

About ALA

▸ [Mission & History](#)

▸ [ALA & LIS Acronyms](#)

▾ **ALA Governing & Strategic Documents**

▸ [Constitution & Bylaws](#)

▸ [Council](#)

▸ [Officers & Executive Board](#)

▸ [Handbook of Organization](#)

▸ [Legal Guidelines](#)

▾ **Annual Report**

⊗ [Past Annual Reports](#)

⊗ [Letter to the Membership](#)

⊗ [About ALA](#)

⊗ [2008-2009 Year in Review](#)

⊗ [Awards and Honors](#)

⊗ [Conferences and Workshops](#)

⊗ [Financials](#)

⊗ [In Appreciation](#)

⊗ [Leadership](#)

⊗ [Other Highlights](#)

⊗ [Programs and Partners](#)

⊗ [Publishing](#)

⊗ [Washington Office](#)

▸ [Financial Data](#)

▸ [ALA Election Information](#)

▸ [Policy Manual](#)

▸ [Offices](#)

▸ [Contact Us](#)

Welcome to the 2008–2009 Annual Report



[ENTER](#)

[About this image . . .](#)

About ALA

- > Mission & History
- > ALA & LIS Acronyms
- ▼ **ALA Governing & Strategic Documents**
 - > Constitution & Bylaws
 - > Council
 - > Officers & Executive Board
 - > Handbook of Organization
 - > Legal Guidelines
 - ▼ **Annual Report**
 - ✦ Past Annual Reports
 - ▼ **Letter to the Membership**
 - ✦ About ALA
 - ✦ 2008-2009 Year in Review
 - ✦ Awards and Honors
 - ✦ Conferences and Workshops
 - ✦ Financials
 - ✦ In Appreciation
 - ✦ Leadership
 - ✦ Other Highlights
 - ✦ Programs and Partners
 - ✦ Publishing
 - ✦ Washington Office
 - > Financial Data
 - > ALA Election Information
 - > Policy Manual
 - > Offices
 - > Contact Us

Letter to the Membership

In 2008–2009, libraries revealed the many ways they serve as first responders in times of economic crisis, providing critical services and resources to those in need. Even as libraries themselves faced budget cuts, layoffs, and closures, the use of their invaluable services surged, and libraries looked for new and creative ways to serve their communities.

Grassroots support for libraries seemed to grow with the increase in usage. In a noteworthy case, the New York Public Library successfully used an online fundraising campaign to win back \$23 million in subsidies after the city initially planned to cut its support by \$28 million. The advocacy campaign—which spread its message through the library’s website, Facebook, and other social networking sites, and a YouTube video featuring celebrities such as writer Amy Tan and actor Jeff Daniels—brought in \$50,000 and calls to city representatives from some 30,000 residents.

In February, citizen support for libraries received a boost as the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates and Friends of Libraries U.S.A. officially joined forces to become the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations. This new ALA division will help trustees and Friends work together at the local, state, and national levels to effectively promote and advocate for libraries so that libraries may thrive even in times of economic distress.

ALA’s new @ your library website, which was launched during National Library Week in April 2009, further promotes the message that libraries are a valuable community resource. A two-year pilot project targeting families/children/teens and underserved populations such as recent immigrants and job seekers, the site offers information on topics of general interest to the public and uses interactive technology and social networking to stimulate library usage and to raise awareness of all types of libraries—public, school, academic, and special.

The explosion in the use of social networking sites, blogs, wikis, and digital content continued at ALA and in the library world, with Twitter at the top of the list of new ways to connect with members and patrons. ALA also offered Association-wide improvements, with a redesigned website launched in September 2008 and ALA Connect—which provides a virtual, collaborative space where members can engage in the Association’s work—launched in the spring.

2008–2009 ALA President James Rettig focused his presidential activities around “Creating Connections” and addressed three critical issues: advocacy, diversity, and member participation. Rettig, university librarian at the University of Richmond in Virginia, provided a variety of innovative opportunities for members to participate in ALA activities throughout his presidential year, including monthly online salons, virtual poster sessions, and the chance to ask questions of the next year’s ALA presidential candidates via YouTube. Other projects included the development of a “Craigslist” of opportunities intended to help members find their place in our complex, vibrant, and opportunity-rich Association, and a Career Connections member community in ALA Connect, where members can submit their resumes for others to review.

Rettig organized a panel discussion at the 2009 Midwinter Meeting titled “Building Statewide Coalitions for All Libraries During a Tough Economy,” which focused on the value of advocacy coalitions in times of economic downturn, and his President’s Program featured Dr. Muhammad Yunus, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner and author, who discussed how institutions such as libraries can transform and build communities that they serve. At the 2009 Annual Conference, 75 members participated in an “unconference,” where participants could set their own agenda, and Rettig’s President’s Program featured Thomas S. Blanton, director of the National Security Archive at George Washington University, who spoke on the loss of access to government information.

In the coming year, we must call on the library community to do what it does best: to educate and inform and to disseminate the knowledge that the library is an indispensable institution, greatly in need of support. It is not enough to focus only on providing the vital services we offer. We must advocate for the value of our libraries by providing the resources, tools, and training that allow librarians and library supporters to better articulate what we already know is true—that libraries are the heart of all communities.

Key initiatives will address advocacy and literacy. A focus on “member-driven advocacy” content and training—for librarians, library staff, and supporters of all types of libraries—complements ALA’s existing efforts targeting local, state, and federal legislative advocacy. This front-line advocacy features a most critical emphasis on the competencies and content needed to advocate for the library and library needs within the library structure and within our respective communities—cities, counties, higher education environments, and schools/school districts. We will work to bring national attention to libraries and their role as literacy builders, engage library leaders everywhere to focus on current literacy best practices in building community, and develop programs that incorporate literacy partners to build a comprehensive advocacy for literacy movement.

Camila Alire
ALA President



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Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Fiels', written in a cursive style.

About ALA

- > Mission & History
- > ALA & LIS Acronyms
- ▼ **ALA Governing & Strategic Documents**
 - > Constitution & Bylaws
 - > Council
 - > Officers & Executive Board
 - > Handbook of Organization
 - > Legal Guidelines
 - ▼ **Annual Report**
 - ⊗ Past Annual Reports
 - ⊗ Letter to the Membership
 - ▼ **About ALA**
 - ⊗ 2008-2009 Year in Review
 - ⊗ Awards and Honors
 - ⊗ Conferences and Workshops
 - ⊗ Financials
 - ⊗ In Appreciation
 - ⊗ Leadership
 - ⊗ Other Highlights
 - ⊗ Programs and Partners
 - ⊗ Publishing
 - ⊗ Washington Office
 - > Financial Data
 - > ALA Election Information
 - > Policy Manual

- > Offices
- > Contact Us

CITE

About ALA



[Mission](#) | [Divisions](#) | [ALA Offices](#) | [ALA Officers](#) | [Executive Board](#)

The American Library Association was founded in 1876 in Philadelphia and later chartered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; it is the oldest, largest, and most influential library association in the world. The ALA has approximately 63,000 members, including not only librarians but also library trustees, publishers, and other interested people from every state and many nations. The association serves public, state, school, and academic libraries, as well as special libraries for people working in government, commerce and industry, the arts, and the armed services or in hospitals, prisons, and other institutions.

Mission

The ALA's mission is "to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."

Headquartered in Chicago, the ALA is governed by an elected [Council](#), its policy-making body, and an [Executive Board](#), which acts for the Council in the administration of established policies and programs. The Executive Board is the body that manages, within this context, the affairs of the Association, delegating management of the day-to-day operation to the association's [executive director](#). The ALA also has 37 standing [committees](#), designated as committees of the Association or of the Council. ALA operations are directed by an executive director and implemented by [staff](#) through a structure of programmatic [offices](#) and support units.

The ALA is home to 11 membership [divisions](#), each focused on a type of library or library function, and 17 [round tables](#) for members who share interests that do not fall within the scope of any of the divisions. A network of [affiliates](#), [chapters](#), and [other organizations](#) enables the ALA to reach a broad audience.

[Key action areas](#) include diversity, equitable access to information and library services, education and lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, advocacy for libraries and the profession, literacy, and organizational excellence.

The ALA is a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization.

[Mission](#) | [Divisions](#) | [ALA Offices](#) | [ALA Officers](#) | [Executive Board](#)

Divisions

The ALA's member divisions are:

- [American Association of School Librarians](#) (AASL)
- [Association for Library Collections and Technical Services](#) (ALCTS)
- [Association for Library Service to Children](#) (ALSC)
- [Association of College and Research Libraries](#) (ACRL)
- [Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations](#) (ALTAFF)
- [Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies](#) (ASCLA)
- [Library and Information Technology Association](#) (LITA)
- [Library Leadership and Management Association](#) (LLAMA)
- [Public Library Association](#) (PLA)
- [Reference and User Services Association](#) (RUSA)
- [Young Adult Library Services Association](#) (YALSA)

[Mission](#) | [Divisions](#) | [ALA Offices](#) | [ALA Officers](#) | [Executive Board](#)

ALA Offices

These units of the Association address broad interests and issues of concern to ALA members; they track issues and provide information, services, and products for members and the general public. Current ALA offices are:

- [Chapter Relations Office](#)
- [Development Office](#)
- [Governance Office](#)
- [International Relations Office](#)

- [Office for Accreditation](#) (OA)
- [Office for Diversity](#) (OFD)
- [Office of Government Relations](#) (OGR)*
- [Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment](#) (HRDR)
- [Office for Information Technology Policy](#) (OITP)*
- [Office for Intellectual Freedom](#) (OIF)
- [Office for Library Advocacy](#) (OLA)
- [Office for Literacy and Outreach Services](#) (OLOS)
- [Office for Research and Statistics](#) (ORS)
- [Public Information Office](#) (PIO)
- [Public Programs Office](#) (PPO)
- [Washington Office](#)

*The OGR and the OITP are housed at the ALA's Washington Office; the others are in Chicago.

[Mission](#) | [Divisions](#) | [ALA Offices](#) | [ALA Officers](#) | [Executive Board](#)

ALA Officers 2008–2009



President

Camila A. Alire
Professor, Simmons College, Boston
Adjunct Professor, San Jose (Calif.) University



President-Elect

Roberta A. Stevens
Outreach Projects and Partnerships Officer
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Immediate Past-President

Jim Rettig
University Librarian
University of Richmond (Va.)



Treasurer

Rodney M. Hersberger
Dean (Director), University Library
California State University at Bakersfield



Executive Director

Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Headquarters
Chicago

[Mission](#) | [Divisions](#) | [ALA Offices](#) | [ALA Officers](#) | [Executive Board](#)

Executive Board

Diane R. Chen
John F. Kennedy Middle School
Antioch, Tennessee
(2008–2011)



Joseph M. Eagan
Montgomery County Public Libraries
Olney, Maryland
(2008–2011)



Patricia M. Hogan
Poplar Creek Public Library District
Streamwood, Illinois
(2009–2012)



Em Claire Knowles
Simmons College
Boston, Massachusetts
(2008–2011)



Charles E. Kratz
Weinberg Memorial Library
University of Scranton (Pa.)
(2007–2010)



Stephen L. Matthews
Foxcroft School
Middleburg, Virginia
(2009–2012)



Larry Romans
Head, Government Information Services
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee
(2007–2010)



Courtney L. Young
Pennsylvania State University
Monaca, Pennsylvania
(2009–2012)

About ALA

[▸ Mission & History](#)
[▸ ALA & LIS Acronyms](#)

▾ ALA Governing & Strategic Documents

[▸ Constitution & Bylaws](#)
[▸ Council](#)
[▸ Officers & Executive Board](#)
[▸ Handbook of Organization](#)
[▸ Legal Guidelines](#)

▾ Annual Report

[▸ Past Annual Reports](#)
[▸ Letter to the Membership](#)
[▸ About ALA](#)

▾ 2008-2009 Year in Review

[▸ Awards and Honors](#)
[▸ Conferences and Workshops](#)
[▸ Financials](#)
[▸ In Appreciation](#)
[▸ Leadership](#)
[▸ Other Highlights](#)
[▸ Programs and Partners](#)
[▸ Publishing](#)
[▸ Washington Office](#)
[▸ Financial Data](#)
[▸ ALA Election Information](#)
[▸ Policy Manual](#)
[▸ Offices](#)
[▸ Contact Us](#)

2008–2009 Year in Review

2008–2009 ALA President James Rettig focused his presidential activities around “Creating Connections” and addressed three critical issues: advocacy, diversity, and member participation.

Rettig organized a panel discussion at the 2009 Midwinter Meeting titled “Building Statewide Coalitions for All Libraries During a Tough Economy,” which focused on the value of building statewide advocacy coalitions in times of economic downturn as well as the concept of the “library ecosystem,” or how libraries of all types are interdependent.

Rettig provided a variety of innovative opportunities for ALA members to participate in Association activities throughout his presidential year, including monthly online salons and conversations that allowed members to discuss a wide array of topics with ALA leaders; two virtual poster sessions, held in February and May, that allowed participants to share ideas with dynamic e-posters; a “Craigslist” of opportunities intended to help members find their place in our big, complex, vibrant, and opportunity-rich association.

In addition, members were invited to ask questions of the next year’s ALA presidential candidates via YouTube; a Career Connections member community was created in ALA Connect, where members can submit their resumes for others to review; and 75 members participated in an “Unconference” at the 2009 Annual Conference, where participants could set their own agenda for and simultaneously play the roles of teacher and learner.

Also at Annual Conference, 10 juried Grassroots Programs selected from 118 proposals submitted by members addressed topics such as creating a library job center, discovering and preserving local history, public art in public libraries, preparing libraries for Web 3.0, libraries and the Obama administration’s information policy, African American male librarians and career choice, and pushing digital content to users. In addition, Chicago-area college students were provided with scholarships to spend the day at the conference and learn about the range of career opportunities in the library field.



ALA President James Rettig gets a hand from President-Elect Camila Alire and Immediate Past President Lorlene Roy as he cuts the ribbon to open the exhibits at the 2009 Midwinter Meeting.

ALA responds to economic crisis

The fiscal year began with widespread media coverage of the increase in library usage during tough economic times. The Public Information Office facilitated interview opportunities for members and ALA leaders with National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered,” NBC’s *Today Show* and *Nightly News*, the *CBS Evening News*, CNN, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the Associated Press, and dozens of other media groups and news websites.

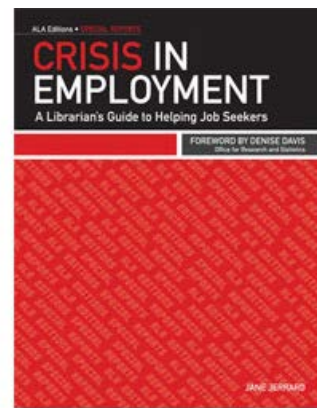
Coverage positioned libraries as trusted and valuable community resources and focused on how libraries assist job-seekers and help families save money, as well as how they are changing to meet the demands of the communities they serve.

The demand for information on how libraries support communities during times of economic hardship was so great that the PIO created an economy press kit, which can be viewed at <http://www.ala.org/economynews>. Libraries across the country posted television clips to their websites and used the coverage as a tool to fuel local advocacy efforts.

Through difficult economic times, people continued to join ALA and renew their memberships in order to support the profession and find the resources they need for their work life. The Association closed the 2009 fiscal year with 64,843 members, a 2.6% percent decrease from the record 66,624 members in FY2008. No particular area of personal membership was down significantly, however, and student and retiree memberships saw modest increases. Organizational and corporate memberships dropped slightly, with 3,295 and 240 members, respectively. FY 2009 was the final year of a three-year phased-in dues increase for personal members and also saw a change in the dues structure for corporate members.

The first ALA Editions Special Report addressed the economy’s impact on jobs: *Crisis in Employment*, by Jane Jerrard, with a foreword by Office for Research and Statistics Director Denise Davis, offers advice and methods for providing appropriate training and education to job seekers. The report, which was also made available in electronic format at a lower price, was published rapidly to ensure timely advice, with content based on interviews with librarians across the country, as well as on research from the ORS.

In the January 2009 issue of *Library Technology Reports*, “The State of Funding for Library Technology in Today’s Economy,” Davis and ORS Project Manager Larra Clark responded to the economic crisis with a detailed look at the library-funding landscape. The report, which grew out of the Libraries Connect Communities Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study, includes contributions from experts such as blogger Jason Griffey and former Colorado State Librarian Nancy Bolt and provides practical guidelines for stretching a library’s budget as far as it



can go.

The Office of Chapter and International Relations supported state library associations as they battled efforts to cut state funding to libraries just when their services—for workshops on financial planning and investment, technology training, access to valuable databases, free access to computers—were most needed. More than 75,000 library supporters nationwide sent messages directly to their governors and legislators. These efforts helped to stave off or reduce catastrophic cuts in Ohio, Florida, and New Jersey.



The Reference and User Services Association worked with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation to develop a new resource for libraries to help people cope with tough economic times through the Smart investing @ your library program. FINRA's Investor Alert brochure "Job Dislocation: Making Smart Financial Choices after a Job Loss" offers guidance and tips for the general public on maintaining financial stability during a period of unemployment. Topics covered include taking the right financial steps, protecting against investment fraud, understanding health insurance options, and asking appropriate questions about employer benefit plans.

Recession, White House transition bring opportunities to highlight library services

The Washington Office responded to the recession by taking action to inform decision-makers—including newly elected President Obama—of the myriad ways in which the nation's libraries serve as first responders in times of economic crisis.

For the House Banking Committee, which was considering an emergency supplemental bill, the Washington Office prepared a proposal focused on a one-year investment of federal support to public libraries to stay open nights and weekends so that the public could use library resources to look for work.

After the election, the Washington Office worked with the Obama transition team, sharing proposals for libraries to help patrons looking for employment and engaging in discussions about national licenses for databases. Also under discussions was a national effort to include two years of supplemental funding for public and community college libraries to stay open when the public needs access to library resources. The Washington Office also suggested a program to put a state-certified school librarian in each K–12 school, which would have funded 60,000 new school librarians.

In addition to economy-related issues, the report "[Opening the 'Window to a Larger World': Libraries' Role in Changing America.](#)" submitted by ALA President Jim Rettig to President Obama's transition team, outlined top ALA issues and concerns. The Open Access Working Group, which includes the Association of College and Research Libraries, ALA, and eight other library and public-interest groups, also sent a report, "Public Access to the Published Results of Publicly Funded Research Will Benefit the Economy, Science, and Health."



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed into law by President Obama in February 2009, did not fully maximize libraries as a resource for recovery. However, it did present unprecedented opportunities for libraries to pursue federal funding, particularly for broadband build-out. In June 2009, the Washington Office created the online guide [Know Your Stimulus](#) to help encourage ALA members to take full advantage of the possibilities in the bill.

Profession says good-bye to leaders Krug and Josey

The library world lost two important leaders in 2008–2009: Office for Intellectual Freedom Director Judith Krug and ALA Past-President E.J. Josey.



Director of the OIF and executive director of the Freedom to Read Foundation for more than 40 years, Judith Krug died April 11, 2009, at age 69. Krug, who often said, "Censorship dies in the light of day," was admired and respected for her efforts to guarantee the rights of individuals to express ideas and read the ideas of others without governmental interference.

Through her unwavering support of writers, teachers, librarians, and students, Krug advised countless librarians and trustees in dealing with challenges to library material. She was involved in multiple First Amendment cases that went to the United States Supreme Court. In addition, she was the founder of Banned Books Week, an annual weeklong event that celebrates the freedom to choose and the freedom to express one's opinion.

At the 2009 ALA Annual Conference, Krug was honored with tributes from every ALA state chapter and the ALA Council, the William J. Brennan Award from the Thomas Jefferson Center, and the Freedom to Read Foundation's Founder's Award, and with Honorary Membership in ALA. Honorary membership is the profession's highest honor and normally is not awarded posthumously—just one more indication of how exceptionally important Krug was to the field of librarianship.

Authors Scott Turow and Judy Blume helped celebrate Krug's life and legacy, speaking to a packed house of more than 500 at the FTRF's 40th Anniversary Gala at the new Modern Wing of the Art Institute of Chicago July 12. Krug's death also brought countless tributes from her friends and colleagues, many of which can be found on the [FTRF's Web pages](#). Her remarkable life and legacy were memorialized by the *New York Times*, CBS News, National Public Radio, the Huffington Post, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Library Journal*, and scores of other newspapers, blogs, and magazines. The May 2009 issue of *American Libraries* offered a retrospective (in photos as well as words) of Krug's life and work, AL Focus included a memorial video, and the July issue of the *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* was dedicated to remembering Krug's career.

Krug began her library career as a reference librarian at Chicago's John Crerar Library in 1962. Later, she was hired as a cataloger at Northwestern University's dental school library, working there from 1963 to 1965. She joined ALA as a research analyst in 1965 and assumed the post of OIF director in 1967, also taking over the duties of executive director of the Freedom to Read Foundation.

On July 3, 2009, the library world also said good-bye to E.J. Josey, professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh and past president of ALA (1984–1985), who died at age 85.

In 1964, Josey authored an ALA resolution forbidding ALA officers and staff from participating in state associations that denied membership to black librarians. This action led to the integration of the library associations of several Southern states, and Josey became the first black librarian to be accepted as a member of the Georgia Library Association.



ALTAFF unites voices of ALTA, FOLUSA



Citizen support for libraries received a boost on February 1, 2009, when the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA) and Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) officially joined forces to become the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF). This new division will help trustees and Friends work together at the local, state, and national levels to promote and advocate for libraries. The ultimate goal is to harness the power of hundreds of thousands of library advocates so that libraries will thrive even in times of economic distress.

New @ your library website debuts

In a cooperative effort between Publishing and Communications and Member Relations, ALA did a soft launch of the [@ your library website](#) for the public during National Library Week in April 2009. The new website is a two-year pilot project funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York and targeting families/children/teens and underserved populations such as recent immigrants and job-seekers. The site offers information on topics of general interest to the public and uses interactive technology and social networking to stimulate library usage and raise public awareness of the library—public, school, academic, and special—as a valuable community resource. The new site is designed to work in tandem with the I Love Libraries website maintained by the Office for Library Advocacy. AL Editor-in-Chief Leonard Kniffel managed the project with Public Programs Office Director Deb Robertson.



ALA launches redesigned website, ALA Connect

ALA continued to work on improving ways to disseminate information and to provide opportunities for networking online. On September 22, 2008, ALA launched a redesigned website with restructured information architecture. Focus groups at the Midwinter Meeting provided positive feedback about the design's features and requested that more attention be paid to search functions and link maintenance. Later in the fiscal year, ALA introduced ALA Connect, which replaced the Online Communities service as a virtual, collaborative, online workspace.

A busy year for the Campaign for America's Libraries



The Campaign for America's Libraries continued to work with partners to generate public awareness about the value of libraries and librarians, to reach new audiences, and to amplify messages.

The American Dream Starts @ your library grant, developed by ALA and funded through Campaign partner

Dollar General Literacy Foundation, awarded funding to 34 public libraries to add or expand literacy services for adult English-language learners.

Using the Campaign for America's Libraries @ your library brand, Verizon's [Thinkfinity.org](#) featured [em tu biblioteca](#) librarian-specific content from ALA and library initiatives in a collection of resources specifically for school library media specialists. The Thinkfinity @ your library page showcases materials collected from Thinkfinity content partners and includes discipline-specific, standards-based educational resources on current subject areas. It also highlights events such as Youth Media Month, School Library Media Month, and *El día de los niños, El día los libros*.

The fourth season of the Step Up to the Plate @ your library program, developed by ALA and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, kicked off during Youth Baseball Week April 13–19, 2009, and was a featured program during the week's celebration at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. The program once again centered on a baseball trivia contest, with this year's questions, developed by the library staff at the Hall of Fame, focusing on multiculturalism in baseball and baseball around the world. The program concluded with a drawing at the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Step Up to the Plate spokesperson and Hall of Famer Ozzie Smith chose

Oscar Youngquist, 11, of Racine, Wisconsin, as the grand-prize winner.

Launched in September 2008 at the national conference of REFORMA (The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking), the "en tu biblioteca" campaign was developed to encourage members of the Latino community to use their local libraries. Univision Radio, the nation's largest Spanish-language radio broadcaster, aired public service announcements in 13 of the country's top Latino markets in the fall and spring, with a combined value of \$1 million in donated air time.

Continuing an eight-year partnership with the Campaign for America's Libraries, *Woman's Day* magazine featured the four winners of its latest library initiative, which asked readers how they used the library to improve a family member's or their own emotional, mental, or physical health. Winners included a woman who found solace in the library when her husband was ill, one who used the resources at her library to learn about her postpartum depression, a woman who was able to make an informed health choice thanks to the research training offered at her library, and a reader who, after losing her eyesight, used books on tape provided by the Library of Congress to rediscover her love of reading. The magazine also announced its next initiative, asking women to submit stories of how the library helped them save money during tough economic times. Four submissions will be featured in the March 2010 issue.

The Campaign for the World's Libraries



The Latvian Library Association (LLA) and the Romania Library Association (ABR) both joined the Campaign for the World's Libraries in 2009. The Campaign for the World's Libraries was developed by ALA and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to showcase the unique and vital roles played by public, school, academic, and special libraries worldwide. To date, 35 countries have joined the campaign, and the @ your library brand has been translated into each country's language. New logos reflecting the national colors of each member nation were made available for download during National Library Week 2009.