

AFAS



AFAS: African American Studies Librarians Section
Association of College and Research Libraries - ALA

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

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“We have a much brighter future as we are masters of our OWN destiny!”
(Paraphrasing "Invictus" by poet W.H. Henley)

Greetings AFAS Members!

My sincere hope is that your fall semester has been a wonderful beginning for this new academic year! First, if you have not had an opportunity to read the minutes of our ACRL –AFAS General Membership meeting minutes of Saturday, June 29, 2013, from Chicago; I would encourage you to do so. Our General meeting was well attended. We were pleased to see new members representing both academic and public libraries that have extensive African American special collections. We are working toward a smooth transition in leadership and an active year.

New Officers 2013-2014:

Chair – Johnnieque B. (Johnnie) Love
Vice Chair – Malaika Grant
Secretary – Lavonda Broadnax
Member-at-Large – Derek Mosley
Liaison to ASALH – Glenda Alvin

AFAS is fortunate to have committed members who accept leadership roles on AFAS committees and work to keep the section active. We encourage and welcome more new members to consider standing for leadership and committee membership. Visit the membership page of the [AFAS website](#) or follow link to complete [ACRL volunteer form](#). The deadline is February 15, 2014.

Committee Chairs 2013-2014:

Program Planning Committee Chair – Derek Mosley
Membership Committee Chair –Lynne Simpson
Publications & Research Committee Chair—Vivian Fisher
Nominating Committee Chair- Former AFAS Chair Gennice King

A Community of Practice

The AFAS Section is a member of the ACRL “*Communities of Practice Assembly*.” Recent recommendations suggest new approaches to ACRL organizational structure. The variety of configurations provides for greater functionality and flexibility within ACRL. In Chicago, at the ACRL Leadership Council it was stated that sections should be more concerned with *quality and not quantity*. Ironically, the new organizational guidelines place a membership minimum of 400 members on all sections to maintain section status. This is a major challenge for AFAS. AFAS current membership is 219 [August 2013]. We have three years to build membership up to 400. If after three years the membership goal has not been obtained--and maintained -- for all three years as required, AFAS will seek ACRL Interest Group status.

AFAS Membership Challenge

Our Section was founded in 1989 but AFAS maintains an active legacy of 37 years. AFAS membership typically hover around 260 members. While AFAS has never had 400 members I think we are up for the challenge and have begun a membership drive of “*Each One, Bring One!*” Our new membership chair is Lynne Simpson. She will also serve as the membership liaison to the ACRL Membership Committee. The membership drive is on the agenda and will be discussed in greater detail at Midwinter meeting in Philadelphia.

Survey for AFAS New Direction

This year is filled with numerous advantages as well as ongoing challenges. To aid in determining the status and goals of AFAS a survey was developed and implemented by the executive committee in June 2013. Results were enlightening and have enabled us to answer a number of key questions on the needs and desires of our membership.

2014 Action Plan presented in First Executive Committee, September 30th via Conference Call

At the Sept 30 meeting, AFAS Chair Johnnie Love presented the 2014 Action Plan. “*Advancing learning. Transforming scholarship*” is the new tagline for ACRL. The new tagline serves as a guiding principle for how AFAS moves forward in 2014. ACRL Section Review principles will be used to evaluate AFAS in three years. These principles are:

- Learning and Advocacy:
- Scholarship
- Continuous Learning
- Leadership
- Membership
- Sustainability

Our 2014 planning seeks to address a number of these principles. The 2014 Action Plan will consist of:

- Finding new direction from survey results (Akilah)
- Membership Challenges and Appeal (Johnnie)
- 2014 Program Planning Proposal (Derek)
- 2014 Research Forum (Johnnie)
- Preparing for new Officers for 2014-2015 (Gennice)
- Task Force for African American Librarianship Competencies (Malaika)
- 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting plans (Johnnie)
- Newsletter publication

Data from the New Direction Survey results was discussed. It was the general consensus that the results showed members need for information and understanding of the new ACRL organizational structure. It was decided that an additional question will be disseminated to membership to clarify definitions, advantages and disadvantages of ACRL units--Section, Interest and Discussion Groups. Other items discussed at the June General meeting, but not discussed in the conference call, will be addressed in later conference calls and/or placed on the Midwinter agenda. They are:

- Establishing an AFAS award for outstanding Africana Librarianship
- Developing of comprehensive history of AFAS (locate through ALA archives at University of Illinois)
- Members serving as research coaches for new librarians in the discipline
- Revision of the AFAS Brochure (Publications Committee)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Program Committee

Derek Mosley, chair of 2014 Program Planning Committee shared that the proposal was submitted as of September 1st. The tentative topic for the Program will be: (*“Realigning Ethnic Studies Librarianship in a Growing and Demanding Digital & Global Environment.”*) ACRL Professional Development Committee will review the proposal and select 2014 Annual Conference programs, with notifications issued in October 2013.

Johnnie also stated that we are also planning for an *“African American Studies Research Forum.”* A draft of the guidelines was disseminated to the Executive Committee. She asked that the Publications and Research Committee take the lead and assist in planning for the Forum. Scheduling for this activity will take place as soon as we hear about the results of our program proposal.

Nominating Committee

Chair- Gennice King, Former AFAS Chair, stated that she had met the deadline with a slate of candidates for the 2014 AFAS election:

Vice Chair -- Derek Mosley

Secretary – Latanya Jenkins

Member-at Large-- Grace Jackson-Brown

Gennice stated that she wanted to thank the members for stepping forward and assuming leadership for the coming year. The 2014 election opens in mid-March, 2014.

Membership Committee

Lynne Simpson has accepted the responsibilities as chair of the Membership Committee. She was unable to attend the Conference Call meeting. Lynne will have to connect with the ACRL Membership Committee. A Conference Call is being planned to discuss membership drive efforts.

Task Force for African American Librarianship Competencies (Malaika)

According to the ACRL review of sections; “librarianship competencies for a specific area promotes sustainability for the section.” Johnnie appointed Malalika Grant to chair this Task Force for AFAS. Its purpose is to look at those standards and competencies for one who is working in the field of African American Studies Librarianship. Malaika stated she has identified one person to serve on the task force. Several names were recommended by the Executive Committee. Her goal is to have a draft report for review at Midwinter meeting.

AFAS Affiliation to ASALH

Johnnie stated that she would be attending the ASAHL conference in Jacksonville. One of her priorities will be to speak to Janet Sims Woods, who is Vice President for membership. Glenda Alvin will also be attending because she serves as Liaison for AFAS to ASALH. A report on the affiliation efforts will be given at the next conference call.

Publications & Research Committee

Chair Vivian Fisher was absent due to a death in her family.

The next conference call is scheduled for early November. Johnnie will poll the committee for the best date. The meeting was adjourned.

COMMITTEE REPORTS contd.

ACRL/AFAS Session Report for the 2012 ALA Conference held in Anaheim California Monday June 25, 2012

(this report wasn't included in the C&RL News)

Erica Bruchko and Akilah Nosakhere

The ACRL African American Studies Librarians Section (AFAS) sponsored "HBCU Library Alliance – History and Accomplishments" at the 2012 ALA conference in Anaheim. AFAS chair, Rebecca Hankins welcomed the audience and encouraged members to continue their activism and support of the section. Rochelle Ballard, Chair of the 2012 Program Committee introduced the session and the speakers, Sandra Phoenix, Executive Director of the HBCU Library Alliance and Dr. Shanesha Brooks-Tatum, HBCU Library Alliance Project Coordinator and Writer.

Ms. Phoenix opened the program with a history of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance. For the past nine years, the HBCU Alliance has promoted collaboration and excellence in library leadership and services of member libraries. The Alliance was recently awarded a Mellon grant to document its history and accomplishments. Articles about the project are available in the journal, *Against the Grain*: <http://www.against-the-grain.com/2012/03/v24-1-table-of-contents/>.

In her introduction, Ms. Phoenix summarized the history of HBCUs, noting their primary purpose to educate African Americans after emancipation. The institutions grew out of the Morrill Act, a Vermont-sponsored bill to fund public colleges for agriculture in the 1860s. An amendment of 1890s allowed for the creation of HBCUs. Project Coordinator Dr. Brooks-Tatum is working with institutions to document this history through the digital preservation of photographic collections of member libraries. Approximately 3000 digital objects are available for viewing at: <http://www.hbculibraries.org/html/hbcu-digital-collections.html>.

In addition to guiding the development of digital collections at HBCU institutions, Dr. Brooks-Tatum's mission is to raise awareness of the HBCU's unique collections and enable global access to the rich materials found at HBCU member libraries. Dr. Brooks-Tatum and Ms. Phoenix both discussed the need for on-going financial and administrative support. However, they are optimistic about the future of the Alliance and the success of the current digital initiative.

Get Involved!

What do members of the African American Studies Librarians Section do?

- Participate in AFAS committees whose objectives are promoting, supporting and fostering information services in the field.
- Plan programs of interest to members and their constituents.
- Network with librarians with similar interests.
- Maintain an online list of core resources in African American Studies.
- Promote librarianship among African American Studies organizations.

MEMBER NEWS

New Directions: A Survey of ACRL/AFAS Membership: A Report

Survey Background

In July, AFAS membership was surveyed to assess support of a change in organizational status from 'section' to 'interest group.' The 10-question survey was sparked by a series of recommendations made by the 2012 ACRL Communities of Practice Implementation Task Force to "*identify strategies that best leverage available resource, while at the same time providing multiple and diverse opportunities for membership engagement.*"

In other words, ACRL seeks to reduce operating costs now that revenue streams are diminishing. Of equal importance, ACRL is also assessing the current organizational structure to sustain professional development through an effective organizational structure for all members.

The African American Studies Librarianship (AFAS) section was established in 1989 and will observe 25 years as a section next year. AFAS builds on a legacy of service and promotion of African American studies collection development and librarianship that actually predates section status. Like other ACRL sections, AFAS has served as a gateway for transition into ACRL and ALA leadership for many new members. Through the years, the AFAS section has consistently organized stimulating conference programs while promoting African American Studies Librarianship.

As one of 17 ACRL sections, AFAS has benefitted from the assistance of ACRL staff and board liaisons, sectional leadership training; funding of conference meetings, programming, and communication tools, such as section newsletter, brochure, ALA CONNECT and a listserv.

ACRL Board of Directors announced at 2012 ALA Anaheim that after careful review of section activity since 2000, existing sections with less than 400 members are subject to transitioning to an interest group or discussion group or disbanding if no choice is made by the section. During the 3-year period, each section has the opportunity to determine its own status. Sections can retain their current status if certain criteria are met. Those not fulfilling proposed new criteria would transition into an interest group or select another

organizational option. Interest groups are less structured and provide opportunities for members to "engage around new and emerging areas of specialization in the profession."

Sections not meeting the basic criterion have five options to consider. They are: transitioning into an interest group; merging with another section; converting into a division-level discussion group; becoming a discussion group or standing committee within another section.

Survey Results

Upon learning of the new standards for ACRL section status, AFAS leadership solicited membership input to help determine the future status of the section. Distribution of the survey included a post to the AFAS website; links to the survey on ALA Connect, the AFAS listserv, Facebook page and email blitz to all AFAS members on two occasions.

The survey included a brief one page explanation of the recommendations from the *ACRL Communities of Practice Implementation Task Force* and the differences between a 'section' and an 'interest group'.

Of the total 77 survey respondents 64% indicated AFAS membership of 5 years or less. The survey also confirmed that 65% of the respondents are not African American studies librarians; and that within the past 5 years, 44% had never attended an AFAS conference program or membership meeting.

While 75 respondents noted that they had not attended any AFAS meeting or conference program within the past 5 years, 96% indicated that they were likely to continue membership in the section and 89% would recommend AFAS membership to others.

When asked about AFAS merging with another section a slight majority of 44% indicated that they were 'not sure' followed closely by 40% who 'disagreed' with AFAS merging to maintain section status. Twelve of the 73 respondents expressed agreement with the option of a merger. (continued on pages 7-8)

MEMBER NEWS contd.

Of the 73 respondents to question 9: AFAS should become an Interest Group within ACRL, 33% were against AFAS becoming an interest group; 30% were for interest group status and 37% were 'not sure'. A variety of comments and recommendations about the future of AFAS were shared. Some respondents are eager to begin a membership campaign to gain 400 members and increase section activity. Others suggest merging with a related section and expanding the AFAS charge to include the promotion of the study of *Africana studies* collection development and librarianship on a global level.

Conclusion

Overall the survey results did not illustrate a clear majority regarding a decision about the future status of AFAS. The leadership will have to make the decision based on the information gained from the survey. The survey was successful in revealing key attributes about AFAS members and the need for more communication from both sides of the section.

AFAS leadership continues to analyze and discuss the survey data seeking a decision that will be beneficial to both AFAS and ACRL. Additional comments, suggestions, and questions from membership are received by AFAS Executive Committee via the listserv and email. AFAS will announce a strategy at the midwinter membership meeting in Philadelphia.

To improve communication and understanding of the pending change in AFAS status a Community of Practice FAQ sheet is available on the AFAS website. See also [ACRL Bylaws Chapter 4](#) for full definition and function of ACRL communities of practice. Members may also post questions to the list.

Submitted by

AFAS Publication and Research Committee

Akilah Nosakhere, Complier

AFAS IS ON FACEBOOK

Have a Facebook account? If so, look for AFAS on Facebook. AFAS has joined ACRL, the Instruction Section, and other ACRL sections on the social networking site.

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=22843361484>



NEW AFAS DISCUSSION LIST
ACRL-AFAS-L@ALA.ORG THIS IS
 THE OFFICIAL DISCUSSION LIST OF
 THE ACRL AFRICAN AMERICAN
 STUDIES LIS SECTION.

GO TO [HTTP://LISTS.ALA.ORG/
 SYMPA/INFO/ACRL-AFAS-L](http://lists.ala.org/sympa/info/acrl-afas-l) AND
 CLICK SUBSCRIBE

Midwinter Meeting Times

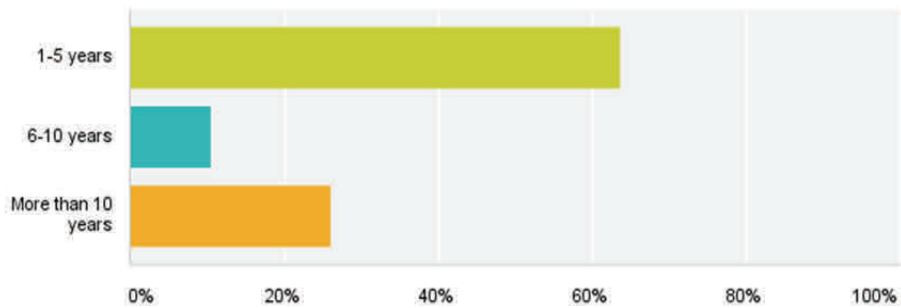
- ◆ Executive Meeting: January 25th, 8:30am to 10:00am.
- ◆ General Membership Meeting: January 25th, 1:00pm to 2:30pm.

MEMBER NEWS contd.

New Directions: A Survey of ACRL/AFAS Membership: July 2013

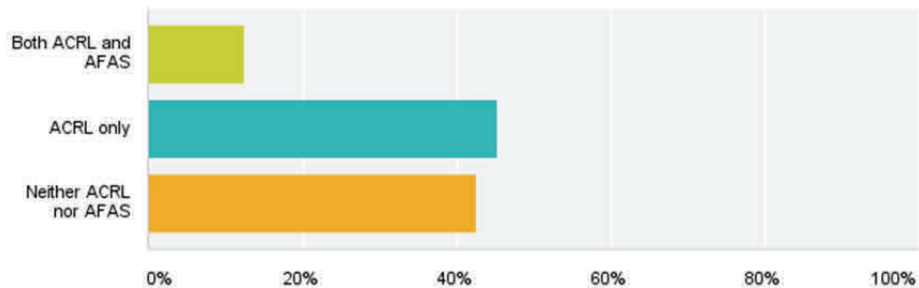
Q1 I have been a member of the African American Librarians' Section (AFAS) for:

Answered: 77 Skipped: 0



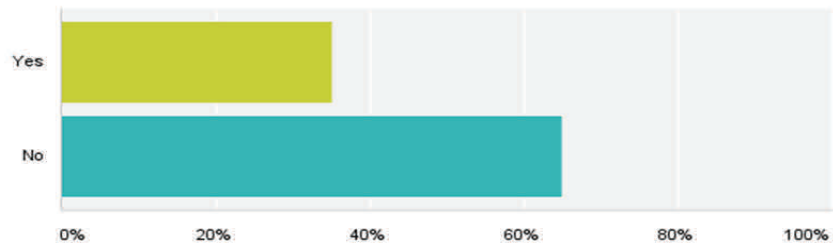
Q2 My Institution is a member of ACRL and AFAS

Answered: 73 Skipped: 4



Q3 My primary job responsibilities are directly related to African American studies

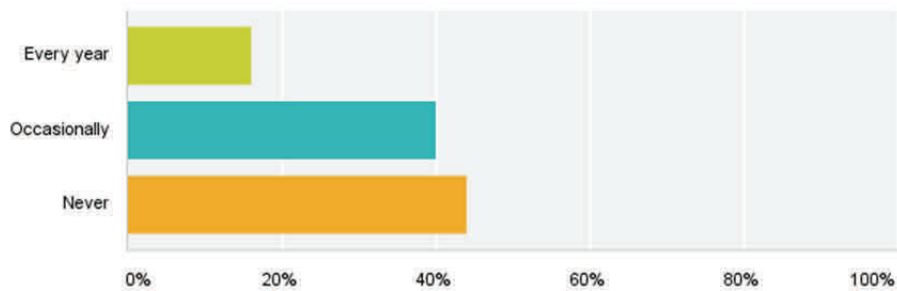
Answered: 77 Skipped: 0



MEMBER NEWS contd.

Q4 In the past 5 years, I have attended AFAS meetings or AFAS conference programs:

Answered: 75 Skipped: 2



Submitted by
AFAS Publication and Research Committee
Akilah Nosakhere, Compiler

Book on Black Librarians Receives BCALA Award

On Saturday, April 20, 2013, co-editors Akilah Nosakhere and Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako) and chapter contributors, Linda Bannerman-Martin, Sandra Michele Echols, Margaret Gibson, Dr. Lucille Thomas, Dr. Cheryl Branche, Johnnie Dent, Dr. Valeda Dent-Goodman, Tenaya Gethers, Tracie Hall and Carol Nurse (not in order) gathered at Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center for a Book Talk on the award-winning *The 21st Century Black Librarian in America: Issues and Challenges*. Published by Scarecrow Press, Inc. in April 2012, the book will be recognized by the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Inc. with their Contributing to Publishing citation at the Caucus's Literary Awards Reception at ALA Chicago in June.



MEMBER NEWS contd.

Mellon Scholars Program in African American History at the Library Company of Philadelphia

The Library Company of Philadelphia's Program in African American History (PAAH), with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is pleased to announce a new Mellon Scholars Program of fellowships, internships, and workshop for 2014-2015. These competitive programs are designed to increase the participation of scholars from underrepresented backgrounds and others in the field of African American history prior to 1900.

The **Mellon Scholars Fellowship Program** aims to promote research in the collections of the Library Company and to enhance the production of scholarly work in African American history of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The following fellowships will be offered for 2014-2015:

Post-doctoral fellowships, with a stipend of \$50,000 for the academic year, or \$25,000 for one semester. Applicants must hold a Ph.D. by September 1, 2014; **application deadline November 1, 2013, with a decision to be made by December 15.**

Dissertation fellowships, with a stipend of \$25,000 for the academic year, or \$12,500 for one semester. Applicants must be in the later stages of research or writing; **application deadline March 1, 2014, with a decision to be made by April 15.**

Short-term fellowships, for doctoral candidates and senior scholars, with a stipend of \$2,500 for one month of research between June 1, 2014 and May 31, 2015; **application deadline March 1, 2014, with a decision to be made by April 15.**

The **Mellon Scholars Internship Program** is a four-week summer program (June 2 to June 27, 2014) that provides potential scholars of early African American history with experience in original archival research, guidance on applying to graduate school and developing research agendas, and exposure to the work of research libraries. Interns will be rising seniors or recent college graduates and will receive a \$1,500 stipend and an allowance for room, board, and travel to and from Philadelphia. **Application deadline: March 1, 2014, with a decision to be made by April 15.**

The **Mellon Scholars Summer Workshop** is a one-week professional development program (June 16 to June 20, 2014) designed to prepare students for the transition to graduate study and for conducting independent research in early African American history archival collections.

Workshop participants will be recent college graduates or students in their first years of graduate study and will receive an allowance of up to \$1,200 to cover the cost of travel, room, and board. **Application deadline: March 1, 2014, with a decision to be made by April 15.**

For more information about the Mellon Scholars Program and application guidelines, visit <http://www.librarycompany.org/paah/fellowships.htm> or contact Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Program Director, at era@udel.edu.



Call for Award Nominations

Excellence in Academic Libraries Award

\$3,000 and a plaque

Sponsored by YBP Library Services

Academic/Research Librarian of the Year

\$5,000 and a plaque

Sponsored by YBP Library Services. Information for many other award opportunities may be obtained on the ACRL Web site:

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/awards> or by contacting Chase Ollis at (312) 280-2521 or collis@ala.org

DEADLINE: December 6, 2013

Apply for ACRL Immersion '14 (Teacher and Program Tracks)

ACRL is currently accepting applications for the Information Literacy Immersion '14 Program ([Teacher](#) and [Program](#) tracks) to be held July 20-25, 2014 at Champlain College in Burlington, VT. [Immersion '14](#) provides four-and-a-half days of intensive

information literacy training and education for academic librarians. Immersion allows you to embrace your educational role by embarking on a path of teacher development and pedagogical inquiry in a community of practice for academic librarians devoted to collaborative learning, individual renewal, and instructional effectiveness.

Acceptance to Immersion '14 is competitive to ensure an environment that fosters group interaction and active participation. Complete program and track details, along with application materials, are [available online](#). The application deadline is **December 6, 2013** and notifications will be issued in February 2014. Questions concerning the program or application process should be directed to Margot Conahan at (312) 280-2522 or e-mail mconahan@ala.org.

Bring the ACRL Standards Workshop to You

Bring the one-day workshop, "*Planning, Assessing, and Communicating Library Impact: Putting the Standards for Libraries in Higher Education into Action*," to your campus or consortia. The

workshop is led by one or two expert presenters at locations across the country upon request. Libraries in higher education are increasingly required to demonstrate their value and document their contributions to overall institutional effectiveness. The [Standards for Libraries in Higher Education](#) is a framework for library planning and assessment that can be used for a variety of circumstances including annual planning, program review, and accreditation self-study. Through presentation, discussion, and group activities, learn how to use the Standards to communicate your library's impact. Contact Margot Conahan, Manager of Professional Development, at mconahan@ala.org; 312-280-2522, to discuss dates and locations, pricing, and for complete workshop details.

ACRL 2015

Submit a proposal for ACRL 2015! The Call for Participation will be available November 2013. Watch the ACRL website for details!

AFAS Newsletter

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The *AFAS Newsletter* welcomes contributions from readers. Send articles, items of interest, and news to the editor, preferably in electronic format.

The *AFAS Newsletter* is sent to all AFAS members at no additional cost. Claims and address changes should be sent to the ALA address, Attention: Membership.

AFAS WEBSITE:

afasacrl.wordpress.com

AFAS WIKI

To directly access the AFAS Wiki use the following URL: <http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/AFAS>.

You can also access our Wiki from the ACRL Wiki main page: http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Main_Page.

**AFAS OFFICERS
2013/2014**

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Chair

Malaika Grant
Vice-Chair

Gennice W. King
Past-Chairperson

Lavonda Kay Broadnax
Secretary

Lavonda Kay Broadnax
Member-at-Large

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[Membership](#)

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[Nominating 2014](#)

Gennice W. King