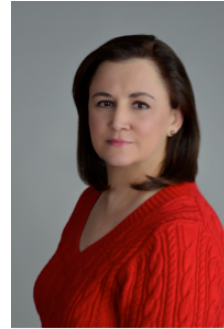


LLAMA President's Message

Translating Vision into Reality

Pat Hawthorne



Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.

- Warren G. Bennis

Turning our vision into reality is achieved by the work of our division-level committees and our sections and section-level committees – all fueled by the dedicated efforts of numerous LLAMA members.

At the last ALA Annual Conference, LLAMA adopted a new strategic plan for 2012 – 2015. Developing our new plan began with a review of previous plans and included study of the ALA strategic plan as well as other ALA divisional plans. Next we sought input from individual LLAMA members as well as committees and sections. Following the spring election where the revised core purpose and mission were approved by membership vote, the LLAMA Board of Directors and Executive Committee began to focus on how to implement the plan. Since ALA Annual, the LLAMA Board and Executive Committee have discussed how to execute the plan and achieve our vision. We have developed an Annual Operating Plan (AOP), a new planning document that maps to the fiscal year and facilitates budget planning within LLAMA. The new AOP includes a timeline that details how we will develop, review, update, and monitor the fiscal year projects and initiatives in the AOP – all in an effort to help us make our vision a reality.

With our plan tied to our fiscal year, development of specific projects and initiatives within sections and committees will require current AND incoming section and committee chairs and current AND incoming division officers to work collaboratively to develop the specific tactics (actionable tasks), coordinate responsibility for specific projects and initiatives, and ensure communication within LLAMA so that we can monitor progress. Our hope is the AOP will also foster collaboration within LLAMA while also allowing us to work more collaboratively with partners within ALA and external to ALA. The LLAMA Executive Committee is developing more robust orientation programs for incoming officers and committee chairs and members to further enhance these planning efforts.

This is our first year of the new strategic plan, and the AOP is a brand new tool. We are very much aware this process is a significant change and is likely to be a bit chaotic and messy while we work out the details in this first cycle. The conversation on how to execute the plan will continue for some time, I am certain. At the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, the LLAMA Board discussed the new Annual Operating Plan – about how we make this a living planning document that guides the work of the division, sections, and committees and facilitates communication with members. We will need to be mindful, deliberate, and reflective in order to learn what works best and what does not work at all. I hope you will be a part of that conversation and help to make the AOP a tool that helps us translate our vision into a reality that is meaningful for our members.

Our library organizations and professional associations have strategic plans, and much effort goes into achieving organizational and association goals. Like organizations and associations, individuals have their own goals and a version of a strategic plan. It might not be as formal or even written for that matter, but a career plan is, for all practical purposes, an individual's plan for turning their vision into reality. In my work as a human resources professional in academic libraries, I work with library staff at all levels – discussing what they need to get or do to obtain a certain job or to prepare for promotion OR exploring a completely different career path OR preparing for a management role OR making a transition successfully. Helping individuals articulate a career aspiration or goal and develop strategies to make that a reality is one of the best parts of my job. This work has sparked my initial and continuing interest in career planning and development.

Last May, I decided that one of my presidential initiatives would be to offer a LLAMA Career Institute at the 2013 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle. Talks with early-career and mid-career libraries and ALA Emerging Leaders and ALA Spectrum Scholars over the past two years led to this idea. It became clear to me from numerous conversations that these talented and dedicated library professionals (and possibly more) are hungry for career planning and development information. Most, I learned, have attended multiple resume writing and job hunting workshops and learned much from these. Yet they have questions about how to explore various career paths, how to set and attain career goals, and how to prepare themselves for the next job or for a management role. These conversations floated around in my head as I was preparing to begin my year as LLAMA President and the beginnings of an idea for a potential program began to take shape.

In May, I was in Seattle for the Medical Library Association Annual Conference as part of group that planned a continuing education symposium on career planning and development. One of the speakers was Elizabeth Atcheson, a Seattle-based career coach who has worked with library professionals. After hearing Elizabeth's presentation, my idea blossomed and the possibility of tapping Elizabeth as a workshop presenter while ALA Midwinter was in Seattle quickly took shape. To my delight, the vision became a reality. The LLAMA Career Institute – *Planning Your Next Career Move: Developing a Game Plan* – was offered on Friday afternoon in Seattle with Elizabeth as the featured presenter. We attracted library and information science school students, early-career librarians, mid-career librarians planning a move into management, and

seasoned professionals considering the next career move or wanting to explore option. As one of the 50 registered participants, I learned more about career planning and development for both myself at this stage in my career and to inform my professional practice as a human resources director who works with all levels of library staff. Planning your next career move in a deliberative manner as an individual is similar to what we are doing in LLAMA. Developing your game plan is like LLAMA developing its AOP. There are perhaps more moving parts in LLAMA but the concept is the same.

My hope for you – and for LLAMA – is that we are successful in turning vision into reality while we learn during the journey.

Pat Hawthorne (phawthorne@emory.edu) is Interim Chief Administrative Officer for the Robert W. Woodruff Library at Emory University.

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