

## LLAMA President's Message

John Spears



At the conclusion of the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, incoming ALA President Sari Feldman announced the theme of a new campaign, *Libraries Transform*. Built around the idea that libraries are capable of transforming the communities they serve, this campaign reinforced the work that libraries were already accomplishing and embraced the changing nature of their relationship with their users. We have all witnessed these changes, and we have witnessed many other changes that have had an effect on our profession - changes in our communities, changes in our workforce, changes in the tools at our disposal, and changes in the ways that we interact with each other. Regardless of the role we may have played in our own institutions, we have recognized that successful leadership, from any position, demands a recognition that transformation is a necessity and that adaptable and flexible organizations are those most likely to succeed. LLAMA now stands poised to undergo a transformation of its own.

Shortly after the Annual Conference, LLAMA President Jeff Steely appointed a Reorganization Task Force, led by Maureen Sullivan, to explore how that transformation could occur. Since its inception, LLAMA has provided countless librarians with opportunities to develop their leadership and management skills, but to truly build upon those successes and take the preeminent position amongst ALA divisions for leadership training, the lessons that we have learned within our own organizations regarding the importance of flexibility and adaptability must now be applied to our division. With declining membership, fewer volunteers for leadership positions, a lack of engagement with younger members, confusion as to our organizational

structure, and a lack of a cohesive identity outside of our existing sections, the need for transformation has become even more apparent. As the division of ALA geared towards leadership and management, we have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership within ALA and set an example for how a division can adapt and evolve to better meet the needs of its membership. Several guiding principles were established by the Task Force, and they have governed its work:

1. We will build upon LLAMA's strengths
2. We will focus on professional development in new, more relevant and meaningful ways
3. We will enable open, flexible, and easy member engagement
4. We will simplify and streamline process
5. We will ensure a governance and coordinating structure that enables members and staff to be effective, engaging in meaningful and productive work
6. We will empower member engagement
7. We will adopt a new mindset
8. We will optimize use of LLAMA staff time
9. We will experiment and try new approaches; we will learn from our experiences and be intentional about assessment
10. We hope to be a model of innovation within ALA

The work of that Task Force has led to proposed changes to our division that will allow LLAMA to build upon its past successes, learn from recent projects and endeavors, and move confidently into the future. Over the course of the next several months, LLAMA leadership will be engaging members in discussions of these changes and, ultimately, presenting these changes to you for approval. It is an exciting time to be a part of LLAMA, and I look forward to working with each of you to ensure the long term success of our division.

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