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2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting

SIX MONTH REPORT TO COUNCIL
January 2015

ALA Washington Office Activities

Presidential Contender Sen. Jim Webb, FCC Leaders Address ALA Annual Conference

During the "Washington Office Update" program at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference, former Virginia Senator Jim Webb discussed the upcoming national election season and the ways that the elections will affect libraries and library funding. Called a "potential presidential candidate" by *The Washington Post*, prior to creating his Presidential Exploratory Committee, Sen. Webb has been a combat Marine, a counsel in Congress, an Assistant Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy, an Emmy-award winning journalist, an accomplished filmmaker and an author of ten books.

Just prior to Sen. Webb's address, the Washington Office secured a video from Tom Wheeler, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). In the video, the Chairman speaks about the changing nature of libraries today, emphasizing the importance of providing access to digital resources, technology, and free public Wi-Fi. Finally, Gigi Sohn, special counsel for External Affairs to Chairman Wheeler, met with PLA leadership, representatives from COSLA, ARSL, the OITP Advisory Committee, and the ALA E-rate task force to discuss E-rate details and the nature of library services in today's and tomorrow's libraries. In addition to these meetings, Gigi Sohn took a field trip to the main library of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, where she saw a model of what libraries can offer their communities.

Net Neutrality Activities

In June, Vermont State Librarian Martha Reid voiced the concerns of our nation'0.002 mies
universities, and libraries nationwide, released a set of net r
Federal Communications Commission's decision to protect
principles describe how network neutrality protections are
speech, educational achievement, and economic growth. In
for Democracy & Technology (CDT) urged the FCC in a le
neutrality rules essential to preserving freedom of speech, e
economic growth online. In the letter to the FCC, the organ

Title II for reclassification or Section 706 of the Communications Act, for a standard of Internet reasonableness to preserve the open nature of the Internet.

In mid-September, ALA and the Center for Democracy & Technology urged the FCC in a letter to adopt strong, enforceable net neutrality rules essential to preserving freedom of speech, educational achievement and economic growth online. In October, John Windhausen, telecommunications counsel to ALA, represented libraries and higher education institutions as a panelist for an Open Internet roundtable discussion hosted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Later, in November, President Barack Obama re-affirmed his commitment to network neutrality principles and to the strongest rules to protect the open internet. The American Library Association welcomed his statement and outline of principles that echo those of public comments filed by the ALA and a coalition of library and higher education organizations this year.

Media Interest in Washington

In August, ALA President Courtney Young appeared on Comcast Newsmakers, a national interview program that airs on the Headline News (HLN) network. Highlighting new data from the 2014 Digital Inclusion Survey, Young discussed the plethora of digital learning opportunities available in libraries and detailed the ways that 21st century libraries have transformed into high-tech classrooms for young students and adult learners nationwide. In October, The Washington Post highlighted the library community's efforts to protect the public from government intrusion or censorship in the feature article "Librarians won't stay quiet about government surveillance."

ALA Leaders Present at West Virginia Library Association Conference

In October, Emily Sheketoff, executive director of the American Library Association (ALA) Washington Office and Carrie Russell, program director of the ALA Program for Public Access to Information, presented at the West Virginia Library Association Conference. Russell led a copyright workshop at the conference. Sheketoff was the keynote speaker discussing activities in Washington and detailing how West Virginians could impact legislative actions. Sheketoff also presented a session on Advocacy.

Advocacy and Social Media Update

We are happy to report that the ALA Washington Office Tumblr page has gained 200+ followers

OFFICE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY (OITP)

ALA Launches Educational 3D Printing Policy Campaign

In September, ALA announced the launch of “Progress in the Making,” a new educational campaign that will explore the public policy opportunities and challenges of 3D printer adoption by libraries. The association released “Progress in the Making: An Introduction to 3D Printing

Nearly 100 Percent of Libraries Offer Tech Training and Workforce Programs, Study Finds

According to a new study, released in July 2014, from the ALA, nearly 100 percent of America's public libraries offer workforce development training programs, online job resources, and technology skills training. Overall, libraries report technology improvements—including nearly ubiquitous public Wi-Fi, growing mobile resources and a leap in e-book access—but the ALA's 2014 Digital Inclusion Survey also documents digital differences among states and an urban/rural divide. The Digital Inclusion Survey is managed by the ALA Office of Research and Statistics; OITP is a partner of the research project.

Over-Filtering in Schools and Libraries Harms Education, New ALA Report Finds

Schools and libraries nationwide are routinely filtering internet content far more than what the Children's Internet Protection Act requires, according to "Fencing Out Knowledge: Impacts of the Children's Internet Protection Act 10 Years Later," a report released by the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) and the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) in June. "Fencing Out Knowledge" is based on a year-long study that included a two-day symposium during the summer of 2013 and other research. Read the report.

ALA Opposes E-Book Accessibility Waiver Petition

In October, ALA and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) renewed their opposition to a petition filed by the Coalition of E-book Manufacturers seeking a waiver from complying with disability legislation and regulation, specifically Sections 716 and 717 of the Communications Act as Enacted by the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010. Amazon, Kobo and Sony are the members of the coalition, and they argue that they do not

Margaret Kavaras Appointed as OITP Research Associate

In August, ALA announced the appointment of Margaret Kavaras as a Research Associate for the organization's Office for Information Technology Policy. As part of the OITP Fellows Program, Kavaras may work on diverse issues in information technology policy within the OITP portfolio. Kavaras previously worked for the technology policy unit as a Google Policy Fellow during the summer of 2014. Her appointment as a Research Associate will extend from September 1, 2014, through August 31, 2015.

Adobe Responds to ALA on Egregious Data Breach

ALA decried the confirmed reader data breaches by Adobe and called for immediate corrective action to encrypt and protect reader information. The plain text transmission of reader data over the internet that was first reported October 7, 2014, presumably stretches back as far as the release of Adobe Digital Editions (ADE) 4.0 in early September. The ADE e-book reader application is used by thousands of libraries and many tens of thousands of e-book readers around the globe.

Held Policy Workshop in Conjunction with COSLA Annual Meeting

To advance the work of the Policy Revolution! initiative, OITP held a workshop in October that was co-located with the COSLA Annual Meeting in Wyoming. This broad-ranging discussion provided valuable input into the policy agenda development process. Workshop participants featured leadership of COSLA, IMLS, and library leaders from the mountain states.

ALA Urges Department of Education to Consider Libraries as Early Learning Partners

ALA urged the Department of Education in a letter to include public libraries as early learning partners in the Proposed Requirements for School Improvement Grants in October. The Association specifically asks that the Department of Education include public libraries as eligible entities and allowable partners under the new intervention model that focuses on improving early learning educational outcomes.

ALA Washington Office Copyright Event "Too Good To Be True"

On November 18th, the American Library Association (ALA) height E

Archivist to make available to the public a record of that former president. The bill also establishes processes for managing the disclosure of records upon the assertion of privilege by a former president, and grants to the incumbent president the power to decide whether or not to