

ALA Advocacy Institute Midwinter 1/14/05, Boston

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This was the first institute of its kind and intended to build advocacy skills and develop new strategies for raising the awareness of libraries' societal value. ALA will host another advocacy institute at ALA Annual 2005.

The entire advocacy workbook from this institute is available on ALA's website at:
http://www.ala.org/ala/issues/MW05_AI_workshop_guide.pdf

ALA's advocacy office suggests creating a team of at least three individuals who work on the steps presented in the workbook.

Advocacy Institute Workbook Contents:

*Setting Your Goals, *Strategies for Developing Your Message, *Team Building,
*Strategies for Getting the Message Out, *Putting It All Together

Other ALA advocacy tools:

Best Practice Web Site <http://www.ala.org/bestpractices>

Real-life case histories of how various libraries handled issues and challenges in their communities, by topic.

Online Key Messages <http://www.ala.org/keymessages>

Key talking points on issues like the Patriot Act, internet filtering and more.

Online Advocacy Action Kit <http://www.ala.org/advocacyactionkit>

Existing ALA advocacy materials.

Library Funding <http://www.ala.org/libraryfunding>

The latest news in library funding

Advocacy Institute Outline

Welcome

2004-05 ALA President Carol Brey-Casiano. Her presidential platform is "Creating an Advocacy Epidemic."

Keynote Address

Kerry Healey, Lt. Governor of Massachusetts

Strategies for Developing Your Message

This was a break-out session in which we brainstormed with attendees sitting at our table about ways to decide on your message, the important first step deciding what is the top priority? We used various parts of the workbook, which is online (see link at the top of this page).

Advocacy and ALA

Keith Michael Fiels, ALA Executive Director, provided various ways that ALA can help.

Lunch

I met two librarians from Nova Southeastern University in Florida. This library is interesting because (from their website) “the Alvin Sherman Library is a unique joint-use facility serving the residents of Broward County as well as NSU students, faculty, and staff members. Thanks to an agreement between the Broward County Board of County Commissioners and NSU, the Alvin Sherman Library offers traditional public library services as well as the full academic resources of one of the nation's major independent universities. This library was opened to the public on December 8, 2001.”

Easy Questions, Tough Answers

Sally Reed, Executive Director of Friends of Libraries USA

Some newer Advocacy book titles from Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA):

[Making Our Voices Heard: Citizens Speak Out for Libraries](#)

[101+ Great Ideas for Libraries and Friends: Marketing, Fundraising, Friends Development and More!](#)

[Getting Grants in Your Community](#)

Team Building: How to Create Your Army of Advocates

Trustees: What They Need to be Effective

Patricia Wickham, Vice President, El Paso Public Library Board

www.elpasolibrary.org

Libraries are the pivotal tool for eliminating illiteracy, provide free access to information
Understand the Organization’s strategic plans, what is the 5 year timeline
Use the specific strengths of the trustees—use the expertise to implement successful strategy.

Have a detailed orientation (roles & responsibilities, goals and objectives, does everyone understand the mission (because they were a part of defining it?)

Thoroughly understand the budget process—available funds, development program

Know the needs of the library (the supplier)

Know the needs of you constituents (the customers)

Be fearless! Contact City Hall, state and federal government agencies.

Another speaker talked about how she became friendly with a painter in her library and he turned out to be the relative of an influential legislator, who in turn developed into an important library supporter. It is important to network, and the people who can help you may surprise you. Talk to everyone.

MLA Success Stories

Molly Fogarty, Asst. Director for Springfield Mass Public Library

Massachusetts Friends of the Library shared some of their ideas.

<http://www.masslib.org>

MLA Legislative Website <http://capwiz.com/masslib>

Two Legislative Events at the State Capitol: MLA sponsors 2 events at the State Capitol every year.

Regional Legislative Breakfasts: Some breakfasts are informal, some more formal, but the legislators get out to the various regions. Some are funded by local libraries with support from friends groups.

Library Advocacy Award: MLA awards a non-librarian for advocacy efforts. In the past legislators, a library friend, the Gates Foundation were all recipients.

Letters about Libraries: MLA's legislative and PR committees teamed up to promote a letter-writing campaign by librarians to legislators.

Survivor Web Tool: By the MLA legislative committee, to be used by librarians and patrons. See <http://www.masslib.org/value/survivor.html>

Project Alert: MLA Friends have a listserv for library advocates with messages focused on library advocacy issues. The messages go to statewide trustees, friends and library workers.

ALA/ALTA

Gail Dysleski, co-chair Advocacy Institute and ALTA Advocacy Chair

<http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=alta>

There is an advocacy registry available for a \$25.00 per year subscription.

See <http://www.ala.org/ala/alta/altapubssubs/AdvRegHome/AdvRegHomepage.htm>

Lobbying 101: Politicians are People, too.

Glenn Miller, Pennsylvania Library Association

www.palibraries.org They cooperate with PLA and PSL

Four Factors that Drive the Political Process

Merits of the Issue: What are the pros and cons?

Political implications of a vote or decision: How does it affect my standing in the community?

Personal relationships: Do I know this person asking for support?

Money, Party Politics and Elections: Does this decision have any financial implications?

Does this decision have any political implications? People don't take risks in an election year.

Dealing with Politicians

Be nice

Get to Know Them: it's easier to listen to friends than strangers.

Show and Tell: no substitute for first hand experience

Keep it Simple: the longer the message, the shorter the attention span.

Surprise Them: reach out to politicians when you want nothing in return.

Mouth and ears: communication is a two-way street.

The Smartest Card Campaign

The PLA/ALA campaign launched in Sept. 2004.

See <http://www.pla.org/smartestcard.htm> for the toolkit and other information.

Campaign for America's Libraries

<http://www.ala.org/@yourlibrary>

The campaign seeks to convey the following:

Libraries are changing and dynamic places

Libraries are places of opportunity

Libraries bring you the world

Various campaign messages for college and research libraries, school library media programs, and public libraries.