

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Communications and Marketing Office Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

No action requested

CONTACT PERSON:

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DATE: October 9, 2019

BACKGROUND:

Report of activities of ALA's Communications and Marketing Office

ATTACHMENTS:

CMO Report

Communications and Marketing Office Report

Public Awareness Activities

Library Card Sign-up Month

Disney and Pixar's "Toy Story 4" characters Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Bo Peep and friends served as Honorary Chairs for Library Card Sign-up Month 2019 and proved to be quite popular. Posts from ALA social media accounts garnered 1.5 million impressions and almost 50,000 engagements, an increase of 61% and 107% respectively over 2018.

The #GetLibraryCarded social media promotion was extremely successful in 2019 (the hashtag was used more than 2,700 times on Twitter), thanks in great part to a collaboration with the Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table. GNCRT enlisted 36 comic creators to share selfies with their library cards, which were posted to the ALA Twitter account and GNCRT Instagram account daily during Library Card Sign-up Month. Many notable personalities from the comics industry participated, including Kelly Sue DeConnick, Mariko Tamaki, Cristina "Steenz" Stewart, Chip Zdarsky, Jimmy Palmiotti, and Dav Pilkey.

Libraries Transform Book Pick

In early October, CMO launched the [Libraries Transform Book Pick](#), a new digital reading program that connects readers nationwide by offering free simultaneous access to the same ebook through local public libraries. The first ebook selection is "After the Flood" by Cassandra Montag and it is available for download at U.S. public libraries Oct. 7-21, 2019, without any waitlists or holds. To help libraries promote the program and encourage ebook checkouts, CMO developed a suite of marketing tools, including a template flyer, digital graphics and a sample press release. The Libraries Transform Book Pick program was developed in collaboration with *Booklist* and OverDrive.

Libraries Transform

Libraries Transform, ALA's public awareness initiative, continues to provide libraries with free communications and marketing tools and guidance. Thus far, more than 15,000 libraries and library supporters have signed up to be part of Libraries Transform, with representation in all 50 states, more than 100 countries, and all six inhabited continents. Resources include dozens of downloadable Because statement graphics for print and digital media, templates and instructions for creating your own public awareness materials, and celebrity PSA videos for

sharing on social media. Recent Libraries Transform highlights include a collaboration with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to create new materials for showcasing how libraries promote health literacy in their communities.

In recent months, Stephanie Hlywak, CMO director, and Lindsey Simon, campaign specialist, have presented on Libraries Transform at the following conference: Maryland and Delaware State Library Association, Rural and Small Library Association, OCLC, Rakuten OverDrive's Digipolooza, New Mexico Library Association, and Kentucky Library Association.

Please note: Libraries Transform was authorized by the board to continue through August of 2020. CMO will be recommending continuing the program for another three years and will bring a proposal to the board at Midwinter.

I Love My Librarian

CMO is accepting nominations for the I Love My Library Award through Monday, October 21. Library users to nominate exceptional public, school, college, community college, or university librarians who have gone above and beyond to serve their communities. Later this fall, 10 winners will be selected by ALA leaders to receive \$5000 and a plaque in their honor. Awardees will be honored at an event at ALA's 2020 Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia on January 25. Thus far, CMO has received more than 1300 nominations for the award.

Support for ALA offices and divisions

eBooks for All

In partnership with the Public Policy and Advocacy Office and the Public Library Association, CMO contributed to the eBooks for All campaign by securing a petition partner, planning and promoting the kick off event (a press conference in Nashville to coincide with Digital Book World), developing a campaign microsite and toolkits, and creating email templates, social posts, and video content to encourage participation.

More specifically, CMO produced an event rundown, a Web press kit and bookmarks to support onsite efforts. We coordinated onsite banners and podium signs and American Libraries blog Post were also added to the mix. CMO created press lists and lead press release distribution efforts. Media relations support resulted in a coverage snapshot of more than 600 mentions/articles resulting in a circulation rate of more than 700 million and a publicity value of more than \$950 thousand. Coverage highlights include the Associated Press, Slate, Yahoo News, Associations Now, American Libraries, Publishers Weekly, Good eReader. CMO also created an eBooksForAll news feed that highlights all earned coverage.

Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE)

CMO Director Stephanie Hlywak met with the SCOE Committee on September 16 and 17 and led the group through a brainstorming exercise to create key messages and talking points for the recommendations. Stephanie also worked with the group to outline a campaign rollout of the report, which is now titled “Forward Together,” including the creation of a microsite, built by CMO.

Membership Office

On September 20, Membership Office director Melissa Walling invited Stephanie Hlywak to lead a brainstorm to develop an elevator speech that distilled the “value proposition” of ALA membership. Deliverables from this project include key messages and talking points for marketing materials.

Media Relations Activity Overview

The following is a snapshot of Communications and Marketing Office (CMO) publicity activities that took place from Sept. 1 - 30, 2019. During this timeframe more than 4,691 articles mentioning the American Library Association (ALA) were captured by ALA’s new monitoring service Cision, resulting in a circulation rate of more than 4.8 billion and a publicity value of more than \$7.5 million. (Please note that circulation rate is calculated using the number of articles/mentions multiplied by the monthly unique visitors for each media outlet’s website.)

Chicago Public Libraries Going Fine Free

On Monday, Sept. 30, 2019 the Chicago Public Library announced their new Fine Free Policy and invited the ALA to be part of their announcement. The majority of the event’s messaging mirrored the ALA’s Resolution on Monetary Library Fines as a Form of Social Inequity that encourages libraries to adopt policies that eliminate economic barriers. CMO worked with ALA Executive Director Mary Ghikas to coordinate participation efforts, developed talking points, a brief quote and secured coverage with American Libraries. CMO also coordinated an interview with Ghikas and the Chicago Tribune while her press release quote appeared in publications like Governing.

Banned Books Week, Sept. 22 – 28, 2019

This year’s Banned Books Week theme was *“Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark. Keep the Light On!”* Media relations support efforts included developing a web press kit, press release and various pitches to print, radio and TV media targets. ALA’s monitoring service captured more than 1,200 Banned Books Week articles/mentions.

CMO secured national and international coverage resulting in a circulation rate of more than 1.4 billion and a publicity value of more than \$2 million. Most of the coverage was positive and

featured ALA's Top Ten List of Challenged Books and quotes from ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom Interim Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone. Banned Books Week Coverage highlights include several in-studio interviews, such as on [Chicago Tonight](#) (WTTW), [Ben Joravsky Show](#) (Chicago *Sun-Times* Podcast), Illinois Public Radio's [First Light](#), [Out Chicago](#) (WCPT), and the [Joan Esposito Show](#) (WCPT). National Highlights include [CNN.com](#), [New York Times](#), [USA Today](#), [Washington Post](#), [Seattle Times](#), and [Book Riot](#) among hundreds of others.

Library Card Sign-up Month (September)

During this reporting period more than 870 Library Card Sign-up Month media mentions/articles were captured for Library Card Sign-up Month. Media outreach efforts resulted in a circulation rate of 580 million and a publicity value of more than \$1.7 million. Highlights include a successful radio PSA campaign featuring *American Libraries* Senior Editor Phil Morehart. CMO secured placement with Westwood One radio network broadcasting over more than 434 owned-and-operated stations in 89 US media markets (including eight of the Top 10) reaching more than 245 million listeners each week. Also radio stations in nine states and more than 20 cities downloaded PSAs from our [Library Card Sign-up Month audio PSAs](#) page.

CMO also worked with ALA's Graphic Novels & Comics Round Table (GNCRT) to secure coverage of **Comic Creators #GetLibraryCarded in Support of #LibraryCardSignUp Month**. For the month of September, the GNCRT will be featuring a new creator each day posing with their library card. Coverage highlights include [The Beat](#), [Graphic Policy](#), [SKTCHD](#), [Newsarama](#), [Comic Book Legal Defense Fund](#), [Multiversity Comics](#), and [American Libraries](#). CMO also secured an interview for GNCRT Chair Anne Wright with [Sci-Fi Talk](#) podcast.