**EBD #12.5**

**2020-2021**

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**RE:** Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Update on equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts of the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS), ODLOS Advisory Committee, and other key stakeholders

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

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**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

No motion proposed – informational only

**DATE:** October 8, 2020

**BACKGROUND:**

The report details efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion within and beyond the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services.

# Initiatives

## EDI Assembly

At the 2020 Midwinter Meeting, the ALA Executive Board charged the ODLOS Advisory Committee with creating an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Assembly. The purpose of this EDI Assembly is to provide a forum for all groups within ALA and ALA-affiliated organizations working on initiatives related to equity, diversity, and inclusion to discuss their activities, identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination, and explore new initiatives related to the association’s strategic direction on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

All groups within ALA and ALA-affiliated organizations working on initiatives related to equity, diversity, and inclusion were invited to appoint representatives. Individuals interested in equity, diversity, and inclusion were also welcomed to volunteer for the Assembly. Members serve two-year terms, with flexibility as needed. The first meeting, held on August 4, brought [over 100 attendees](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/edi-assembly). The ODLOS Advisory chair, Elizabeth Brumfield, welcomed attendees and laid out the agenda, which included background on the ODLOS mission, community agreements for the space, an ice breaker in small groups, and breakout conversations to discuss content areas. Attendees took [shared meeting notes](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NKZi1a-lZEwfUh5NYs2hiIt_CeIScI1hfS9MdWdbt48/edit#heading=h.1ht8xl1xc501).

The EDI Assembly meets quarterly, with the next meetings to take place in November and February, and continues work and conversation in the Connect community space between meetings. A working group of five members of the ODLOS Advisory Committee and the ODLOS Interim Director leads planning for the Assembly.

## ACRL, ARL, ODLOS, PLA Cultural Competencies for Racial Equity Task Force

The [Building Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity Framework Task Force](http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2020/05/acrl-arl-odlos-and-pla-announce-joint-cultural-competencies-task-force) is a joint initiative of ALA (specifically, the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Public Library Association, and ODLOS) and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The task force is charged with creating a framework for cultural proficiencies in racial equity that can be used in public and academic libraries through: scanning the environment to identify literature and similar statements and frameworks related to racial equity; drafting the framework; seeking comment from stakeholders and the library community on the draft; and revising as needed. The Task Force as a whole has met six times virtually and has developed working groups to survey existing frameworks and training opportunities, build a glossary of terms, and draft a national survey.

### Diversity Research Grants

ODLOS sponsors the Diversity Research Grant program to address critical gaps in the knowledge of equity, diversity, and inclusion issues within library and information science. The grant consists of a one-time $2500 award to support a one-year original research project and complimentary registration for one conference in conjunction with a presentation of findings at ALA Annual Conference or the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Three awards are made annually. The 2020-21 funded projects are: “Exploring Library Advocacy Work by Library Workers of Color: A Qualitative Study Using Critical Race Theory” by Raymond Pun; “We're Still Here at Mid-Career: The Retention of Academic Librarians of Color and Our Lived Experiences” by Brittani Sterling, Brittany Paloma Fiedler, and James Cheng; and “EDI Open Data for the Public Good and for Social Change” by Rachel Woodbrook.

## Libraries Respond

Since 2016, ODLOS has maintained the [Libraries Respond](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/libraries-respond) page – a resource for addressing current social justice issues. In addition to the two resource pages we created earlier this year, [Black Lives Matter](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/librariesrespond/black-lives-matter) and [Combating Xenophobia and Fake News in light of COVID-19](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/libraries-respond-combating-xenophobia-and-fake-news-light-covid-19), ODLOS has added a third new page, [Libraries Respond: Protecting and Supporting Transgender Staff and Patrons](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/librariesrespond/transgender-staff-patrons). The page includes key definitions, a guide for “Creating the Trans Inclusive Library,” and additional resources for protecting and supporting staff and patrons.

## Spectrum Scholarship Program

The Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services awarded 2020 Spectrum Scholarships to [61 exceptional students](http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/07/ala-awards-spectrum-scholarships-2020) pursuing graduate degrees in library and information studies. Since 1997, the ALA has awarded more than 1,240 Spectrum Scholarships. In the 2020 application cycle, the Spectrum Scholarship Program received four times as many applications as there were available scholarships, and the majority of this year’s applicants were deemed highly fundable. A prestigious committee of 22 jurors selected this year’s Spectrum Scholars based on their commitment to community building, leadership potential and planned contributions to making social justice part of everybody's everyday work in LIS.

The application for the 2021-2022 Spectrum cohort opened September 1, 2020 through the [ALA Scholarship Clearinghouse](http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/scholarships) and will close March 1, 2021.

# Member Groups

## Interest Groups

In September, with the dissolution of the Association of Specialized, Government, and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA), ODLOS welcomed the following interest groups:

* Bridging Deaf Cultures
* Consumer Health Information Librarians
* Library Services for Dementia/Alzheimer’s
* Library Services for the Incarcerated and Detained
* Library Services to Persons with Print Disabilities
* Tribal Librarians
* Universal Access

Each of these groups has a purpose that closely aligns with the ODLOS mission, and the groups’ work expands the Office’s scope and emphasis on equity, diversity, inclusion, outreach and engagement. At the same time, the groups bring essential representation and advocacy – and the ODLOS team looks forward to opportunities to support and leverage that.

Shuntai Sykes, Membership and Programs Specialist, serves as the primary staff liaison for the interest groups. Shuntai formerly worked with ASGCLA and the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) and now will split her time between RUSA and ODLOS.

## SRIDP and Welcoming Week

The Services to Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons (SRIDP) Sub-Committee of the ODLOS Advisory Committee created a [toolkit](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/Welcoming%20Week%20Toolkit.pdf) to help libraries engage patrons in celebrating Welcoming Week. [Welcoming Week](https://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week) is an annual series of events during one week in September when neighbors, newcomers, and long-term residents come together in a spirit of unity. This year Welcoming Week took place from September 12 - 20.

## Committee Resources Page

ODLOS has created a new [committee resources page](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/odlos-committee-information) to support and help onboard the chairs and members of our committees. The page includes governance resources, ODLOS resources, committee tools, and an embedded AirTable calendar of events and deadlines.

# Continuing Education

The Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services facilitates a portfolio of equity, diversity, and inclusion trainings for library systems and organizations. While we have had to adapt what are normally in-person trainings to a virtual platform, we continue to see high demand, particularly for series of trainings. The schedule for this fall thus far includes the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives, the State Library of North Carolina, and San Mateo County Libraries.

ODLOS also continues to sponsor member-led webinars on a variety of topics in equity, diversity, inclusion, literacy and outreach. “From Refugee to Librarian: In Our Own Words,” held in conjunction with [World Refugee Day](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/world-refugee-day) on June 20, gave a voice to refugees who had become librarians or library educators. Presenters shared their journey from persecution to resettlement to a professional career, giving attendees a glimpse into the presenters’ experiences of struggle, resilience, hope, and belonging. The webinar was jointly sponsored by the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs, ODLOS, SRIDP, the International Relations Office, and the International Relations Round Table.

The Committee on Literacy hosted two recent webinars. “Food Literacy: Providing Access and Knowledge for Your Community,” held on July 22, highlighted library professionals’ experience bringing food literacy to their communities—including addressing food insecurity, using food to teach other literacies, and establishing partnerships with local food banks. “Libraries at the Intersection of Adult Education, Family Literacy, and Digital Equity Webinar,” presented on September 23 in conjunction with Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, explored the library’s place and role at the intersection of adult education, family literacy, and digital equity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussion highlighted how these connections impact communities of color and other underserved groups. This webinar was co-sponsored by the Committee on Literacy, AILA, APALA, BCALA, CALA, and REFORMA.

The recordings of these member-led webinars are available on the [ODLOS archive page](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/odlos-webinar-archives).

Submitted by Kristin Lahurd, Interim Director,

ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services