

Greetings to all. As your newest GODORT chair, I come into this position feeling like a student entering their new school year. As an elementary or secondary student, it was the excitement of new shoes, new clothes, new hairdo, new backpack, new lunchbox, seeing old friends again, and wondering how to make new friends, sometimes heading to a new school depending on the movement of grades. Then, off to a higher education institution, perhaps the first long stretch away from your childhood home and living on a campus or living in an apartment with new roommates, or commuting with a car or public transportation every day, finding the right building where your class is located, new independence, and for returning students seeing classmates again. It was that sense of new and familiar, exciting and terrifying, thrilling and intimidating, all rolled up together. Leaving the secure and comfortable and venturing into the unknown and unfamiliar for the chance to learn, develop, and grow in experiences, knowledge, and networking with colleagues. An old song that I learned in Girl Scouts long ago crept into memory: “Make new friends, but keep the old . . .”

One reason for this feeling is that I have moved from familiar to new. On a local level, I have chaired several library position search committees, collaborative educational committees on my campus, our campus annual Constitution Day/National Voter Registration Day events, and a state-based Maryland Interlibrary Loan (MAILL) organization. Then, I started to branch cautiously out of familiar by first attending many GODORT meetings as a “lurker” in all the open virtual committee meetings to find out more about them, and attend the GODORT meeting when Fall FDLP Conference was in-person and also the GODORT Social Hour at an ALA Annual. Then I leaped a little more by chairing the GODORT Cataloging Committee through several terms. Now is the new, chairing GODORT as an entity in a national organization and helping to move it forward to advocate learning in all forms and levels of government information.

Another reason for this feeling is that fall brings the start of a new academic year for many of us, no matter what type of library we work in. There are of course the varying sizes of academic libraries as we see our campuses start to come alive again with more bustling activity as the bulk of students return. But public, law, and special libraries also see the start of new academic years of public-school students and specialized researchers starting new book reports, reviews, and

research and dissertation projects. Fall often starts a new year of events, programs, performances, and celebrations, many of them tied to government agencies, information, and historical events. GODORT is a gathering of so many talented and devoted government information specialists who have created a wealth of digital tools that are designed to share resources on many topics with not only educators and librarians but also with all those students and researchers who crave it. Many of these research tools are focused on events happening in the fall. We are headed into a presidential election, and leading into that we have Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day happening on the same day this year. I’m sure many of us have historical events happening more locally to our institutions that involve not only federal documents but also important state documents. In Maryland, where I work, September 12 marks the 210th Anniversary of Defenders Day, a state holiday that commemorates the successful defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812. It’s also when Francis Scott Key wrote the poem that became the U.S. National Anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner,” in 1931. Where I reside in Pennsylvania, I am always drawn to observe the federal document of the Gettysburg Address on its annual anniversary occurrence of Dedication Day on November 19 at Gettysburg National Cemetery. I have been approached by several GODORT members to start thinking about the United States’ 250th birthday in July 2026, and there is already planning and preparing of resources among some committee members. There is that sense of newness, excitement, and thrilling adventure happening that we need to continue to cultivate.

Mixed in with this may be some unknown factors as we see the transition in government information from a print base to a digital base and how that will affect the workflows at our institutions and access for our patrons. I am a member of the Northeast National Collection Service Area Steering Committee, and the steering committees of those four geographic regions are working to ensure collaboration and sharing of resources among Federal depository libraries to guarantee the permanent public access to Federal Government information. The Government Publishing Office has released updates regarding the Print Distribution List and allocations of print titles with its recent report to the Federal Depository Library Program community “Implementing a New Print Distribution Framework.” The NCSA Steering committees are tasked with developing collection management plans to ensure access and

preservation of the National Collection of U.S. Government Publications, and to develop a plan of processes in the event that any library can or wishes to no longer receive their allotted print copies, so that at least one tangible copy of government publications are kept in each of the four NCSA areas. Along with these updates, some libraries who have been utilizing the free Cataloging Record Distribution Program (CRDP) for their cataloging, a joint program with the Government Publishing Office and Marcive, received recent notice that Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) inside the GPO will cease CRDP services in March 2025.

New changes usually bring intimidation and uncertainty, and affected libraries will need to evaluate their workflows and processes while continuing to provide access to government

information. GODORT will need to be continually aware of all these new developments, collaborating with other organizations, associations, agencies, and information providers, so that we ensure our research toolboxes link to and provide accurate and relevant information for the libraries and public who need it in their daily lives. GODORT will continue to make new friends and collaborations in advocating for access in all forms while always keeping and safeguarding the old and familiar for historical preservation.

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