

# Association for Library Collections and Technical Services Annual Report, 2017–18

Mary Beth Thomson, ALCTS President, 2017–18

The Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), continues to provide opportunities for members to share their passion, interest, and expertise; to network; to learn and teach; to experiment with new technologies; to create new procedures, policies, and standards; and to research, publish, and create new scholarship. ALCTS members are the leaders and experts in acquisitions, cataloging and metadata, collection management, electronic and continuing resources, and preservation within the library community. This annual report includes a summary of the association's activities for the 2017–2018 year.

## Sustainability of the Independent Midsize Functional Divisions

In January 2018 the executive directors, presidents, and president-elects of ALCTS, the Library Information Technology Association (LITA), and the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA) produced the document “Working Document Exploration of Integration and Realignment Opportunities for ALCTS, LITA, and LLAMA.” As a group, we discussed the sustainability of the midsize functional divisions and whether there is a model for increased collaboration between our divisions or a possible structural realignment. Each division submitted the document to their respective boards for discussion and consideration during Midwinter 2018. The ALCTS Board also discussed revising the division's current strategic plan, the impact of lower Midwinter attendance on division activities and events, the impact of changes to ALA's program planning process, current and projected budgets, and the division's overall organizational effectiveness.

After the 2018 Midwinter Meeting, the ALCTS, LITA, and LLAMA groups continued to explore a possible structural realignment through a series of online meetings. To support ongoing discussions and to inform division members, the realignment group established a new ALA Connect site for posting documentation concerning the divisions and the realignment process. The three divisions established a joint Budget and Finances Working Group and a joint Communications Working Group. The Budget and Finances Working Group was charged with performing a preliminary budget analysis of the divisions by early June. The Communications Working Group was charged with developing a plan for communicating

with members concerning the potential realignment and creation of a new division. In late April, a survey was distributed to gather information from members and nonmembers concerning their current positions, work environments, educational needs, and professional aspirations.

ALCTS, LITA, and LLAMA will continue these discussions with their respective boards and are planning a joint board meeting during the 2018 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans.

## Finances

ALCTS ended FY17 ahead of budget projections and is on track to end FY18 with a positive net revenue. A second year of positive revenue will allow us to restore funds to our budget reserve. From FY12 through FY16, ALCTS experienced net losses requiring the use of budget reserve funds. ALCTS Executive Director Keri Cascio and the division's Budget and Finance Committee continuously review and analyze revenues and expenditures. This year the decision was made to begin using the OJS editorial manager, which will reduce the overall expenses of producing the *Library Resources and Technical Services* (LRTS) journal. The decision was also made to eliminate the in-person Midwinter symposium and the 2019 virtual symposium. This change will have a minimum impact on the division's revenue in FY19. A dues increase, strong continuing education registrations, a reduced rate of decrease in memberships, and controlled expenditures have all contributed to this year's positive net revenue.

ALCTS members have generously given \$32,910 to support the work of the association. Due to member gifts, we were able to provide registration grants to two library school students and four library support staff to attend the 2018 Midwinter Symposium. Member donations also made it possible for us to offer free attendance to the 2018 Midwinter Symposium and to the division's virtual preconference for all current Spectrum Scholars.

Corporate sponsorships continue to be important to ALCTS. Sponsorships remain a vital component in our ability to continue providing our members with quality professional development opportunities and the resources necessary to continue with other valuable events including Preservation Week.

## Continuing Education and Professional Development

As a result of the ongoing dedication and tireless efforts of its members and staff, ALCTS continued to provide

high-quality continuing education and professional development opportunities throughout the year. Highlights of this year's continuing education offerings include seven Fundamentals Web Courses—each one offered multiple times during the year—approximately twenty-nine webinars, and monthly e-Forums.

The Fundamentals Web Courses continue to provide those new to technical services and collections with an opportunity to learn the basics from library leaders and experts. Most of the web course offerings sold out weeks in advance. Beginning in March 2018, a six-part webinar series titled “From MARC to BIBFRAME: Linked Data on the Ground” was offered. The first webinar in the series, “Library of Congress BIBFRAME Pilot: Phase Two,” was offered free of charge and had 1,036 registrations. Other webinar offerings covered a variety of topics including PyMarc, patron privacy, shared print collections, and preservation. ALCTS e-Forums continue to be popular, with over 4,867 subscribers. Topics covered include cataloging and metadata education, adapting cataloging in a batch processing environment, journal collection development, and cataloging and ethics.

As we moved forward with planning a number of the association's professional development events, the theme of accessibility of information emerged. The ALCTS 2018 Midwinter Symposium, “Empowering Access and Ensuring Accessibility: Connecting People to Information and Collections,” was conceived and expertly organized under Helen Reed's leadership. Attendees heard from a variety of speakers and discussed how libraries and cultural institutions can strive to provide all populations with access to materials. This year's ALCTS Forum, “The Case for Making Video Content Accessible,” addressed how libraries can overcome challenges and ensure streaming media content delivery is in compliance with accessibility standards. Prior to the 2018 ALA Annual Conference, a two-day virtual preconference titled “The Road to Electronic Information Accessibility: How Do We Increase Student Success?” was held. Preconference attendees heard from speakers who focused on how libraries can prepare and help meet the accessibility needs of students and address accessibility compliance issues.

## President's Program in New Orleans

One of the highlights of the year was having Michael W. Twitty, author of *The Cooking Gene* (HarperCollins 2017), as our featured speaker at the President's Program in New Orleans. Twitty is the creator of Afroculinaria (<https://afroculinaria.com>), a food blog devoted to African American historic foodways and their legacies, and winner of this year's James Beard Foundation Media Award for writing and for book of the year. Twitty describes his talk “Dining

from a Haunted Plate” as focusing “on his search through the lens of extensive research at libraries and archives and plantations across the South and how he translated that journey into food through museum education and historic interpretation. In tracing his family roots through food from enslavement to emancipation, from West and Central Africa to the Old South, his work invites all Southerners of all backgrounds to a complicated, uncomfortable groaning table rich in heritage and tradition in which new conversations and connections emerge.”

## Publications

ALCTS continues to offer multiple avenues for the sharing of research through its publishing efforts. ALCTS publishes the highly regarded peer-reviewed journal *LRTS*, as well as monographs on collections and technical services topics. Four new publications were released this year, with several more in preparation to be published in 2018–2019.

- *Affordable Course Materials: Electronic Textbooks and Open Educational Resources*, edited by Chris Diaz (2017)
- *Coding with XML for Efficiencies in Cataloging and Metadata: Practical Applications of XSD, XSLT, and XQuery* by Timothy W. Cole, Myung-Ja (MJ) K. Han, and Christine Schwartz (2018)
- *Reengineering the Library: Issues in Electronic Resources Management*, edited by George Stachokas (2018)
- *Textbooks in Academic Libraries: Selection, Circulation, and Assessment*, edited by Chris Diaz (2017)

ALCTS members are actively engaged in developing informational documents. The Acquisitions Section’s Education Committee prepared the “Core Competencies for Acquisitions Professionals” document that was reviewed by the acquisitions librarian community and approved by the ALCTS Board in May 2018.

Chelcie Rowell was appointed as the new editor of *ALCTS News* (<http://alcts.ala.org/news/>), and by migrating *ALCTS News* to WordPress, she has updated the division’s online news publication with a fresh new design.

## Advocacy

ALCTS members are interested in having a strong voice on policies and standards that are important to their work. Members were active advocates during the year on topics such as library funding, copyright, net neutrality, the FDLP Modernization Act of 2018, Marrakesh

Treaty Implementation Act, and library funding issues. The ALCTS Advocacy and Policy Committee increased their involvement in keeping the membership up-to-date on legislative actions by posting updates to ALCTSCentral plus short articles in *ALCTS News*.

ALCTS and the Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS) continue to advocate for the preservation of materials held by libraries, cultural institutions, and individuals through Preservation Week, held April 22–28, 2018, and the Preservation in Action (PiA) initiative. Preservation Week’s theme this year was cooking and community archiving. Michael W. Twitty, as this year’s Honorary Chair, appeared in Preservation Week artwork and participated through various social media networks. The 2018 PiA initiative focused on a preservation project held at Preservation Hall in New Orleans.

## International Standards

ALCTS approved the Terms of Reference to create the North American RDA Committee (NARDAC) ([www.rda-rsc.org/northamerica](http://www.rda-rsc.org/northamerica)), which is the entity responsible for representing the North American region on the RDA Steering Committee (RSC) for RDA: Resource Description and Access.

ALA has delegated to ALCTS the responsibility of appointing the ALA Representatives to NARDAC. The first representatives to NARDAC are Dominique Bourassa, Yale University, and Kathy Glennan, University of Maryland, College Park. Bourassa is serving as NARDAC chair. The NARDAC representatives work closely with the Cataloging and Metadata Management Section (CaMMS) Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA) to create and respond to standards proposals to the RSC.

ALCTS Executive Director Keri Cascio represents ALA as a copyright Holder on the RDA Board.

## Recruitment and Mentoring

ALCTS launched its new mentoring program in 2017. The initial cohort of forty mentors and mentees completed their formal mentoring program in May 2018. The overwhelming success of the first year of the mentoring program was celebrated during the ALCTSFest event held at Midwinter in Denver. Erin Leach and Hayley Moreno spoke to those in attendance about their experiences participating in the program. The Leadership Development Committee’s Mentoring Program Subcommittee, chaired by Regina Gong, began forming the second cohort of mentors and mentees with an announcement for applicants in January 2018.

The CaMMS Recruitment and Mentoring Committee developed the *Career Profiles in Cataloging, Metadata, and*

*Related Fields* resource ([www.ala.org/alcts/mgrps/camms/careerprofiles](http://www.ala.org/alcts/mgrps/camms/careerprofiles)). This new resource includes fourteen career profiles of early career and experienced professionals.

The Lois Mai Chan Professional Development Grant's inaugural award went to Treshani Perera. The Grant ([www.ala.org/alcts/awards/grants/chan](http://www.ala.org/alcts/awards/grants/chan)) was established in 2017 by CaMMS and encourages professional development for librarians and paraprofessionals from traditionally under-represented groups.

### **Memorial Resolutions**

ALCTS, and the broader library community, lost three valued colleagues this year. Memorial resolutions were passed for Eugene (Gene) Dickerson, John Donald Byrum, and Mary Lynette Larsgaard.

### **Organizational Changes**

Julie Reese, ALCTS Continuing Education and Meetings Manager, accepted a new position in July 2017. We wished Julie much success but were sad to see her leave ALCTS. Over the years, Julie made significant contributions to

ALCTS and especially to the success of our continuing education efforts.

Fortunately Megan Dougherty joined ALCTS in August 2017 as our Program Officer for Continuing Education. Previously, Megan had been with ALCTS as a part-time continuing education assistant since 2015. Jazz Lee-Coley then joined ALCTS as the new part-time Continuing Education Assistant.

I am grateful for the support provided by everyone in the ALCTS Office and for their enduring patience when answering all our questions. I am especially appreciative of the thoughtful guidance, comments, and opinions of my Executive Committee colleagues, ALCTS Executive Director Keri Cascio, President-Elect Kristin Martin, Past-President Vicki Sipe, and Division Councilor Erin Stalberg, and of this year's board members who, when asked to consider a structural realignment and the future of ALCTS, were thorough and deliberate in their discussions and decisions. At the end of the day, all of the ALCTS programs, services, events, accomplishments, and successes are made possible due to the leadership, commitment, support, and participation of an amazing community of members. I am thankful to be a member of the ALCTS community and for the opportunity to give back to an association that has meant so much to me.