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Pioneering Change in the Centennial Year

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Pioneering Change in the Centennial Year

Greetings! I came back from the San Antonio meeting rejuvenated and with many ideas. It was a wonderful Meeting, full of stimulating programs, old friends and new ones, networking and social events, and it ended with the amazing line dancing after the Closing Banquet. But, have no fear, plans are well underway to celebrate our 100th anniversary in St. Louis in July 2006.

The Big Issues

As AALL president, I am part of a continuum. My thinking has greatly benefited from conversations with my fellow Executive Board members, I was inspired by the leadership of Victoria Trotta, and I feel blessed to work with such a talented group of individuals. My main goal for the year is to work with all of you to enhance the **visibility** of law librarians and the law library profession to **constituencies outside of the library**, that is, the people we serve

“Pioneering Change” Theme for St. Louis Centennial Meeting, July 8-12, 2006

“Pioneering” reflects the frontier spirit in St. Louis. “Change” is the operative word in our vocabulary as we take an active role in shaping the future and becoming pioneers for change. How do we pioneer change? We, law librarians, need to build relationships and raise our visibility to the practicing bar, judiciary, and law school deans.

Our *raison d'être* in the information society is clear. To ensure our future, we must be visionaries in reinventing our profession to meet the changes and developments on the horizon and beyond. We must actively communicate our value to significant decision-makers in the legal profession.

We hope that these two words will resonate with you, the members. We will also celebrate the vital role of the law librarian in this new century of information and have many events to celebrate a century of achievements and successes.



and the decision-makers in the **legal profession**: lawyers, judges, legislators, court administrators, law school deans, faculty, other legal educators, and media journalists.

The selection of the theme for the St. Louis centennial Meeting was a joint effort with the Annual Meeting Program Committee. We started out with the concept of “Extreme Makeover!” The theme we finally chose, “Pioneering Change,” represents a deep conviction on my part that our profession needs to reinvent itself to thrive in the information society. We are the experts in legal information, research, and technology in our own institutions, and we need to affirm it and communicate it effectively to our audience.

Early in August, in my first “From the Desk of Claire” e-mail messages, I asked you a few questions:

1. What perceptions do people have of law librarians and law libraries? (What do you hear?)
2. What perceptions do you wish for them to have?
3. What will it take for us to be seen in the ways we wish to be?

Thank you for your thoughtful responses to these questions. I promise that your voices will be heard, and I have shared your messages with our Executive Board for action.

New AALL 2005-2010 Strategic Directions: Leadership, Education, and Advocacy

At the San Antonio Meeting, the Executive Board ratified the new AALL Strategic Directions, and it was presented to the membership. The Strategic Directions will now be implemented during the next several years by the members, working individually and through the many Association entities.

What do these Directions mean? After considerable deliberation, environmental scanning, and consultation with members and outside stakeholders, the Executive Board has determined the three most important issues for AALL to move forward during the next five years.

Goal I: Leadership. AALL wants to ensure that law librarians will be recognized and valued as the foremost leaders and experts in legal information, research, and technology.

Goal II: Education. Law librarians will have the education and training they need

to meet and leverage the challenges of the changing information environment.

Goal III: Advocacy. Law librarians will influence the outcome of legal information, technology policy, and librarianship issues of concern to AALL members.

The new Strategic Directions consciously focus on the members and how the members can achieve professional and career success. The Executive Board's role is to allocate resources based on strategic priorities and facilitate concrete initiatives that will come from members. It is now up to the various entities to develop initiatives that will make the vision a reality and “make it so.”

Everyone's participation is encouraged at the individual level, as well as through the committees, SISs, chapters, and caucuses. The Executive Board will gather this fall for a retreat as a follow up. The board will look again at trends in legal education, the legal profession, and the legal information and technology industries that impact libraries and reflect on how our Association can deliver the most value and benefit to you, our members.

For more information, visit www.aallnet.org/strategic.

Special Committees

I have appointed the following special committees for 2005-2006 to jumpstart the new AALL Strategic Directions. These special committees will be result-oriented and will coordinate their work with already existing committees where appropriate.

Promoting Law Librarians to the Legal Community. This special committee, chaired by Gail Warren, will focus on ways law librarians can raise their visibility and communicate their value effectively to the practicing bar, judiciary, media, and law school deans, as well as other significant decision-makers in the legal profession. The committee will come up with measurable methods of success in reaching out to the legal community. The committee will work with the Publishing Initiatives Caucus (PIC) on writing for legal publications. Look for a *Members' Briefing* in the April 2006 *AALL Spectrum*.

Fostering Legal Research as a Subject Specialty. This special committee, chaired by Blair Kauffman, will focus on enhancing the value of law librarians as information experts in their institutions. It will address, in a proactive way, the lack of understanding of the value of librarians in the digital world and the myth that, with the Internet, there is no need for librarians or libraries. This issue brings together all law librarians,

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whether in law firms, academic, corporate, or government settings.

The committee will focus on (1) fostering the expertise of law librarians providing a core competency for their institutions and (2) promoting the teaching role of law librarians as faculty members in law schools or equivalent—instructor, trainer—in law firms, courts, and other law library settings. Look for a *Members' Briefing* in the July 2006 *AALL Spectrum*.

Permanent Public Access to Legal Information. This special committee, chaired by Judy Meadows, will examine whether AALL should take an active role in helping to develop an agenda of cooperative

actions to ensure long-term access to born digital legal information and the preservation of print legal materials. It will focus on whether AALL should strengthen its relationship with the Legal Information and Preservation Alliance, which is developing a national preservation plan for digital and print legal materials. Look for a *Members' Briefing* in the December 2005 *AALL Spectrum*.

Training the Next Generation of Law Librarians. This special committee, chaired by Michael Chiorazzi, will explore what needs to take place in terms of education, training, and mentoring to ensure the success of the next generation of law

librarians, with a special focus on law library directors and librarians with foreign and international law experience, as well as a workforce that reflects the diversity of our clientele. Look for further information later this year.

I am looking forward to working with each one of you on what promises to be a most exciting year. Together, with everyone's participation and creativity, we will move our Association forward and celebrate a century of accomplishments and successes at the St. Louis centennial Meeting, July 8-12, 2006.

Off to a great year! ■