

Gina Millsap and Barbara Stripling

Meet the candidates

Vote in the election this spring

The ACRL Board of Directors posed the following questions to the candidates (both are ACRL members) for ALA President, and *C&RL News* is pleased to publish their responses. Each candidate was given 1,200 words in which she could respond to six questions and contribute an optional opening statement; the responses are identified under each question.

Opening statement from Gina Millsap

ALA will be *the* champion and gathering place for 21st-century libraries and librarians—with the right leadership and a focus on value to its members. As ALA president, I would work to facilitate communication, participation, and organizational development to ensure that ALA is strategic and innovative. It must also model the way in the practice of leadership, use of technology, and timely responsiveness to the challenging economic, legal, and political environment we live and work in. I'd love the opportunity to help make that happen.

1. What do you see as the most important issues facing our profession today, particularly for academic and research librarians? With respect to these issues, what should ALA do to address them?

Millsap: The easy answers are—libraries and librarians are facing challenges and issues we've faced for years—money, demonstrating value, relevance and impact, making sure libraries are part of the conversation about copyright, digital rights management and our access to digital content, increasing diversity, and the fact that we compete with



Gina Millsap



Barbara Stripling

other choices people have to get information, stories, and other resources.

With the profession, I think our biggest challenge is us. Plans, vision, mission are all critical, but librarians must be willing to think, act, and lead strategically and differently than we have in the past. It's not enough to wait to be asked. We must demonstrate our expertise, insist on a place at any table where decisions about our constituencies, core missions, and values are being made. We must also use the plans and tools we've developed to show accountability and value. Leadership, with its accompanying skills and practices, are key in this environment. ALA can and should provide education and experience for its members as well as ensure that those key skills are part the accreditation process for library education.

Stripling: All libraries need to show value to their communities, especially in these tight

Gina Millsap is chief executive officer at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, e-mail: gmillsap@tscpl.org, and Barbara Stripling is assistant professor of practice at Syracuse University, e-mail: barbara@barbarastripling.org

© 2012 Gina Millsap and Barbara Stripling

economic times. Academic and research libraries may measure their impact by how well they advance the priorities of their institution. ALA must provide specific tools and guidance to enable members to measure and be accountable for achieving their targeted outcomes and contributing to the success of their institutions and users.

A second issue is the imperative for libraries to transform themselves to seize the opportunities presented by the digital environment. The academic and research library community faces challenging issues surrounding scholarly communication; supporting research and grants through resources and services; curation, digitization, and preservation of digital resources; and purchasing and availability of e-books. ALA has an important role in supporting local decision-making by negotiating with critical parties at the national level. As president, I will foster collaborative problem solving so that, for example, solutions on collection development and management of digital materials can be developed by ACRL and ALCTS together.

A third issue libraries are confronting is the need to increase impact on our communities. Academic and research libraries can be supported by ACRL's and ALA's professional development, modeling, and tools to increase their contributions to learning, research, faculty instruction, information literacy instruction, and user experiences.

2. What leadership skills you would bring to ALA to lead and move the association forward, particularly in light of the issues you mentioned?

Millsap: I've been in formal leadership in libraries for 25 years and a public library director for 16 years. I've held leadership positions in ALA and the communities I've lived in. I know how to bring groups of people together, focus on a vision, develop a process to get it done, and get results. I facilitated a reorganization process for the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA) that drew on the expertise of leaders and members, instituted new educational pro-

grams and services, and focused on creating value for members. Facilitation, inclusiveness, and strategic conversations combined with action are the keys. I know it works in my library, in my community, and it will work within ALA. I've found my colleagues in LLAMA, who represent all types of libraries, are eager to use their expertise, energy, and experience on behalf of the profession. I know how to facilitate a process that allows people to give and do their best.

Stripling: My leadership skills will help ACRL and ALA achieve their goals. I have broad experience in ALA with all types of libraries and library issues, which will enable me to make connections across the association that will strengthen our collective work. My collaborative leadership style empowers others to share their expertise and builds a productive team culture. I can lead a transformation process—that's exactly what I did as director of school libraries in New York City. I understand how to navigate large and complex systems to get things done. My background in education and outcomes-based measurement will enable me to lead the association-wide effort to document and communicate the value of libraries.

I bring well-honed communication and research skills to the presidency. Although I have been a faculty member at Syracuse University for only a short time, I have pursued scholarship, writing, and editing throughout my career. My doctoral research enabled me to understand the complexities of research and the need for strong academic library support. I have extensive experience in public speaking and will be a strong advocate for public support and funding of libraries.

3. ACRL has adopted a Plan for Excellence with goals that heighten the impact that librarians have upon the Value of Academic Libraries, Student Learning, and the Research and Scholarly Environment. In what ways would you, as ALA president, work with ACRL and its partners to advance or promote these goals?

Millsap: I'm impressed with the Plan for Excellence's focus, strategic approach, and to-the-point brevity. In addition to the work ACRL is doing to "articulate and promote the value of academic and research libraries," ALA should be focused on doing the same for all libraries. There shouldn't be a "Hey, look what libraries are doing these days!" story in the *Wall Street Journal* "discovering" that libraries contribute to student achievement, help people find jobs, facilitate literacy, or generally offer opportunities for people to transform their lives in big and small ways. It should be so well known and understood that it isn't news. ALA has to take a consistent, unrelenting approach on a national level to promoting all libraries as life-changing, valuable community assets. The Plan for Excellence also claims a convener role for ACRL on the discussion of key issues for higher education. ALA can use its considerable influence to assist in that effort.

Stripling: As ALA president, I will support ACRL's follow-up work on the value of academic libraries by promoting research and documentation in this area, fostering value-assessment conversations for all types of libraries, and connecting these conversations across the association. I will promote national, online dialogues about the value of academic libraries and foster strategic partnerships as a part of my national agenda of building public will for libraries of all types. I will lead the process of re-imagining ALA's face-to-face and virtual professional development to build flexible and dynamic support for librarians to implement new programs and services.

My career-long focus on K-12 student learning and information-literacy instruction will enable me, as ALA president, to foster connections among public, school, and academic libraries and engender a "lifelong learning through the library" focus for ALA. I intend to promote international connections to ACRL's information literacy standards and the role of academic libraries in international scholarship. Finally, I will support ACRL's efforts to help academic institutions move

to a more open system of scholarship by establishing special task forces as needed, connecting different sections of ALA working on this issue, and creating opportunities for developing, capturing, and disseminating best practices and innovative solutions.

4. As ALA president, you will be asked to address the media on a variety of issues and public policies related to libraries and to advance the association's legislative agenda. Provide an example of an active role you have played in advocating for or against a proposed local, state, or federal policy that impacts libraries.

Millsap: I have done both. I've spent the last 16 years working with elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels. I'm very proud of the fact that I was chair of the governmental affairs committee of the Iowa Library Association when direct state aid for public libraries in Iowa was enacted. At that time, Iowa was one of only seven states that had no state aid. It was a multiyear effort that required coordination of seven regions of the state for weekly appearances at the Capitol during legislative sessions.

I have significant experience in working with professional library lobbyists and have had the opportunity to work with legislators on the drafting of legislation. I have lobbied successfully in both Iowa and Kansas to persuade state legislators to eliminate language in bills that would require libraries to filter Internet access. I have also lobbied for funding for regional library systems.

I have attended ALA Legislative Day, working with my colleagues to educate members of Congress on the importance of library user confidentiality in the early years of the Patriot Act and to encourage them to support federal funding for public and school libraries. I have appeared before appropriation committees of the Kansas Legislature with the state librarian to advocate for funding that assists all types of libraries in resource sharing and providing databases to all Kansans. I also do advocacy presentations and training for librarians and library trustees.

Stripling: Stemming from my deep commitment to intellectual freedom, I have been actively opposed to required Internet filtering in libraries for a number of years. When I was on the ALA Executive Board, we made a major decision to file a lawsuit challenging the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). I have helped form ALA policy and created a public record in opposition to Internet filtering through ALA Council resolutions. As a member of the Intellectual Freedom Committee, I have revised and written Interpretations to the Library Bill of Rights on the rights of individuals to access digital information, all of which were passed by Council. Finally, I have translated this commitment to action at the local level by preparing an expert opinion and testifying in court for the ACLU in a suit against a school district that is employing a filtering system that blocks Internet sites with neutral/positive information about gay, lesbian, and transgender issues.

5. What experience have you had advancing diversity in the library profession? As ALA president, how will you move forward ongoing association efforts regarding the recruitment and retention of librarians from diverse backgrounds?

Millsap: As a library director, I have worked with human resources professionals to partner with organizations serving minority students and prospective employees. Activities include attending minority career fairs and participating in activities in the community that have a focus on celebrating and facilitating ethnic and racial diversity. We are proud of the fact that 10 percent of the employees in our paraprofessional classification (the largest group of employees) are members of a minority. My library has also been recognized by the Living the Dream, Inc., a local organization devoted to celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.. And even though this isn't specifically librarians, I have worked with mayors, city councils, and county commissions over the years to ensure they include minority candidates when making appointments to my libraries' governing boards.

ALA's ethnic caucuses are an important untapped resource for efforts on recruitment and retention of librarians of diverse backgrounds. Having had the opportunity to meet with some of them at the ALA Midwinter Meeting, I am excited about what they could bring to these efforts. I would ask them to work with me and each other to develop new strategies and programs for attracting people of diverse backgrounds to our profession.

Stripling: As a school library administrator in New York City, I actively advanced diversity in our profession by collaborating with three library schools to offer MLS-degree program scholarships to teachers from diverse backgrounds who wanted to become librarians. By recruiting from the local community, we attracted a pool of diverse applicants who were committed to the students and parents in that community. Recruitment, however, was only half of our ongoing efforts to strengthen the profession through diversity. Our office provided regular professional development and support to ensure the success of these librarians. In addition, even though I was directing a system of more than 1,200 librarians, I provided personal mentoring to several of these librarians to help them navigate their first years in the library. On the national level, during my term on the ALA Executive Board, I proposed and voted to increase substantially the Spectrum Scholarship endowment. I am committed to support this important scholarship program.

I will bring a broad vision of diversity to the ALA presidency to include age, geographical location, type of library, urban vs. rural, as well as ethnicity. I will address recruitment and retention of librarians from diverse backgrounds by supporting initiatives like Emerging Leaders, mentoring and internships, Spectrum, and leadership development. I will connect to NMRT and the Office of Diversity. I will support the National Conference of Librarians of Color and the programs and issues of the ethnic affiliates. Finally, I will make ALA more inclusive by creating opportunities for individuals to be-

come involved in the association and have an impact on ALA's initiatives.

6. Membership organizations, such as ALA and ACRL, need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does ALA need to do to keep the organization relevant to academic and research librarians, particularly those new to the profession?

Millsap: ALA and its divisions, like ACRL, will remain relevant if members perceive that there are incentives for belonging and participating in their professional association.

As LLAMA president, I worked with our leadership to determine what is important to members. Early in their careers, librarians and students are looking for mentors, ways to grow their professional networks, to practice skills they may not have the opportunity to in their current positions, and to make their mark in a competitive environment. Veteran librarians are eager to share what they know, to give back to the profession, and practice skills they may not have the opportunity to do otherwise.

ALA and its divisions must respond with programs and services that meet those needs.

I believe in putting your money where your mouth is. As ALA president, I would listen to members and facilitate the investment of resources into programs and services

they have told us they want and will find most valuable. My blueprint will be ALA's 2012 strategic plan.

Stripling: The best way for an organization to remain relevant to its members is to develop a culture that is flexible, dynamic, and responsive to the priorities of the members. ALA must provide new opportunities for members (and prospective members) to become involved in substantive work that is most important to them. That involvement with ALA should start in graduate school. Through technology, ALA can become nimble and transparent enough that groups can form quickly around common concerns. Then ALA must ensure that members' work informs and impacts the association. Members who feel they are contributing to the profession and to ALA as well as to their own development will retain their membership.

In more global terms, ALA must be more immediately responsive to the rapidly changing and very complex issues of our digital world. Task forces, white papers, active research, and ongoing professional development are strategies that should be employed to analyze and respond to national and international issues. Finally, ALA must be a strong public voice for libraries. Our members must see that ALA advocates for them and that ALA's advocacy empowers our communities to speak up for libraries. ♪

ACRL members running for ALA Council

The following ACRL members are either nominated or petition candidates for ALA councilor in the spring 2012 election. ACRL members are encouraged to vote for these candidates to increase ACRL's voice in ALA affairs.

Rosie L. Albritton, Director of Library Services, Prairie View A&M University

J. Douglas (Doug) Archer, Reference and Peace Studies Librarian, University of Notre Dame

Latrice Booker, Coordinator of Library Instruction, Indiana University Northwest,

Min Chou, Reference Librarian/Associate Professor, New Jersey City University

Cynthia D. Clark, Associate Dean of the Libraries, Adelphi University, Swirbul Library

Elizabeth J. Cox, Special Formats Cataloger, Southern Illinois University

Joseph R. (Bob) Diaz, Associate Librarian, University of Arizona Libraries,

Aaron W. Dobbs, Systems and Electronic Resources Librarian, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

M. Teresa Doherty, Head, Circulation and Information Services, Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries

Karen E. Downing, Foundation and Grants Librarian, University of Michigan

Valerie Jackson Feinman, Retired Librarian, Syracuse University

George J. Fowler, Associate University Librarian for Information Resources and Technology, Old Dominion University, Perry Library

Martin L. Garnar, Reference Services Librarian, Regis University

Mario M. Gonzalez, Executive Director, Passaic Public Library

Kevin Gunn, Coordinator—Religious Studies and Humanities, Catholic University of America, John K. Mullen Library

Amiya Hutson, Student, University of Pittsburgh, School of Information Sciences,

John M. Jackson, Library Supervisor, University of Southern California

ShuYong Jiang, Chinese and Korean Studies Librarian, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Alys Jordan, Distance and Instructional Services Librarian, Nova Southeastern University

Robin L. Kear, Reference/Instruction Librarian, University of Pittsburgh, Hillman Library

Lynda Kellam, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, Jackson Library

Kate Kosturski, Outreach Specialist, JSTOR

Jim Kuhn, Head of Collection Information Services, Folger Shakespeare Library,

Elisabeth Leonard, Associate Dean for Library Services, Western Carolina University

Chih-Feng P. Lin, Associate Professor, Department of Information and Communications, Shih Hsin University, Tapei, Taiwan

Olivia Madison, Dean of the Library, Iowa State University Library

Jason Martin, Associate Librarian, University of Central Florida Libraries

Courtney A. Mlinar, Academic Support Services/Reference Librarian, Nova Southeastern University Health Professions Division Library

Toni Negro, Librarian, Universities at Shady Grove

Mary S. Page, Associate Director for Collections and Technical Services, University of Central Florida

Suzu Szasz Palmer, Dean of the Greenwood Library, Longwood University

Dorothy (Dottie) Persson, Education/Psychology Liaison/Embedded Librarian, University of Iowa

Jeannette E. Pierce, Head of Reference, Loyola University Chicago Cudahy Memorial Library

Sue Polanka, Head of Reference and Instruction, Wright State University

Nathan B. Putnam, Head, Cataloging and Metadata Services, George Mason University

Alexandra P. Rivera, Student Enrichment and Community Outreach Librarian, University of Michigan Libraries

K.R. Roberto, Serials/Electronic Resources Librarian, University Of Denver, Penrose Library

Gail A. Schlachter, President, Reference Service Press, El Dorado Hills, California

Karen G. Schneider, Director for Library Services, Holy Names University

John C. Stachacz, Dean of Library Services, Wilkes University Farley Library

James K. Teliha, Associate University Librarian for Public Services, Idaho State University

Thomas Teper, AUL for Collections, University of Illinois

Min Tong, Reference/Instruction Librarian, University of Central Florida

Tracy-Lyn Van Dyne, Head of Young Adult Services, Connetquot Public Library, Bohemia, New York

Courtney L. Young, Head Librarian, Penn State University