Committee Name: Diversity Committee

Committee Charge: 2008-2009 Charge

TYPE: Process Committee

PURPOSE: The Committee serves to ensure the diversity of AALL membership.

CHARGE: The Committee shall be charged with:

- Identifying issues related to maximizing the diversity of AALL membership
- Exploiting the benefits and possibilities of a diverse and complex membership
- Recognizing and celebrating the richness of an active, diverse membership
- Advising the Board on mechanisms and programs that encourage a diverse and complex membership
- Encouraging active participation by the whole membership including identifying barriers and how to remove them
- Enriching the Association and the profession through extensive integration of multiple perspectives and experiences
- Determining the winner of the AALL Minority Leadership Development Award

TENURE: Membership on the Committee shall normally be for two (2) years, except that the Vice Chair and Chair will each serve three (3) years. The member selected as Vice Chair at the end of the first year will serve in that capacity in the second year, and become Chair in the third year.

SIZE: The Committee shall normally consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, five (5) members, and a non-voting Executive Board liaison.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS COMPLIANCE:

Goal II: Education
Goal III: Advocacy

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COMMITTEES: The Committee works with the Annual Meeting Program, Awards, Nominations, Recruitment to Law Librarianship, and Scholarships committees. The Committee also works with the Grants Committee to screen for duplication in the awarding of the AALL Minority Leadership Development Award.

Major Activities for 2008-2009:

1) Planning of Diversity Symposium – Upon discussion of the entire committee at the July meeting and thereafter, it was decided that the 2009 Diversity Symposium would be one where the various caucuses and groups that address diversity would be invited to an open discussion of diversity within AALL. Invitations were extended to the Asian American Law Librarians Caucus, the Black Caucus of the American Association of Law Libraries, the Standing Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues, the Gen X/Gen Y Caucus, the Latino Caucus and the Native Peoples Law Caucus to send a representative to speak at the Symposium about their Caucus/Committee and discuss the history, concerns, and goals for each group. As of this report, all six groups will be able to send a representative to the Symposium. A moderator will facilitate the discussion among the attendees and speakers. It is hoped that each attendee will learn more about the diversity that is within AALL and the ideas and goals of each Caucus/Committee. The Symposium will assist in fulfilling the Committee's charges to identify issues relating to diversity, and help recognize the richness of a diverse membership within AALL. While doing so, it will also help the groups identify mutual barriers to achieving diversity and assist in defining them for possible future recommendations to the AALL Board. Finally, the Symposium will recognize the complexity of diversity within AALL by initiating a forum in which the integration of multiple perspectives and experiences can be explored. All of these reasons help advance the AALL Strategic Directions of Advocacy and Education.

2) Review of Website (Prior to request from AALL) – The Diversity Committee's website underwent in-depth review to determine the continued relevancy of various pages on the website, and identify areas of possible development for the 2009-2010 year. The Committee has proposed the updating and revision of Diversity materials that are currently on the website, and the exploration of possible additions in the future.
AALL Committee Activities and Action Plan

Possible suggestions: Material from Symposium participants; Updated Diversity Bibliography; Updated information on diversity initiatives within law libraries.

Proposed Activities for 2009-2010:

1) Reassessment and reworking of Diversity Website and information. The Diversity Committee feels that the website could become a possible “portal” site for information on Diversity within the profession as well as a way in which librarians of diverse backgrounds can network within the organization. With the advent of social networking and electronic communication, it is felt that a stronger web presence could have a positive effect on interest in Diversity issues within the greater membership. In addition, the Diversity Committee will explore hosting links to each Caucus/Committee that participates in the 2009 Diversity Symposium, in order to assist with the facilitation of communication between the groups.

2) Building on the Diversity Symposium of 2008, the Committee hopes to continue outreach and create avenues of support between the various Caucuses and interest groups involved with Diversity within AALL. It is hoped that the Committee in 2009 – 2010 will work on recommendations with interested groups to create mechanisms and/or programs to assist with encouraging diversity and active participation by the entire membership within AALL.