American Association of Law Libraries
Membership Development and Retention Task Force

Report to the Executive Board
September, 1999

Background:

The Membership Development and Retention Task Force was appointed by AALL President Jim Heller in January 1999 when the AALL Strategic Planning Committee recognized the need for significant membership recruitment efforts.

Two existing committees, the Mentoring & Retention committee and the Recruitment committee, work with membership related issues. The primary activity of the Mentoring & Retention committee has been CONELL, the conference of newer law librarians, held in conjunction with the annual meeting. Other activities have been designed to assist newer AALL members and those anticipating job changes. The Recruitment committee is charged to pursue efforts to recruit individuals to the profession of law librarianship, but not to recruit them to join AALL.

The Task Force was charged to:

1. Make recommendations and suggest strategies for publicizing, promoting, and marketing AALL publications, services and programs to AALL members and to others, such as librarians in public, college, and university libraries.
2. Help identify the programs and services that members value most and which should therefore be maintained or strengthened.
3. Examine the roles and responsibilities of the Mentoring & Retention and Recruitment Committees.
4. Provide input to the Board and to the Executive Director on implementing the recommendations of the Helen Little “Membership” Report.

The Task Force met in Chicago May 5 and 6, 1999. The Meeting Summary, including recommendations, is attached to this report. The Task Force recommends that AALL:

- engage in ongoing membership recruitment and retention efforts
- foster networking among members as a valuable membership benefit
- conduct an evaluation of existing programs and services

The Meeting Summary contains some concrete suggestions on how to pursue these efforts.

Following the meeting, the Task Force drafted charges for two new committees. The Task Force met in Washington at the Annual Meeting to discuss the proposed charges. Upon further discussion, the Task Force recommends that three new committees be created by the AALL board and that the existing Mentoring & Retention Committee and Recruitment Committee be abolished.

The Task Force members, particularly those who had chaired the existing committees, felt that the current committee charges did not accurately reflect the activities of the committee. Additionally, the Task Force believes that the current committee structure does not address some issues that would promote recruitment efforts.

The Task Force has drafted charges for the new Law Librarian Recruitment Committee, the Membership & Retention Committee, and the Mentoring Committee. The proposed charges are attached.

The new Committees will focus on three discrete, though somewhat overlapping, functions. The Law Librarian Recruitment Committee will encourage individuals to enter the law librarianship profession. The
Membership and Retention committee will focus on attracting and retaining members in the American Association of Law Libraries. The Mentoring Committee's primary focus is planning, promoting and presenting the Conference of Newer Law Librarians (CONELL) at the Association's Annual Meeting.

Recommendations:

1. The Membership Development and Retention task force recommends that the Board abolish the existing Mentoring & Retention Committee and the Recruitment Committee.

2. The Membership Development and Retention task force recommends that the Board approve the charges for the three new committees and that the committees be established beginning with the 2000-2001 committee cycle.

3. The Membership Development and Retention task force recommends that the Board consider additional activities to promote Association membership, foster networking among members, and evaluate existing programs and services as outlined in the Task Force Meeting Summary.

4. The Membership Development and Retention task force recommends that the Task Force be dissolved at the end of its term.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Lemann, Chair
Ann Fessenden, Gayle Lynn-Nelson, Kimberly Pogue, Michelle Schmidt, Roger Parent, ex-officio,
Ruth Fraley, Executive Board Liason
Law Librarian Recruitment Committee

Charge: Encourage qualified candidates to enter the profession of law librarianship
Size: 8

The Law Librarian Recruitment Committee shall encourage qualified candidates to enter the profession of law librarianship by:

- preparing informative materials describing opportunities in law librarianship;
- coordinating with Headquarters to distribute information on law librarianship annually to library schools, law schools, paralegal programs, bar associations and other target groups, and answering questions from individuals who contact headquarters inquiring about the profession;
- preparing career day programs and materials and making them available to chapters and individual members;
- coordinating with the Membership and Retention Committee to staff booths at career conferences, and at meetings of library, legal, paralegal and similar associations;
- encouraging and supporting chapter law librarian recruitment efforts;
- coordinating with the Diversity Committee to provide particular support for law librarian recruitment efforts directed towards diverse populations;
- educating the membership on the importance of law librarian recruitment and encouraging individuals to promote law librarianship on a personal level;
- developing other methods to promote law librarianship as a career.

Membership & Retention Committee

Charge: Attracting new members and retaining existing members.
Size: 8

The committee shall pursue efforts to attract and retain members in the American Association of Law Libraries. The committee will coordinate internal and external activities with Headquarters to identify and recruit potential Association members. The committee shall plan and implement promotional activities and campaigns. Working with the Law Librarian Recruitment Committee, members may staff booths at career conferences, and at meetings of library, legal, paralegal and similar associations. They will advise on mailing selected targeted groups for campaigns creating key messages and strategies. The committee shall act as a liaison to chapters explaining member benefits and dues while monitoring membership trends. The committee will review and evaluate Association member benefits.

Mentoring Committee

Charge: Responsible for CONELL and educating new members of the Association.
Size: 10

The mentoring committee shall be responsible for providing information and networking opportunities by advising and mentoring newer Association members or those contemplating job changes or desiring career guidance. To accomplish this goal the committee will plan, promote and present the Annual Conference of Newer Law Librarians (CONELL) and pursue additional efforts to orient newer members to the benefits and opportunities of Association membership.
AALL Membership Task Force Meeting Summary
May 5-6, 1999

Report: May 6, 1999

Participants: Cathy Lemann, Chair, Ann Fessenden, Kimberly Pogue, Gayle Lynn-Nelson, Ruth Fraley, Board Liaison, Roger Parent, Executive Director, Julie Duffy, AALL Marketing Manager

1999 AALL BYLAWS AMENDMENT

The Task Force reviewed the proposed Bylaws Amendment. They discussed the rationale for the proposed revisions. Ruth Fraley, Executive Board Liaison, explained the rationale for the Executive Board recommendations and the elaborate process they followed before bringing these amendments forward to the membership. The Task Force encourages every effort to communicate the importance of these changes to the membership through listservs, broadcast e-mail, chapter leadership training at the Annual Meeting and Conference, and lawlib. The rationale for the proposed change must be explained clearly so that members understand that the proposed changes are being driven by the need to reflect in the AALL membership the changes that are occurring in law libraries.

1998 MEMBERSHIP PROJECT FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS


Recommendation: Engage in ongoing Membership Recruitment and Retention Campaign.

The Task Force agrees that ongoing membership recruitment and retention are essential. Julie Duffy, AALL Marketing Manager, explained current recruitment and retention activities, in particular those efforts initiated in 1999 to retain current members. The Executive Director explained that the staff is reviewing all procedures for invoicing members and for dropping members who have not renewed. These procedures will be brought into conformance with Helen Little's recommendations whenever that is appropriate and feasible.

The Task Force reviewed the materials that were sent to all members prior to the mailing of their dues invoices. The Task Force reported that there was some confusion caused by separating the "promotional materials about AALL" from the actual dues invoice. In the past those two items had been combined into one mailing to members. However the Task Force agreed that the separation of the promotional materials from the actual dues invoice, as recommended by Helen Little, makes sense and will not be confusing to members in the future. They asked that staff consider reformatting the letter from the President-elect in the future; generally the Task Force preferred the format of the 1998 letter from Jim Heller that included a photo of the President-elect.

Recommendation: Foster networking as an extremely valuable benefit.

The Task Force agreed with Helen Little's assessment and endorsed her suggestion that the Directory of members, both the paper and the electronic version, be enhanced to make it as useful as possible. The Task Force supported the collection and addition of information about library special collections.
Strengthen the SISs by creating a SIS Coordination position on AALL staff.

The Task Force agrees that SISs are important association entities. The Task Force recognizes that SISs vary considerably in the quality and quantity of programming from year to year primarily because the level of activity depends on the efforts of volunteers. The Task Force did not support the idea of a new AALL position to coordinate the work of the SISs. Frankly the Task Force could not envision how such a staff position would function and work with volunteers.

Recommendation: Create SISs for one person libraries, corporate law libraries and unaffiliated law librarians.

The Task Force noted that the PLL SIS already has subgroups composed of corporate and solo librarians. The Task Force questioned the value of creating more SISs particularly when there does not appear to be grass roots interest or demand for them. Although there might be some value in AALL leadership encouraging growth of new SISs to meet member needs, those needs must be more clearly identified before proceeding with such an effort. In particular AALL should consult widely with members before initiating any new SISs.

The Task Force encouraged more analysis of the members currently categorized as "non-affiliated", "independent" and "other entities". The Task Force quickly scanned a printout of specific members in those three categories. They noted that many of those in the "other entities" category belong in other categories, such as firm and academic libraries. It appeared that many members did not complete that question on their membership profile. Staff offered to review all the memberships in those three categories and re-categorize them properly when necessary.

Recommendation: AALL should remain a small, focused niche association.

The Task Force discussed this recommendation at length, particularly in light of the proposed bylaws amendment. The Task Force understands that the amendment maintains AALL’s focus on law libraries and law librarians. The Task Force realizes that the amendment has been drafted in an effort to reach consensus among members on an issue that has been hotly debated in the recent past. They agree with the Executive Board and support this focus with the knowledge that the membership wants AALL to remain their professional organization of choice.

Recommendation: Conduct an evaluation of existing programs and services.

The Task Force recognizes that members want value for their dues, while noting that all members will not agree on the same set of programs and services that should be maintained, strengthened or discontinued. The Task Force believes that the Executive Board, especially the Strategic Planning Committee, has responsibility for evaluating programs and services regularly, and ultimately making the hard choices. The Strategic Planning Committee has the knowledge and the information about member needs and association resources to make the best decisions for the overall health of the association. The Task Force supports that kind of in-depth assessment and evaluation as part of the Strategic Planning Committee’s 1999-2000 strategic planning process.

Communication with members about the value of programs and services is essential if members are to be persuaded to support a dues increase. This type of communication should be initiated continuously and in every format, e-mail, AALLNET, AALL Spectrum, etc. Every opportunity should be used to inform members about the activities that are supported with their dues. For example, the annual dues invoice might include a description of what their dues support each year, how program priorities are established,
and why certain programs are being strengthened or discontinued. Members need to understand the background for these Executive Board decisions.

At the same time AALL leaders should highlight and promote the range and richness of the Association’s programs and services and the diversity of interests and needs among many different members. Although not all members will take advantage of all services, there must be a range of services available to satisfy a diverse membership.

The Task Force encouraged frequent communication with members about the functions performed by the staff. The members need to know who is on the staff and how they provide member benefits.

Chapter Involvement in Membership Development.

The Task Force supported Chapter involvement in membership development activities. They suggested that both AALL and the Chapters need to perceive benefit in a joint effort. In particular the Task Force noted that many Chapters would appreciate and welcome professionally produced recruitment materials that would attract new members to both the Chapters and to AALL. Julie Duffy recommended including Chapter information for the local Chapter in AALL’s welcome new member packet.

The Task Force also suggested that Chapters would welcome information or articles for their newsletters and speaker lists on topics of current interest. These resources would support Chapters and would build a more collegial relationship with Chapters that might then be more willing to participate in joint recruitment efforts.

AALL Committee Roles and Responsibilities.

The Task Force reviewed the current charge for both, the Mentoring and Retention Committee and Recruitment Committee. In summary, the Task Force recommends to create two new committees in lieu of the existing two committees. The two new committees and responsibilities proposed are:

Law Librarian Recruitment Committee

Ann Fessenden, will draft a charge for the recommended Law Librarian Recruitment Committee based on the Task Force discussion.

IDENTIFIED TARGETS -
Law/Librarian Students, Attorneys, Library School Directors, Law School Placement, Bar Associations, Paralegals, MIS and other librarians.

FOCUS -
Networking
Providing Information
Advising
Literature
Chapter
SIS’s (?)
SUGGESTED RESPONSIBILITIES -

• Prepare quality information
• Distribute information annually to Library School Deans, Law School Deans, Paralegal Schools, and Bar Associations.
• Identify member contacts to answer inquiries
• Design a prototype career day program and materials with and for Chapters.
• Liaison with Chapter Recruitment Committees
• Promote importance of recruitment by staffing booths at other conferences
• Monitor employment trends for Law Librarians

HEADQUARTERS RESPONSIBILITIES -

• Identify staff individuals on annual basis
• Identify non-AALL Chapter members
• Manage prospect lists
• Send dues and reminder notices
• Gather trend data
• Annual mailing to library schools

Membership Development Committee

Kim Pogue and Gayle Lynn-Nelson, will draft a charge for the recommended Membership Development Committee based on the Task Force discussion.

IDENTIFIED TARGETS -
Law/Librarian Students, non-members, Chapter members, current AALL members, non-renewal AALL members, Library School Directors, other associations i.e. SLA, and other libraries.

FOCUS -
Networking
Providing Information
Advising
CONELL
Literature
Chapter
SIS’s
Mentoring

SUGGESTED RESPONSIBILITIES -

. Advise on mailings such as: Membership Recruitment Packet, promo pieces, magazine, etc.

. Select target groups for campaigns

. Create key messages and strategies

. Liaison with Chapters

. Explain member benefits and dues

. Monitor trends

. Table top displays at Chapter meetings

. CONELL/Mentoring

Other Committee's Responsibilities

Coordinate Library Education
Placement
Scholarships
Diversity
Public Relations
Strategic Plan
Program Evaluation
DATE SUBMITTED: October 13, 1999

SUBMITTED BY: Ruth Fraley, Board Liaison

ON BEHALF OF ENTITY: Membership Development and Retention Task Force

REQUIRES: BOARD ACTION

TOPIC: Membership Development and Retention Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations

SUMMARY:

President Margie Axtmann, Executive Director Roger Parent and Ruth Fraley reviewed the Task Force's Final Report and Recommendations. We have modified action #1 to include the date, July 2000, for disbanding the two existing committees. We have modified slightly the charges to the two new committees, Law Librarian Recruitment Committee, and Membership & Retention Committee for clarity. We have clarified the size of each new committee by adding the chair to each committee.

All changes are underlined to ease comparison with the Task Force’s recommendations. The changes have been reviewed by the Task Force Chair and approved by her.

MOTION FOR BOARD ACTION:

1. That the Executive Board disband the existing Mentoring & Retention Committee and the Recruitment Committee effective at the end of the Annual Meeting & Convention, July 2000.

2. That the Executive Board approve the charges for the three new committees and that the committees be established beginning with the 2000-2001 committee cycle.

Law Librarian Recruitment Committee

Charge: Encourage qualified candidates to enter the profession of law librarianship
Size: 8 Committee members plus a Chair

The Law Librarian Recruitment Committee shall encourage qualified candidates to enter the profession of law librarianship by:

1. preparing informative materials describing opportunities in law librarianship;
2. coordinating with Headquarters to distribute information on law librarianship annually to library schools, law schools, paralegal programs, bar associations and other target groups; and
3. answering questions from individuals inquiring about the profession;
4. preparing career day programs and materials and making them available to chapters and individual members;
5. coordinating with the Membership and Retention Committee to request funding annually to staff booths at career conferences, and at meetings of library, legal, paralegal and similar associations;
6. encouraging and supporting chapter law librarian recruitment efforts;
7. coordinating with the Diversity Committee to provide particular support for law librarian recruitment efforts directed towards diverse populations;
8. educating the membership on the importance of law librarian recruitment and encouraging individuals to promote law librarianship on a personal level;
9. developing other methods to promote law librarianship as a career.
Membership & Retention Committee

Charge: Attracting new members and retaining existing members.
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The committee shall pursue efforts to attract and retain members in the American Association of Law Libraries. The committee will coordinate internal and external activities with Headquarters to identify and recruit potential Association members. The committee shall plan and implement advise the staff on promotional activities and campaigns. Working with the Law Librarian Recruitment Committee, members may request funding annually staff booths at career conferences, and at meetings of library, legal, paralegal and similar associations. They will advise on mailings selected targeted groups for campaigns creating key messages and strategies. The committee shall act as a liaison to chapters explaining member benefits and dues while monitoring membership trends. The committee will review and evaluate Association member benefits.

Mentoring Committee

Charge: Responsible for CONELL and educating new members of the Association.
Size: 10 Committee members plus a Chair

The mentoring committee shall be responsible for providing information and networking opportunities by advising and mentoring newer Association members or those contemplating job changes or desiring career guidance. To accomplish this goal the committee will plan, promote and present the Annual Conference of Newer Law Librarians (CONELL) and pursue additional efforts to orient newer members to the benefits and opportunities of Association membership.

3. That the Board assign a high priority and support efforts to promote membership in AALL, foster networking among members, and encourage its committees and staff to evaluate regularly existing membership recruitment and retention activities.

4. That the Executive Board dissolve the Task Force upon acceptance of their Final Report and Recommendations.

Follow Up Assignments & Responsibilities Checklist

The following are some of the options available to the Executive Board:
Table until the next Executive Board Meeting
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Revise or add to the AALL Financial, Legislative or other Policies
Revise the approved budget
Issue a news release
Post on AALLNET
Publish in AALL Spectrum
Update the Board, Committee, Representative, Chapter or SIS Handbook
Transmit action to an external organization or individual

Last updated by Kim Rundle: Headquarters-Staff on 10/27/99 10:45:09
DATE SUBMITTED: October 13, 1999
SUBMITTED BY: Ruth Fraley, Board Liaison
ON BEHALF OF ENTITY: Membership Development and Retention Task Force
REQUIRES: BOARD ACTION
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3. That the Board assign a high priority and support efforts to promote membership in AALL, foster networking among members, and encourage its committees and staff to evaluate regularly existing membership recruitment and retention activities.

4. That the Executive Board dissolve the Task Force upon acceptance of their Final Report and Recommendations.

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Revise the approved budget
Issue a news release
Post on AALLNET
Publish in AALL Spectrum
Update the Board, Committee, Representative, Chapter or SIS Handbook
Transmit action to an external organization or individual
Revise an existing flyer or form
DATE SUBMITTED: September 10, 1999
SUBMITTED BY: Catherine Lemann, Chair
ON BEHALF OF ENTITY: Membership Development and Retention Task Force
BOARD LIAISON: Ruth Fraley
REQUIRES: BOARD ACTION

TOPIC: Membership Development and Retention Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: The Executive Board supported the creation of the three new committees and believed that their new charges were clear. Each of the areas represented by these charges, in particular membership retention, needs attention right now. The Membership Committee might review member benefits and evaluate them. Should we conduct exit interviews of those members who choose not to renew? Learning more about the reasons that members do not renew is a high priority.

Although leadership training and development are not explicitly mentioned, they are very important and might be added to the charge of the Mentoring Committee in the future, whereas the current work of the Mentoring Committee seems focused on Annual Meeting related activities. The new Committee might further clarify the actual roles of mentors—perhaps throughout the year.

MOTION FOR BOARD ACTION:

On motion by Ruth Fraley, seconded by Heather Braithwaite Simmons, the motion was approved as amended, that the Executive Board:

1. Disband the existing Mentoring & Retention Committee and the Recruitment Committee effective at the end of the Annual Meeting & Convention, July 2000.

2. Approve the charges for the three new committees and that the committees be established beginning with the 2000-2001 committee cycle.

Recruitment to Law Librarianship Committee

Charge: Encourage qualified candidates to enter the profession of law librarianship
Size: 8 Committee members plus a Chair

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3. Assign a high priority and support efforts to promote membership in AALL, foster networking among members, and encourage its committees and staff to evaluate regularly existing membership recruitment and retention activities.

4. Dissolve the Task Force upon acceptance of their Final Report and Recommendations.

RESOLUTION: Passed unanimously

FOLLOW-UP: The Executive Assistant will update the Committee Handbook.
DATE SUBMITTED: September 10, 1999

SUBMITTED BY: Catherine Lemann, Chair

ON BEHALF OF ENTITY: Membership Development and Retention Task Force

BOARD LIASON: Ruth Fraley

REQUIRES: BOARD ACTION

TOPIC: Membership Development and Retention Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations

SUMMARY:

The Membership Development and Retention Task Force (Catherine Lemann, Chair, Ann Fessenden, Gayle Lynn-Nelson, Kimberly Pogue, Michelle Schmidt and Ruth Fraley, Board Liaison) was appointed by AALL President Jim Heller in January 1999 when the AALL Strategic Planning Committee recognized the need for significant membership recruitment efforts.

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2. Help identify the programs and services that member’s value most and which should therefore be maintained or strengthened.
3. Examine the roles and responsibilities of the Mentoring & Retention and Recruitment Committees.
4. Provide input to the Board and to the Executive Director on implementing the recommendations of the Helen Little "Membership" Report.

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MOTION FOR BOARD ACTION:

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2. That the Board approve the charges for the three new committees and that the committees be established beginning with the 2000-2001 committee cycle.

**Law Librarian Recruitment Committee**

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3. That the Board consider additional activities to promote Association membership, foster networking among members, and evaluate existing programs and services as outlined in the Task Force Meeting Summary.

4. That the Task Force be dissolved at the end of its term.

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Post on AALLNET
Publish in AALL Spectrum
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