Rethink Your Value was the theme of the 2013 AALL Annual Meeting and Conference held in Seattle, WA from July 13-16, 2013. The theme, selected by AALL President Jean Wenger, called on the membership to focus on the value they bring to their roles as librarians, to their institutions as contributing employees, and to the profession as AALL members.

This was a very busy year for the 2013 Annual Meeting Program Committee (AMPC). It was the first AALL conference with changes implemented based on the recommendations made by Velvet Chainsaw Consulting and the Annual Meeting Special Committee. These recommendations were approved by the Executive Board in March 2012. AMPC spent a vast amount of time sending out communications and helping members navigate through the changes. AMPC shared annual meeting information by posting messages on the AALLNET Communities and AALL e-newsletters, writing articles for Spectrum and chapter and SIS newsletters, and through direct contact with members.

AALL President Jean Wenger and AMPC Chair Julie Pabarja led a conference call with the SIS leadership discussing how the annual meeting changes would affect their SIS. The changes included the implementation of a blind review process and an end to SIS sponsorship and program rankings. Each SIS would be able to submit 1 program to present at the conference that would be scheduled by AMPC. The SIS would be responsible for all expenses related to that program including the evaluation form and recording fees, if feasible. The leadership and the SIS education committee should continue to be a resource for their members regarding the annual meeting program proposal process. They should help members develop good content and identify good speakers. Each SIS was also limited to schedule up to 10 meetings not including the breakfasts, luncheons, and receptions.

Just prior to the Boston meeting, AMPC invited the membership to participate in a survey that solicited feedback on the education topics that members would like to see addressed at the annual meeting in Seattle. There were 1037 respondents to the survey. An Executive Summary of the survey was posted on AALLNET. Members were encouraged to review the summary and to develop programs based on the members’ needs.

Members were encouraged to join the Annual Meeting Program Ideas Community which was a neutral venue where they could share program ideas and find others to collaborate with on a program. Some discussions did take place in this Community.

During the meeting in Boston, AMPC attended a training session led by Jeff Hurt from Velvet Chainsaw Consulting on how adult learners retain information and the best techniques on developing programs for adult learners. This training was very helpful during the program selection process.

While in Boston, AMPC provided information and answered members’ questions about the changes to the conference in Seattle. Julie Pabarja spoke at CONELL and David Mao represented AMPC at CONELL Marketplace. Committee members sat at a table in the Members
Services area in the exhibit hall and the committee was present at the Annual Meeting Open Forum.

The program proposal site opened after the Boston conference was over with a deadline of October 15. The later deadline gave members time after Boston to develop and submit programs.

AMPC members, John Digilio and Carol Watson, led a webinar offering best practices on how to develop a good program proposal and what AMPC would be looking for when evaluating the proposals.

AMPC members also provided guidance on the proposal process using the Annual Meeting Program Ideas Community. They posted different questions and answers regarding the annual meeting changes. Documentation on adult learning techniques was made available in the Community for members to reference.

AMPC selected programs from proposals submitted by members. The 2013 Annual Meeting also saw the return of coffee talks, poster sessions, and ILTA programs.

AMPC added a new format, Deep Dives, and a special session called Monday Morning Recharge. Deep dive programs allowed members to have a more in-depth discussion on a topic. There were 5 deep dives offered in Seattle. Monday Morning Recharge was a dedicated session where the programs focused on business skills. AMPC curated all 5 Recharge programs and selected non-member speakers to lead a session on presentation skills, change management, what it means to be a leader, influencing others, and learning to destress/yoga at your desk.

AMPC selected 3 hot topic programs in April which were proposed by members. By offering three hot topic slots, it gave members an opportunity to propose current and trending topics.

AMPC also curated a program entitled Rethink Disruption where the speakers used the Ignite format.

For the first time, AMPC members were assigned programs to “follow” until the conference in July. They kept in contact with the program coordinators about their program and served as a resource for the coordinators.

AMPC members were also assigned SISs, committees, caucuses, chapters to serve as their liaison to the annual meeting.

The conference brought in a great number of non-member speakers. These speakers were highlighted in an AALL e-newsletter.

In order to develop a list of VIPS and potential speakers in the Seattle area, Julie Pabarja collaborated with Local Arrangements Committee Chairs, Rita Dermody and Tina Ching, and reached out to local AALL chapters in the area for suggested speakers. These suggestions helped identify some of the speakers for the Monday Morning Recharge programs.
The committee put in all their efforts to provide communication and guidance to the membership about the annual meeting. They selected programs based on topics that members asked for and look forward to seeing the evaluations. It was an unforgettable experience.

The 2013 AMPC includes Julie Pabarja (Chair), Madeline Cohen, Marjorie Crawford, John DiGilio, Janet Ann Hedin, David S. Mao, Alison A. Shea, George Taoultaside, and Carol Watson.