Public Relations 2007-08

Promoting the value of AALL members, member institutions, and the profession to members, employees, the general library profession, the legal community, and the community at large was our overarching goal this year. This included increasing awareness and understanding of the profession of law librarianship and changing the image of law librarians. In cooperation with AALL’s review of committees, we worked on updating the committee’s purpose and charge for the future needs of the profession. Members of the 2007-08 Public Relations (PR) committee were Chair Julie Jones, Cathy Breen, Bret Christensen, Amy Hale-Janek, Peggy McDermott, Julie Noland, Cindy Spohr, and Catherine Whitney. Sally Wise served as AALL Board Liaison, and Julia O’Donnell coordinated with AALL Publications.

To help stimulate ideas and educate AALL members on public relations and marketing strategies that may be put to use in their libraries, PR Committee members authored a wide range of articles for AALL Spectrum throughout the year. Topics included maximizing the ALA’s “@ your library” campaign as an outreach tool, highlighting virtual tours of your library to attract new patrons, adapting court library marketing tactics to an academic setting, and integrating word of mouth marketing into your PR portfolio, to name just a few.

This year’s AALL/Thomson West Excellence in Marketing (EIM) Awards were a great success, with terrific participation by AALL members. Julie Jones, Amy Hale-Janek, and Catherine Whitney coordinated the 2008 competition. After finalists were selected, the AALL Awards Committee chose the winners. Lucinda MacDonald of Thomson West coordinated the creation of the brochure and managed the shipping of entries to the judging subcommittee.

The third Day in the Life of the Law Library Community Photo Contest (DIL) remained an extremely popular event. During National Library Week in April 2008, AALL members took many photos and submitted their favorite shots online. Julie Jones, Bret Christensen, Peggy McDermott, and Julia O’Donnell selected the finalists for member voting. The 2008 winning photos are available on AALLNET. Many thanks go to AALL Web Administrator Chris Siwa for his assistance with this program.

To better assist AALL members with their marketing needs, Bret Christensen updated the committee Web site, and the resources section was expanded, providing links to freely available PR Web sites. With support from the AALL Board, the committee was able to purchase post-its to be given away at the Annual Meeting with the Web address clearly printed to serve as a reminder to members of the services and resources the PR Committee makes available online.

Looking forward, the committee expects to continue the EIM and DIL contests, publishing useful articles in AALL Spectrum, and reaching out to its constituents both within and outside AALL.

Julie M. Jones, Chair