AALL Committee Activities and Action Plan

Committee Name: Public Relations Committee

Committee Charge:

- Develop materials that will inform those within and outside the profession regarding the value of law librarians
- Select one (1) or more recipients every year for the annual AALL Excellence in Marketing (EIM) Awards, or no recipient if it deems none of the nominees sufficiently qualified, and will submit the winning recipient's name(s) to the Awards Committee. The Awards Committee will oversee the grant of the annual AALL Excellence in Marketing (EIM) Awards to the recipient selected by the Public Relations Committee.
- Submit a column on a public relations topic for each issue of the AALL Spectrum

Major Activities for 2008-2009:

First, The committee had a large presence at the 2008 Annual Meeting. Not only did we participate in the CONELL marketplace, we also had a very large display set up in the Exhibits area to showcase the winners of the "Day in the Life" photo contest and the "Excellence in Marketing" award. We also facilitated an open roundtable discussion during the annual meeting, extending a special invitation to those who submitted entries to either contest. Our "giveaway" was a post-it note pad with AALL's logo on it.

Throughout the year, we embraced the strategic goal of education by writing a total of nine articles for AALL Spectrum. Subjects ranged from a survey of public relations efforts in smaller law libraries to a book review with suggestions on personal networking. This was a great opportunity for several of our members who had never before been published in AALL Spectrum to see their ideas in print.

During the fall, we discussed whether to have the "Day in the Life"(DITL) contest for 2009. Usually it is held every two years, but feedback from previous years said this is something "fun" and many members look forward to the contest each year. Thus, we decided to continue the photo contest.

However, in light of the lower number of submissions to this year's contest (and the consistently lower number of submissions over the past three years), we recommend that the DITL contest be held every other year.

With the Board's expressed desire to stop depending so much on vendors, we worked with AALL HQ to create and update a new "Excellence in Marketing" (EIM) award brochure. We eliminated references to vendors and vendor sponsorship while providing a new look for the brochure. The committee spent a great deal of time and effort judging the results of both the photo contest and the marketing contest.

The EIM entries this year were very small. In one category, we had only one entry. Perhaps the board should consider whether this contest should be held every other year as well. The PR Committee could hold the "Day in the Life" photo contest one year, and the EIM contest the following year. This might generate more entries and attention for both programs.

Finally, the chair of the P.R. committee signed up to blog on the AALL Spectrum blog. This is a way to further discuss and/or disseminate public relations information or ideas.

Proposed Activities for 2009-2010:

The "Day in the Life" (DITL) photo contest should be held every other year instead of annually. Some AALL members have commented that they would like to be able to submit photos via email. After speaking with the AALL staff and learning the extra layer of complications that surround email submission of photos, we recommend that the DITL entries continue to follow current guidelines for electronic photos wherein photos are submitted via the DITL website or mailed in on a CD-ROM.

The "Excellence in Marketing" (EIM) awards should also be held every other year instead of annually. Perhaps alternate the DITL with the EIM so that at least one contest is available per year.

The PR Committee needs to have a fixed budget. We need to see how much we have to spend so that we can start pursuing AALL's strategic directive of advocacy. We need money to (1) place advertising the Annual Meeting in various legal publications, (2) place educational advertising about law librarians in legal...
A PR wiki needs to be put up on www.allnet.org. It should contain examples of PR documents, public service announcements, past winners of the EIM awards, and links to past Spectrum articles. This would need to be visible to any AALLnet member in order to spark ideas and generate content.