

Minnesota Association of Law Librarians 2010-2011 Annual Report

2010-2011 was a very good year for the Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL). This year, MALL's activities focused on educational growth for members, advancing the understanding and appreciation of law librarianship to non-members, and advocating access to legal information for everyone.

The Education Committee, led by Liz Reppe, provided several education programs throughout the year, which were all well attended. MALL traditionally holds evening business meetings that also include an educational session afterwards. The first business meeting featured a very entertaining and timely guest speaker. Mary Lahammer, a reporter and host of Twin Cities Public Television's *Almanac*, spoke on covering the Capitol and Minnesota politics.

At the spring conference, the speakers were no less impressive. Darcy Kirk, AALL's vice president; Michele Timmons, revisor of statutes for the state of Minnesota; Paul Van Cura, State Legislative Reference Library; Deborah Grealy, dean of the LIS School, St. Catherine's University; and the Honorable Edward Lynch, chief judge of the First Judicial District, were just a few of the speakers on this final business meeting of the year. The program was so interesting that several non-members, including students from the library school program and paralegal students, registered for this all-day conference, bringing total attendance to 76.

The Downtowners also held their monthly lunchtime meetings throughout the year. With a steady attendance of a dozen and sometimes even more, this group arranged for speakers on a variety of topics, ranging from social media practices and policies, to sustainability and "green" issues in libraries, to generational learning issues in the workforce, to its annual book club meeting. While based in downtown Minneapolis, the meetings were open to all MALL members. The Downtowners meetings provided additional education opportunities on topics that might not have been able to be on the agenda at our regular business meetings.

In order to share the advantages of knowing a law librarian, MALL members also volunteered to staff tables at the Minnesota Library Association annual meeting, the Minnesota Association for Legal Administrators annual meeting, and the LIS Professional Organization Fair held at St. Catherine's University. The volunteers who were at this fair enjoyed talking to the students. Many of the students were surprised to find out that they did not need to have a law degree to be a law librarian. Our savvy volunteers managed to convince three students to join our ranks.

The most active volunteers in MALL are the members of the Volunteer Librarians Coalition (VLC). Led by Trudi Busch and Jennifer Doyle, this subset of the Consulting and Community Outreach Committee supports the needs of the low-income people through collaboration with the

Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN). They do this task by updating and maintaining a wiki, which allows the VLN attorneys and the VLC volunteers to communicate with each other via the web. The VLN can answer reference questions, help with research, and offer other services to over 700 volunteer lawyers in the Twin Cities area. Currently services are mostly local to Hennepin County, but soon the VLN hopes to extend their services to volunteer attorneys in greater Minnesota by working closely with ProJusticeMN.org.

Although our membership decreased slightly from last year, MALL ended the year with 163 active members, with 11 new members, including four students from St Catherine's University. MALL took the opportunity this year to modify the membership categories for students and to create a new category of membership for unemployed members. We are hoping that the reduced membership rates (free for the first year for students and unemployed members, half price every year thereafter until graduation/becoming employed) will encourage more people to stick with MALL, even in hard financial times. The final changes for the new rates were voted on and approved at the spring business meeting, and will be implemented beginning with the 2011-2012 year.

The MALL 2010-2011 executive board consisted of the following members: Pauline Afuso, president; Liz Reppe, vice president; Doris Dingley, secretary-treasurer; David Zopfi-Jordan, past president; and Neal Axton, member at large.

Individually and collectively, MALL members are active and creative professionals, and it was an honor to lead them this past year.

Pauline Afuso
President, 2010-2011