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Congratulations to the Winners of the PAGI and Member Advocacy Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 2, 2009—The AALL Government Relations Committee and Awards Committee are pleased to announce the distinguished winners of two AALL awards, the Public Access to Government Information (PAGI) Award and the Robert L. Oakley Member Advocacy Award. This year, the PAGI Award goes to the Sunlight Foundation, and the Oakley Member Advocacy award goes to AALL member Rick McKinney.

AALL gives the PAGI Award each year to recognize individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to improve public access to government information. This year's winner, the Sunlight Foundation, exemplifies the award criteria. Sunlight was founded in 2006 by businessman and lawyer Michael Klein and public interest advocate Ellen Miller with the mission of "using the revolutionary power of the Internet to make information about Congress and the federal government more meaningfully accessible to citizens," as well as promoting political transparency and accountability in government.

Since its inception, Sunlight has developed a wide assortment of projects using innovative technologies to make government data more accessible to the public. Sunlight has put together and funded many databases and tools that have made government data easier to use and understand, including www.OpenCongress.org, a database that brings together congressional data with news articles, blog coverage, and public comments, and www.FedSpending.org, a project of last year's PAGI winner OMB Watch that allows users to search federal government spending. Sunlight is also active on several important policy issues that AALL supports, including the Senate Campaign Disclosure Parity Act (S. 482), which would require senators to file their campaign finance reports electronically. We congratulate the Sunlight Foundation for winning this year's prestigious PAGI Award.

The Oakley Member Advocacy Award is given to an AALL member who is an outstanding advocate and has contributed significantly to the AALL policy agenda at the federal, state, local, or international level. The award honors the memory of Robert L. Oakley, AALL's Washington affairs representative (1989-2007), who received the award posthumously in 2008. The winner of the 2009 Oakley Member Advocacy Award is Rick McKinney, assistant law librarian at the Federal Reserve Board Law Library in Washington, D.C. McKinney is the author of *The Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Legislative Sourcebook* (<http://llsdc.org/sourcebook>), an impressive publication of online legislative resources. Some of the helpful resources included in the Sourcebook are "Legislative Histories of Selected U.S. Laws on the Internet" and "A Research Guide to the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations."

In addition to his dedication to providing a variety of excellent legislative resources in the Sourcebook, McKinney has demonstrated an impressive willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty to help other law librarians with their research. He is an active participant in the dialogue on Law Librarians Society of Washington, D.C.'s online discussion list, often speaking up to offer in-depth advice to others on their questions. The Oakley Member Advocacy Award recognizes McKinney for his commitment as a strong advocate for law libraries, and we congratulate him on this honor. These two awards will be presented during the Annual Legislative and Regulatory Update at the AALL Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. We hope to see you there!

AALL's New Advocacy Toolkit for Members and Chapters

The AALL Government Relations Office and Government Relations Committee are pleased to offer a new resource to help AALL members and chapters become effective advocates for law libraries at the federal and state levels. As announced by AALL President James Duggan in his March 2009 e-

newsletter, the “Advocacy Toolkit for the 111th Congress: 2009-2010” is designed to help you learn more about AALL’s ambitious policy agenda and take action when it’s most needed. With law libraries facing an array of difficult challenges due to the serious economic problems around the country, it’s an especially important time to become an outspoken advocate for our profession.

The Advocacy Toolkit provides AALL members and chapters with:

- Ways to get involved in advocacy
- Specific actions you can take immediately to promote our efforts in Washington, D.C.
- A comprehensive look at the issues and bills AALL is currently working on
- The tools you need to become effective advocates on both the federal and state levels

The toolkit consists of separate sections for individuals and chapters. The first section is designed to help individuals learn more about AALL’s policy work and take immediate action. This section includes information about the AALL Government Relations Office and links to the many resources that keep you informed, such as the Washington Blawg, the Washington e-bulletin, and these monthly “Washington Brief” columns in Spectrum. The toolkit also includes the most recent action alerts for individuals and a comprehensive guide to federal legislation that AALL either supports or opposes. The bill chart will be updated frequently, so we encourage you to check back regularly or subscribe to the toolkit’s RSS feed to find out what legislation we’re tracking.

A major portion of the toolkit is dedicated to helping chapters form effective legislative committees. Legislative committees are the key to helping your chapter build long-term successes in your state and on our federal issues. The toolkit explains how both new and well-established chapter legislative committees can successfully influence policy at the federal and state levels by tracking bills, working with coalition partners in your state, and communicating with your members of Congress or state legislature to achieve the chapter’s legislative goals. This section also includes case studies to help you follow the example of other chapters that have successfully met their legislative goals in the past.

The advocacy toolkit is available as a live document and as a PDF on the AALL Government Relations Office Web site (www.aallnet.org/aallwash/toolkit/contents.asp). An RSS feed is also available (www.aallnet.org/aallwash/toolkitrss.asp) to help you keep track of the latest action alerts, bills, and other updates. We hope the toolkit will inspire you to join AALL’s advocacy team and help promote AALL’s policy agenda during this critical time.

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