

Legal Information Services to the Public SIS Annual Report 2014-2015

The Officers for the Legal Information Services to the Public Special Interest Section (LISP-SIS) for 2014-2015 were Brian Huffman, Chair; Leslie Greenwood, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, and Pauline Afuso, Secretary/Treasurer. For 2015-2016, the LISP-SIS Officers will be Leslie Greenwood, Chair; Nicole Dyszlewski, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, and Christine Timko, Secretary/Treasurer.

Kathy Garner Grants: This year, the section awarded two Kathy Garner Grants in the amount of \$1700 total. This year's recipients were Pauline Afuso, County Law Librarian, Washington County Law Library in Stillwater, Minnesota; and Artie W. Burns, recent graduate of School of Library & Information Science from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Applications were down from years past: only two applied. LISP is grateful to the Kathy Garner Grant Committee, Janet Ann Hedin (Chair), Dr. Joel Fishman, Stefanie Pearlman, Nancy Lynn Strohmeyer, and Jane Underwood for all of their hard work and dedication.

Education Committee and Conference Programming: The LISP-SIS was pleased to sponsor an independently produced program "Communicating with Everyone: Clear Writing and Expression" at the 2015 AALL Annual Meeting & Conference in Philadelphia, PA. The program panelists shared techniques and insights relating to clearly communicating the law to non-lawyers. Panelists discussed best practices for completing written material in the clearest language possible, and provided tips on practicing clear verbal communication. A list of resources, including samples and examples of clear writing, was provided. The speakers were:

- Catherine McGuire (program coordinator & moderator), Head of Reference and Outreach, Maryland State Law Library;
- Tanya S. Thomas, Research Librarian, Maryland State Law Library;
- Molly Kalifut, Writer-Editor, Office of Communications and Public Affairs, Maryland State Judiciary; and
- Dave Pantzer, People's Law Library Web Content Coordinator, Maryland State Law Library.

The LISP Education Committee joined with the SCCLL, RIPS, and SR SISs to produce a one-week online discussion, "Five Topics in Five Days". This discussion centered on the topic of mental health issues in law libraries. The discussion took place the week of March 9, 2015. The daily discussions covered were:

Day One: Flexibility of Library Rules;
Day Two: Mental Health at Work;
Day Three: Resources for Mental Health Law Assistance;
Day Four: Security Issues; and
Day Five: Training Library Staff.

A summary of discussion together with resources was posted to the discussion list on the last day by Jessica Randall Panella. The Education Committee Co-Chairs also plan to post an expanded resource list to the LISP website (estimated completion date, August 1, 2015).

In addition, LISP once again co-sponsored the “Joint Roundtable on Services to Pro Se Patrons and Prisoners” with the GLL-SIS and the SR-SIS at the 2015 AALL Annual Meeting & Conference. Speakers included Sara Galligan, Ramsey County Law Library, and Joan Bellistri, Anne Arundel County Public Law Library. Sara and Joan talked about their work with the SCCLL Special Committee on Best Access to Justice Practices. We also heard from Sara Gras, Georgetown, who spoke about her work on coordinating a prisoner letter program at Georgetown.

The LISP-SIS Exhibit hall table displayed a poster board highlighting the “Death by a 1,000 Cuts” asking librarians to share the tribulations and successes with programs, funding, etc. The stories were written on library cards and put into book pockets. Kudos to Pauline Afuso for the creative idea and the skill at assembling the display. The results were photographed and will be collected and put on a website for getting the word out to the larger law library community.

Business Meeting: The LISP-SIS Business Meeting was held as a breakfast on Monday, July 20, at 7:00 am, and the section received sponsorship for this event from LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters, and Wolters Kluwer.

At the business meeting, the membership discussed the process to change the SIS name and why the LISP executive board decided against an election with such low membership engagement. The committees also provided status updates on projects that had been identified as priorities for 2014-2015.

Public Libraries Toolkits: The Public Libraries Toolkit Review Committee, Leslie Greenwood (Chair); Heather Simmons reported we have at least one link for each state, thanks to all our volunteers. It was noted a few of the links (i.e. Maryland and Pennsylvania) are in fact links to pre-existing websites. The committee thought this was fine as long as it provided comprehensive resources that public librarians could use.

Nominations Committee: Sara Galligan (Chair), Sarah Mauldin, and Catherine McGuire served on the committee this year. The committee selected Nicole Dyszlewski (Roger Williams School of Law) as the nominee for Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. Christine Timko (Nevada Supreme Court Library) was selected for the Secretary/Treasurer nominee. Both candidates ran unopposed. They were approved by the LISP membership by electronic ballot.

Joint LISP/GLL Committee on Pro Bono Partnerships (JCPBP): Janine Liebert reported the goal of the committee is to help promote Pro Bono partnerships with Libraries. Members of the committee attended the Equal Justice Conference. The committee is still looking for other ways to get more awareness about the partnerships, including the following: putting information about the Joint Committee on the LISP website; and taking advantage of the AALL VIP program and bringing someone in next year.

Treasurer's Report: After last year's AALL conference we paid the expenses incurred for the Annual Meeting leaving the balance in our account as of September 30, 2014 at \$12,723.79. As of June 30, 2015, our account balance is \$12,270.87. Outstanding expenses incurred over the summer include one AALL grant, expenses relating to the AALL Program, and expenses to pay for the LISP Business Meeting. Expected revenues include credited the revenue from membership dues. A final accounting is expected in September.

I want to express my utmost appreciation and pride at serving the members of LISP. I was blessed with involved members and sincerely believe the SIS accomplished many goals this year. I look forward to a bright future for this SIS and those we serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Huffman
Chair, 2014-2015