

Law Librarians of New England (LLNE) – Annual Report to AALL

Submitted by Diane D'Angelo, LLNE President 2015 – 2016

2015-2016 was a productive year for LLNE. I'm enormously proud of the things the members of the executive board accomplished together this year.

I. FOUR KEY THINGS WE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR

IMPROVED OUR ELECTION PROCESS

At the start of my presidency I appointed an ad hoc bylaws committee that was charged with reviewing the bylaws and determining whether or not we could improve our election process. The committee met numerous times and circulated proposed changes to the membership. At our spring meeting at Northeastern University Law School in April, the membership voted unanimously to approve the bylaws changes. We are now no longer required to hold our elections at a business meeting at the AALL meeting each summer. This change will allow us to hold online elections and as a result, more of our members will be able to play a more active role in our election process. The first election we held after the bylaws changes were approved saw almost half of our members participate in the online voting process – a record number of members voting in an LLNE election. The AALL meeting in Chicago will be the first meeting that LLNE will not be hosting a luncheon and business meeting for our members. Because networking and seeing friends is very important to our members, we organized an off-site LLNE get together for our members. The event will be held Monday evening July 18th at the South Water Kitchen.

WON THE AALL CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Thanks to the staff at Roger Williams University Law School who organized our fantastic fall meeting – Successfully Supporting and Igniting Innovation, LLNE won the chapter development award. We are always looking for new ways to engage our members and provide enriching and meaningful educational opportunities. This award recognizes our commitment to strong educational programming for our members.

RECEIVED AN AALL/BLOOMBERG GRANT FOR OUR NEW VIDEO SERIES: LIBRARIANS GETTING LATTE

We are committed to growing and sustaining our current membership level. At our Executive Board retreat last fall, we brainstormed ways that we can encourage folks to join LLNE and showcase how we're different from other organizations and all the great benefits that come with joining. Librarians Getting Latte was inspired by Jerry Seinfeld's Comedians Getting Coffee Series. Our goal was to create a convenient and fun resource for LLNE members to get to know each other and learn about all the great things our members are doing. The AALL/Bloomberg grant helped us create our first episode and purchase a mic, tripod and logo for the series.

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO MA COURT RULES ON ACCESS TO COURT RECORDS

The government relations committee, in conjunction with the immediate past president worked on LLNE's response to proposed changes to Trial Court Rule XIV Uniform Rules on Access to Court Records. I

submitted our comments on behalf of LLNE to the Trial Court Committee on Public Access to Court Records on May 3, 2016. These proposed changes followed testimony given at the Court's public hearing held in June 2015 at which LLNE Past President Melinda Kent and Association of Boston Law Librarians (ABLL) President Bob DiFabrizo testified and AALL sent a letter in support. Comments will be available on the Court's website at a future date.

II. ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our committees were very active this year and have made many meaningful contributions to our organization, the law library community, the greater legal community and the public at large:

BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE

The budget subcommittee met several times and proposed the 2016-17 budget to the executive board and finally to the membership. The approved budget for 2016-2017 totals \$7835.00 and includes an upgrade of Survey Monkey to Gold and Dreamhost for the website as well as the usual expenses for scholarships and training. The complete budget is available on the LLNE website.

SERVICE COMMITTEE

In conjunction with the LLNE Fall 2015 meeting, *Successfully Supporting and Igniting Innovation*, the service committee raised funds to purchase 10 Raspberry Pi computers for the public Girls Who Code Club at the Rochambeau Library in Providence, Rhode Island. Another initiative LLNE supported this year was Bringing Books Behind Bars. In the spirit of the LLNE Spring 2016 meeting on Access to Government Information, the service committee worked with the Rhode Island Department of Corrections library system to compile a list of approved and much needed books for the inmates. The library serves both maximum and minimum security prisons, as well as male and female prison populations. We received over 45 books for the drive. The service committee is also exploring ways we can advocate for the Department of Corrections library system. Continuing our outreach to Public Librarians, Jessica Pisano Jones, Joshua LaPorte, and Nicole Dyszlewski presented at the Rhode Island Library Association Annual Conference, *Legal Link: Successful Strategies for Managing Law-Related Patron Inquiries*. The presentation included discussion of how to approach common legal questions, information about unauthorized practice of law and when to refer out to law libraries or other community services, and an introduction to Legal Link, the service committee's web portal for legal materials and advice for New England public librarians.

SCHOLARSHIP

This year the scholarship committee awarded a new Continuing Education Scholarship, which aims to expand LLNE members' access to education and training opportunities. The inaugural recipients of this award, Ellen Frentzen and Anna Lawless-Collins, attended the AALL Business Skills Clinic. The scholarship committee also awarded a scholarship to Melanie Cornell to attend the AALL Annual Meeting, and to Amy Wilson to attend LLNE's Spring Meeting. In addition to actively reviewing

applications, the scholarship committee also revised some of its policies with the approval of the executive board, and worked on developing new marketing strategies.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership committee coordinated the Meet & Greet at AALL last July and a Happy Hour with ABLL last October 2016.

ARCHIVES

The archives committee reviewed our current holdings and began the deaccession process in order to weed out irrelevant materials. They also developed plans to move the holdings to a more convenient location for easier access and use and created a strategy for digital materials, which is broken down into two pieces: creating electronic surrogates for existing materials (both for preservation and ease of use) and capturing digitally-born materials (i.e., those materials that only exist in an electronic form).

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Throughout the year, LLNE GRC monitored legislation in the New England states, including UELMA in MA, and coordinated with AALL's Government Relations Committee. They were in communication with the LLNE GRC's representatives of the 6 New England states for updates on legislative and government policies in their respective states that are of interest to law librarians. The UELMA subcommittee of the LLNE GRC has remained active all year, organizing a letter writing campaign at the LLNE spring meeting and working on gathering support from stakeholders. Due to the Subcommittee's efforts, the Massachusetts Bar Association's House of Delegates voted to support UELMA. The Subcommittee will continue to monitor the legislation.

EDUCATION

LLNE held two meetings this year. The fall 2015 meeting, hosted by Roger Williams University School of Law, focused on supporting and igniting innovation. It included panels on legal entrepreneurs and a plenary talk from noted law and design expert Margaret Hagan. This meeting won an AALL reward for Chapter Professional Development. The spring 2016 meeting, hosted by Northeastern University School of Law in conjunction with the Association of Boston Law Librarians, focused on access to government information.

LLNE COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

This committee sent Harvard's holdings of LLNE News to HeinOnline for digitization. They received back the digital files from Hein and are still in the process of figuring out how to make them available to LLNE members through the LLNE website. The publication now appears on HeinOnline's Law Library Reference Shelf. The committee is currently updating the LLNE brochure. They made regular use of our social media outlets and are in the process of developing a Twitter member list and sending out a social media use survey and are working on developing an organizational communications strategy.