



ALA mobilizes library advocates

"Thanks for the most entertaining, informative session I've ever attended."

"I am excited about this. We must be selling our program to school boards, legislators and the public."

"This is the most important and potentially powerful thing ALA is doing!"

Those are among the comments of participants in Library Advocacy Now!, a new initiative sponsored by ALA to build a nationwide network of library advocates.

Library Advocacy Now! workshops will be offered at many ALA state-chapter and other library conferences throughout 1995. The training program, developed with a World Book/ALA Goal Award, is intended for trustees and other friends of libraries, as well as library staff.

The focus is on helping everyone who cares about libraries to become effective advocates using contacts with the media, legislators, and other forums to build the case for library sup-

port at the local, state, and national levels.

"Other interests have claims that they advocate forcefully in the media, in executive chambers, and legislative halls," ALA President Arthur Curley explained. "The library community must also speak out and be aggressive about getting others to speak out on our behalf."

Curley noted that several pieces of legislation and policy critical to libraries will come before Congress in the coming year. These include reauthorization of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), new funding for school libraries authorized in the Elementary and Secondary School Library Media Act, intellectual property rights, and other issues related to the information superhighway.

Those interested in scheduling a local Library Advocacy Now! training session should contact Gerald Hodges, director of ALA Membership, at (800) 545-2433, ext. 4285; fax: (312) 944-2461; e-mail: gerald.hodges@ala.org.

Curley has appointed a Special Committee on Public Awareness to lead the mobilization effort. Patricia Glass Schuman, a past-president of ALA and member of the New York Library Association Public Awareness Committee, is chair. Margo Crist, assistant director for public services at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and Charles Beard, director of West Georgia College Libraries in Carrollton, are cochairs.

A Library Advocacy Now! Action Pack (#5900-9600) with tips for being an effective library advocate, dealing with the media, and contacting legislators, and a sample speech, news release, letter to the editor, and more, is available from ALA Graphics for \$10 plus \$4 for shipping and handling. Send a check to ALA Order Department, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Orders of \$30 or more can be called in to (800) 545-2433, press 7.



"As a child, I loved to read books. The library was a window to the world, a pathway to worlds and people far from my neighborhood in Philadelphia. And even today, as I travel around the world, I often visit places I used to dream about because of the books I'd read."

*Ed Bradley,
broadcast journalist*

American
Library
Association

Journalist Ed Bradley was one of many people who responded to ALA's "Libraries Change Lives" testimonial campaign.