

Libraries applaud dismissal of Google Book Search case

After eight years of litigation, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York today upheld the fair use doctrine when the court dismissed *Authors Guild v. Google*, a case that questioned the legality of Google's searchable book database. The Library Copyright Alliance—which is comprised of ALA, ACRL, and ARL—welcomes Judge Denny Chin's decision to protect the search database that allows the public to search more than 20 million books. In his dismissal of the case, Chin referenced an amicus brief submitted by the Library Copyright Alliance and enumerated the public benefits of Google Book Search by calling the project a fair use under the copyright law.

ALA launches policy revolution initiative for libraries

The ALA Office for Information Technology Policy will begin work on a national public policy agenda and action plan for U.S. libraries with support from a new grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Nearly \$1 million in funding over three years will enable ALA to increase library visibility and build capacity for sustained action on the national level. The three-year initiative includes three major components: establishing policy priorities, engaging decision makers and influencers to advance policy goals, and upgrading ALA policy advocacy practice and capabilities for long-term sustainability. An important activity under this capacity-building umbrella is training a cadre of library policy advocates to supplement ALA staff capacity.

ALA calls for nominations for the James Madison Award


ALA is calling for nominations for two awards to honor individuals or groups who have championed, protected, and promoted public access to government information and the public's right to know. The James Madison Award, named

in honor of President James Madison, was established in 1986 to celebrate an individual or group who has brought awareness to these issues at the national level. Madison is widely regarded as the Father of the Constitution and as the foremost advocate for openness in government. Nominations should be submitted to the ALA Washington Office no later than January 17, 2014. Submissions should include a statement about the nominee's contribution to public access to government information, why it merits the award, and one seconding letter. ALA will announce the winner during the 2014 National Freedom of Information Day on March 14, 2014.

ALA opposes harmful federal research legislation

In November, legislators circulated language for a bill entitled the Frontiers in Innovation, Research, Science, and Technology Act of 2013, a bill that would restrict public access to articles reporting on federally funded research for up to three years after initial publication. The proposed delay is two-and-a-half years longer than what is proposed in the bicameral and bipartisan Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act. ALA has joined in a letter with ten other national and regional library, publishing, and advocacy organizations expressing our strong opposition to the current language in the first bill.

ALA submits reply comments

In November, ALA filed reply comments with the Federal Communications Commission to swiftly reform the federal E-rate program so that the nation's learners are connected to high-capacity broadband through libraries and schools. The average public library has about the same connectivity as the average home—limiting libraries' ability to serve communities' education, employment, and e-government needs. With an average of 16.4 public computers and more than 40 percent of libraries with maximum Internet speeds of 4 Mbps or less, we are falling behind. ALA proposes two limited-term programs that build on President Obama's ConnectED initiative and address the greatest barriers to increasing bandwidth. 

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