

Maggie Farrell and Sari Feldman

Meet the candidates

Vote in the election this spring

The ACRL Board of Directors posed the following questions to the candidates (Farrell is an ACRL member) for ALA president, and *C&RL News* is pleased to publish their responses. Each candidate was given 1,200 words in which she could respond to six questions and contribute an optional opening statement; the responses are identified under each question.

Opening statement from Maggie Farrell

Thank you for the opportunity to address critical concerns of ACRL. As a leader in higher education, ACRL has been on the forefront of information literacy competencies and linking the value of academic libraries to colleges and universities. As ALA president, I want to work with you to ensure your priorities are supported and advanced within ALA.

Opening statement from Sari Feldman

We know this to be true: libraries change lives. Libraries are bastions of intellectual freedom, places where curiosity, exploration, and knowledge meet inquiring minds. As members of the library profession and library supporters, we share an incredible opportunity to contribute to environments where people can learn freely, share ideas, and draw inspiration.

Should I be elected president of ALA, I will engage our membership to build strong advocates for libraries and to help our members truly see themselves as part of our organization. I commit to elevating best practices and championing the risk-takers and game-changers who are helping libraries innovate to meet the needs of our customers today and into the future. I want to lead an



Maggie Farrell



Sari Feldman

ALA that not only inspires those in the library profession, but an ALA that is driven to share our inspiration with others around the world.

1. What do you see as the most important issues facing our profession today, particularly for academic and research librarians? With respect to these issues, what should ALA do to address them? What leadership skills you would bring to ALA to move the association forward?

Farrell: There are several important issues facing our profession but a common concern for all types of libraries is the false perception that libraries are not essential for our communities. As I was advocating for increased funding for Wyoming libraries a few years ago, I had to counter the notion that people could just find what they needed on the Internet and that books via Amazon were readily available. As libraries compete for limited resources, we have to show how libraries advance our communities with demonstrable data. Our metrics need to go beyond library usage to showing how students are more successful when they develop information literacy skills, how programs in our public libraries support employment and economic

development, and how school libraries assist in the development of critical thinking skills so students are better prepared for college and university studies. The ACRL Value of Academic Libraries initiative is an excellent example of metrics that tell the story to our universities demonstrating that academic libraries are essential to higher education. We need more training and best practices in this area and as ALA president, I would look to ACRL to work with other divisions and units to articulate how we as an association can address this need. My facilitation and consensus skills would be instrumental in bringing together a broad group of people to advance our advocacy efforts. My leadership focuses on the ability to develop and communicate a shared vision that advances an organization. I would be honored to lead ALA in our efforts to work effectively with our stakeholders and partners in demonstrating the many contributions of our libraries to communities.

Feldman: Demonstrating and communicating our relevance is one of the most critical issues facing the library profession. Within the academic and research library field, we must reinforce the ways in which library service is essential to learning, research, and information accessibility. Academic and research institutions are especially critical to fostering information literacy, scholarly publication, and responsiveness to student learning. They are doing important work that ALA must emphasize and bring to the forefront of public awareness.

The core values of privacy and preservation increasingly represent an essential focus for libraries. It is essential for ACRL to be at the forefront of advancing national policy in these areas. My experience in advocating for library support at the local, state, and national level will be critical to positioning ALA at the table for these important policy conversations. As a confident public speaker and experienced media spokesperson, I look forward to representing ALA to advance libraries and our profession.

I also bring expertise in making strategic budget decisions that sustainably align rev-

enues and expenditures. My ability to identify new revenue streams and increase fund development to ensure financial sustainability is a critical leadership skill that ALA and its membership need moving forward.

2. ACRL's Plan for Excellence identifies goals that heighten the impact that librarians have upon the Value of Academic Libraries, Student Learning, and the Research and Scholarly Environment. In what ways would you, as ALA president, work with ACRL and its partners to advance or promote these goals?

Farrell: I am very impressed with ACRL's work in linking information literacy and library instruction to student success and retention. Universities and colleges are under great pressure for student retention, time to degree, and marketable skills upon completion of degree programs. The competition for research funding is becoming more intense, and academic librarians can have a stronger role in supporting research on their campuses. In order to advance these goals, academic librarians will need to emphasize different skills, including teaching, student assessment, research strategies, and managing data. As president, I would be a strong advocate to partners, such as the Higher Learning Commission, to build an awareness of how librarians contribute to student and faculty success. I will also work within ALA to advance ACRL goals within the new strategic plan that will be developed under my term and to link those goals with ALA units so that as an association, we are discussing common goals and how all libraries advance their respective communities.

Feldman: One of my primary goals as ALA president will be to elevate innovative approaches across all disciplines within the library profession to promote best practices. The ACRL Plan for Excellence is a highly innovative plan that leverages research on ROI, student outcomes, and research initiatives. It is critical for ALA to support this kind of best practice approach and share it broadly with members. All of us in the profession can

learn from the ACRL model and become more data driven, especially in our responses to the media and the development of a national platform on the future of libraries.

As cochair of the Digital Content and Libraries Working Group, I have gained invaluable experience building consensus within ALA and working collaboratively across the divisions, roundtables, and offices of the organization. My ability to co-create a solid vision and execute a plan collaboratively will be critical to helping ACRL and other groups within ALA to advance their goals.

3. What experience have you had advancing diversity in the library profession? As ALA president, how will you move forward ongoing association efforts regarding the recruitment and retention of librarians from diverse backgrounds?

Farrell: Our profession needs to reflect the diversity of our society, and we have had some success as noted in the recent “Diversity Counts” report, but additional individual and collective actions are required. As dean and associate dean in academic libraries, I have sought diversity when hiring librarians and library workers. Once hired, I support formal and informal education as a way to strengthen individual skills and build a pathway for advancement. At the University of Wyoming, I hired librarians as part of a spousal/domestic partner program enabling couples to find full employment. At Montana State University, I supported additional funding and staffing for the Tribal College Librarian Professional Development Institute; an important training program for many smaller tribal colleges. I also seek diversity in my service engagements as noted in my work with the Traditional Cultural Expressions Task Force, and, as president, I would continue to be inclusive in order to bring a variety of voices to the table. As president, I would also engage the caucuses and units in outlining specific actions to advance our profession. The Spectrum scholarships, of which I am a donor, and the IMLS/ALA Discovering Librarianship are initiatives that I fully support and hope to expand as president.

Feldman: The key to building diversity in any organization is to foster a collaborative and inclusive culture. Part of creating that kind of culture is effective communication; the other part involves becoming comfortable with, and adept at, change. The fact of the matter is that we have not done enough across ALA to communicate the broad changes in our profession and to encourage innovators, risk takers, and entrepreneurs to join us in the workforce or the association.

We must make a concerted effort as an association to become much more deliberate in our recruitment efforts for the profession. At the same time, our efforts in continuing education and leadership development must support those already committed to the career to see a path to advancement. We need to seek out the creative thinkers and individuals from diverse and unique backgrounds to tap them for leadership opportunities. The association must provide multiple entry points and opportunities for participation and leadership.

Over the course of my career in libraries I have worked in diverse environments and championed the value of inclusiveness. I have successfully mentored a broad group of individuals from different backgrounds, interests, and ethnicity into our profession and have also encouraged and supported diversity in professional and ALA leadership positions. Over time I have moved from mentorship to sponsorship, making personal investments in the professional future of a diverse and talented group of individuals. If there is one area where ALA can make the biggest impact over the next three-to-five years, it is in strengthening the diversity of our organization.

4. Membership organizations, such as ALA and ACRL, need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does ALA need to do to keep the organization relevant to academic and research librarians, particularly those new to the profession? What ideas or strategies do you have to balance the ALA budget and to increase revenues in support of member activities?

Farrell: Our new librarians have a fresh energy that is inspiring, and their optimism is contagious. We not only need more such librarians, but we also need to retain them in order to keep our profession dynamic. ALA needs to use technology as a way to engage our new members—technology is an opportunity to connect individuals, yet our current association infrastructure is clunky and much of our association work is still conducted face-to-face at conferences. We need to change the way we work so that we are conducting more work in between conferences and using conferences to build our relationships and networks.

The size and scope of ALA is daunting to new members, but divisions and units can provide a more relevant and personal experience for a new librarian. As part of the strategic planning process, I will ask members what activities should be the purview of ALA and which activities should be managed by divisions and roundtables. We need to reduce the duplication of programs and services within ALA seeking more collaboration across the units. A simpler structure with clear areas of responsibilities that are coordinated will be more appealing to our newer members as well as more fiscally responsive.

Feldman: As the world becomes increasingly connected and technology enables us to do more than we ever imagined in terms of opening communication, relevance for our organization and many others will mean adopting a more global focus. During my tenure as PLA president and at various points throughout my work in ALA, I have travelled internationally to foster global relations and to learn from library professionals around the world.

One takeaway from my travels that continues to resonate for me is that American libraries and ALA are recognized as global leaders in our profession. I see opportunity to strengthen revenue by developing professional training and consultation services that extend beyond our membership and connect with a global audience. Cultivating collaborations with international library pro-

fessionals and networks also offers potential for developing revenue streams, while further engaging our membership in new and energizing ways. We must recognize that revenue streams of the past based on publications, conferences, and even dues should be evaluated and reconsidered within a global marketplace of education, ideas, and information.

5. Big data, acquiring, storing, organizing and analyzing it, is a subject of great interest both in and beyond higher education. ACRL is currently exploring how it might provide educational and other big data services to members. As big data becomes more widely used in analytical methods in academic and scholarly research, as well as government and industry, how can ALA support divisional efforts to make sure we are helping our members to thrive in this new research environment?

Farrell: Professional development of academic librarians as well as course work within library science programs are essential in strengthening librarian skills in managing data and understanding the research process. Academic librarians already possess the foundational skills for assisting researchers in managing data, but it is intimidating due to the scale of the data and the intellectual property and privacy rights that encompass this type of research. ACRL can be a leader in developing training to bolster these skills as well as a partner with other higher education associations to ensure that our universities and colleges are developing policies that manage data deposit, discovery, metadata, authentication, and archiving of research data.

Feldman: The application of big data in enhancing productivity, product development, and strategy across industries is in a state of evolution. What is clear at this point is that the ability to curate data and provide effective analysis presents increasingly significant opportunity for academic librarians to partner with, and demonstrate value to, faculty, researchers, innovators, industries, and

education. ALA can play a role in supporting the development of competency areas and information studies that ensure our profession provides the talent of deep analytical skills to our academic and research community. At the same time, the implications of big data acquisition, storage, analysis, and more will touch on core value areas for ALA that require the development of policies related to privacy, security, and intellectual property.

6. Defending the privacy of their community members is a responsibility to which academic librarians are strongly committed. The year 2013 brought news of unprecedented assaults on individual privacy. What is your perspective on the role and responsibility of ALA in helping libraries to educate community members about privacy rights? Can you envision a “big tent” approach in which all library sectors proactively collaborate to protect these rights?

Farrell: Absolutely, and privacy as one of ALA’s values should be protected by all ALA units. ALA, with its legislative expertise and connections to partner associations, is in the position to educate our citizens about privacy rights and to communicate our concerns about threats to our privacy and intellectual freedom. The intellectual freedom committees and liaisons are instrumental in keeping all ALA units informed and providing common talking points so that as individuals we have a consistent message advocating for

our patrons. ALA’s role is to coordinate and facilitate communication among the various units, and ensure that members are aware and equipped to handle questions and concerns regarding various library values on local and national levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to address specific concerns of ACRL, and while the concerns noted have an academic perspective, these are shared concerns across the association and our profession. As president, I look forward to working with you to articulate these issues and to seek common solutions in order to move our profession forward. I ask for your vote for president-elect of ALA.

Feldman: Even as we recognize the complexity of security in the United States and the role that information plays in global security, defending the privacy of individuals is one of the most fundamental tenets of our profession. ALA must stand behind policies that protect anonymity and prevent metadata from being used to identify individuals.

ACRL faces particular challenges on this issue related to new revelations on government surveillance of researchers and academics. If we learn from the success of our efforts in the Digital Content and Libraries working group, where we employed a “big tent” approach, we could develop a similar strategy as it relates to advocating on behalf of privacy rights. ALA has an essential responsibility to advocate for individual privacy and communicate broadly about this most basic right of American democracy. *ZZ*

ACRL presidential candidates online forum

The 2014 candidates for ACRL vice-president/president-elect will participate in an online forum on Monday, March 17 from 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. CST (12–1 p.m. EST, 10–11 a.m. MST, 9–10 a.m. PST).

Come hear Ann Campion Riley and Rickey Best discuss their platforms and vision for ACRL. Campion Riley is associate director for access, collections, and technical

services at the University of Missouri, and Best is collection development librarian at Auburn University at Montgomery.

Details for accessing the webcast will be available on the ACRL Insider blog, www.acrl.ala.org/acrlinsider, by early March. Audio archives of the candidates answering prepared questions will also be available on ACRL Insider a few days after the forum.

ACRL members running for ALA Council in the spring 2014 election

The following ACRL members are either nominated or petition candidates for ALA councilor. ACRL members are encouraged to vote for these candidates to increase ACRL's voice in ALA affairs.

Latrice Booker, Coordinator of Library Instruction, Indiana University Northwest-Gary

Steve Brantley, Head of Reference Services, Eastern Illinois University-Charleston

Matthew Ciszek, Head Librarian of the Lartz Memorial Library, Penn State Shenango, Sharon, Pennsylvania

Alexander H. Cohen, Library Consultant, Aaron Cohen Associates, Croton-On-Hudson, New York

Gerardo "Gary" Colmenar, Associate Librarian, University of California-Santa Barbara

Roberto C. Delgadillo, Social Sciences/Humanities Reference Librarian, University of California-Davis

John DeSantis, Cataloging and Metadata Services Librarian, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

Tyler Dzuba, Head of the Physics-Optics-Astronomy Library, University of Rochester, New York

Clem Guthro, Director of Libraries, Colby College, Waterville, Maine

Kathleen Hanselmann, Chief Librarian, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Presidio of Monterey, California

Will Hires, Engineering Librarian, Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge

Susan L. Jennings, Dean of Library Services, Chattanooga State Community College, Tennessee

Xudong Jin, Library Director, Pitt Community College, Greenville, North Carolina

Laura Koltutsky, Social Sciences Librarian, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Charles E. Kratz, Dean of Libraries, University of Scranton, Pennsylvania

Chihfeng P. Lin, Associate Professor, Shih Hsin University, Taipei, Taiwan

Rodney Lippard, Director, Learning Resource Centers, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Salisbury, North Carolina

Michael J. Miller, Acting Chief Librarian, Bronx Community College-City University of New York

Heather Lea Moulaison, Assistant Professor, University of Missouri-Columbia

Andrew Pace, Executive Director, Networked Library Services, Online Computer Library Center, Dublin, Ohio

Jeannette E. Pierce, Associate Director for Research and Information Services, University of Missouri-Columbia

Kevin Reynolds, Associate University Librarian, The University of the South, Sevanee, Tennessee

Erin S. Stalberg, Director of Discovery and Access, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts

Thomas H. Teper, Associate University Librarian for Collections and Technical Services, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign