
I am happy to share some updates on what I covered in my previous column. First of all, I am excited to report that the merger planning of LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA is back on track. The merger planning had been temporarily put on hold due to the target date for the merger being delayed from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, as announced earlier this year. After taking some time after the 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the current leadership of LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA met, reviewed the work that we have accomplished so far, and decided that the remaining work will now go to the capable hands of the President-Elects of LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA, who were elected this April. During their term, this new cohort of President-Elects will build on the work done by the cross-divisional working groups, in order to present the three-division merger for the membership vote in Spring 2020 with more details.

Another piece of good news is that LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA will begin experimenting with joint programming in order to kickstart our collaboration while the merger planning continues. The LITA Board decided to hold the next LITA Forum in Fall 2020. ALCTS is also planning for its second virtual ALCTS Exchange to take place in Spring 2020. LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA will work together on both program committees of the LITA Forum and the ALCTS Exchange to provide a wider and more interesting range of programs at both conferences. If the membership vote result is in favor of the three-division merger, then the new division will be officially formed in Fall 2020, and the planned 2020 LITA Forum may become the first conference of the new division.

Shortly after the 2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the LITA Board decided to commit funds to create and disseminate an online allyship training to address the issues aggressive behavior, racism, and harassment reported at the Midwinter Meeting.¹ Since then, the LITA staff and the LITA Board of Directors have been closely working with the ALA office and several other divisions, ALCTS, ALSC, ASGCLA, PLA, RUSA, and United, reviewing options. It is likely that this training will follow the "train-the-trainer" model, in order to generate and expand the pool of allyship trainers who will develop and run the LITA's online allyship training for LITA members. Our goal is to expand our collective capacity to strengthen active and effective allyship, recognize and undo oppressive behaviors and systems, and promote the practice of cultural humility, which requires ongoing efforts, not just a one-time event. We hope to be able to announce more details soon once the final plan is determined.

I would also like to highlight the LITA award winners who will be celebrated at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference in Washington D.C. and to thank the members of the award committees for their hard work.² The 2019 LITA/Ex Libris Student Writing Award will go to Sharon Han, a Master of Science in Library and Information Science candidate at the University of Illinois School of Information Sciences, for her paper, "Weathering the Twitter Storm: Early Uses of Social Media as a Disaster Response Tool for Public Libraries During Hurricane Sandy," which is included in this issue. Charles McClure and John Price Wilkin were selected as the 2019 winners of the LITA/OCLC

Bohyun Kim (bohyun.kim.ois@gmail.com) is LITA President 2018-19 and Chief Technology Officer & Associate Professor, University of Rhode Island Libraries, Kingston, RI.



Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology and the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award sponsored by ACRL, ALCTS, LLAMA, and LITA, respectively. Charles McClure is the Francis Eppes Professor of Information Studies in the School of Information and the Director of the Information Use Management and Policy Institute at Florida State University. John Price Wilkin is the Juanita J. and Robert E. Simpson Dean of Libraries at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The North Carolina State University Libraries will receive the 2019 LITA/Library Hi Tech Award for Outstanding Communication in Library and Information Technology, which recognizes outstanding individuals or institutions for their long-term contributions to the education of the Library and Information Science technology field and is sponsored by LITA and Emerald Publishing.

Other not-to-be-missed LITA highlights at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference in Washington D.C. include the LITA Top Tech Trends program widely known for its insightful overview of emerging technologies, the LITA President's Program with Meredith Broussard, a data journalist and the author of *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*³ as the speaker, and the LITA Happy Hour, a lively social gathering of all library technologists and technology-enthusiasts. The LITA Avram Camp is also preparing for another terrific all-day discussion and activities this year for women and non-binary library technologists to examine the shared challenges, to network, and to support one another. The LITA Imagineering Interest Group has put together another fantastic program, "Agency, Consent, and Power in Science Fiction and Fantasy," featuring four sci-fi authors: Sarah Gailey, Malka Older, John Scalzi, and Martha Wells. The LITA Membership Committee is also preparing a virtual LITA Kickoff orientation for those who are newly attending the ALA Annual Conference.

In this last column that I write as the LITA President, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the dedicated LITA Board of Directors, the always fantastic LITA staff, and many LITA leaders and members whose creativity, passion, and energy continue to drive LITA forward. Serving as the Chief Elected Officer of one of the leading membership association in library technology has been a true honor to me, and having such a great team of people to work with has been of tremendous help to me in tackling many daunting tasks.

It is often said that all LITA Presidents face unique challenges during their terms. I can say that this has been certainly true during my term. Working together with the ALCTS and the LLAMA leadership on the three-division merger was a valuable experience and a privilege. While we could not move things as quickly as we hoped, we have built a great foundation for the next phase of the planning and learned many things together along the way.

Last but not least, I would like to thank everyone who stood for the election and congratulate all newly-elected LITA officers: Evviva Weinraub for the President-Elect, Hong Ma and Galen Charlton for Board of Directors at Large, and Jodie Gambill for the LITA Councilor. I am confident that led by the incoming LITA President, Emily Morton-Owens, the capable and dedicated LITA leadership will continue to accomplish many great things with energetic and forward-thinking LITA members in coming years. The future of LITA is brighter with these new LITA leaders. Good luck and thank you for your service!



ENDNOTES

- ¹ “LITA’s Statement in Response to Incidents at ALA Midwinter 2019,” *LITA Blog*, February 4, 2019, <https://litablog.org/2019/02/litas-statement-in-response-to-incidents-at-ala-midwinter-2019/>.
- ² “LITA Awards & Scholarships,” *Library Information Technology Association (LITA)*, <http://www.ala.org/lita/awards>.
- ³ Meredith Broussard, *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2018).