

Cloud computing. Web 3.0 or the Semantic Web. Google Editions. Books in copyright and books out of copyright. Born digital. Digitized material. The reduction of Stanford University's Engineering Library book collection by 85 percent. The publishing paradigm most of us know, and have taken for granted, has shifted. Online databases came and we managed them. Then CD-ROMs showed up and mostly went away. And, along came the Internet, which we helped implement, use, and now depend on. How we deal with the current shifts happening in information and technology during the next five to ten years will say a great deal about how the library and information community reinvents itself for its role in the twenty-first century. This shift is different, and it will create both opportunities and challenges for everyone, including those who manage information and those who use it.

As a reflection of the shifts in the information arena, LITA is facing its own challenges as an association. It has had a long and productive role in the American Library Association (ALA) dating back to 1966. The talent among the association members is amazing, solid, and a tribute to the individuals who belong to and participate in LITA. LITA's members are leaders to the core and recognized as standouts within ALA as they push the edge of what information management means, and can mean.

For the past three years, LITA members, the board, and the executive committee have been working on a strategic plan for LITA. That process has been described in Michelle Frisque's "President's Message" (*ITAL* v. 29, no. 2) and elsewhere. The plan was approved at the 2010 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. A plan is not cast in concrete. It is a dynamic, living document that provides the fabric that drives the association.

Why is this process important now more than ever? We are all dealing with the current recession. Libraries are retrenching. People face challenges participating in the library field on various levels. The big information players on the national and international level are changing the playing field. As membership, each of us has an opportunity to affect the future of information and technology locally, nationally, and internationally. This plan is intended to ensure LITA's role as a "go to" place for people in the library, information, and technology fields well into the twenty-first century.

LITA committees and interest groups are being asked to step up to the table and develop action plans to implement the strategies the LITA membership have identified as crucial to the association's ongoing success. Members of the board are liaisons to each of the committees, and there is a board liaison to the interest groups. These individuals will work with committee chairs, interest group chairs, and the membership to implement LITA's plan for the future. The committee and interest group chairs are being asked to contribute those actions plans by the 2011 ALA Midwinter Meeting. They will be compiled and made available to all LITA and ALA members for their use through the LITA website (<http://lita.org>) and ALA Connect (<http://connect.ala.org>).

What is in it for you? LITA is known for its leadership opportunities, continuing education, training, publications, expertise in standards and information policy, and knowledge and understanding of current and cutting-edge technologies. LITA provides you with opportunities to develop those leadership skills that you can use in your job and lifelong career. The skills working within a group of individuals to implement a program, influence standards and policy, collaborate with other ALA divisions, and publish can be taken home to your library. Your participation documents your value as an employee and your commitment to lifelong learning. In today's work environment, employers look for staff with proven skills who have contributed to the good of the organization and the profession.

LITA needs your participation in developing and implementing continuing education programs, publishing articles and books, and illustrating by your actions why others want to join the association. How can you do that? Volunteer for a committee, help develop a continuing education program, write an article, write a book, role model for others with your LITA participation, and recruit. What does your association gain? A solid structure to support its members in accomplishing the mission, vision, and strategic plan they identified as core for years to come.

Look for opportunities to participate and develop those skills. We will be working with committee and interest group chairs to develop meeting management tool kits over the next year, create opportunities to participate virtually, identify emerging leaders of all types, collaborate with other divisions, and provide input on national information policy and standards through ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy and other similar organizations. If you want to be involved, be sure to let LITA committee and interest group chairs, the board, and your elected officers know.

Karen J. Starr (kstarr@nevadaculture.org) is LITA President 2010–11 and Assistant Administrator for Library and Development Services, Nevada State Library and Archives, Carson City.