

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

October 14, 2006

Like the noble elephant, AAHSL is complex and often viewed from different perspectives by its officers, committee chairs, members and non-members. It is also an association that has accomplished much and undoubtedly will accomplish much more in the future. This year, like many before, was filled with important activities and achievements made possible by the tremendous volunteer efforts of AAHSL members. Thus, a special thanks should be accorded first to the nearly 70% of the membership who lend their time, talent, expertise and energy to AAHSL committees and task forces; to the Board of Directors for their advice and direction; to past-president Michael Homan for his learned counsel; to president-elect Elaine Martin for her enthusiasm; to Carolyn Lipscomb for her support, and to executive director Shirley Bishop and her staff for their dedication and their service excellence.

The extensive work of AAHSL is reflected in the annual reports published in the *AAHSL/AAHSLD 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 2005-2005*. These reports together with other documentation generated by the association's various units, all of which are available on AAHSL's website ([www.aahsl.org](http://www.aahsl.org)), are the direct result of the shared vision of the association's leadership.

Specifically, AAHSL's vision is to *enhance the success of its members in advancing health through their recognized leadership in managing and utilizing the intellectual resources within and beyond the institution*. To achieve that vision, association activities and efforts this year focused on three major goals.

### **GOAL 1: Continue to Grow AAHSL:**

#### **Membership**

Although AAHSL's membership growth this association year was modest – adding two new institutional members (MD Anderson & University of Miami) – it is testimony to AAHSL's continuing value that it remains the premier association defining the future of academic health sciences libraries in the United States and Canada with a membership of 116 regular institutional members and 20 associate institutional members. The publication and distribution of a Members' Benefits brochure will help tell AAHSL's story to key administrators of existing and potential member institutions and expand our influence and strategic collaboration with association partners and legislative groups. In addition to

membership growth, AAHSL has experienced growth in its sphere of influence through growth in strategic collaborations.

#### ***Strategic Collaboration***

AAHSL continued to enhance its strategic collaboration with the National Library of Medicine (NLM), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the Association of Academic Health Centers (AHC), the Medical Library Association (MLA), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

- **NLM:** AAHSL and NLM continue a successful collaboration for provision of the NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program (chaired by Carol Jenkins & Wayne Peay) and funded an evaluation

study of the program's first three years. The program, now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, has expanded beyond our original expectations and program alumni are actively being recruited for academic health sciences library positions. AAHSL has also continued its strong support for the NIH Public Access Policy implementation on PubMed Central and open access (OA) issues in general. A survey conducted by AAHSL and MLA about researchers' participation in the NIH Public Access database spoke to the need for Congressional oversight to actively monitor participation rates and overall effectiveness and generated language ultimately mirrored in the NIH Reauthorization bill. AAHSL continues to stress the importance of promoting widespread, affordable, and effective dissemination of scientific scholarly research, especially through enactment of the Federal Research Public Access Act. Both the MLA/AAHSL Joint Legislative Task Force and the Scholarly Communications Committee (chaired by Mary Ryan) have worked hard to achieve these accomplishments. Additionally, several AAHSL members including AAHSL Board members Elaine Martin and Gail Yokote serve on NLM long range planning panels.

- **AHC:** Our strategic collaboration with AHC continues to evolve and a strong collegial relationship has begun to grow between AHC and AAHSL leadership. Elaine Martin and I met with the AHC Board of Directors and other affiliated AHC members this year to discuss ways to improve cooperative efforts between and among the affiliated members. It is encouraging to see how

dedicated each of the associations is to improving the quality of healthcare and how each association views and interacts with this "elephant" we call healthcare. Direct results of this strategic collaboration include the participation of AHC Leadership in the Leadership Fellows Capstone event, presentations to the Joint Legislative Task Force by AHC legislative staff, AAHSL (and MLA) contributions to AHC's professional website, and the potential for shared IT management collaboration.

- **AAMC:** AAHSL and AAMC continue to maintain and expand their collaborative efforts. Existing activities include an annual spring visit by AAHSL leadership with AAMC leadership, AAHSL representation on the Council of Academic Societies (Shelley Bader, Gary Byrd), AAMC leadership participation in the Fellows Capstone event, and joint sponsorship of the annual Matheson lecture and annual meeting reception with the Group on Information Resources (GIR). This year AAMC opened its Chairs portal ([www.aamc.org/chairs](http://www.aamc.org/chairs)) that contains useful times like the AAMC Salary Survey and the AAMC Databook to AAHSL library directors. AAMC also invited AAHSL to make recommendations regarding LCME accreditation guidelines as they relate to academic health sciences libraries. The newly appointed LCME Task Force (chaired by Debra Ketchell) is hard at work drafting recommendations.
- **MLA:** MLA remains a key strategic partner with overlapping memberships of AAHSL members in MLA and joint funding of a lobbyist firm in Washington, DC. The AAHSL/MLA Joint Legislative Task

Force is one successful activity of this long-standing relationship and this year the task force addressed a significant number of legislative issues including NIH appropriations, NIH reauthorization, EPA libraries funding, copyright section 108, the Federal Research Public Access Act, and health information technology legislation. Additionally, AAHSL and MLA are cooperating to staff a health sciences librarianship career information both at the annual Minority Student Medical Career Awareness Workshop and Recruitment Fair for high school and college students during the AAMC annual meeting sponsored by the AAMC Group on Student Affairs-Minority Affairs Section (GSA-MAS) and Division of Diversity Policy and Programs.

- **ARL:** ARL ended its collaboration with AAHSL with the conclusion of the fourth year of the Leadership Fellows Program due to changes in ARL strategic priorities. As a result, AAHSL signed a contract with DeEtta Jones and Kathryn Deiss to continue their relationship as program faculty. ARL continues as a collaborator on issues of open access publishing including AAHSL participation in the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) and the Alliance for Taxpayer Access (ATA). ARL also worked with AAHSL, ALA, ACRL, GWLA, MLA, SPARC, and SLA to coordinate several letters and FAQ documents on scholarly communications and OA to Congressional members. The AAHSL Scholarly Communications coordinates these activities for AAHSL.
- **IMLS:** AAHSL began communications and collaborative

efforts this year with the Institute of Museum and Library Services. IMLS leadership provided presentations to the Joint Legislative Task Force, the New Leaders Development Symposium, and the Leadership Fellows Program. IMLS has also been posting announcements of grant opportunities to the AAHSL listserv and it is anticipated that this partnership will continue to grow.

These partnerships continue to grow AAHSL's influence in the world of librarianship and the larger world of healthcare. Through them the value of academic health sciences libraries and librarians is communicated and enhanced and our association is slowly moving from a quiet organization that accomplishes much behind the scenes to a more publicly recognized association able to guide and influence larger issues.

## **GOAL 2: Ensure the Viability of AAHSL**

A common set of expectations helps build a foundation for association viability. Those expectations must be conveyed to the membership along with the realization that not all services are of equal importance to all members. To ensure AAHSL viability, the provision of services and the communications about the availability of those services is essential. These services are obviously important to the majority of AAHSL members (65%) who voted to increase regular member dues by \$300 each year, for three years, and increase AAHSL associate member dues by \$100 each year for three years, effective with invoicing for 2007 association dues. Although space limitations for this annual report do not permit a full listing of AAHSL services and benefits, I would like to mention four of them.

- **Networking:** One of the most valuable services any professional association can provide its members is the ability to network; this is especially important for new directors. The traditional New Directors Luncheon held each year during our annual meeting was enhanced this year with the addition of the New Directors Development Symposium. Sitting AAHSL directors and other leaders shared insights and tips on budget and planning, human resources, strengthening the library's position within the institution, and facilities and information technology with twelve new directors. Of course, all members benefit from attending our annual meeting where both formal and informal networking opportunities abound.
- **Statistics:** For both our member institutions and many others the *Annual Statistics of Medical School Libraries in the United States and Canada* is an extremely valuable resource. The charge to the Assessment and Statistics Committee is two fold: 1) the production of statistics reports and data files that describe and support the planning needs of AAHSL membership institutions and 2) defining, testing and evaluating new statistics products. Thanks to the efforts of Gary Byrd and Jim Shedlock, AAHSL signed a contract this year with the Research Foundation of the State University of New York to develop a web based data collection and analysis portal that will ensure the continuing viability of this service. Additionally, about 48 AAHSL libraries have participated at least once in the LibQual+ survey (7 this association year) which is coordinated with ARL and which provides an opportunity to develop statistical reports to aggregate the AAHSL data and compare our results with other cohorts.
- **Education:** Keeping abreast of new resources and new technology is a constant challenge and AAHSL members are constantly building and strengthening their knowledge base. The Annual Meeting workshop that this year features discussion of effective use of assessment and statistics, this year's annual Matheson lecturer on informatics competencies, the AAHSL Leadership Scholarships and AAHSL's many joint educational efforts with associations, government, publishers and the academic sector assist all our members at a multitude of levels.
- **IT Utilization:** A better understanding of effective utilization of IT as a strategic tool for association management and delivery of association services is critical to achieving the goals of the association. Currently, AAHSL does not have a set of strategic IT goals and a plan for integrated systems support of AAHSL's initiatives, services, and association management. This year, AAHSL IT Manager Jim Shedlock began preparing a white paper on planning for association IT integration. Work also continues by the Charting the Future Committee (chaired by Scott Plutchak) to establish a testbed Organizational Repository that would provide AAHSL committees and members an opportunity to get some practical experience with IR software.

### **GOAL 3: Feel Good About Doing Good**

Our members and AAHSL do good work; it is important that we recognize this and celebrate it both internally and externally. Much of what AAHSL does directly benefits our member libraries. Some of what AAHSL does is for the good for the profession, but may not have an immediate ROI to our member libraries; often it is difficult to distinguish the difference. This year AAHSL established the Cornerstone Award given for a notable or important contribution that has assisted AAHSL in achieving its mission or had significant impact on the profession of academic health sciences librarianship. The inaugural recipient, Betsy Humphreys, certainly is deserving of that accolade and the AAHSL membership should feel good about having established this award.

In fact, as we look over the past association year, there is much to feel good about: our collaboration with key partners has produced a volume of work beneficial to our members, our

profession, and healthcare in general; our work in reframing health information policy advances public health and promotes widespread, affordable, and effective dissemination of scientific scholarly research; our networking efforts affirm our traditions and common core values while providing new opportunities for future academic health sciences leaders; our educational activities build on and improve our intellectual capital, advance knowledge and research; and even the development of such mundane housekeeping activities as a Conflicts of Interest Policy speaks to our recognition of our accountability as a professional association.

Personally, and on behalf of the AAHSL Board of Directors, please accept my thanks to all members for your dedication and commitment to further the good work of our Association on behalf of academic health sciences libraries.

Logan Ludwig, PhD  
AAHSL President 2005-2006