Candidate Update

The American Library Association-Allied Professional Association’s Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) Program has continued to grow rapidly in the last three months. The program currently has 318 active candidates and 32 graduates who have been certified.

New Competencies Approved

On October 28th, the ALA Board of Directors approved the revised LSSC competencies. The 10-month revision process included input and suggestions from experts in the competency sets and representatives from ALA division sponsors. The competencies were revised to make them clearer and less duplicative. There are still the same ten competency sets; however, the revision resulted in fewer competencies in each set.

This revision does not impact any approved courses. All approved courses are still approved. All candidates who completed LSSC approved courses and have completed portfolios still receive full credit. Now, however, candidates may find completing portfolios easier because of the reduced number of competencies. There are still two to four Portfolio Development Suggestions for each competency to assist candidates to develop portfolios.

Website Revision

The revision of the competency sets prompted a revision of the website as well. LSSC staff updated all LSSC webpages. Of particular note are the revisions to Developing a Portfolio. Information in four different locations on the website has now been combined into one, clear, and easy to read (we hope) webpage. Thanks to candidates who submitted successful portfolios for their critique of drafts of these pages. Taking approved courses and information on becoming certified through Recognition Agreements with community college programs has also been updated and expanded. Check out the revised website and send us your comments.

Enrollment Assistance Awards (formerly Registration Assistance Awards)

LSSC is pleased to announce that we will again be offering Enrollment Assistance Awards to library support staff who would like to be candidates for certification. These Awards will pay $175 of the $350 application/enrollment fee for LSSC. The application window for an EAA is February 15 and March 15, 2013. Nine states are partnering with LSSC on this effort: the New York State Library, the Oregon State Library, the Texas Library Association, the Missouri State Library, the State Library of Louisiana, the Wyoming State
Library, the Washington State Library, the Idaho Commission for Libraries, and the Colorado Library Consortium.

Interested applicants can apply at the state level if they live in a partner state or at the national level. An application form will be on the LSSC website on February 15 for national applications. Contact a state partner to apply at the state level. Candidates may apply for both a state and national EAA but may only be awarded one.

**New agreements with LTA programs**

The LSSC Program continues to work with community college programs (commonly known as LTA programs) for library support staff. The purpose is to develop Recognition Agreements that would allow college graduates to receive LSSC without having to further demonstrate their skills and knowledge. LSSC will review these programs’ courses to determine if they cover the majority of LSSC’s competency requirements. If so, the LSSC will propose a Recognition Agreement with the college.

ALA-APA believes that college degrees or certificates coupled with the LSSC will benefit graduates, the library in which they work, and library users. Lorelle Swader, Director of ALA-APA, said, “LTA graduates will be recognized for their acquired skills and knowledge with this national certification, becoming a standard for our profession. The LSSC will show employers of these graduates that they are serious about their work and their future.”

LSSC is now reviewing courses from 13 LTA Programs and has completed reviews and have agreements with the 11 following colleges:

- College of DuPage, IL
- Palomar College, CA
- Pasadena City College, CA
- Waubensee Community College, IL
- Belmont College OH
- NMSU-Dona Ana Community College, NM
- Three Rivers Community College, CT
- Central Carolina Community College, NC
- Illinois Central College, IL
- Highline Community College, WA
- Ivy Tech Community College, IN

If interested in being a part of this program, contact Karen Strege at kstrege@msn.org.

**ALA Midwinter Activities**

There will be a Certification Update at the ALA Midwinter Meeting that will cover both LSSC and the Certified Public Library Administrator’s Program (CPLA). This will be at 8:30 – 10:30 am, Sunday, January 27, in the Seattle Convention Center, Room 620. And don’t forget the ALA-APA Networking Reception on Saturday, January 26, 2013 from 8pm – 10pm at the W Hotel (Seattle), Great Room 1. Tickets are $50 and can be purchased at [http://ala-apa.org/2013-ala-apa-networking-reception-fundraiser](http://ala-apa.org/2013-ala-apa-networking-reception-fundraiser) or at the door (cash or check).

**Candidate News and Notes**

We are hearing a lot from candidates about their progress, success, and ideas. Here are some of the things they are saying. (We did some editing to conserve space.)
Allison Sloan writes:

I am moving slowly through the six required competencies. I am trying to see if it's possible to get scholarships vs paying for the courses or alternately doing a portfolio. I am pleased to say that I completed a second course through Fresno Pacific University online: Foundations of Library Services. It was an excellent curriculum, and certainly inspiring to look at ethics, Freedom to Read, copyright and much more. I was granted the $400 through the Massachusetts Library Aid Association (MLAA). I'm very excited to share the news that I am a contributor to an ALA Librarians Handbook series that was published in December, titled: Managing in the Middle, ISBN 9780838911617. I wrote a piece titled: “Middle Managers as Mentors.”

Barbara Fischer writes:

Just thought I would write in about my accomplishments with the ALA LSSC class programs, and how these classes have assisted me in better utilizing our library services, at the Waldport Public Library, for library patrons.

I have finished five of the required competency sets: Foundations of Library Services which has assisted in bringing to me the base of library services- what they are, how they work within our policies bringing the foundation of what true library services means to staff and patrons. The Communication and Teamwork class has given me a wider thought process of how each staff member uniquely works individually, but for the whole of library services, this class also has given me a better sense of teamwork, and how problems that may occur can be solved with differing techniques with oneself, or with others, and for me this has already proven to work. The Technology and Collection Management classes have given me a true sense of what I really want my career to be in the service of Library Information Sciences, and that is to provide as much information and materials to library users as possible. In the technology area, I have created brochures and bookmarks that assist our patrons with remote library services, I learned through the technology class how to create/design these items to bring the information to patrons quickly without a lot of non-added information. For the Collection Management class I learned how to create a budget for acquisitions, and this was very important for the job I was given at our library; the choosing and purchasing of our library’s Music (CD) and Movie (DVD) media, as this class assists me in the processes of acquisitions from budgeting, choosing and purchasing, and weeding out library materials, and how these all work together to bring better service to our patrons. I also learned about library repairs, and how repairs fit in to the budgeting of library materials, and weeding, and circulation of materials. In the Cataloging and Classification class I learned about the cataloging and classification processes, and how important it is to catalog and classify library materials, so that patrons can easily find items, either remotely through and OPAC system, or physically find their needs.

I have found through my ALA class programs, that I have become more aware of how to better serve our library patrons, and for me as a library staff member this is an accomplishment, giving me more credibility with library patrons as to my library skills, as well as being better able to utilize what is available in our library services areas. Thank you for all the new skills that have assisted me in my library career, and for the support in making it possible.

Gilda Brathwaite writes:

I was fortunate to have received $175.00 Registration Assistance Award from the ALA towards my LSSC registration fee. I completed my first course, Reference & Information Services through Northern Kentucky University. It was a rewarding experience and I may be able to pass the benefits to the patrons I serve at a
private academic college library. I would like to say thank you to my professors and my immediate supervisor and others who were instrumental in this process.

Cynthia Morgan writes:
I received word last week that I have won The Secher Staff Scholarship – a $500 scholarship awarded by The University of Memphis Libraries’ Friends of the Library organization. This scholarship is awarded to staff members who are currently enrolled in the Library Support Staff Certification program or other professional development programs. This award will allow me to attend those conferences and workshops for which a staff member is not ordinarily reimbursed.

Deborah Mitchell writes:
I am enjoying my next course, Communication and Teamwork. I have just finished interviewing two librarians. I have gained insight into their positions. This course is really helping to improve my communication. I now have a vehicle that I can use to make suggestions and changes because of this program. I am hoping that other library professionals will join the program.

Kathy Clevenger writes:
I just finished up my 5th competency. One more to complete, and I will be finished by March 2013. Love the courses. I have done all my work through No. Kentucky University. My Director has encouraged me throughout the process and is quite proud of my accomplishments. This has given me more self-esteem, as I feel more respected at work and continue to get compliments from the MLS staff. I only wish I could encourage more staff to pursue their LSSC.

Stephen Rzasa writes:
I've had my fourth novel published with my publisher, Marcher Lord Press, called Crosswind. You can read about my books at www.marcherlordpress.com

Upcoming Presentations (http://ala-apa.org/lssc/ for more information)

January 30th, 3pm Central Time - Using LiveText Successfully
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/250305097

February 6th, 2pm Central Time - An Introduction to the LSSC Program
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/368248688

February 11th, 2pm Central Time - Preparing a Portfolio
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/319579233

February 26th, 2pm Central Time - Using LiveText Successfully
https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/758736832