

Northern California Association of Law Libraries

2020/21 Annual Report

Written by Sarah Lin, NOCALL 2020/21 President

Officers

The NOCALL officers for 2020/21 were:

- Sarah Lin, President
- Jocelyn Stillwell-Tong, Past President
- Delia Montesinos, Vice-President/President Elect
- Jean Willis, Treasurer
- Hilary Hardcastle, Secretary
- Chuck Marcus, Member-at-Large
- Kristin Brandt, Member-at-Large

Shortly after this Board was sworn in at our late May 2020 Board meeting, we were faced with a challenge of how to respond to George Floyd's killing and subsequent Black Lives Matter protests in our cities, state, and the country at large. Many other law library associations wrote heartfelt statements of solidarity and compiled reading lists about racial justice. NOCALL chose a different path and released an action plan to change various aspects of our organization in order to take steps toward racial justice.

The Board's Black Lives Matter (BLM) Statement, published on June 19th, 2020 and shared on the Council of Chapter President's listserv, was approved by the NOCALL membership as a Resolution at our January Business Meeting.

BLM Actions

NOCALL's BLM statement had 3 areas of focus: ensuring a recruitment & retention pipeline for black law librarians, keeping NOCALL accountable as an organization, and ensuring that BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) Californians have access to justice through county law libraries. The actions NOCALL took over the course of the year included:

- Donated to BLL-SIS's general and education funds as well as to the California Library Association's minority scholarship fund.
- Established the role of Student Trustee and recruited BIPOC library school applicants to fill this annual position
- Established guidelines for grant awards and limited seat events to set aside money and seats for BIPOC members
- Added a field to our membership database for BIPOC members to self-identify (if they desire) and provide annual metrics for accountability
- Created & approved an association [Code of Conduct](#) for all events & online activities

- Actively solicit BIPOC speakers for events
- Paid for anti-bias training for the membership, so members could attend at no cost
- Created an Access to Legal Information Committee to advocate on NOCALL's behalf for state legislation benefiting our county libraries, with a representative from the Council of California County Law Libraries to share information between our organizations

Committee Activities

Additionally, our various committees were very active over the course of the year.

- Academic Relations
 - We worked with the Executive Board on outreach, interviews and selection of the Student Trustee.
 - Continued outreach to SJSU and other MLIS students.
 - Communication with students who applied for Student Trustee position about career planning and attendance at NOCALL events.
 - Planning for outreach/educational virtual event on the different types of law librarian positions.
- Access to Legal Information
 - Established possible ways to connect with county law libraries to learn what their needs are; and brainstormed current areas of lack of access to legal information.
 - Ran a letter-writing campaign in support of budget appropriations for county law libraries, in which drafted letter for board to send to 32 Senators and Assembly Members, the Governor; and the Executive Secretary; provided a template letter and solicited NOCALL members to send their own letters
- Awards
 - 2021 Award for Professional Achievement to member Julie Horst
 - 2021 Advocacy Award to Patrick Sweeney (EveryLibrary) and David Holt (member) for the 2018 Spring Institute on Advocacy.
- Constitution & Bylaws
 - Drafted for Executive Board review and adoption of a resolution on the Black Lives Matter movement, BIPOC members of NOCALL and the profession, and Access to Justice in California County Law Libraries.
- Education
 - The Education Committee responded to the need for remote programming through several programs. We wanted to focus on current issues such as anti-bias and Covid response, to facilitate sharing and discussion. The Anti-Bias Training provided tools that librarians can use to recognize and address unconscious bias in library systems as well as scholarly research. Next, a Vanderbilt Law Librarian discussed how their library reconfigured services and adapted to the pandemic and two law firm librarians also discussed their firms response to the increased client needs during the pandemic. Finally, we facilitated a roundtable discussion on Covid-19 lessons learned by law libraries at a lunch and learn session.
- Grants
 - Two grants were awarded during the year

- New guidelines/criteria established on awarding grants with focus towards diversity.
- Updated Grants form to include Persons of Color / diversity check box to be considered for funds specifically retained for minority members.
- Earmarking 50% grant funds towards Persons of Color / diversity
- Grants will be separated by category: 1) for registration-only 2) travel/hotel-only
- Monthly notices via list-serve to NOCALL members there are grant funds available
- Rotation of duties (quarterly) amongst the Grants Committee regarding the monthly notices.
- Membership
 - Kept Wild Apricot running smoothly during membership renewal period through communication with members, bundle administrators, and the NOCALL Board. Assisted with implementing the NOCALL Board's Statement on Black Lives Matter, by making changes to the membership website so that members could voluntarily opt-in to being identified as a Person of Color in the NOCALL Directory. Troubleshot issues with new member applications, renewals, and invoices. Assisted Board and Committees as needed (e.g., preparing membership lists and data).
- Memorials
 - The Memorials Committee gathered memories of Todd Bennett, which were published in the September/October issue of NOCALL News. NOCALL made a donation in Todd's honor to the National AIDS Memorial Grove at Golden Gate Park.
- Networking
 - Virtual happy hours: May 28, 2020 (Scavenger Hunt); July 16, 2020 (Throwback Thursday); September 24, 2020 (Talk Like a Pirate Day); October 22, 2020 (Halloween/Loyd Auerbach ghost stories); March 25, 2021 (One Year Zoomaversary)
 - Virtual NOCALL holiday trivia happy hour on Dec 18, 2020 (donated \$700 to various local charities with assistance from Lexis)
- Newsletter
 - The Newsletter Committee published five issues of the [NOCALL News](#).
- Placement
 - The Covid-19 Pandemic has decreased our requests for job postings dramatically. For this fiscal year, we have posted 30 positions on our website and listserv May 1, 2020 through May 3, 2021.
- Spring Institute
 - Organized the 2021 Spring Institute as a virtual event comprising three days of educational sessions and one day of vendor demonstrations.
- Technology
 - We have continued to lower administrative technology costs for NOCALL. We are currently spending around \$10 a month for the website and \$90 for Wild Apricot. This is a significant reduction in costs compared with our previous vendors.
- Website

- Revised Offices & Committees page for new officers and chairs; updated grant application; moved older events to Past Events page; created page for 2021 Spring Institute
- Wiki
 - Assisted Sarah Lin, NOCALL president, with reorganizing and updating content on multiple Wiki pages
 - Updated user accounts

Business Meetings

Finally, although we were unable to meet in person due to state COVID restrictions, we held 3 virtual Business Meetings:

- September 2020
 - Speaker Grace Lo, Reference Librarian at Stanford's Law School Library
- January 2021
 - Speaker Mary Jenkins, AALL Executive Board member
- May 2021
 - Speaker Stephanie Godley, KM Director at Ropes & Gray