

RESTORING REOPENING RECONNECTING



Dear ILA Members and Friends,

When I ran for ILA Vice President/President-Elect in April 2019, I couldn't have imagined what was in store for libraries, or the world in which we now operate. As my term as ILA President began in July 2020, we were in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic. So much was still unknown and every day was filled with fear and uncertainty. Through it all, libraries and the Illinois Library Association worked hard to continue the services our patrons and stakeholders needed, in the safest way possible. Over the course of the year, we became optimistic about reopening our public spaces, then hesitant as the virus surged again, but we did not give up. Although each library needed to approach the pandemic based on the specific needs of those it served, the Illinois library community came together as a whole to support and guide one another. As the theme of the first-ever virtual annual conference reminded us, "Many Libraries, One State: We Are ILA."

Through the fall and a contentious presidential election, followed by violence at the nation's Capitol, the danger of disinformation became ever clearer. We issued a strong statement condemning the January 6 violence, rooting our stance in our strategic plan's listed core values of the library profession: information access, equity, intellectual freedom, and objective truth. In our annual series of Library Legislative Meet-ups, we kept on message, emphasizing libraries as vital to the reopening of the state.

As I write this, I currently serve as the association's Past President, whose primary responsibility is to chair the Nominating Committee, as well as the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee of the Executive Board. This subcommittee keeps ILA leadership accountable and led the process to create a foundational document to guide the association's DEI work. I look forward to helping our association recruit the next group of leaders to take ILA into the future; and stewarding the Executive Board in its efforts to continue the momentum re-energized last year toward our strategic goals of a culture of diversity and inclusion in the association, and the profession. I am so proud of, and appreciative of, everyone's participation in the association as we restore, reopen, and reconnect our libraries, our communities, and ourselves.

Here's to 2022 and beyond,



Veronica De Fazio, Plainfield Public Library
ILA President, 2020–21



2019–2023 ILA Strategic Plan

Vision

Collaboratively shaping a new future for libraries in Illinois

Mission

Leadership, advocacy, partnership, and learning for the benefit of Illinois libraries

Core Strategic Values

- Energizing, visionary leadership
- Adaptation to change
- Long term strategic perspective/direction
- Member service focus
- Partnerships and alliances
- Diversity and equity of opportunity

Core Values of the Profession

Information access, equity, intellectual freedom, and objective truth



Strategies, Goals, and Desired Outcomes

Strategy: Advocacy

Goal: Legislative Advocacy

- Invest in advocacy. Educate and mobilize activist groups and other professional associations to understand and support the cause and critical nature of libraries.
- *Desired outcomes:* Activated strategic alliances and informed advocacy at all levels achieve adequate funding for libraries. Governmental decision-makers increase support for libraries.

Goal: Community Advocacy

- Develop education and tools for library leaders and staff to establish clear understanding of libraries' worth among the people served, resulting in community and stakeholder ambassadorship and engagement.
- *Desired outcomes:* The communities and people served value the presence and vitality of libraries. The communities and people served are vocal advocates for libraries.

Strategy: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion

Goal: In the Profession

- Develop education for library leaders and staff about increasing diversity in collections and programs and creating an inclusive environment in libraries and librarianship.
- *Desired outcome:* Library leadership and staff are cultivated and engaged in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the communities they serve.

Goal: In the Association

- Review and revamp the committee and volunteer system for functionality, diversity, inclusivity, and recognition. Increase awareness, understanding, and commitment to creating an inclusive environment in ILA.
- *Desired outcomes:* Members recognize their ownership in and have equitable access to participate and be heard in ILA's volunteer structure. Members connect collaboratively for sharing and creation of knowledge.

Strategy: Delivery of Members Value

- **Goal:** Assess and refresh programs and services, integrating new approaches and technologies to deliver member value in programming, communication, and involvement.
- *Desired outcome:* Members in every segment find relevant value from ILA programs and services.

Strategy: Leadership

- **Goal:** Convene critical conversations with partners in the library ecosystem including the Illinois State Library, the three systems, AISLE, and other related consortia and organizations.
- *Desired outcomes:* Access to library service continually expands to increasing numbers of Illinois residents. Librarians, library staff, and trustees are supported effectively and efficiently by the library ecosystem in the state.

REFOCUSING ON STRATEGY

2020–21 is the second full governance year with ILA's strategic plan (approved in April 2019). In 2020, it was difficult to focus on moving forward our strategic priorities as everyone was coping with the national crisis of the pandemic, although having a strong strategic plan in place helped the association continue to function and serve our members during that time. As the state began to re-open, we were able to refocus our attention back on our strategic goals. A July 2021 assessment included the following progress toward the association's strategic priorities since the prior (2020) report:

Strategic Priority: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion in the Association

- Creation of DEI Subcommittee of the Executive Board
- Investment from ILA's net asset balance of \$10,000 in the Diversity Scholarship Fund in fiscal year 2020–21 and in the approved fiscal year 2021–22 budget
- Development of an association-wide "Statement of Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion"
- Instituted "Courageous Conversation" ongoing trainings for Executive Board and staff
- Best Practices Committee's work to develop a land acknowledgement statement
- The Diversity Committee's EDI educational needs survey and "ILA Voices" listening session at the 2020 ILA Annual Conference, and publication of the results in the *ILA Reporter*

Strategic Priority: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion in the Profession

- Travel stipends for black, indigenous, and person of color librarians to attend national conferences included in approved fiscal year 2021–22 budget
- Funding for editorial work and permissions to adapt the Oregon Library Association's "EDI Toolkit" for an Illinois audience included in approved fiscal year 2021–22
- Planned outreach to PLA to sponsor Illinois interns for PLA's "Inclusive Internship" program and funding for this included in approved fiscal year 2021–22 budget

Strategic Priority: Legislative Advocacy

- Activism around the proposed "Diversity in Literature" bill; collaboration with internal and external groups (ILA Diversity Committee, ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee, ILA Public Policy Committee, ILA DEI Subcommittee; the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE); ALA; the Illinois Association of Teachers of English; and Illinois General Assembly members)
- Invest in Advocacy with funding in the approved fiscal year 2021–22 budget for an advocacy consultant to collect stories and produce content for the 2022 Library Legislative Meet-ups
- Successful advocacy for the inclusion of media literacy in Illinois high-school curricula, with AISLE
- Successful advocacy for the inclusion of a school librarian on the Inclusive American History Commission, with AISLE
- Successful advocacy for an increase in per capita grant rates for school and public libraries in the state budget for the past two years and as of this year, codified in state law, with the Illinois State Library

Strategic Priority: Community Advocacy

- Development of the "Bigger than a Building" campaign in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Outreach to IDPH and development of a template letter for libraries to use regarding vaccination for library staff members
- Inclusion of a mini "Advocacy Boot Camp" at ILA Annual Conference and Reaching Forward
- Initial development of "Ready, Set, Advocate" training initiative to launch in fall 2021
- Funding allocated to produce PSAs for school, public, and academic libraries in the fiscal year 2021–22 budget

Strategic Priority: Leadership

- Integrated Reaching Forward and Reaching Forward South into Reaching Forward Illinois in 2021, enabling attendance at both virtual one-day conferences for one registration price.
- Active participation in monthly calls with AISLE, IHLS, and RAILS leadership

Strategic Priority: Delivery of Member Value

- Planned revision of the ILA Connector blog to "ILA Voices," and integrate it in the ILA website
- Clarify committee appointment process via the "Overall Committee Composition Statement"
- New institutional member benefit: Free downloadable copy of the iREAD Resource Guide
- Creation of branded "Remote Learning" and enhanced "Noon Network" series during COVID
- Enhanced functionality for iREAD state partners regarding ability to purchase "credits" or downloadable Resource Guides for their in-state libraries

The complete report, including ongoing work toward advancing ILA's goals, is available on the ILA website at www.ila.org/about/strategic-plan.

ILA'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS

We began ILA's fiscal and governance year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, as Illinois was preparing to move through the stages of Governor Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan to reopening. Alas, the pandemic continued to surge in fall 2020 and economic and legislative uncertainty persisted, with legislators' focus entirely on how the legislature itself could continue to function virtually, and on how best to serve the state in crisis. With an awareness that libraries across the state differ in approach, depending on the situation in different communities; and that the desire for state guidance on matters including materials quarantine, closure to in-person public services, and more is weighted differently in different communities against the importance placed on local control; ILA opted to shift our advocacy focus to a broader one instead of our traditional agenda focused on specific pieces of legislation. That said, we did secure a few legislative victories: First, working with AISLE, we secured a school librarian position on the newly created Inclusive American History Commission, part of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus's education platform; also with AISLE, advocated for the successful inclusion of media literacy in Illinois high school curricula. Last but not least, we secured recent budget increases in the per capita grant rates for school and public libraries into statute.

Beyond that, our "asks" for legislators were three-fold: first, to keep library funding "whole;" second, if edicts were to be issued about library activities during the pandemic, to please check with the library community first; and third, to ensure library eligibility for and inclusion in any COVID-19 relief funding initiatives. We framed these "asks" in context of remarkable work libraries did and are doing during the pandemic, which we showcased at the 2021 Library Legislative Meet-ups.

Like everything else in 2020–21, the series of Library Legislative Meet-ups looked a little different with all events taking place online, and without the opportunity for conversation that convening over a meal has allowed in the past. What didn't change was the enthusiasm and support for libraries expressed by the elected officials and their staff members in attendance and ILA's articulation of the library position. We did not know what to expect regarding legislator and library participation in a virtual format, but participation was strong across the board, including record-high attendance at two of the events anchored in Southern and Central Illinois. The primary focus of our presentations was showcasing Illinois libraries' vital work during the stay-at-home orders and beyond using the "Bigger than a Building" concept; and reporting on the productive use Illinois libraries made from CARES Act funding (see below).

Beyond advocacy with the Illinois General Assembly, ILA crafted a two-pronged approach to advocating for library workers' eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine, at a time of scarcity after its initial approval by the FDA. First, we reached out to the Illinois Department of Public Health for public librarians to be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 1b or Phase 1c at the latest, noting that decisions about the extent to which libraries are open to in-person public services are being made on a local level, and the localities will need to know that decisions they make are in keeping with state guidance. Second, we created a template letter for library directors to use to follow up with their own county departments of public health, where most of these decisions were being made. By late February, 13 counties had included library staff as eligible in Phase 1b or 1c; by mid-April, vaccine availability and had eligibility opened up in all 102 counties.

On the Federal Level

Library funding, both for COVID-19 relief and for regular appropriations, continued as the top federal advocacy issue this year. Following four relief bills the prior year including the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which included \$50 million for libraries via IMLS and established the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP); the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act was signed into law on March 10, 2021. ARPA included unprecedented levels of funding for numerous sectors, including libraries, through various channels. ALA and ILA worked hard to identify and clarify opportunities for libraries. In Illinois, these programs included \$4.7 million in IMLS funds made available via the Illinois State Library and \$15 million nationwide available by application directly to IMLS; \$1 million from the National Endowment for the Humanities made available via the Illinois Humanities Council; \$933,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts made available through the Illinois Arts Council Agency and \$80 million nationwide available by direct application to NEA; \$7.17 billion nationally from the FCC for the Emergency Connectivity Fund; and \$350 billion to state and local governments, for which libraries needed to work with their municipality to access.

Once again, ALA and its state chapters, including ILA, engaged in a campaign to secure "Dear Appropriator" letters in support of full funding for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and the Innovative Approaches to Literacy Act (IAL) grant program in the Department of Education. For FY2022, we asked congressional appropriators to include funding of at least \$206 million for LSTA and \$50 million for IAL. President Biden's initial budget included \$265 million for IMLS, including \$197 million for LSTA; and \$28 million for IAL. Subsequently, the House Appropriations Committee approved an increase of \$9 million for LSTA and a \$3 million increase for IAL. In Illinois, both Senators signed both letters. Representatives Casten, Danny K. Davis, Schneider, Foster, and Bustos signed both letters; Rush, Kelly, Krishnamoorthi, Newman, and LaHood signed the IAL letter; and Schakowsky signed the LSTA letter. As of the writing of this report, a 2022 budget resolution has passed the House and the Senate, and negotiations over the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation package are in progress.

In addition to COVID-19 relief funding and regular appropriations, ALA spearheaded a campaign for a proposed \$5 billion Build America's Libraries Act as part of the Biden administration's and 117th Congress's focus on infrastructure. Negotiations over the infrastructure package and the budget resolution continue. In Illinois, Senator Durbin and Representatives Kelly, Newman, Garcia, Casten, Danny K. Davis, Krishnamoorthi, Schakowsky, Schneider, Foster, and Bustos cosponsored BALA.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

ILA put on our first virtual Annual Conference on October 20-22, 2020. Nearly 1,000 people attended, including exhibitors. While the way we met changed, what didn't change was the array of high-quality topics and content typical of an ILA conference.

Over three afternoons, programs, exhibits, and online networking opportunities focused on the conference's theme: "Many Libraries, One State: We Are ILA." Conference Co-Chairs Darnetta Bolton and Sarah Sagmoen led a Conference Program Committee that not only was responsible for assembling a strong array of speakers, but also considering what the programming would look like in the virtual environment. Opening General Session speaker Eric Klinenberg, author of *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life* (Crown, 2018); President's Program speakers LaShawnda Crowe Storm, a community based artist and organizer and Phyllis Viola Boyd, an artist and urban strategist; set the tone. Rounding out programming, Jon E. Cawthorne, President of ACRL, spoke at the IACRL President's Program and James A. Bowey, a Chicago-based documentary artist, was the DiversiTEA featured speaker, along with more than 50 other sessions, all available to conference registrants via recording for one year following the conference.



ILA continuing education also continued virtually, including the second Director's University—a collaborative project of ILA, IHLS, RAILS, and the Illinois State Library. Conducted weekly online from June through September, this series featured its typical educational lineup of sessions covering public library budgeting and finance, human resources, policies, and records retention, and more.



ILA presented Reaching Forward South and Reaching Forward both online on April 16 and May 7, respectively, branded as "Reaching Forward Illinois." Both were accessible to registrants for one low, combined price of \$50; popular programs included "RA for All: Think Like a Reader," "Understanding Challenges to Library Materials and How to Respond," and "Weeding Without Tears."



The Library Trustee Forum converted its traditional in-person Springfield and Oak Brook workshops to a series of three online workshops in March, April, and May 2021: "One Year On: Where Is Your Library and How Can You Prepare for a Post-COVID World?," "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: What Library Trustees Need to Know," and "Boot Camp for Trustees."



Mark Puente, Associate Dean for Organizational Development, Diversity, and Inclusion at Purdue University Libraries and School of Information Studies presented the workshop "Conscious Actions for Inclusion" for the Elevate Library Leaders event. Elevate is a project of ILA, IHLS, RAILS, and the Illinois State Library designed for librarians at any level to develop their leadership skills.



The "Noon Network," a series of midday micro-learning webinars on various topics designed to help achieve professional development goals, launched in April 2020 and continued in 2020-21. Webinars are held at noon on Mondays and Wednesdays for 20 to 30 minutes followed by a question-and-answer session; topics included "Intellectual Freedom in an Age of Political Polarization: A Conversation with Emily Knox and Nadine Strossen," "Librarianship Specializations: Beyond 'Traditional' Library Careers," and "Sacred Ground: A Conversation with Timuel Black."



The Marketing Forum's annual Mini-Conference has become a highly popular and successful event. After postponement in 2020 it was held in April 2021 and was titled "Impact and Influence," and featured Adam Harris, head of communications and storytelling for the Arlington Heights School District 25; Anna Popp, consultant for the Massachusetts Library System; and Katharine Uhrich, social media manager for the Field Museum.



The Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL) Forum began a new series of online events known as "Spark: Connect and Get Fired Up," designed to foster sharing and connection among academic librarians. Three have been held to date, in addition to a series of online town halls. Recordings of all IACRL webinars are available on the Forum's page on the ILA website.

REALIZING REVENUE

ILA enjoys a diverse array of revenue sources, making the association unique among state chapters of ALA. Membership, continuing education, and publications are all traditional sources of revenue; the iREAD® summer reading program enables ILA to survive and thrive as traditional revenue sources face pressure from tight budgets and changing environments. The Fund for Illinois Libraries continues to offer ILA institutional members who do not have their own associated foundations or friends groups a way to accept donations, primarily from corporations that require a 501(c)3 for their philanthropy. Our long-term investments help ensure the Association's continuity; although the portfolio is managed conservatively, we do typically see investment returns, which were particularly strong in 2020–21.



iREAD marked its 40th year in 2021 with the theme, "Reading Colors Your World." Committee chair Alexandra Annen led an effort that included art by a fantastic array of illustrators including Yuyi Morales, Oliver Jeffers, Zach Lehner, and Hervé Tullet. The U.S. Department of Defense continues to purchase iREAD resources and incentives

for military libraries worldwide; and the 2021 program was implemented in states well beyond Illinois' borders, including statewide adoptions in Alaska, California, Iowa, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington, and individual libraries in more than 25 states.

Contributions to the association also continue to increase, most notably through the Illinois Library Luminaries program, which supports the ILA Endowment and saw three new inductees in 2020–21, Janice M. Del Negro, James R. Johnston, and Patricia Jarog. Contributed income also helps build ILA's array of restricted funds, which primarily support awards and scholarships, including the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Fund, the Diversity Scholarship Fund, the Intellectual Freedom Fund, the Legal Defense Fund, the Valerie J. Wilford Memorial Fund, and the Robert R. McClarren Fund. For the second year, the ILA Executive Board itself voted to transfer \$10,000 from ILA's net asset balance into the Diversity Scholarship Fund, to enable it to support initiatives broader than its traditional role in the Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholar program.

There is no doubt that the Association's fiscal profile is different than before the pandemic necessitated changes, particularly to our business model for continuing education and events. We have striven to offer valuable programming for a reasonable cost; and have added a great deal at no cost. We can afford to do this, temporarily, thanks to the strong financial position that has been deliberately constructed over the years. One of the brightest spots among a difficult time is our membership, which has remained strong through the second year of the pandemic; ILA ended the fiscal year at 99% of our budget for dues. Our purpose for existing is our members, and we would not be here without you.

Fiscal Report (Year Ended June 30, 2021)

Revenue

General Operations	\$ 33,514
Membership	\$ 280,764
Conference	\$ 122,138
iRead	\$ 2,306,667
Publications	\$ 38,261
Public Policy	\$ 2,000
Awards	\$ 5,130
Endowment Contributions	\$ 8,852
Workshops	\$ 25,084
Reaching Forward	\$ 45,100
Donor Restricted Funds Contributions	\$ 3,140
Total Revenue	\$ 2,870,650

Expenses (reflecting allocation of staff salaries, taxes, and benefits to functional areas)

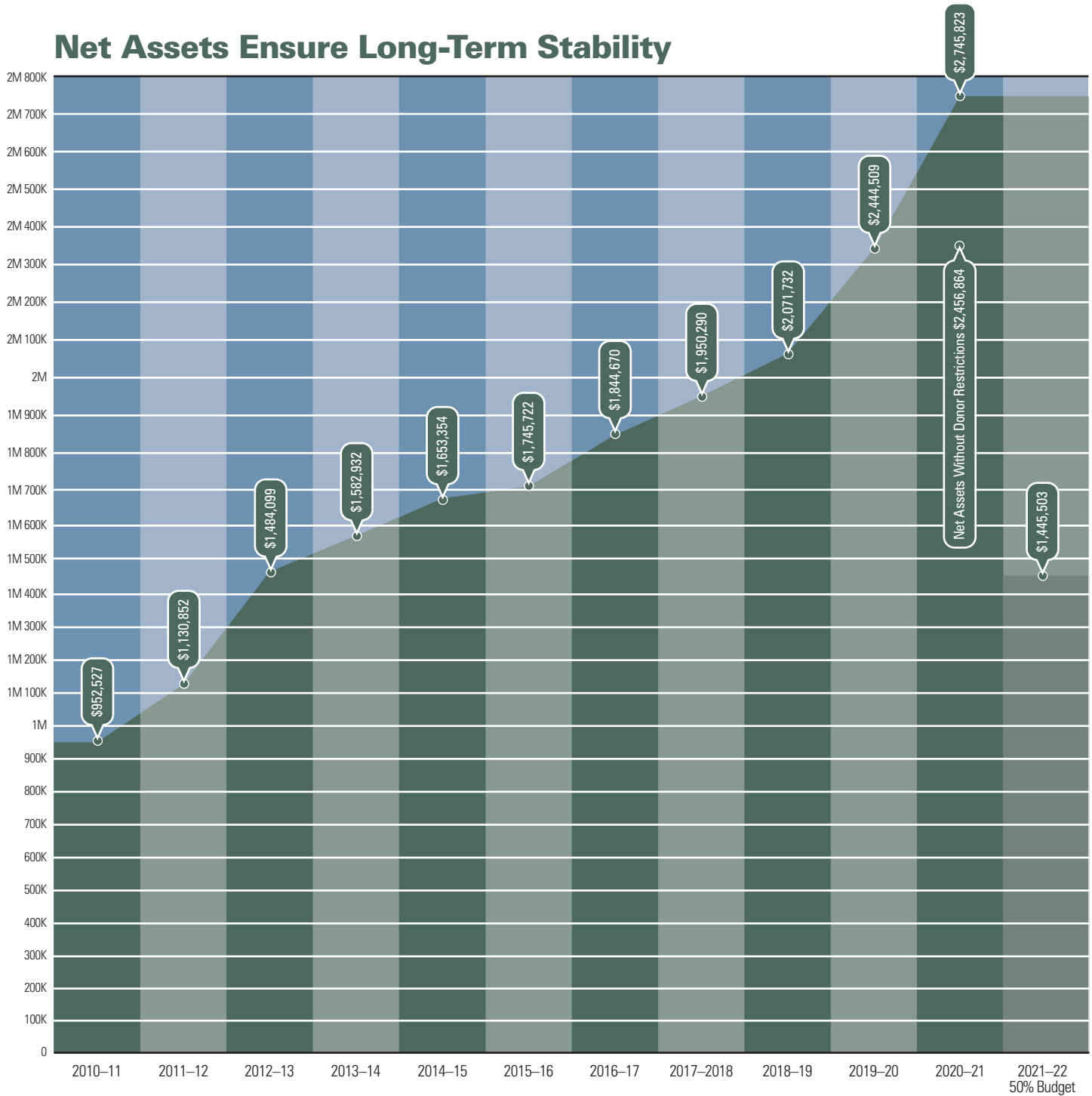
General Operations	\$ 302,778
Membership	\$ 149,971
Conference	\$ 160,965
iRead	\$ 1,979,206
Publications	\$ 30,611
Public Policy	\$ 157,720
Awards	\$ 23,710
Workshops/Projects	\$ 41,461
Forums & Committees	\$ 6,457
Reaching Forward	\$ 29,812
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 2,882,691

Operating Net	\$ -12,041
Other Revenue: Gain on Long-term Investments	\$ 319,494
Other Expenses: Amortization, Depreciation	\$ 6,139
Increase in Net Assets	\$ 301,314
Net Assets at end of FY 2020	\$ 2,444,509
Net Assets at end of FY 2021	\$ 2,745,823

Net Assets Comprise:

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 2,456,864
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$ 288,959
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atkinson Memorial Award: \$1,330 • Robert R. McClarren Award Fund for Legislative Development: \$8,911 • Legal Defense Fund: \$995 • OCLC Users Group: \$25,266 • Valerie Wilford Fund: \$16,632 • Diversity Scholarship: \$3,535 • Diversity Scholarship (Board Designated): \$10,000 • Intellectual Freedom Fund: \$1,480 • Endowment Fund: \$200,437 • Unappropriated Endowment Fund Earnings: \$30,373 	
Total Net Assets at End of FY 2021	\$ 2,745,823

Net Assets Ensure Long-Term Stability



Cumulative Surplus

The growth in ILA's net assets, particularly net assets without donor restrictions, has been a conscious strategy over the past 20-plus years, with the goal of producing an annual budget surplus that will build up a reserve fund of net assets without donor restrictions equal to at least 50% of the subsequent year's budgeted expenses, according to ILA fiscal policy. This goal has been achieved since 2013; this year, of the net assets listed in the chart above, \$2,456,864 are without donor restrictions. The expense budget for 2021-22 totals \$2,891,006; 50% is \$1,445,503.

2020-2021	\$	301,314
2019-2020	\$	372,777
2018-2019	\$	121,442
2017-2018	\$	105,620
2016-2017	\$	98,948
2015-2016	\$	92,368
2014-2015	\$	70,422
2013-2014	\$	98,833
2012-2013	\$	353,247
2011-2012	\$	178,331
2010-2011	\$	193,267
2009-2010	\$	372,938
1896-2009	\$	386,316
Grand Total	\$	2,745,823

2020–2021 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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2019–2020 ILA Staff

Diane Foote, Executive Director

Sarah Anderson, Administrative Coordinator

Tamara Jenkins, Communication and Engagement Manager

Tina Koleva, Membership and Product Services Manager

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