



Libras, Inc.

Annual Report

2013-2014

President's report – David Malone (Wheaton College)

2015 marks the 50th anniversary of LIBRAS. Built upon a foundation of cooperation and resource sharing, LIBRAS continues that mission to this day. In these last 49 years much has changed in the library landscape yet we maintain our core purpose. At times the emergence of other organizations and technologies have brought into question the continued usefulness of our private liberal-arts college association. Yet, events of recent months have displayed the value of LIBRAS.

As I mention value, it is important that we recognize the value of LIBRAS. Each member library makes an investment into LIBRAS. Some manage this investment with diligence and others may manage it more passively. This is not unlike how different individuals manage a retirement or investment portfolio. There are different styles of engagement all the while each recognizes the need to plan for the future.

As mentioned, over the years other organizations have emerged that have provided similar services and resources for our member libraries. The obvious one that comes to mind is CARLI. This state-wide consortium has changed the way academic libraries in Illinois carry out their respective missions. LIBRAS has tried to find its role in this new environment. Yet, in recent months the value of LIBRAS has been reinforced as funding for CARLI has been called into question.

CARLI has had a long-standing practice of providing a “return on investment” letter to member libraries. I think that as we approach our golden anniversary it may be worthwhile for LIBRAS to provide something similar. We have done this informally at our annual meetings as various reports have been provided regarding professional development and continuing education opportunities and funding, as well as our Special Interest Group offerings.

Earlier I alluded to managing an investment portfolio. For a portfolio to grow it must be managed, but it must also have regular contributions. In addition to the return on investment from LIBRAS we must also focus upon the investments themselves. One of LIBRAS' greatest strengths are the opportunities that it affords member libraries to develop their staff through SIGS and workshops, but also leadership opportunities. Each year LIBRAS must fill several executive committee positions as well as several special interest group leadership roles. Sometimes this is a struggle. My wish would be that libraries would see the participation of its staff in LIBRAS leadership as an investment in our liberal-arts college library portfolio. This portfolio cannot grow unless we contribute and manage it well. We can't rely upon the work of outside organizations to provide for our future. We must be involved on an individual level.

Let us build upon the strong foundation these last five decades so that we may serve our academic communities well.

Vice-President's report – Elaine Page (Elmhurst College)

The LIBRAS LIBRAS special interest groups (SIGs) got off to a late start for 2013-2014, and as such, were only able to offer one event each for this academic year. With two new SIG chairs this year, there were some great new ideas offered for programming this year and there is already a good start for next year. Below is a review of the SIG events held this year.

Archives

- *Creating Online Exhibits: New Ways to Reach Out, Advocate, and Publicize Your Collections and Services* (webinar, held at Benedictine June 9). This event was a LYRASIS/NEH webinar followed by discussion among those who gathered to participate in the webinar.

Collection Management

- *Art in the Academic Library* (webinar, held EVERYWHERE May 7). This event was hosted online and featured a roundtable panel of 5 library and curatorial experts from across the country. Participants from LIBRAS and beyond viewed the webinar through Google Hangouts on Air or YouTube. As of the end of May 2014, over 70 people had watched the presentation. It can be viewed in perpetuity at the following url:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McqaiCRxNbg&feature=share>

Public Services

- *Promotional Efforts in Academic Libraries* (in-person meeting, held at St. Xavier April 9). This event brought library staff together for a lively discussion of ways to engage our campuses in sharing the resources and services our libraries offer.

Technical Services

- *From Local Practice to Best Practice* (in-person “unconference”, held at North Park February 28). This event’s content was determined by those attending, and focused on workflows as well as library statistics.

In addition to professional development programming through the SIGs, LIBRAS was able to offer its members opportunities for developing social and networking relationships through two social events. A holiday social was held in December in Oak Park. A social was also held immediately following the IACRL pre-conferences in Oak Brook in March. 14 of the 17 LIBRAS institutions were represented at the annual meeting held on May 28, graciously hosted by Benedictine University.

Treasurer's Report – Jill Bambenek (Dominican University)

The primary goal of this year's fiscal management was the ongoing consolidation of online payment for all bills at First American Bank. This was achieved through the establishment of an online bill pay account with First American Bank and a Libras debit card for other transactions. Print checks have been eliminated from the organization's pay program. Online account access for all financial systems is in place allowing Libras officers access to financial data in the case of the treasurer's absence. Annual dues continue to be collected through E-invoices and spreadsheet tallies for expenditures and dues paid were maintained in Google Docs in an ongoing effort to create a paperless operation for all Libras treasurer activities.

(Through May 22nd, 2014)

Income	Budget	YTD	
Dues	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	
Transfer from Reserve account		\$2,500.00	
TOTAL INCOME		\$11,000.00	

Expenses	Budget	YTD	Balance
Continuing Education			
Conferences	\$4,200.00	\$1,495.00	\$2,705.00
Pre-conferences/workshops \etc.	\$2,500.00	\$2,806.25	-\$306.25
Non-degree education	\$200.00	\$97.00	\$103.00
Professional Development Grant	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Research Grant	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00
Hospitality	\$1000.00	\$635.95	\$364.05
Legal	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
Programming		\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Communications Technology	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Miscellaneous	\$400.00	\$89.63	\$310.37
TOTALS	\$11,000.00		\$5676.17

Assets	Balance
Cash in Checking* (First American Bank) *includes encumbered assets	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$22,685.75

Secretary's Report – Amy Weidner (Benedictine University)

General Meetings Held

LIBRAS Directors met October 30, 2013 at Elmhurst College and on April 17, 2014 at Kendall College.

The Executive Committee met July 30, 2013 virtually via a Google hangout, November 20, 2013 at Elmhurst College, and February 12, 2014 virtually via a Google hangout.

The annual meeting will be held on May 28, 2014 at Benedictine University.

Meeting Minutes

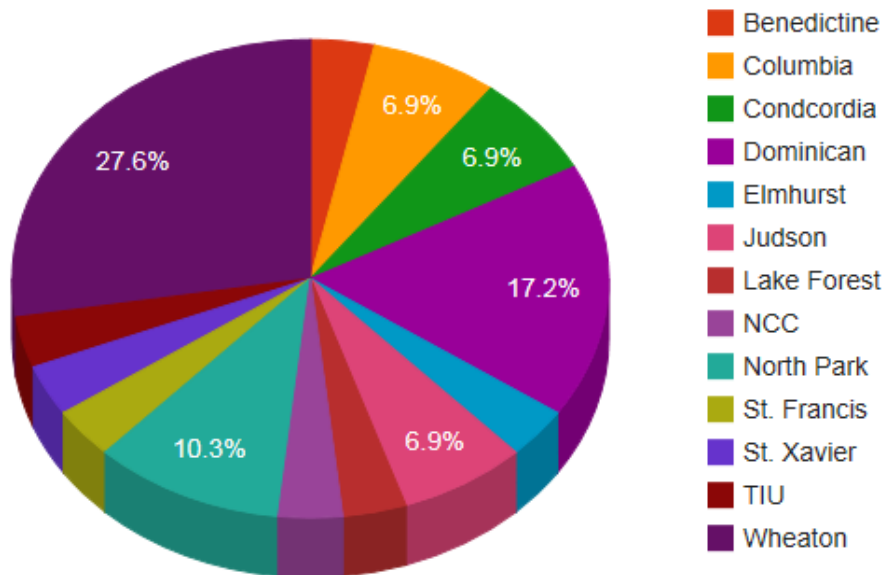
Minutes from the above meetings will be posted on the LIBRAS web site.

Reports from all meetings, officers and committees will be collected and placed in the LIBRAS Archives located at North Park University.

Past-President's Report – Katie Maier O'Shea (North Park University)

This past year 29 applications for continuing education funds were granted with an average grant of \$242 (lowest amount \$97). Total expenditures were over \$7,000. A variety of opportunities were funded with grantees attending major professional association conferences like IACRL, ALA, LOEX, ATLA, NASIG, and SAA, as well as various topical or technology conferences like Code4Lib, ILLiad, Games, Learning and Society, Academic Impressions, and the Charleston Conference.

Applications Approved



Melvin R. George Award – Mark A. Vargas

Twenty-two years ago LIBRAS established the Melvin R. George Award in honor of its early president, as well as other LIBRAS founders, who provided wonderful examples of interlibrary cooperation.

This year's recipient is Mark A. Vargas. Until recently, Mark was Director of the Robert and Mary Rita Murphy Stump Library at Saint Xavier University, a post he held for over 10 years. Prior to that Mark was Director of the Nash Library at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and an archivist with the Milwaukee Urban Archives.

Prior to Mark's life in academia he was responsible for maintaining temperature and pressure in coke ovens for US Steel. Mark easily transferred that to his leadership in libraries as he sought to heat-up and refine the processes and procedures of the libraries he oversaw.

One of the ways in which Mark has distinguished himself is his engagement in the activities and theoretical underpinnings of librarianship. He is not one to conduct himself casually as a librarian, simply waiting to respond to requests. Rather, he has sought to delve into the purposes and intentions of core functions of the profession and determine the reasons why certain activities are undertaken and the structures that are created. He not only questions, but engages in dialogue with others to test his ideas. He is provocative in his questioning and as dialogue moves to a point of resolution Mark seeks to share with others the results of his work. An example of this can be found in his efforts to develop and implement new models of collection development and management in a library that has limited space and tightening budgets – something many academic libraries face.

The fire and heat of Mark's work has helped increase access to and usage of library materials for his library users. Additionally, his service to LIBRAS and other professional organizations exemplifies the sorts of activities that the Melvin R. George Award seeks to honor.