

Western Pacific Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Report 2020-2021

The 2020-2021 WestPac Executive Board members were David McClure, President; Cory Lenz, Vice-President/President-Elect; Lee Van Duzer, Treasurer; Sharalyn Williams, Secretary; and Kerry Fitz-Gerald, Immediate Past President.

The annual meeting that was originally scheduled to be held in Reno, Nevada, in fall 2020 and rescheduled for fall 2021, continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board conducted a survey of the membership in February 2021 asking for member preferences relating to the 2021 annual meeting. The responses reflected uncertainty and concerns related to health and safety, vaccine roll outs, mandatory quarantine periods, travel bans and budgets, and personal and organizational finances. Given such concerns and the significant financial and logistical challenges that could result from insufficient membership attendance at an in-person meeting, the Board decided to postpone the annual meeting in Reno until 2022.

Contracts for the hotel/meeting venue and audio-visual services for the annual meeting in Reno were renegotiated for fall 2022. The annual meeting is scheduled to be held from Thursday, September 29, 2022, to Saturday, October 1, 2022, and the WestPac Writing Institute is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, September 29, 2022.

When the contract for the annual meeting's opening reception location could not be renegotiated, the WestPac Board reached out to Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Northern Nevada to see if they could use WestPac's deposit for an event at that location. Big Brothers, Big Sisters were very excited and grateful. They hosted an event in August 2021 to recruit new volunteers to serve as mentors for Northern Nevada youth.

To help fill the void of the typical educational programming of the WestPac annual meeting and provide points of connection and interaction for members, WestPac's Education Committee sponsored a series of free, one-hour, online roundtable discussions in fall 2020. Descriptions of those online roundtables were included in the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

The Diversity & Inclusion committee, a special committee chaired by Carla Bywaters, was appointed to explore ways to support diversity and inclusion within WestPac and in outreach efforts to recruit new members to WestPac and law librarianship in general. In April 2021, the WestPac Executive Board joined the Asian American Law Librarians Caucus in support of their statement condemning Anti-Asian incidents. In May, at the invitation of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee and in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Victoria Szymczak of the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law gave an online presentation to WestPac members about the origins of Pacific Island legal systems and the legacies of colonialism in the Pacific region.

WestPac members gathered for a virtual social hour on July 16, 2021, on the eve of AALL's Virtual Conference. This was in lieu of a business meeting since no chapter events or activities were permitted during the conference dates. WestPac provided registration grants to Suzanne Darais and Julie Horst to attend AALL's Virtual Conference and selected Anna Russell to receive the 2021 AALL Chapter Registration Grant provided by AALL.

In May 2021, the WestPac membership elected Anna Blaine as Vice-President/President-Elect and re-elected Lee Van Duzer as Treasurer. Their terms of office began at the WestPac fall business meeting held virtually via Zoom on September 29, 2021. The Life Member nominations of Jaye Barlous, Stacey Gordon Sterling, and Harriet Zook were also approved at the meeting.

David McClure
President, 2020-2021