

## **President's Update - December 13, 2018**



December is a time of reflection, for me. As I get involved in holiday events, parties and shopping, I tend to get lost in memories of the year. I think about the books I have read; the authors I have seen and met; movies I have watched; friends and family I have spent time with; places I have traveled; the political scene and midterm elections; and great programs the library has hosted or that I attended. I also think about everything I want to accomplish before the end of the year, like writing my 2018 best reads list, weeding my closets, and the list goes on. This year my reflections have been plentiful and very fulfilling. I had the great honor of meeting and moderating the One Book, One Community event with United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, and recently I did my first-ever podcast with author Mitch Albom.

In contemplating both Justice Sotomayor's and Mitch Albom's conversations, I realized they talked a great deal about forgiveness and empathy. Admittedly, to forgive is one of the hardest things for us to do, yet it is so liberating. So as we look forward to 2019, do not dwell on what you did not finish, revel in your great accomplishments and the possibilities of what is yet to come.

MLA's great accomplishments in 2018 were many. The annual conference attendance was up to pre-recession numbers at 670; many legislative initiatives were advocated for, including holding libraries and library staff harmless for administering NARCAN and state funding increased; a new director's workshop was developed; the organization had a clean audit and its finances are operating in the black; membership numbers are up; and a multitude of successful programming including, Leadership Academy, Spring Institute and the Executive Summit. None of these accomplishments would be possible without the tremendous support of MLA members.

Yes MLA has some large unfinished items looming as we head into 2019, namely Gail Madziar's retirement and hiring a new executive director, but this is also a time for opportunity, growth and discovery. The New Year will bring new programming, a new directors training workshop, collaborations and advocacy efforts with new legislators and a new governor. MLA will leap into 2019 in good financial shape and with planning for workshops, Spring Institute and

the Annual Conference underway. Forefront for the Director Search Committee and the MLA Board of Directors is the search for a new executive director. Tentatively, the schedule is to post the position from January 30 through February 28, and to conduct live interviews with the Board from March 25 through March 29. Ideally, we would like to have a new executive director in place by the end of April. As with all searches and hiring processes, these things take time. There will be a gap from when Gail leaves and the new director starts, and the MLA Board of Directors is discussing plans for an interim director.

As 2018 wraps up, and you reflect on your successes and muse about what you did not finish, remember to forgive. Happy Holidays and a very happy New Year.

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