I. February 2, 2023
II. President
III. N/A
IV. Board Action Required (none)
V. Brief Summary of Activities

As in falls past, one of my key tasks has been congratulating award recipients and generating award letters (particularly for our travel grant awardees). This is always a tremendously gratifying task. This year we also caught up on overdue special achievement and special recognition awards for the work that COVID necessitated over the last nearly three years.

The board approved several new funding initiatives this fall and launched two in response to member requests during strategic planning focus groups and town halls – in support of the MLA/TLA Annual Meeting, 2023. Namely, a General Conference Registration Fund (to support applicants whose registrations will be funded by generous donors) and the addition of an institutional registration category that will allow five participants from one institution to share a streaming registration.

MLA and IAML boards each approved donations of $1,000 to support digitization equipment for the SUCHO project: Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (organized by Quinn Dombrowski, Anna Kijas, and Sebastian Majstorovic). This vital work aligns precisely to our MLA mission to preserve global musical heritage, provide and enhance access. We are proud to support this mission-critical work for Ukrainian libraries and museums.

MLA-L Mediator: When this role was established, the board agreed that the listserv mediator will report to and be evaluated by the membership and not the board (now that MLA-L is under MLA auspices). After a failed nominations process for a panel, we agreed to appoint a small group of representatives from Retirement Interest Group, Membership Committee, and IDEA Committee. Will Scharfenberger, IDEA Co-Chair has agreed to be the inaugural chair of this mediator review panel. They will report their renewal / non-renewal decision through the board to the membership (by way of announcement at the business meeting).

Future of A-R Editions and MLA: Patrick Wall (President and owner) plans to retire during the next several years and is working closely with MLA on a succession plan. A-R will continue to handle us as a client until we are ready to transition elsewhere. Toward these ends last spring (2022) the board appointed two working groups: one to propose a plan to replace the business office functions and one to handle proposals for our publications transitions to new publishers (Notes and monographic series). Publications group is sending requests for proposals to seven university presses in early 2023, and should have proposals for the board in the summer, for decisions by 2024. They’ll begin analysis of monographic series options in 2023-2024 and we look forward to plans from the business functions working group.
Climate Survey 2022 is well underway (our last survey was 2019) – the survey closed December 19, and our consultants, Mark Puente and Maurini Strub are analyzing and synthesizing results for presentation in the spring of 2023. The team consists of Sylvia Yang (coordinator), Susannah Cleveland, Lisa Shiota, Amanda Steadman, and Liza Vick.

Publicity officer: after several searches, we’ve decided to suspend the position and absorb the tasks as follows: social media posting to the newsletter editor (a logical pairing, as news is moving toward a blog-style format); networking events to organizational liaisons (pending a refresh of expired positions); and library school presentations and conference exhibits to Membership Committee, board members, and organizational liaisons. We thank Jacey Kepich for her flexibility and willingness to expand her editorship midstream and we have renamed her position as News Editor (subtle but key change).

Circling back to newly formed groups, in the spring the Committee Recruitment Task Force submitted their compelling report, recommending a new team that will gather committee vacancies and coordinate the appointments process (with chairs and the President) using a common application, and undergirded by DEIA principles. They were charged with improving our appointments structure aimed at increasing representation and transparency. With the help of the task force and Membership Management and Planning officers, we’ve drafted a charge for a new Committee Management Team and a yearly calendar and guidelines. This shall be handed off to an inaugural team, including the aforementioned officers, an MLA new member, a paraprofessional, a CMC representative, and and led in its first year by incoming Planning Officer, Sonia Archer-Capuzzo (after her term, it won’t have to be chaired by a board member).

Yet another new working group was formed (in fall 2022) to revise our Code of Conduct to cover all MLA activity (explicitly broadened beyond annual meetings). This group will work over the next months to share a newly-revised draft (and may propose models for handling complaints). They are led by Allison McClanahan and Amanda DuBose.

Along similar lines, the board has heard several requests for MLA to consider external ombuds services. We are investigating options provided by the International Ombuds Association, in order to compare/contrast a handful of options and continue research to identify a partner. Many ombuds firms (outsourced) are designed to handle much larger non-profit organizations and we may need extended patience while MLA identifies a team that can work effectively for us.

On September 28, 2022, we held the second of a series of “get involved in MLA leadership” town halls. This event covered officers and editor roles, and featured presentations by both sides of house, ample discussion/questions, and outline of the search process. The last of this series will be for committee chairs but at this point, it will be more productive if we delay until the rollout of new appointments process (perhaps with some other onboarding activities in the meantime).
We have reached the end of our three-year pilot of the Student/Early-Career representative position and the membership voted in favor of making this a permanent board position. We thank Elizabeth Uchimura (2022), Ellen Ogihara (2021), and Jessica Abbazio (2020), for compiling training materials based on their successful terms. We welcome Blaine Brubaker as the first voting representative, with a 2-year term! This pilot was immensely successful in both representing the Student/Early-Career constituencies to the board and infusing our leadership with new perspectives.

Our fall election also brought us three new members at large. The ballot was, once again, outstanding throughout and my conversations with all candidates left me greatly inspired about the future of our organization. During the election cycle the MLA membership approved granting students the right to vote in our elections, as well (updating our Constitution/Bylaws).

It has been an immense honor to serve the Music Library Association as President and I can hardly believe two years have gone by. The role is in equal measure humbling, challenging, and hugely gratifying. I look forward to serving as Past President as Paula Hickner steps into office. We are in such good hands.

VI. Strategic Planning alignments (highlights):

Objective 1.4: Review MLA’s publications (working group strategizing for the future of Notes and monographic series).

Objective 2.1: Cultivate leaders (town hall for officer/editor recruitment held in September).

Objective 3.6: Construct a method for reporting and handling microaggressions (currently researching ombuds options, preliminary stages).

Objective 4.1: Code of Conduct revision (underway)

Respectfully submitted,
Liza Vick, President