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# ACRL 1991 presidential candidates' statements

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*ACRL's two presidential candidates offer their views on the Association's future.*

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*Jacquelyn McCoy  
Morris*



*Photo credit: Dementi-Foster Studios*

*John C. Tyson*

Among the ACRL activities ranked as the ten most important in a recent membership survey, there are five which I am particularly interested in exploring in greater depth:

1) Enhancing both the opportunities and the rewards of membership in ACRL; 2) Providing greater access to an expanded program of Continuing Education; 3) Recruiting and developing leadership among an able and diverse population of well-trained librarians; 4) Strengthening ACRL's relationship with other associations serving higher education; 5) Establishing and periodically revising standards and guidelines for academic and research libraries.

**T**his presentation of statements from ACRL's candidates for Vice-President/President-Elect is an information service for ACRL members. Many of the issues and concerns facing ACRL are discussed informally at meetings, but this does not provide a national forum available to all members. These statements provide the basis for an informed choice when you receive your ballot next month.

## **Jacquelyn McCoy Morris:**

The next president of ACRL will have an opportunity to build on the initiatives of our recent leaders. Guided by the Strategic Plan developed out of member concerns and priorities, the ACRL leadership has focused on such important themes as information literacy and recruitment. As we move ahead with our Strategic Plan, we must find new ways to serve our diverse constituencies, which reflect our pluralistic and multicultural society.

**1) Membership.** The strength and the future of our organization lies in the qualities and aspirations of its individual members. Each and every member can and will be heard by those responsible for setting goals and handling day-to-day operations. New members can be attracted by the benefits of membership: two periodical subscriptions, discounts on publications and conference registrations, opportunities for continuing education, and assistance in identifying career and development opportunities.

The ACRL Membership Committee is continually seeking to promote member satisfaction. For example, the Committee recently conducted a telephone survey of non-renewing members to better understand member attitudes and concerns. The Committee was greatly encouraged by the positive feedback from this effort. The recently appointed Organizational Member Task Force in ACRL has been charged with investigating ways of enhancing the benefits of this type of membership. Some of the possible benefits that I would support include discounts on employment advertising and

reduced registration fees for junior librarians from institutional member libraries.

Members can contribute to the strengthening of ACRL in many ways, in addition to committee membership, including: responding to surveys and questionnaires, participating in local ACRL chapter activities, and communicating their suggestions for enhanced member services to ACRL staff and the Membership Committee. Enhancing both the opportunities and the rewards of membership in ACRL supports Goal One of the Strategic Plan: contributing to the total professional development of academic and research librarians.

**2) Continuing education.** ACRL members, according to the recent membership survey, want Continuing Education. ACRL must expand Continuing Education opportunities for all members regardless of their location. We should consider the possibility of marketing video tapes and teleconferencing of both seminars and courses. We need to seek outside funding to support ACRL media projects.

Continuing Education offers us an opportunity not only to help junior academic librarians keep up with their rapidly changing professional environment but also to assist in the re-education and updating of skills among senior librarians. New courses available through ACRL Continuing Education include "Improving Organizational Communication" (CE 118) and "Understanding Conflict Within the Library" (CE 116). New CE courses could be brought to local chapters through University Satellite Teleconferencing or videotape. Providing greater access to an expanded program of Continuing Education supports Goal One of the Strategic Plan: Contributing to the total professional development of academic and research librarians.

**3) Recruiting and developing leadership.** Recruiting into the profession has always been a major concern in ACRL. This past year saw the publication in C&RL News (December, 1990) of the report of the ACRL Task Force on Recruitment of Underrepresented Minorities following the endorsement of the position statements included in the report by the ACRL Executive Committee at its November, 1990, meeting. This comprehensive and far-reaching report outlined an impressive number of possibilities for expanding our efforts to recruit and develop leadership among underrepresented minorities.

Funding of these increased recruitment activities, including wider use of the minority recruitment videos produced by the School of Library and Information Science, University of Pittsburgh ("Librarians for the Information Age") and the 18 minute ALA video ("The Future is Information"), must be a high priority for ACRL. The Executive Committee voted last November to establish an

ACRL Standing Committee on Racial and Ethnic diversity and President Barbara Ford appointed the committee members immediately so that they could establish priorities and prepare a budget request for the actions identified in the task force report. ACRL's leadership must continue these important first steps in this essential effort.

Recruiting and developing leadership among an able and diverse population of well-trained librarians supports Subgoal C of Goals Three in the Strategic Plan: To support and participate in the recruitment and retention of outstanding persons to the field of academic and research librarianship.

**4) Relationship with other professional associations.** There are a number of opportunities for ACRL to expand and strengthen its relationship with other professional associations. One example of this kind of opportunity is our working in partnership with other associations to insure the successful implementation of NREN, the proposed electronic National Research and Education Network, which would provide a superhighway for increasing the flow of data among existing research networks. It offers academic and research libraries an opportunity to expand and upgrade their telecommunications research networks with ACRL playing both promotional and integrative roles.

Senator Albert Gore has been instrumental in promoting a bill (S. 1067) to establish over the next decade a multi-gigabit system to provide the telecommunications infrastructure needed to connect computers and their users at universities, federal and industrial laboratories, libraries, schools and other institutions. The aim of this effort is to reach a 3 gigabit per second capacity by 1996 which could move 100,000 typed pages per second. Paul Gherman, Director of Libraries at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, testified before a House committee hearing that "...NREN has the possibility of transforming the very basis of scholarly communication in our nation."

Working with other professional associations to insure the successful implementation of NREN supports Goal Three of the Strategic Plan: To promote and speak for the interests of academic and research librarianship.

**5) Standards and guidelines.** Members have repeatedly listed ACRL Standards and Guidelines as a major contribution to the profession. Since 1986 all three academic library sections have published revised versions of their standards. The 1986 Standards for College Libraries are currently being reviewed by a College Libraries Section Committee. A membership survey leaves no doubt that these standards will undergo revision within the next few years.

There are two important issues that must be addressed regarding standards: 1) Convincing accrediting agencies to use ACRL standards when

evaluating institutions; 2) Helping librarians apply these standards in the field.

Recently copies of ACRL's three sets of standards—for university libraries, for college libraries, and for two year institutions—were sent to all members of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). While many positive responses were received, more needs to be accomplished in this area. Concerted efforts to establish the credibility and legitimacy of these standards must be undertaken by demonstrating how their application enables academic and research libraries to better serve their users.

Academic librarians have requested for years more information on how to apply the standards in the field. Guidance in specific interpretation of standards and guidelines and methods that might be employed to make the best use of standards must be available to library directors and staff. The development of standards and guidelines support Goal Two of the Strategic Plan: Enhancing the capability of academic and research libraries to serve the needs of users.

### **Narrative statement of experience and qualification**

Since 1977 I have been active on over twenty ACRL Committees and have chaired many of these groups, including: 1) BIS Research Committee (during my tenure as chair the committee published *Evaluating Bibliographic Instruction: A Handbook*); 2) ACRL Professional Association Liaison Committee (we developed the guidelines for distributing funds to ACRL members liaison activities); 3) ACRL ad hoc College Library Standards Committee (this assignment resulted in the publication of the 1986 College Library Standards); 4) College Library Section. As Chair of CLS I gained much experience on the management of an ACRL section including: making appointments, running meetings, assuring member input and offering leadership.

Other committees I've served on include: three terms on the ACRL Nominating Committee, ACRL Academic or Research Librarian of the Year Award Committee, ACRL Planning Committee, ACRL Performance Measures Committee, BIS ad hoc Committee on LOEX, BIS Committee on Cooperation, BIS Miriam Dudley Awards Committee, and two terms as ACRL Liaison to American Association for the Advancement of Science.

My work on the ACRL Planning Committee has given me the opportunity to examine all aspects of ACRL Committee and governance structure. As a member of the ACRL Performance Measures Committee and Chair of the College Library Standards Committee I was in touch with the needs of members.

I have spent my entire professional career working in academic libraries. I have worked in colleges and universities, and in private and state-supported institutions.

I feel my experience in ACRL and my professional career give me a unique understanding of the needs of our organization and balanced insight into the future agendas facing academic and research libraries.

*Jacquelyn M. Morris is director of the Occidental College Library in Los Angeles, California.*

### **John C. Tyson:**

I am pleased to have this opportunity to share my views on the current state of the association, and to indicate how I would use my leadership skills as ACRL President to help the association accomplish the goals outlined in the strategic plan. ACRL's effectiveness has been enhanced enormously with its adoption of a formal planning process. Having served on the ACRL Planning Committee during the past two years, I have gained intimate knowledge of the association's three most important management tools—the strategic plan, the financial plan, and the operating plan. Collectively, these documents provide the necessary direction and a rational basis on which to make difficult decisions concerning the use of our scarce resources. Furthermore, they have facilitated our efforts to establish priorities as to where we should invest our money, time and energy.

I fully support the organization's current mission statement and the four overarching goals in the planning document. Working within the context of these goals, ACRL's sections, committees, and the discussion groups have been able to pursue actively many diverse issues, among them information literacy, the need for conservation and preservation of our major research collections, multitype library cooperation, the status of women within the profession, and equal access to information. As a result, strong advocacy groups within ACRL have emerged that call for strengthening graduate library education programs, the recruitment of a culturally diverse workforce, and the need for strong continuing education programs which enable practitioners to keep abreast of changing technologies. All of these issues are important to our future success. Many of ACRL's working units have articulated specific goals and objectives to address one or more of these concerns. My assessment of ACRL is that it is a healthy organization that is dynamic and effective in providing leadership for our nation's academic and research libraries. Therefore, rather than generate many new initiatives, my term as President of ACRL will be used to

continue emphasis of these important and timely issues.

One of the reasons professional organizations such as ACRL succeed is that many people are willing to work for a cause and accept recognition instead of a salary. Within ACRL we are fortunate indeed to have a wealth of loyal members who care deeply about the library profession and the important role of libraries in a democratic society. I believe that we can create an even stronger, more effective, and more fiscally sound ACRL through membership growth. Currently we rank as the largest division of ALA with more than 10,000 personal and organizational members. There are unquestionably large numbers of practicing academic and research librarians and organizations who should be in the association but are not members. I would like to see a significant increase in the numbers of new membership applications resulting in more new members in active assignments within the organization. Involvement means a stronger interest in the attainment of association goals at the local, state, national, and international levels. In my efforts to attract a greater percentage of the persons who staff this nation's academic and research libraries, I plan to work closely with the Board of Directors, the Membership Committee, and the Chapter Council to create an innovative public relations program. Major components of the program would include a membership promotion and retention plan, a recruitment program aimed at attracting the best and brightest into academic librarianship, and a program designed to improve the public's image of the librarian.

I believe that my team approach to accomplishing common goals, my commitment to an information literate society, and my enthusiasm for the library profession would enable me to serve as an effective leader. I have participated in volunteer grassroots organizations at the local, state, regional,

and national levels. In my participation in all of these organizations, I have established a reputation as a people-person. This means that while I develop a program to provide leadership for the organization, I do not forge ahead without the full participation of the members of the organization. Moreover, I am a team player who seeks consensus. An effective working group or team is an energetic group of people who work well together, enjoy doing so, and produce high quality results. My experience as a teambuilding consultant in libraries and other organizations has taught me that teams do not develop by accident. Therefore, I plan to work with committee chairs, board members, and headquarters staff to identify how the leadership of ACRL might enhance its working relationship through team development efforts.

ACRL is in a position to function optimally now that its sections, committees and discussion groups are moving toward the same organizational goals. Because of our past successes, I believe that the time is ripe for teambuilding within ACRL and that the appropriate organizational interventions will enable us to be even more successful.

In conclusion, whoever is elected President of ACRL will inherit the reins of a healthy and vital organization. The challenge will be to increase the effectiveness of the organization to deal successfully with the many professional issues confronting academic and research librarianship. Libraries have traditionally been underfunded in this country; therefore, much of ACRL'S energy must be focused on addressing the need for a national information policy that provides additional funding to strengthen our nation's academic libraries. ACRL will need to suggest new legislative initiatives in support of college and university libraries. The information explosion, inflation, and changing technologies have made it more challenging to build comprehensive collections. Issues related to conservation and preservation, teaching information literacy, cooperative collection development, and multitype library networks have resulted in larger, more complex organizations with broader, more encompassing missions. Unfortunately, these issues come at a time of budget reductions that have increased the financial pressures on academic and research libraries. ACRL's role in developing an action plan to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services will be crucial to strengthening the ability of research libraries to meet the needs of scholars in the 21st century. I would be honored to lead ACRL as together we work to meet the information needs of the next century.

*John C. Tyson is state librarian at the Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond.* ■■

### **Call for access policy statements**

The Access Policy Guidelines Task Force appointed by ACRL President Barbara J. Ford is asking the help of libraries in revising the 1975 Access Policy Guidelines. The Task Force Chair, Althea Jenkins, is interested in receiving access policy statements currently being used in libraries. The Task Force will study them as part of its research before revising the 1975 Access Policy Guidelines.

Please send your Access Policy statements as soon as possible, but not later than May 1, 1991, to: Althea H. Jenkins, University of South Florida at Sarasota, 5700 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34243.