

ALA's National Policy Convening

ALA's National Policy Convening is being held April 12–13, 2016, in Washington, D.C., during National Library Week. It is a chance to hear about policy priorities of importance to the national library community. (Contact Charlie Wapner, at cwapner@alawash.org, for information or to register.) This year there are three themes within the program, which will be hosted by ALA President Sari Feldman and Alan Inouye, director of ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy, which include:

- **Tuesday, April 12: Youth Engagement with Technology (5:30–6:30 p.m.).**

How can we develop and sustain effective technology opportunities for young people in formal (K–12 classroom) and other (informal) settings—particularly for those in groups underrepresented in technology fields?

- **Wednesday, April 13: Advancing Economic Opportunity in Communities (3:00–4:30 p.m.).**

At a time when income inequality is a widely acknowledged challenge across the political spectrum, there is an urgent need to build economic opportunity. How can we engage a broader cross-section of our country in entrepreneurship, the sharing economy, and 21st-century economic development?

- **Wednesday, April 13: Future Directions for the Library of Congress (5:00–6:30 p.m.).**

What should be on the priority agenda for our nation's library? It is an opportune time to ask this question, given the retirement of James Billington, the Librarian of Congress since the Reagan years, and the recent nomination of Carla Hayden as his successor.

50th Anniversary of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

With the approaching 50th anniversary (July

4, 1966) of the enactment of the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), there was a spirit of festivity at the 18th annual Freedom of Information Day event hosted March 11 by the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center. While highlighting several library policy priorities, ALA President Sari Feldman said the association will continue to work with a broad coalition of groups to finally and comprehensively reform FOIA. (Since she spoke, the Senate unanimously passed S.337, the FOIA Improvement Act aimed at increasing the transparency of government and expanding access to government information on a timely basis. Senate and House negotiators must now reconcile S. 337 with the House's own version of FOIA reform, H.R. 653, passed in January of this year.) Feldman, who honored OpenGov Foundation Executive Director and Cofounder Seamus Kraft with the 2016 James Madison Award, brought home the theme of how important libraries are to the principles of democracy by sharing comments on that topic by several luminaries, including James Madison himself: "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."—*James Madison, fourth President of the United States and author of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution*

National Library Legislative Day 2016 is approaching: register now!

This year's National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) is taking place May 2–3, 2016, in Washington, D.C. Take a moment to register. There are still rooms available in the room block available at reduced rates at the Liaison Hotel. NLLD takes place over two days, the first day being devoted to briefings and a special reception on Capitol Hill, and the second day focuses on visits with your Members of Congress and their staff. For more information or assistance of any kind, please contact Lisa Lindle at llindle@alawash.org or (202) 628-8410. *rl*

Nancy Gravatt is press officer of the ALA Washington Office, email: ngravatt@alawash.org