Good morning Chapter Presidents,

I’m reaching out today to provide an important update regarding a long-standing favorite ALA event – Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI).

ALA’s first CLI was held in June 1996. The event was attended by approximately 100 chapter leaders and scheduled in both an East and West Coast location, on back-to-back weekends. Since that time, and even before, when less formal chapter management workshops were held, ALA chapters have benefited from funding assistance provided by the organization. This funding has historically covered registration fees, travel expenses and hotel stays for at least one individual per chapter.

There was a time in which this practice was feasible. Many ALA chapters were chartered in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, and were busily working to establish themselves as a reputable resource within their local communities. Funding CLI attendance was a way to support chapters in exchange for their efforts in furthering the mission of the international Association.

CLI attendance has more than tripled in the last 20 years. It has become much more robust, showcasing multiple keynote speakers, requiring considerably heavier audio/visual needs and increased meeting space. In turn, the financial burden on the Association has grown substantially. Therefore, the Board of Directors has made the decision to limit funding assistance for this and subsequent years. This means that a complimentary registration and travel stipend will no longer be offered automatically to one representative per chapter.

Through support of ALA international, many ALA chapters have established business partner sponsorship programs. These efforts have shifted business partner support from the international Association to the chapters. As that continues to happen, we feel we also need to shift some expense responsibilities to the chapters.

Understanding that each chapter’s situation is unique, the Board also determined that funding assistance will remain available to those chapters that exhibit the financial need. Through applications approved by both the Regional Director and ALA’s Executive Director, the new process will require the chapter or individual seeking funding to submit a request for assistance (including the amount desired) and certain chapter financial information. More details regarding this application process will be provided as we get closer to the event. For planning purposes, we wanted to provide this information to you now. As you likely know, CLI will be held July 21-23, 2016, at the Worthington Renaissance Fort Worth in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Board of Directors stands behind its commitment to provide chapter leaders with the tools and guidance they need to effectively lead their chapters. This change will allow for the reallocation of funds to enhance those tools and resources.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts on behalf of the Association. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns regarding this or any other matter.

Warm regards,

Teresa Walker
ALA President