

# OLA Scholarship Taskforce Planning Document

## OLA Leads

### **Pilot Program Mission/Description:**

The goal of the pilot program is to provide scholarship funds for professional development while building leadership interest and involvement in OLA. The following describes the general parameters of the new program.

OLA Leads will connect Emerging Librarians with scholarships for both educational use and leadership opportunities in OLA. For the purposes of this pilot program, an “emerging leader” is defined as an MLS student or paraprofessional either currently studying library science or currently employed in the library or related field. For the pilot program, an MLS student and a library support staff member will be selected.

In general the scholarships will include the following:

- Scholarship funding is specifically for education-related professional development. (For example, if the recipient is an MLS student, the funds would go toward tuition. If the recipient is a library support staff, the funds could be used to receive support staff certification training.)
- Membership to OLA for one year.
- OLA Annual Conference registration.
- A requirement that the recipients participate in the OLA Leads development cycle. This means that **1)** recipients will be paired with a mentor who will mentor them specifically in OLA participation. This mentor will be selected via the new Leadership Committee **2)** recipients will choose an OLA unit to actively participate in, and **3)** recipients will actively participate in some element of the OLA Conference as a volunteer, presenter, or in another designated role.

### **Pilot Program Goals:**

#### **For OLA:**

- To strengthen OLA and membership
- To support mentoring initiatives in OLA
- To support developing and training emerging leaders in OLA

#### **For Emerging Leaders:**

- To help introduce and become familiar with OLA mission, goals, and opportunities for involvement
- To offer leadership training and professional development opportunities
- To offer mentoring to aid informal career development

**For Mentors:**

- To share professional knowledge and experiences of OLA
- To network with new colleagues and emerging librarians and staff
- To refresh and deepen knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a leader

**Scholarship Criteria:****Eligibility:**

- Applicants must be students or paraprofessionals currently studying and/or currently employed in the field of library science
- Applicants should have demonstrated potential to be future library leaders, as provided in their application materials
- Applicants must be willing to attend the OLA Annual Conference during the OLA Leads Initiative
- Applicants may be a:
  1. current MLS student member of OLA
  2. current member of OLA for three years or less (not including student memberships)
  3. a non-member of OLA

**Scholarship Amounts:**

- 1 - year OLA membership (including unit dues) appropriate to level, e.g. student dues or based on current salary
- Stipend for OLA Annual Conference and travel up to \$500 depending on travel needs and level of conference registration
- Stipend for professional development/tuition
- Each scholarship amount will not exceed \$2500

**Scholarship Guidelines:**

Scholarship recipients will:

- Be paired with a mentor from OLA
- Receive funds for OLA membership dues for one year
- Receive funds for OLA conference registration
- Receive a stipend toward travel expenses to attend OLA conference
- Participate in leadership activities directly related to OLA, such as appointment to an OLA or unit committee, board, or project
- Receive funds for professional development up to \$2500 minus the costs for OLA membership and conference fees. As part of the application process the applicant will state specifically how the money will be used (examples include tuition for MLS students, or certification or other professional development for paraprofessionals)

- Write a short essay about their experience (for publication within OLA publications, such as the OLAQ)
- Participate in the one-year program, beginning from the selection process continuing through OLA's fiscal year (September-August).

### **Timeline**

Submission and selection process:

- Call for applications: Sept. 21 - Oct. 5th. (firm date tbd)
- Submission deadline: October 15th
- Selection of 2 OLA Leads recipients by Scholarship Committee: Nov. 15th?
- Pairing of recipients with mentors from the Leadership Committee: Nov. 15- Dec. 15th?
- Recipients and mentors meet (virtually) with OLA Leads Coordinator to begin mentoring process - timeframe: Dec. 15-Jan. 10
- Announcement of 2 OLA Leads recipients and mentors - January 11th

### **Other important notes for the OLA Board and future OLA Leads Coordinator**

#### **Donation suite of funding - Ideas:**

- Past Presidents - continue fundraising efforts at OLA Annual Conference
  - Poster/promotional material available at registration booth for on-the-spot donations
- Additional information/link on OLA Annual Conference registration page to solicit scholarship contributions
- Vendors - contribute to the OLSF and be highlighted at the conference. May be paired for a meet and greet with scholarship recipient
- Crowdsourcing website
- Grants - pursue these using annual interest earned from OLSF as match
- Tax on OLA divisions - a small, annual tax to generate a steady stream of revenue

### **OLA Leads Coordinator**

Duties:

- Communicate with Scholarship Selection Committee as they select scholarship recipients.
- Once the recipients are selected, communicate with the Leadership Committee chair to select mentors on that committee for the newly selected Emerging Leaders.
- Communicate with Leadership mentors. The mentors will:
  - Review mentoring orientation documentation
  - Establish contact with the Emerging Leader.

- Ensure that Emerging Leader attends OLA Annual Conference, attends orientation session, and volunteers in some capacity at conference
- Ensure that Emerging Leader selects an area of interest in an OLA unit or project and begins participation in that chosen area of interest. Touches base with the Emerging Leader throughout year to help track this participation. [OLA Leads coordinator contacts person to help track this and be connection between leader and unit]
- Ensure that Emerging Leader participates in professional development/education, as outlined in their application
- Solicit feedback from Emerging Leaders and mentors
- Solicit a short, personal essay from Emerging Leader
- Coordinate with OLA Hotline and/or other OLA media outlets to publish essays
- Prepare certificates of participation for Emerging Leaders and mentors

### **OLA Leads Mentors**

#### Responsibilities:

- OLA Leads coordinator contact person to help track this and be connection between leader and unit
- Provide advice, assistance, and support to mentee related to leadership development
- Set up a regular “checking in” schedule with mentee
- Be an active listener
- Provide feedback throughout the participation year
- Check in regularly with OLA Leads Coordinator and OLA Unit
- Maintain confidentiality

The OLA Leads model will ultimately support MLS students, support staff, and emerging librarians. An OLA Leads scholarship includes a stipend for conference participation, requires association unit participation, and pairs emerging libs with mentors. The program is embedded in the existing OLA structure with an OLA Executive Board position – the OLA Leads Coordinator – to ensure smooth communication between all moving pieces: Scholarship selection, the mentoring of recipients by the Leadership Committee, and sustained funding for the program.

