MLA Strategic Planning Membership Survey Feedback

This feedback was extremely useful to the MLA Strategic Planning Taskforce in their development of a new, streamlined plan for FY2015 – FY2017.

The Taskforce attempted to organize the feedback into some larger categories. Some really meet more than one.

The Divisions and other units who do the work to meet the goals and objectives of the strategic plan will be using this feedback to create their annual strategies.

Additionally, this feedback will provide ideas for the ongoing need to keep MLA fiscally sound while keeping membership and program fees at a reasonable rate.

Top priorities MLA should focus on
- Advertising campaigns to general MD populace
- Community engagement
- Marketing/promoting, communication strategies
- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Policy
- Support of intellectual freedom
- Membership
- Outreach to new members
- Not enough people to run for office
- Partnerships with other organizations to share funding and training and achieve shared goals.
- Partnerships with academics
- Professional Development
- Social networking
- Networking
- Sharing resources throughout all regions
- Network security
- Technology training
MLA Services you value most

- CRAB in paper format (note: currently it is only available electronically)
- marylib
- A strong network that mentors its members
- Legal back-up when we step to the plate on issues
- Defense of intellectual freedom
- Education of our population
- Fund raising
- Grant opportunities to support networking and resource sharing (people and talents, equipment) to enhance services, technology
- Maker spaces, etc. throughout the state including the more remote counties.
- Discounted conference attendance

Most important things for MLA to focus on in the next three years

MLA structure & procedures

- Organization of programs and discussions need to have fewer rules for outcome of divisions being able to offer more educational opportunities
- Better integration of divisions and interest groups.
- Develop guidelines to help MD libraries stay technologically up-to-date and relevant to citizens of all backgrounds.
- Provide incentives to allow and encourage innovation and growth.
- Improve MLA’s finances to support major programs such as MLLI
- Continue to utilize new technology in association administration
- Create a genealogy interest group
- Website/Digital Presence Overhaul
- Less red tape when trying to coordinate events with groups outside of Maryland.
- Develop a system to host the documents electronically, so people can access at the meeting (or remotely) and not waste the paper/staff time/file space required to use the paper copies.
- Hire a grant writer and a web developer
- I would like to see MLA evolve more using technology. I would like to see a truly interactive Social Media environment. I would also like to see the use of technology to facilitate meetings.

Leadership

- Grow a more robust and dynamic leadership
- Leadership development program
- Develop Leaders for the future
- Help members with career advancement skillsets/opportunities
• Develop new leaders who can take over the reigns from the ones who are ALWAYS involved and committed.
• Transition to new organization leadership

**Advocacy/Communication/Advertising/Publicity**
• More advocacy for library systems to send their staff to MLA programs.
• Continue advocacy work.
• Promote the profession, the libraries and support staff.
• Need improved communication among library stakeholders
• Advocacy for libraries
• Increase advocacy
• More info / lobbying to our legislators
• MD Libs getting involved in educating people in the sharing economies mentality through offering class on growing gardens, etc.
• Teach people in MD what libraries are *now* through a real advertising campaign.
• Advocate for increased public library funding
• Partner with more institutions in the area to make MLA a bigger name throughout the state and surrounding states.
• Advocate for increased funding for libraries by Md legislature.
• Advocate for libraries to hold on to older, more experienced librarians.
• Partner with other groups to defend our staff, customers, and open information for all.

**Improve provision of information to members**
• More or better knowledge of MLA Divisions so that interested parties can make an educated choice as to what they wish to join.
• Transform the Crab into a more modern form of communication. Make it an electronic document that has searchable archives, a table of contents with links to the content area and suggestions for similar reads in other issues, etc.
• New MLA website that is fresh and interactive and a place where members want to come often to check out news, etc.
• Expand MLA’s JobLine to include all MD library job ads and add links to other states’ joblines
• MLA newsletter that is more than registration info for programs – include important news and cutting edge info about the library field
• Improve ongoing communication with members, to provide timely and engaging news and information.
• More information for new members in a way they don’t have to keep searching for it.
• RSS feature on MLA website
• Legislative News RSS feed great
• *Happenings* newsletter needs to be less text heavy – try bullet points with links to details.
• CRAB and Happenings need to be professionally designed and emailed to all members
• Marylib link hard to find on MLA website
• During legislative session, post state-related blog entries
• Post Legislative Committee meeting notes online in a timely manner
• Use technology to improve communication and interactivity
• Add vendor marketing to the CRAB
• Update MLA website - more accessible membership online profile - so members can log in and renew their account, see what groups they are a part of, and what programs they’ve attended.
• Include mobile apps in new MLA web site design.
• Make better use of existing web platforms to facilitate communication and collaboration between MLA and its constituents. Members should have personalized logins to access member-only information, update their contact info, and renew/modify their membership. Units should be able to update information about their groups’ activities themselves.
• Modernize communication methods, documents, and website, making it easier for members to find information on/from MLA and communicate electronically.

Networking
• Increase networking opportunities, including gaining more members.
• Network more face-to-face as well as electronically
• Better communication between academic and public librarians
• A password secure digital space for MLA members to share best practices and innovative, transformative ideas.
• Kick off local later afternoon, evening, or weekend social events in each area (by county, at the largest, if possible), and see if there’s interest for more.
• Everything flows from relationships.
• Networking opportunities for new librarians and MLS students
• I really want more support for younger librarians. Mentorship, fostering networks, and help in developing their early careers will go far.
• Networking opportunities at conference
• More networking and social events.
• Encourage a social network of Maryland librarians
• Encourage more sharing of ideas between systems
• Perhaps ways to network online. Frequently I would like to attend events, but they are either not networking for people in my field of interest or they are too far away for me to attend because of my work schedule.
• Create more networking events

Increase membership
• Increase diversity initiatives
• Broaden MLA’s membership
• Issue of not being able to be more involved in MLA due to individual library systems not being able to let staff take the time.
• Increase diversity in the profession through recruitment programs for underrepresented populations.
• Encourage decision makers to increase support for non-librarians to be involved with MLA.
• Include a broader spectrum of library workers. e.g technical and non MLS library workers.
• Increase membership by 25%
• Get more members involved in committees, which improves networking and sharing ideas.
• Get library staff at all levels excited about MLA and involved in it.
• Seek out more front line staff for membership on subcommittees and
• Coach library managers to really help frontline and support staff develop their careers and specialties.
• Continue to support teams that are planning customer service and support/circulation-centered development.
• More outreach and recognition of role of support personnel including security, circulation assistants, business office accountants, etc....perhaps an annual MLA Support Services Award....
• Lower membership rates
• Recruit more members
• Promote the value of the association as a means for people to develop skills, network, and create opportunities for themselves both personally and professionally.
• Increase engaged, active membership across all systems and library types.
• Attract enough involved members that division offices never go vacant, and ideally have more than one person vying for the office.
• Increase membership among young people working in libraries and with people who are new hires in libraries. That means offering training, programs, services, and conferences that include topics that interest them. And engaging with them and creating roles that can make them become active members.
• Increase membership
• Increase membership, especially among newer librarians.
• I feel like MLA is perceived badly by many very good librarians, who therefore do not get involved. I’d really like to see MLA turn this around and attract really good people who get involved.
• Online membership management. I should be able to manage my account online like other associations.

Training/Education
• Continue to provide CEUs
• Increase training and workshop opportunities
• Create a division/Interest group/committee/panel on increasing diversity in MLA and to provide training to increase diversity in programming, collections and library related issues.
• Develop high quality training that could be adapted and moved to the National level for PLA and ALA. Support people who want to do the training
• Keep doing the excellent job with your conference
• Coordinate programs or events with partners such as museums or educational services, which will extend MLA’s reach and value to a greater number of people.
• More programs/trainings for support staff
• Offer more online training on more topics (right now it just seems focused on social media)
• More technology training
• Educational programming for librarians and support staff
• Have relevant training to meet the needs of the changing library environment and paradigm.
• The library field is changing rapidly. Helping library staff with training to keep up with the direction the field is going.
• Programs directed to e-books, how to best promote them to non-traditional library users, and getting librarians comfortable with using this newfound technology.
• Continue the fabulous conferences in OC.
• Offer more online training and learning opportunities.
• Overhaul the whole way we deliver professional development programming
• Required library trustee training curriculum
• A diversity program

Accessible / affordable training
• Do more in the western part of the state. Many of the MLA programs and state library programs are Baltimore-centric. We rely almost exclusively on our regional library for training opportunities.
• More courses on the eastern shore of MD
• Plan and promote more staff development/training programs at low or no cost to be held at some of the more remote counties throughout Maryland.
• Offer more scholarships
• More affordable programs – hard for individuals and library systems to pay
• Offer more low cost or free trainings to help members obtain CEUs
• A joint-membership with neighboring state’s library associations.
• Utilize new technology for providing distance learning application.
• Free Webinars for training on new technology
• Help everyone (who is interested) in learning about all technology pieces.
• Easy online access to all programs to address issues of traveling to face-to-face.
• Like face-to-face training but not always/often practical.
• Figure out a way for members that have no travel budget to be able to participate more
• More training/education grants libraries and individuals
• Access for everyone to training, including at home
• Expand training opportunities for Maryland library employees, keeping the cost to the trainee as low as possible.
• Hold the annual conference in different areas of the state, not always in Ocean City, making it more convenient for a wider variety of people to attend through the years.
• Move the conference around the state, perhaps make it more centrally located.

Other
• Find ways to honor specific MD libraries
• Actively engage with regional systems in increasing daytime foot traffic for the parents of preschoolers for their own programming. Bring the kids but not for the kids. Also seniors.
• Expand partnerships
• Along with state leadership, support pooled/shared resources at the state level beyond what is in existence –
• Conduct a survey/comparison of retirement systems for various libraries throughout the state.
• A state-wide courier system with all types of libraries involved.
• Develop a strategy to meet the challenge of a changing library role in the community
• Support the pooling of resources statewide such as a shared ILS

How can MLA attract new members?

Make training more accessible and meaningful
• Lower the cost of training workshops.
• More programs, less rules!
• Work with Counties to provide acceptable programs (in person and online) in which members can earn CEU’s.
• The only thing MLA does on the Eastern Shore is the conference in May -- having more activities / offerings within reasonable travel distance -- might help ES staff attend more of the meetings / trainings.
• Offer more training opportunities featuring experts in their field.
• More "distance" learning opportunities and programs
• Offer more general workshops - more like things regular staff (such as processing clerks) would find useful and would want to take. They find
nothing in the Conference brochure or the Monthly offerings that would entice them.

- Offer or sponsor more webinars that are advertised to all members, and not just certain interest groups. I find it difficult to know what is available to me because I did not register for more than one interest group, but I do have broad interests.

- Make programs "pay what you can" but include a realistic suggested donation

- Provide more trainings

- Programs that are relevant to daily work of a variety of library positions.

- Continue to provide strong professional development opportunities to members.

- MLA could offer more programs and networking opportunities specifically for new librarians and publicize these on its website and listservs.

- Encourage LATI tie-in on a national level and include an advocacy event or MLA volunteer opportunity through LATI.

- keep cost down, offer tuition reduction to U of MD

- Award CEUs to institutions outside of the library world. One case being Common Ground on the Hill’s summer classes at McDaniel College. Many teachers attend classes to get grad credit. If CEUs were allowed, librarians would be able to take weeklong classes that would directly benefit their programming plus they’d meet teachers, artists, performers, musicians who could appear at their branches. Develop a partnership with this organization that promotes cultural understanding plus traditional arts and music.

- More CEU opportunities (both physical and virtual) for all types of membership, especially leadership with the understanding that leadership should occur at every level of an organization.

- Establish CEU credit for committee meetings.

- Charge less for program attendance for MLA members. I know that there is a discounted rate, but given how much we pay for our membership, it could be a bit more. My library system does not have the funds to send staff to many MLA programs, and I’d love it if my MLA membership made it easier for us.

- Plan and promote more staff development/training programs at low or no cost to be held at some of the more remote counties throughout Maryland.

- Have more affordable programs.

- Stronger training in innovative services

- Discounted programs

- Hold the annual conference at a time that is more convenient to library science students

- Hold conference in central Maryland.

- Offer scholarships to major events.

- Encourage participation in activities and events

- Consider adding elements to the conference for students/potential libraries that supplement their studies - financial and budgeting workshops, HR and personnel management training, marketing and PR for novice librarians, etc.
These are not taught in MLS/MLIS coursework but it is vital that librarians understand and use these tools.

- Have more training
- More virtual meetings (to draw in those who don’t have time (or budgets) to drive all over the state for a two-hour meeting.
- Better promotion and the elimination of fees for workshops. Many workshops sound interesting, but the fees prevent some people from attending.
- Continue to offer great, engaging programs at affordable rates
- More webinars and online conferences
- Discounts. Perhaps you could offer discounts to people who pay full price for training opportunities or group discounts for multiple people in one organization.
- Promote the benefits of becoming a member clearly and concisely. Create member-only opportunities (publications, events, etc.).
- Quit the crafty "quilting" activities
- Hold smaller regional conferences throughout the state, throughout the year
- Get library institutions to support membership of their employees - perhaps with financial help?

**Look at membership costs/benefits**

- Provide discounted rates to encourage new members.
- Offer discounts for multiple year memberships.
- Offer more interesting perks possibly lower a biannual fee.
- Lower membership price
- Discounted guest membership to newly appointed librarians in DC/Maryland
- Decrease membership fees and deliver certifications.
- Lowest possible membership dues
- Provide more membership benefits
- Bring costs for membership and programming down.
- Deeper membership discounts for conventions, books and other materials.
- Work with directors of the various types of libraries to award a 1-yr complimentary MLA membership to all brand-new employees (first-time Maryland library employees, not transfers w/n the system)?
- A lot of staff have to pay for their membership out of pocket with little or no support from their employer. They need to know what the benefits are to joining.
- Establish an anonymous "pay it forward" membership account where donors can contribute $50 or more to fund a basic membership for promising new library professionals and library paraprofessional staff.
- Many systems have MLA membership as a part of their employment package -- this should be encouraged, though I realize it may not be practical for smaller county-systems. Perhaps a discounted membership rate for small counties?
• Facilitate internships for MLS students
• Have a lottery to pay travel expenses and fee to the MLA conference.
• Give members something free, not just discounted. Ex: one free training per year.
• First year discounts for new members.

Create more membership outreach
• Include more people at every level of staffing many people think MLA is only for reference staff
• Recruit new members by visiting library schools and also library systems to encourage participation at all levels.
• Better jobline and promote actual benefits to being a member.
• Make it relevant to new librarians
• Make it easy for new library staff to create their own niche within the organization.
• Somehow get managers and administrators in systems to promote and encourage more participation in MLA
• MLA needs to encourage support staff to become members, not just librarians.
• Target specific populations with specific benefits in marketing - for example students would benefit from networking (possible job contacts) and scholarships, new supervisors could benefit from leadership development, etc.
• More opportunities to get involved (committees, chapters, etc.) including virtual memberships.
• Go to other system’s branch meetings to get members (who haven’t participated before) and non-members a good idea of what the benefits of being apart of MLA are. Coming into MLA, I wasn’t totally clear of what it can do for me other than giving my system discounted rates on trainings (which is awesome). Now that I’ve been in it, I can see the benefits, but I don’t know if they are totally clear from the beginning.
• Increase diversity in the information profession through recruitment programs for underrepresented populations.
• Appeal to non-Librarians
• Make it more clear to non-members why MLA is important
• Invite other associations to join
• Make participating in the committees easier, and spread more information about what they do, including their importance to Maryland librarians.
• We need to have a stronger outreach presence at colleges and universities. Are there such things as community service fairs where MLA can have a booth? Can we have a stronger presence in the local LIS realm?
• I joined because I received a personal invitation from a librarian at another institution, and whom I had met only via email.
• Have the MLA president or another key person attend annual Staff Days.
- Reach out to new hires at the University level.
- Each county/system could hold a contest and fund 5 memberships a year for new members. Then, all these new members would need to find a niche in MLA, from attending training to serving in an area of interest.
- Persuade library systems/organizations to support MLA membership for their staff.
- Target CUA students. The school is less than 2 miles from the State line, and a lot of their students (myself included) live in Maryland.
- Be a part of staff developments days and other outreach at various libraries. Let people know what MLA is doing and how they can be a part of what is happening in libraries statewide.
- Something that always works with me is to personally invite new members to join. Perhaps there could be a visiting campaign where MLA members would visit libraries and invite new people to join.
- Make MLA members available for library systems visits (e.g. Staff Day, branch meetings) to make presentations on the benefits of MLA. Having a member do so allows for not only the presentation of the "big picture" but also for personal stories.
- More outreach, current members and the membership committee should do "fact finding" trips across the state to survey interests and to advocate for membership.
- Have an MLA liaison in each county who represents MLA to that county library.
- More relevant committees
- Speakers at staff days in public libraries; field trips to college and university library meetings; speakers at media specialist meetings.
- More in-library visits
- Give a more dynamic presentation at LATI
- Convince entire county systems to support MLA membership, not necessarily by paying for it, (though this would obviously be nice) but by encouraging staff to become members and setting examples by being on teams or being presenters. And by providing the staff time for ALL library staff members to be involved in some way.

Create/expand networking opportunities
- Networking and social events at the regional level that cross type of libraries.
- Meet and greets throughout the state.
- More social media and networking events.
- Maybe more virtual events would help bridge this gap
- Host more informal, networking events around the state for both members and non-members alike.
- More gatherings that are not simply committee meetings.
- Offer networking or mentoring mixers like the one being held at the MLA Conference so that newly graduated librarians have a chance to learn from another professional in the field and possibly land a potential new job.
- Create meet ups so members have a chance to get together more often
- Offer more in-person networking events, like the Speed Mentoring
- Find a way to promote the benefit of networking. Several people who are active in MLA can attribute their progress in part to connections made through MLA work. Sharing those stories in a way that reaches non-members could help.
- Publicize fun, social networking events.
- Honestly, that is why I like the MLA/DLA conference: it is relaxing and fun - it’s restorative. Of course it is also extremely informative, but the manner in which that happens is inviting, and that’s the key.
- Develop networking opportunities in more geographical areas of the state. Maryland is spread out enough to need this but small enough to create a tighter membership web.
- Periodic Membership night get-togethers in each region. Maybe at a pub or a library meeting room. Meet N mingle type....to attract new members.

**Improve communication/promotion of MLA/Advocacy**
- Improve communication with current members.
- Invite other associations
- Clear brand identity and purpose communicated to various demographics
- Show that you are adaptable to the way the world is changing (e.g. budget/staff reductions, economic or environmental fears)
- More social media. Keep up good work of SMUG and DEAL
- More publicity with tangible benefits of membership outlined
- Increase access to technology, which will draw younger and newer members to want to participate.
- Redesign the member experience from the point of view of your target users.
- Consider possible barriers to conversion (to members) and design solutions to minimize/neutralize those threats. Example: The MLA website is very outdated and unattractive, and committee pages are dull/uninformative. This gives potential members the impression that the organization itself is outdated and not relevant to innovation and growth.
- Try changing the Marketing towards networking and idea exchanging between libraries and see if you get more of a response.
- Get the word out! Make sure that all members understand and value MLA and then encourage them to share that with their library friends and coworkers. I feel as if I am not always able to articulate the full value of MLA to someone who might not be interested in moving up, doesn’t need CE’s, etc.
• Focus on innovative people in the profession. Tailor marketing to what libraries are going today. Make it exciting; emphasize the library's importance in a democratic society.
• If MLA would work on reaching out to new members and really show (as opposed to tell) those members how to get involved, through a tutorial, videos about committees and functions, etc, positive recommendations would come easily when MLA appeals to staffs of libraries.
• Improve web presence. Update sections of web page.
• Better marketing (at least to academic librarians) - I came from out of state and originally had no idea you existed!
• Clear focus; benefits outlined in relation to national memberships. Why bother? This question has to be answered.
• Be sure that everyone receives information.
• Speak as an advocate for individual librarians ‘fighting the good fight’....the legal, mentoring, collegial needs of the professionals in the profession.
• Advertise the tuition/job/scholarship services more actively.
• Do some outcomes research and use those outcomes to sell membership to new and aspiring librarians who don’t see intrinsic value in simply belonging to an association.
• Make the organization easier to navigate.
• Better communication
• Publicity is very important. Advertise more using social media with a eye-catching slogan for MLA.
• Have a more active social media presence including Twitter and LinkedIn that is updated regularly
• Talk more about it’s relevency to helping people’s careers.
• Marketing membership and programs in non-traditional means such as using social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
• Create a video at the next LMA with a "member spotlight" in which folks say what they like about....MLA, the conference, their committee, etc. Post the video to the website to spark interest. If it looks like fun, people will want to be part of it.
• new website
• Increase Social Media presence.
• I am new to MLA and I am still learning all that MLA has to offer. I would just like to know not only what I can do for MLA, but what can MLA do for me.
• I don't know, but most staff here don't know much about MLA.
• Make it easy for new staff to find mission statements for MLA and each of the interest groups and divisions. I see a bunch of acronyms. Not sure what they mean or where I might fit in, so I don't feel welcomed.
• More detailed explanation on how the membership can become more active in MLA while still trying to figure it all out as a new person.
• I think it would be beneficial if it were a little more evenly split between Public and Academic librarianship and tried to build links between us.
• Provide timely educational programs and opportunities for idea sharing as membership entitles you to know about programs first though MLA publications and valuable sharing occurs in meetings, events and listservs only available to members
• MLA gets a lot of competition from DC associations. I think MLA needs to clarify what kind of librarian it serves - there's a definite urban vs. rural feel in the library world. MLA should identify common areas between them, and make those its target priorities.

Provide Job support/leadership growth opportunities
• Have opportunities to provide more job support for professionals out in the field, especially those who are solo practitioners
• Provide more development opportunities for leadership for front line staff.
• Offer more job placement assistance.

Use technology to move MLA forward/be more efficient
• Continue to stress adoption of new technology
• Update the entire website, especially the forms. Make it simple, clean and easy to understand the structure of MLA, and opportunities available to current and interested members.
• Create MLA Apps which would be handy for the membership.

What else do you want MLA to consider?
• The Strategic Plan is published online on the MLA website but is not updated online (there are no Completion Notes). The Performance Measures are activity/output-oriented; strategies will either be completed or not completed. Is there a way to consider/measure whether these activities (once completed) have effectively promoted the Goals and Objectives they serve?
• Trip to Austria & New Zealand
• MLA is still not considered accessible to non-librarian (i.e. non-degreed) staff. Think about ways to improve that, and talk to them! They are the backbone of the library!
• More regional collaboration perhaps with VA, DC and PA
• Marketing
• Keep membership costs low (continue sliding scale fees).
• Make more paraprofessionals and other library workers more welcome
• Keep up the good work!
• Consider extending outreach to corporate sponsors who have an affinity with our mission but may not be specifically library vendors. Hire a professional to do this.
- We have fallen into doing the same old things every year. Let's try to step outside the box and do something very different from previous years.
- Let's try to have a virtual conference as ALA does.
- We need to make some innovative changes to stimulate interest for newer and younger professionals to connect to MLA and yet retain the long time members.
- More leadership opportunities
- Holding the conference in a more convenient location- Ocean City is pretty far away for most of us!
- The importance of the user experience across all interactions (web, app, in library etc.) and the importance of staff training in these areas.
- MLA procedures, particularly conference planning and program planning, need major updating. Taking better advantage of technology would be a good start.
- Streamline the manual and make it searchable online when formulating priorities, limit the number and consider "what success looks like" for each division/committee/interest group as they work toward the priority. Is it possible for every group to do work in service of the given priority? If not, reconsider it, perhaps it should not be a priority.
- Locating and advertising more job openings throughout the state
- I think MLA should really up its marketing force in general.
- Continue to focus on all library types for training/conference programs and more technical services/collection development programs.
- The website is very dated looking...it needs a re-do.
- Extend the conference to more days -- there are simply too many sessions to try to fit in into two days.
- Overhaul the website
- Take a real good look at your website. Or better yet, get someone to update it for you. I don't like the 3 yuppies featured on your home page. Take a look at other professional association pages (not necessarily library associations).
- How to get support from library directors regarding staff involvement
- If MLA has a LinkedIn presence, I haven't found it. I am interested in information-sharing and networking via social media.
- Am really really appreciative of the Drexel tuition discount! Thank you SO much for having this available for members and budding MD librarians!
- MLA should make opportunities to join committees and interest groups more apparent on its website and listservs.
- Modernize the conference planning process.
- Incorporate more special and school libraries into networking conversations.
- Look to more online experiences.
- Consolidation of divisions.
- More fun get-together activities to build more friendships between library systems. The Maker-style conference was a great example.
• It’s time for MLA administration to develop a succession plan for executive director.
• More online committee meetings and programs/webinars
• MLA membership is a significant cost. I know that we get out of it what we put into it, but so many of us are overworked and underpaid as it is. It would be nice if the benefits made the expense and effort worthwhile.
• Keep trying to find the niche libraries and librarians need to serve in our future. 25 years ago we (my colleagues and I) were talking of the 3 areas that public libraries always served, and served well.....immigrants, children and parents, the poor. This is still true. Libraries are still one of the most solid bulwarks trying to bridge the educational and digital divide. ..... push this, please. We will never die, if we do this.
• Create a plan to foster networking and idea sharing among libraries throughout the state. (e.g. How can we add to each of our library’s services by networking with all the libraries and staff we have throughout Maryland?)
• Consider ways to create and support maker spaces and possibly mobile sharing of expensive Maker Equipment (e.g. 3-D Printers) throughout the state."
• There is very little of interest to academic librarians in MLA. When I do see interesting events, they almost always cost money in addition to the annual dues that I’ve already paid. Most of that I have to pay out of pocket because my library does not have adequate continuing education funds available.
• Why can’t the state work together at all levels (public, K-12, academic, special) to purchase databases that are provided to all libraries? The discounts would be better, etc. This is the first state in which I have lived that the State Librarian has not made e-resources available to all libraries out of state funds.
• Technology training
• There are so many free learning opportunities and online learning opportunities that I think MLA needs to find another revenue stream other than programming
• Continue scholarship programs
• How to give non-public library members more options for committees, programs, and an equal voice in the MLA decisions. MLA is EXTREMELY public library centric.
• What happens if Margaret Carty decides to retire, heaven forbid - succession planning (maybe this is already in place)
• More discussion about the future of libraries.
• Seek/identify/compare top 3 Strategic Planning categories from mid-Atlantic, northeast states.
• I wish MLA could establish binding employment standards for its member libraries, but realize this is beyond its abilities and influence.
• The handbook and bylaws are too long and complex, which means no one reads them or can find anything easily when a question is asked. I’d like to see the documents simplified, available electronically, and searchable.
- Publicize the legal benefits from MLA United - I didn’t know about it!
- Continued development of partnerships with state agencies and nonprofits (e.g. DLLR, Veterans Affairs, etc)
- Different parts of the state have different needs and environments. Some libraries are just scraping by.
- Funding advocacy
- Clarify and stand behind MLA’s values.
- How to navigate libraryland with new technologies.
- A lot of our events are difficult to get to if one is without a car.
- Look closely at Library trends, and funding, and try to figure out where the profession is going in Maryland.
- A bigger conference dedicated to youth/YA in a more central location to take the place of "Great Books"
- Please continue to fund scholarships for those who pursue a MLS. It is very expensive and there are not many opportunities to earn them from other organizations, etc.
- Having more trainings available through webinars and through video conferencing so that more people can participate.
- Emerging technologies so that we may be proactive rather than reactive.
- Communication with members should be a priority
- The impact the digitization of information is having on "traditional" library services, how libraries can respond to this, and libraries can make this impact easier for our patrons.
- The task force should look for ways to attract more support staff and LA’s.
- The possibility of a smaller conference in the western part of the state. With the annual conference always being in Ocean City, it pretty much disenfranchises the western part of the state.
- Greater presence/workshops for support staff.
- Facilitate supplementing membership dues for systems that make staff pay out of pocket.
- Consider strengthening ties with the associations in surrounding states and DC to build a regional block of library advocates that can pool resources.
Tangible Ideas: To Accomplish

Update Programming/Events Process
- Find a different location for the conference
- Offer low/no-cost programs
- Simplify the process; make it easier, less red tape
- Offer more online programs
- Have more programs in the West, South, and Shore

Create & Schedule Networking Events
- Host networking events with educational institutions like museums, etc.
- Try having events different times of day, even weekends
- Offer more events
- Offer more events in different locations
- Offer online networking events
- Host networking events around current, professional topics

Update the Website
- Easier to maintain/update division/committee/interest group info, activities, how-to-get-involved info
- Online membership management (pay dues, register, etc. all in one place)
- Easier to use forms
- More accessible membership profile
- Easy to access members-only area
- Integrate social media
- A place for members to share best practices, have discussions, etc.

Improve the CRAB
- Include vendor marketing
- Utilize Constant Contact for newsletter
- Make it 100% online, searchable w/ TOC & archives
- Have it professionally designed
Tangible Ideas: To Accomplish

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   - A place for members to share best practices, have discussions, etc.
Tangible Ideas: Membership Recruitment

**Redesign the MLA Website**
- Addresses ease of participation in committees/divisions
- Addresses marketing/promotion
- Addresses communication/transparency
- Addresses integrated social media presence
- Addresses virtual representation of MLA as organization

**Restructure Membership Dues**
- Offer group discounts to library systems who have a large # of staff as members
- Good Neighbor Rates for DE/DC/VAPANV/WV
- Multi-year membership options
- Sliding scale membership dues
- First year free for new members
- Refer-a-Friend discounts
- Rewards for long-standing members: For every 5 yrs a member you get the next year free!

**Restructure How Programs are Offered**
- Advertise M&G schedule on website and social media
- Create networking interest group
- Schedule different areas in MD
- Intentionally invite different types of lbs
- Ask SLA and LMD for help with this - they already do this for SLA & LMD members

**Develop Intentional Partnerships - then crowdsource!**
- Work with MSDE to establish CEUs for committee work
- Offer pay-what-you-can programs w/suggested 'donation'
- Give members 1 free training per year
- More online trainings
- More lower/no-cost trainings
- Hold annual conference in a different location
- Review rules governing how programs can be offered (make it easier)

**Create an Awareness (marketing) Campaign**
- Conduct outcomes research and use results to tailor marketing efforts
- Statewide tour of MLA reps
- Ask to present at Staff Training Days
- Deliver compelling presentations at LALT, MLLU, LFAP, MLA Conference

**With LIS programs**
- Have 1 MLA liaison in each library system
- With other library associations (DE, DC, PA, VA, WV)
- With McDaniel College
- With Univ. MD College Park
- With Catholic Univ. of America

**Create a Meet 'n Greet Schedule**
- Address ease of participation in committees/divisions
- Addresses marketing/promotion
- Addresses communication/transparency
- Addresses integrated social media presence
- Addresses virtual representation of MLA as organization