



Gateway (St. Louis)

A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

Gateway Connection

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Association of Legal Administrators – Gateway Chapter



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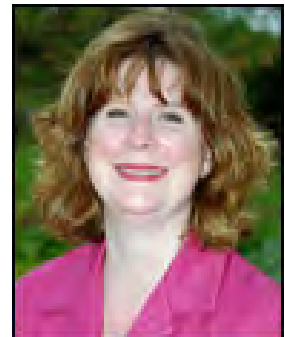
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From the President, Angela Louis

Great year for networking and education!!!

It all started at the ALA annual conference that was held in Boston. The networking opportunities were abundant and core of the conference was the continued education and outstanding programming. If you missed the annual conference the Regional conference will be held on October 15th -16th in Chicago, IL.



The current board was able to attend the Chapter Leadership Institute Conference in Las Vegas. This opportunity excited and motivated the board to continue to make education and networking the number one priority at the local Chapter. New ideas were brought back from the trip and the board is always looking for people to participate and help with all of the activities and we have planned throughout the year.

Our summer education programs have been outstanding thanks to Steve Gilliland and the education committee. We held the leadership forum at the Four Season Hotel in July on the topic of strategic planning. We had

very positive responses from those that attended. Check out the calendar for future monthly programs.

Casino Night is our community challenge event this year and it is on October 1st at the Kirkwood community center. The Chapter will continue to support the charities of Ronald McDonald House and Shriners Hospital for children. Paul Dalziel and Joe Taylor will be sending out emails requesting volunteers, donations, and gamblers and non-gamblers to participate in the evening.

Now more than ever with the changing law firm environments and having to adapt to the ever changing outside world there is a need for the support of other administrators, human resources managers, operations and overall leaders of the firm. I encourage all to get involved. The Chapter will continue to provide opportunities for networking and opportunities for our business partners. With your help we will keep the Chapter and knowledge base strong.

Look forward to seeing you at the next monthly meeting.

Catching Up With... Sarah Allen!

Sarah Allen is the Director of Administration and Human Resources of Greensfelder, Hemker & Gale, P.C. She has been an ALA member since June 1984. We recently quizzed Sarah for the “Catching Up With...” section, and her answers are below.



Allen

1. My main responsibilities are... *directing the human resource functions of the firm including recruiting, performance management, employee relations, employee benefits administration and certain compliance.*
2. I became a legal administrator when... *I accepted the Personnel Coordinator position in 1984 here at Greensfelder. At the time I had my college degree, HR administrative assistance experience and industrial relations experience.*
3. The thing I like best about being a legal administrator is... *that every day is different and the role tends to evolve.*
4. The thing I like least about being a legal administrator is... *that's an easy question to answer, terminating an employee.*
5. The hardest situations I have had to deal with... *are difficult terminations and a reduction in force.*
6. As a legal administrator, I never thought I'd have to... *get lawyers to think certain ideas were THEIR ideas to move an initiative forward but you learn this early in the field.*
7. The best advice I'd received from a fellow legal administrator is... *that it is more important to be respected by personnel than to be liked.*

8. I decided to join the ALA because... *the administrator thought it was an important network for me and sent me to an ALA meeting on my first day at Greensfelder.*

9. My impression of the Gateway Chapter is... *that everyone understands that they get more than they give by attending functions and networking with this group of peers.*

10. If I were not a legal administrator I would be... *leading the health reform charge and bringing the parties together in a logical, productive manner (okay, that's my fantasy, could I really do that? A girl can dream. Earlier in life I wanted to be a rock star like Pat Benatar, that didn't materialize.)*

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11. In my spare time I like to... *read, work out, listen to live music, travel, spend time with Elliot and Jon, enjoy my friends and family (not necessarily in that order).*

12. Three words that best describe me are... *dedicated, steadfast, patient*

13. The biggest change I've seen in the legal industry is... *the widespread adoption of personal computers (I've been around a long time).*

14. The most challenging part of being a legal administrator is... *keeping all the balls up in the air and still moving initiatives forward with hurdles to clear along the way (sounds like a circus, doesn't it?).*

Business Partner Success Story – Robert Half Legal

Christy Pashia | Robert Half Legal

The business partnership Robert Half Legal has shared over the years with the Association of Legal Administrators, both at the national and local level in St. Louis, has been an important part of our client networking and candidate recruitment efforts.

Robert Half Legal has been a major sponsor of the ALA for 10 years. The professional relationships we have developed with ALA members have led to friendships and a loyal client

base, and allowed us to be a sounding board and resource for ALA members. We have been relied upon to answer specific market trend questions and to provide ALA members with valuable career information that helps them remain up-to-date with current trends in the legal industry. Robert Half Legal has also been provided the opportunity to present various topics of interest to ALA members and their staff.

One such valuable resource has been our new *Workplace Redefined* research guide and presentation, which highlights key trends and provides timely advice on managing cross-generational communication. As we work into the 21st century, law firms are experiencing the unique circumstance of employing individuals from 3 separate generations: Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (those born roughly between 1965 and 1978) and Generation Y (born primarily between 1979 and 1999). While there are unique challenges to managing a multi-generational workforce, it also presents opportunity to learn from employees of varied experience. The presentation summarizes data from a multigenerational study of currently employed workers in the U.S. and Canada. Some of the key findings of this presentation are:

- Salary, Benefits and Stability In – Compensation, benefits and company stability are the top three factors for all generations when evaluating an employment opportunity.
- Healthcare and Time Off Are Prized Benefits – These were cited as most important in determining job satisfaction for all generations.
- Many Intend to Seek Greener Pastures – 40 percent of workers said they're more inclined today to look for new opportunities outside their firms. 31 percent of employees plan to stay put and build tenure with their companies.
- Retirement May Be On Hold – 46 percent of people surveyed plan to work past the traditional retirement age.
- The Multi-Generational Workplace Has Benefits and Challenges – 43 percent of workers polled say that varying experience levels and areas of expertise are the greatest benefits of a multi-generational workplace, but they cite differences in work ethic and approach to work/life balance as the biggest challenges. 72 percent of hiring managers find it challenging to manage teams composed of members of different generations.
- Hiring Managers Expect More Productivity – 50 percent of managers polled expect their teams' productivity levels to increase as the economy recovers. 41 percent of hiring managers say they believe employees are working smarter. 33 percent of managers supplement their teams with project professionals during annual workload peaks. 33 percent use interim professionals to help with major new projects.

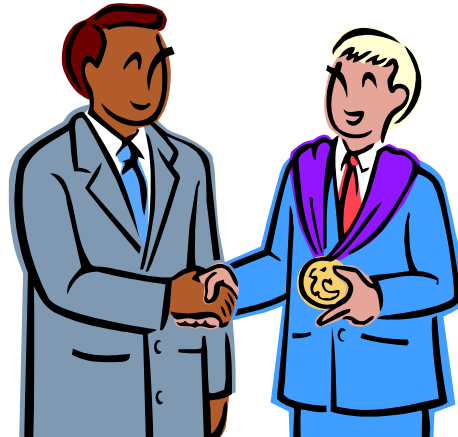
Robert Half Legal is happy to provide this valuable research guide and presentation information to ALA members. As the economy continues to change and the market for legal positions is constantly shifting, we rely on our relationship with ALA members and our partnership with the ALA to build a strong legal community and fill positions quickly for our clients.

If you are interested in the *Workplace Redefined* presentation and research guide, or other industry topics, please call Robert Half Legal at (314) 621-2223. Visit us at www.roberthalflegal.com.

Don't Miss The ALA Gateway Chapter Business Partner Fair!

**August 18, 2010
11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**

**Missouri Athletic Club
405 Washington Avenue
2nd Floor
St. Louis, Missouri 63102**



The Business Partner (Vendor) Relations Committee is proud to announce that we have more Business Partners supporting our Chapter than ever before! Our Business Partner Fair promises to be a fantastic networking opportunity for Administrators, other law firm decisions makers and all of our incredible Business Partners. As usual, the Missouri Athletic Club will offer delicious food and a great atmosphere for spending time-sharing information, knowledge and expertise. Please do not miss this opportunity to connect with your existing Business Partners and meet all of our new ones. Drawings will be held at the middle and at the end of the event. Watch for your e-mail invitation and remember ... *this is a FREE event to all attendees!!**

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Summary Report
Excellence in Management: Creating a Positive Workplace Environment
 Presented by Michael Nash, Nash Consulting, Inc.
Jacqueline M. O'Quinn | Thompson Coburn

Morale is not a touchy, feely, 'no big deal' thing. It is huge! Leaders have to understand that morale matters. It is the job of the organization to create a working environment conducive for high morale. Morale is not the same as personal happiness. Low morale causes absenteeism, gossip, low productivity, high turnover, and negativity. Often when morale is low, people do not

care. There is a saying, “You can buy my back and my hands, but I volunteer my heart and my brain.” Employees give their hearts and brains because they want to do so. Some things that create high morale are: positive reinforcement; catching them doing something right; keeping people informed; giving them meaningful work; ownership; proper training; and holding people accountable.

The top 15 management skills that are necessary for building healthy organizations are:

- Show caring and respect. People know that you see them as people, not just employees.
- Advocate for your employees and for the team. You should stand up for your group and go to bat for them.
- Communicate! Information is distributed effectively and people know what’s going on.
- Involve others in decision making and be collaborative. You ask for people’s opinions, ideas, suggestions and you listen.
- Be consistent, fair and equitable. People are given equal respect, opportunity and understanding.
- Give people autonomy and trust.
- Ask for and be open to feedback.
- Deal with issues and fix problems.
- Know what your people do. You can do their job or at least know what they’re up against.
- Give recognition and thanks.
- Provide accountability. Inappropriate behaviors are addressed effectively.
- Be accessible and available.
- Follow through and follow up. Do what you say you’re going to do and get back to people.
- Make your expectations clear.
- Provide resources and training.

Organizations can be trained to use the Water Line Model to both diagnose problems and as a road map to solve problems. The model first focuses on structure, which is the top level, looking for both strengths and concerns. Then the focus moves to group processes, then to interpersonal and, lastly, to intrapersonal. Following this order makes positive change easier. It is easier to enact healthy changes in structure, roles, and policies than it is to change people. In order to help the people in your organization effectively cope with change, it’s important to recognize the feelings that come with change, such as loss, grief, fear, and excitement. Show empathy. Show that you understand, you care and you’re willing to support them. Provide plenty of lead time and give them as much information as you can. More knowledge tends to lead to less stress. Allow people to have some control by asking for their input, ideas and assistance. Finally, give people training in both soft skills and hard skills.

According to the Water Line Model, the structure consists of the organization and responsibilities. The focus should be on the management, leadership style, role clarity, decision making, policies and procedures, reporting lines and accountability.

The group processes include the day to day activities. Some of these would be team work, group communications, meetings, work styles, information distribution, work flow, and use of email.

The interpersonal are the work relationships. These areas include respect and trust, conflict resolution, behavior styles, giving feedback, receiving feedback, gossip, cooperation, and listening skills.

Lastly, the intrapersonal focuses on the individuals. This includes work ethic, ability to receive feedback, flexibility, attitude, listening skills, communication, adaptive skills, and respect.

There are principles for receiving and giving feedback. Feedback should be taken like a gift. Hold it, open it, consider it and then make a choice about it. Managers cannot afford to come across as defensive. If you are defensive, people won't tell you anymore, they will talk about you behind your back. This causes everyone to lose out on trust, lose valuable information and lose respect. In addition, there isn't any collaboration.

When receiving feedback, it is necessary to listen and look like you're listening. It is also important to ask questions for clarity and understanding. That will also show the other person that you truly want to 'get it' and that you're truly listening. Asking questions will also buy yourself some time. Show empathy. Having the capacity to think and feel oneself into the inner life of another person says, "I get it." If possible, agree with some or all of what they're saying and only disagree if you really have to. Try to stay neutral with comments like, "I'll think about what you said." Finally, thank them for their feedback.

If there is an obvious sense of attack, such as screaming, swearing or waving hands, calmly tell them, "Let's reschedule this discussion when you're calmer."

When giving feedback, it is necessary to take steps to reduce the other person's defensiveness. Always ask permission, such as, "Do you have a few minutes?" or "Can I talk to you?" Be aware of the time and allow yourself plenty of time. Do not give hit 'n run feedback. Be aware of the place. Always give feedback in a private setting. Do not make an appointment to give feedback. The only exception to that rule is annual evaluations should be scheduled.

When giving negative feedback, do not use absolutes or hyperboles. Do not use invisible witnesses. Do not talk too much or be too quick or wait too long. Also do not include irrelevant praise. Always use positive statements, but the positive should relate to the negative. Stay calm and focused. Use an example or some specifics if you have them. Ask for suggestions. Show them that you want them to be successful by using open and interested body language.

Feedback should only be given about behavior and the impact of that behavior. Do not give feedback about character or motive. Don't call them rude, lazy or inconsiderate (although it might be true). Instead, discuss the specific situation that gave you the perception that they were inconsiderate. Although you might think you know what's in their heads and why they did something, do not give feedback about your perception of their motive. It will cause them to push back and be defensive. Never give negative feedback in an email or a written note.

The only time when we should break all the rules is for positive feedback. Make public what they did and do everything that you don't do for negative feedback.

In summary, all organizations experience road blocks, which are problems that can be seen and noticed, although not always correctly diagnosed. These roadblocks keep organizations from achieving their true potential in a wide variety of areas, including bottom line financial issues;

staff retention; customer service; employee morale; and more. Unfortunately, many organizations spend time, energy and sometimes money trying to overcome these roadblocks in unhealthy, reactive, and ineffective ways. The Water Line Model is a proven and effective model for creating a positive workplace environment.



2010 Law Firm Profitability Enhancement Webinar

Wednesday, August 18, 2010

Noon (ET) • 11:00 a.m. (CT) • 10:00 a.m. (MT) • 9:00 a.m. (PT) (3.5 hours)

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Why Be A Member of ALA?

Mary Hoffman | Willams, Venker & Sanders LLC

Law firm administrative personnel are very busy and usually underappreciated. The to-do list is always too long, there are too many fires to extinguish, too many “other duties as assigned”, and yet, partners still ask the same old question - “I wonder what she does all day?”

Plus, as administrators, we are usually an island in our own firm. Professional, but not a lawyer. Supervisors of support staff members that cannot be our friends. Armed with tools to save the firm money, but still viewed as overhead.

Thus are the trials and tribulations of being an administrator in a law firm. To me, the list of woes above detail the main reason to be a member of the ALA. It can be boiled down to one word: networking.

Sure, we have educational opportunities through our local chapter and the national organization that allow us to better serve our firms and its employees. We also have reference materials and

surveys available to us to provide quantitative data so our firms can remain competitive. We have collective buying power through the formation of business partners. All of these things are very important to the administrator, but they are not the one thing that ALA provides all of its members - the ability to network with others who have some of the same responsibilities, the same challenges and goals, the same demands that must be met as well as the same circumstances under which we work.

One of the main benefits of ALA membership is access to the Chapter Salary and Benefits Survey. If you do not participate in the survey, you are missing out!

ALA provides its members with the opportunity to come together on a regular basis to network with our peers. While being very careful to guard our firm's confidential information, we share experiences and ideas, offer advice, lend a sympathetic ear or provide moral support, make needed introductions and develop relationships that cannot be duplicated in our firms.

The collective knowledge of our chapter's members is endless. The benefit of being an active member of ALA can be endless, too. It is an organization that will give you back what you put in. Don't you owe it to yourself and your firm to participate?

As Seen on ListServe – Blackberry vs. iPhone

The Chapter's listserv is an excellent resource for information. If you are not on the listserv and would like to be added, please contact Marie Vogt (mmvogt@lashlybaer.com). Below is a recent exchange, as seen on the listserv.

Question: We have 4 users currently using an iPhone and the other 11 using a BlackBerry. We would like to standardize to one type of device. Can you please respond to the questions below and relay any additional information/experience you may have on this topic. We are running XP with both an Exchange Server and a BES Server. Your input will be appreciated. Thanks.

- 1) What types of mobile devices do your attorneys/staff use?
- 2) Any security issues? Are you using encryption software?
- 3) How is the integration with messaging software (specifically Outlook)?
- 4) Any helpful apps you've found for the iPhones?
- 5) Reports on the new iPhone? Problems with voice dialing or bluetooth?

Response 1: . We support iPhones and any mobile device with the Windows Mobile OS. No security issues or encryption software is used. Outlook is very easy to set up and integrates well with both Windows mobile and iPhone devices. We only support the message syncing and do not support or recommend any apps. We have no experience with iPhone.

Response 2: We support iPhone, Blackberry or other Smart Phones. I tried to standardize in the past and found that they will not use the device if they do not like it for a particular reason (keypad issues, etc.). We password protect all of the devices and do not use encryption software. Integration with messaging software is fine except for the two Blackberry users since we do not

have a Blackberry server and those have to sync with AT&T. Recently found a helpful app that allows the user to view Westlegaledcenter for CLE's on their iPhone's. Our iPhone4 devices are on their way so I don't know of any issues yet but have not had these issues with the 3's. I did see that we may need to purchase a protective shield around the 4's because the antenna is located where most people hold the device so the user may lose bars in locations where the signal is not as strong. I am not purchasing those until I see if it is a legitimate issue.

View it on the ALA National Website

ALA Management Solutions

The Reference Desk / ALA Management SolutionsSM is a legal management reference service provided free to ALA members. The Reference Desk Research Studies using a wide array of in-house and on-line resources to develop **meaningful and timely responses** to your management questions. They access targeted information from an in-house legal management library that includes: surveys, statistics, policies, samples, templates, books and articles, Internet resources, and an in-house proprietary electronic database

ALA Management Encyclopedia (ALAME) - <http://www.alaencyclopedia.org/>

The *ALA Management Encyclopedia*SM was specifically developed and available online. The *Encyclopedia* is filled with carefully indexed, highly searchable answers to your financial management, marketing, strategic planning and human resources questions.

Legal Management Resource Center (LMRC) - <http://thesource.alanet.org/portal/server.pt>

The Legal Management Resource Center (LMRC) is designed to immediately provide the information you need or to quickly direct you to other resources, most on the Internet, where the knowledge you seek can be found. Use the LMRC to contact ALA's Management SolutionsSM Reference Desk, where our expert group of researchers will help you find the answer to your legal management question.

Legal Marketplace – <http://alanet.org/#LegalMarketplace>

Legal Marketplace will increase your company's exposure to the leaders in law firms, corporate legal departments and government agencies by linking your company's website from the "Legal Marketplace" section.

This completely redesigned section is a highly visible area that allows ALA members and other visitors to acquire information about vendors and suppliers to the legal community.

July Recap: Legal Management Forum: Strategic Planning

The following is a summary of the half day Gateway Chapter Legal Forum presented by Eric Seeger of Altman Weil.

Mr. Seeger began his presentation with each member in attendance introducing themselves. From there, he began his discussion on the topic of strategic planning. You can break down strategic planning into two categories, planning and implementation. Implementation is the more difficult of the two.

There are three levels of planning: the firm level, the practice group level and the individual level. He notes that lawyer personality issues can conflict with the process of strategic planning so that should be taken into account in terms of a group's dynamics. Those that plan do better! Practice group leadership is imperative. Planning is attractive. It aids in retention. Planning gives staff a sense of purpose and people want to be part of a firm with a sense of going somewhere.

Those that plan do better!

Putting a plan into action is not as interesting as the planning portion. To effectively implement, you need a culture of implementation. Someone has to oversee the implementation of the strategic plan identified by the group.

The two most important questions when strategic planning is (1) where do we play and (2) how do we win. The idea is to focus on two or three things that you do exceedingly well. The firm has to realize that they cannot do everything well. The ultimate objective is to acquire, retain and grow clients at a profit. Everyone is moving towards this goal but not everyone moves towards it in the same way.

Facts are important. In fact, facts are the most important part of planning. You cannot develop a strategic plan based on hunches, theories, etc. A plan should be focused on external variables. Internal variables are important and they are relevant to executing on the external plan.

In the past, strategic plans were based on a five year outlook. Recently, the plans have developed a more urgent and short term outlook; 12 to 18 months is now the norm.

Client surveys will provide you with the facts you need to develop your plan. Client surveys can help you develop a business purpose statement. A good business purpose statement draws a circle around your practice. Apply strengths to opportunities. Do not focus on weaknesses. For each strength, you have to ask yourself (1) are they true and if yes, then (2) are they unique and if yes, then (3) do they matter?

Mr. Seeger noted the elements of a good strategic plan. A plan is short. The business purpose statement is obvious and clear. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) is objective and based in reality. Goals and actions are clear, motivating, realistic, achievable, important, measurable, aligned and assigned. The planning process is not to be graded. It should be noted that some initiatives may fail. Benchmark against the plan. Regular meetings lead to regular activity.

Management has a role in developing a strategic plan. This role includes the reinforcement of the need for a plan and to provide support and resources. Management also provides a candid review of the plan. Management coordinates the planning efforts and deals with non-contributors. Management will also help promote and foster a culture of accountability,

The biggest killer to a strategic plan is complacency. Accountability is absolute. Non contributors must be dealt with. Implementation is the key. In implementing your plan, appeal to the achievement and recognitions of your members.

The lunch program covered the topic of lateral recruiting. Your most important goal in recruiting is to acquire, retain and grow personnel to attract clients. Mr. Seeger finds that in most firms lateral recruiting process can be improved. He also notes that the personnel issue should be addressed in the firm's strategic plan.



Eric Seeger | Altman Weil

Calendar of Upcoming Events (2010 through 2012)

2010

August 13-14, 2010

- Program: ALA National-Board of Directors Meeting
- Location: Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront, Portland, OR
- Contact: Nicole Larson, ALA Headquarters

August 18, 2010

- Program: Gateway Chapter Vendor Fair
- Location: Missouri Athletic Club, downtown St. Louis
- Time: 11AM – 1:30PM

August 18, 2010

- Program: ALA National Webinar – Law Firm Profitability Enhancement
- Speaker: Richard Turnbow
- Contact: Rosemary Shiels, ALA Headquarters

August 20-21, 2010 ****PROUD SPONSOR****

- Program: 2010 St. Louis Diversity Job Fair
- Location: Clayton, Missouri
- Contact: Angela Schaefer, ALA Gateway Committee Chair

September 15, 2010

- Program: ALA National Webinar – Electronic Records Management: How to Manage Your ESI in the 21st Century
- Speaker: Dana Moore
- Contact: Rosemary Shiels, ALA Headquarters

September 23 – 25, 2010

- Program: ALA National Large Firm Administrators Retreat
- Location: Barton Creek Resort & Spa, Austin, Texas
- Contact: Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

October 1, 2010

- Program: Community Challenge Weekend
- More info to follow

October 15-16, 2010

- Program: ALA Region 3 Educational Conference & Exposition
- Location: The Drake Hotel, Chicago, IL
- Contact: Jane Mundell, ALA Headquarters

October 19, 2010 (3rd Tuesday due to Chicago conference)

- Program: Healthy Self : Work-Life Balance
- Speaker: Theresa Ebeling, People Resources EAP Provider
- Location: Fox Galvin, One Memorial Drive, 16th Floor, St. Louis, Missouri, 63102, (314) 588-7000
- Cost: \$10

November 5-6, 2010

- Program: ALA National-Board of Directors Meeting
- Location: Renaissance Pittsburgh Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA
- Contact: Nicole Larson, ALA Headquarters

2011

January 2011 2011 Nominating Committee Selection & Meeting

February 16, 2011 2011 Slate of Officers presented to Membership

March 16, 2011 Election of 2011-2012 Officers

May 23 – 26, 2011

- Program: ALA National Annual Educational Conference & Exposition
- Location: Orlando World Center Marriott Resort & Convention Center, Orlando, Florida

2012

January 2012 2012 Nominating Committee Selection & Meeting

February 15, 2012 2012 Slate of Officers presented to Membership

March 21, 2012 Election of 2012-2013 Officers

April 23 – 26, 2012

- Program: ALA National Annual Educational Conference & Exposition
- Location: Hawaii Convention Center, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, Hawaii

2010-2011 ALA Gateway Chairs and Committees

Bar Liaison	Dianne Feltz, Co-Chair Angela Schaefer, Co-Chair
Community Challenge Weekend	Paul Dalziel, Co-Chair Joe Taylor, Co-Chair
Diversity	Jacqueline O'Quinn, Chair Susan Muszynski Bill Turkington
Education/Professional Development	Steve Gilliland, Chair Tracy Bolling Connie Wiechens Angela York
Human Resources	Sarah Whitehead, Chair
Membership Directory	Angela Louis, Chair
Membership Committee	Patty Brokaw, Co-Chair Mary Hoffman, Co-Chair
Newsletter	Kara Brostron, Co-Chair Mary Jennings, Co-Chair
Operation Bunny Hop	Ana Helton, Chair

Salary Survey	Sarah Whitehead, Chair Carla Lucz Angela Louis Debbie Schneider
Vendor Relations/ Vendor Fair	Maria Harvey, Co-Chair Donna Sobkoviak, Co-Chair Johnna Ferguson Cheri Meier
Website	Marie Vogt, Chair

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