

Jim Rettig, university librarian at the University of Richmond, Virginia, will take over as the Association's head at the conclusion of the 2008 ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California.

**American Libraries: What will be your focus or theme as ALA's new leader?**

**VICE-PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT-ELECT JIM RETTIG:**

In addition to being ALA's spokesperson for our bedrock values, such as intellectual freedom, equitable access to information, the freedom to read, and privacy, I will emphasize experimenting with new ways in which members can participate in and contribute to ALA's work. Many librarians are using new technologies in creative ways that complement our time-honored structures of committees and elected office. We need to find ways to bring the best of both of these worlds to all our members. Carol Brey-Casiano created the "Many Voices, One Nation" program while serving as ALA president. We need an equally effective "Many Voices, One ALA" culture.

**How will you work to ensure overall member involvement within the Association, including areas that will focus on diversity?**

ALA has built a strong diversity record but, as the *Diversity Counts* report released in October 2006 demonstrates, we need to do more. ALA and the ethnic caucuses collaborated to produce the successful first Joint Conference of Librarians of Color. President Lorieni Roy is working with the ethnic caucuses to sustain that momentum. I will do the same. If we collaborate, ALA and other national associations can strengthen our diversity programs.

**What about reaching out to younger members and the continuation of such programs as Emerging Leaders?**

ALA has budgeted to continue Emerging Leaders. Younger members, as well as older members new to librarianship, are doing much of the creative work happening outside. I look forward to working with them informally and through established channels, such as the New Members Round Table.

**Do you believe that ALA has a role to play in the education of new librarians?** ALA is, ultimately, its members. We who are experienced in the field as well as in the ways of



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ALA have a role and responsibility to mentor newer and less-experienced colleagues and to give them responsibilities that will allow them to develop their leadership talents. At the same time, they have a role in our continuing education by offering new ideas and perspectives and by questioning the ways things have long been done—both in their employing institutions and within ALA.

**The election results were very close between you and your opponent.**

**What kind of message does that send you as the new ALA president?** When I learned that Nancy Davenport would be the other candidate, I knew that ALA would win the election no matter which candidate won. Close votes and the absence of petition candidates in the presidential and treasurer's races demonstrate that the Nominating Committee found strong, capable candidates. Our members affirmed that with their votes. I am pleased and fortunate that a majority voted for me. The combined vote total sends the perennial message that only a minority of members participate in our democratic processes.