

OLA 2010

Mary Ann Mavrinac, President

It has been an honour and a privilege to be nominated by my peers to become the 2010 President of the Ontario Library Association. This is truly an amazing organization. During my year as President, I feel like I have only scratched the surface of the depth and breadth of activities in which the OLA and its sector organizations were involved. I have come to realize that we have a winning formula in terms of our organization's structure. Each sector—OSLA, OLBA, OCULA, OPLA, OLITA and ABO-Franco—through dedicated leaders and volunteers, delve into issues, opportunities and challenges for which they are passionate. Through their respective Board Executives, each comes together as the OLA Board, working harmoniously and enthusiastically, and balancing the needs of their sector with the needs and health of the greater OLA organization.

This organizational structure is supported by an outstanding, dedicated OLA staff led by Shelagh Paterson, Executive Director. In combination—OLA Board, OLA staff, OLA sectors, and OLA members—this is an über organization; however, unlike other über organizations, OLA has remained nimble, generative and impactful. I am constantly amazed and intrigued by all of the initiatives swirling around OLA—some big, many small. However, the tie that binds this organization together is collaboration. We are an organization of collaborators, believing that we achieve greater impact when we are working together, drawing ideas from many.

Which leads me to the Power of C!: Collaboration, the theme of the 2011 Super Conference. Again the Super Conference lived up to the “super” expectation we have all come to anticipate for this conference which regularly draws over 4,000 delegates. The Power of C!, to me, spoke to the transformative capacity of collaboration which is emblematic of the OLA Boards, but also for libraries in general who collaborate within and beyond their domains, working with multiple and diverse professions and organizations to deliver outstanding resources and services to our users.

The 2011 Super Conference again drew outstanding

plenary speakers: film producer Atom Egoyan, the iconic Stephen Abram with his “Voices of the Generations” series, Michael Wesch, cultural anthropologist (Kansas State University), publisher and author Anna Porter, and CBC news anchor Diana Swain. The energy and enthusiasm at this conference were palpable. Several felt it was the best conference ever, a tribute to co-Chairs, Ann Perez and Kristin Hoffman, and to the Super Conference Planning Committee and OLA Staff led by Liz Kerr.

One of the very special roles of the OLA President is to award the OLA's President Award for Exceptional Achievement. This year's recipient was Wendy Newman, former CEO of Brantford Public Library and since 2004, Senior Fellow, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto. Wendy is iconic in the world of libraries, a strong advocate who furthers and fosters awareness about critical issues at provincial, national and international levels, most recently assisting the provincial government advocacy strategy for Knowledge Ontario. Wendy works across sectors, and in keeping with the theme of the 2011 Super Conference, she is all about collaboration.

