

# **Responses from Non-Renewing MPLA Leadership Institute Participants, Board Choice Members, and Recipients of Free State Conference Memberships**

**March 26, 2009**

## **Introduction**

The Executive Secretary sent e-mail messages on 3/19/09 to three groups of members in the MPLA database since 2006 who did not renew memberships for 2009. All were promised anonymity in the compilation of responses:

- Leadership Institute Participants
- Board Choice Memberships
- Free Memberships from State Conference Drawings

The messages asked for input in any of the following areas:

- reason(s) for not renewing
- overall assessment of MPLA's value as a regional professional association
- suggestions for programs or benefits which might add value for a member of MPLA

Of the 296 messages sent, 277 messages reached recipients.

- Leadership Institute participants – 67  
27 responses – 40%
- Board Choice memberships – 23  
5 responses – 22%
- Free Conference memberships – 187  
58 responses – 31%

The rest bounced because of invalid e-mail addresses or no contact information.

As of March 26, 2009, 90 responses were received, a 32% overall return.

*Note: These numbers do not represent all past members in these groups. The database has identified these types of memberships only since 2006.*

The Executive Secretary replied to every respondent.

14 respondents said they would renew (*some renewals have been received*); 12 said they would consider renewing in the future.

**--FYI--**

**Of the current MPLA Personal Members:**

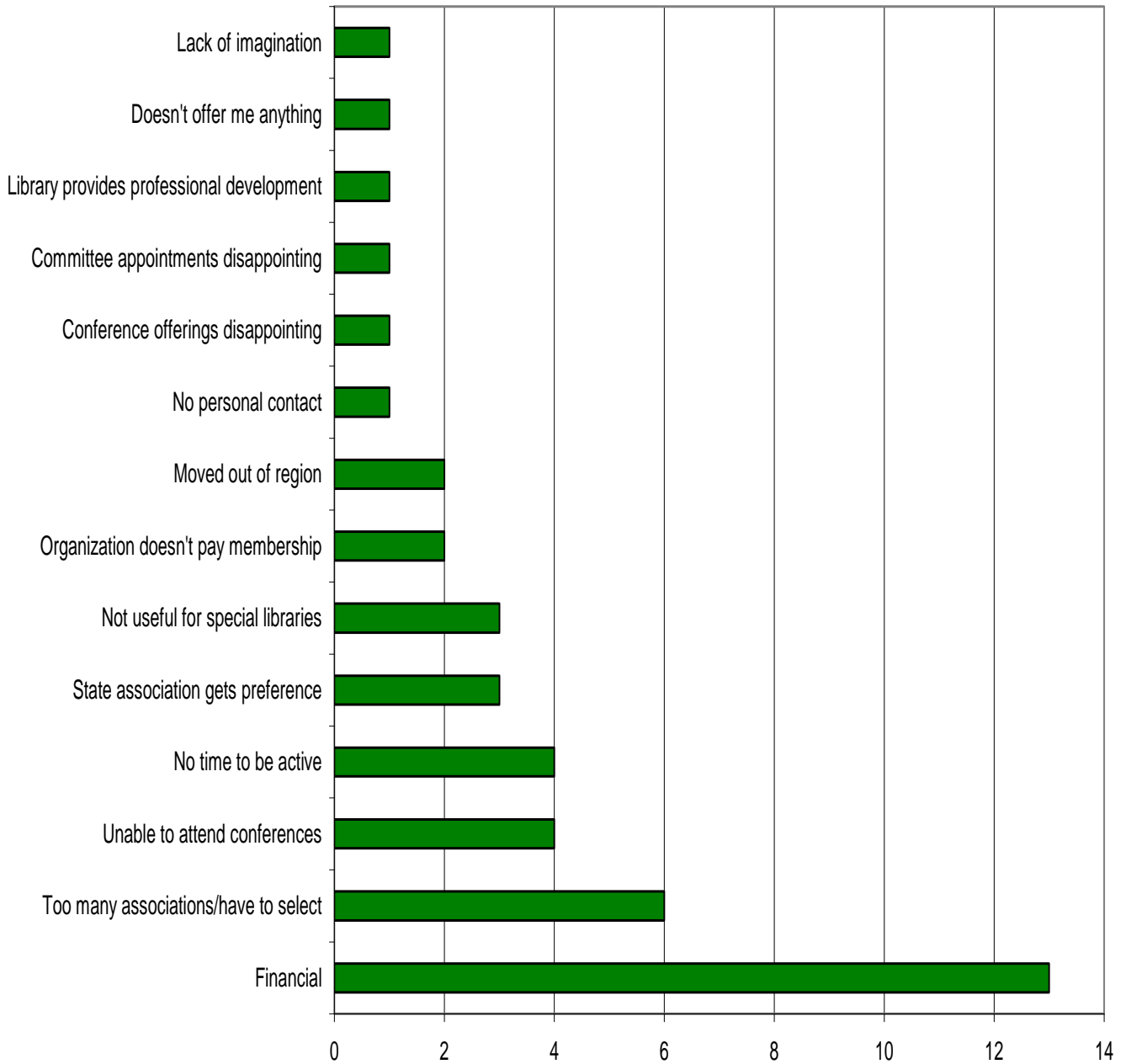
**23% are past recipients of Free Conference Memberships**

**13% are past Leadership Institute Participants**

**3% are past Board Choice Members**

## Leadership Institute Participants

### Leadership Institute Participants Reasons for Not Renewing



## Responses: Reason(s) for not renewing

Financial – 13

Too many professional associations/have to be selective – 6

Not able to attend meetings/conferences - 4

Not able to be active - 4

State association gets preference - 3

Not as useful to those in special libraries/services - 3

Organization doesn't pay membership - 2

Relocated out of region - 2

Didn't hear from anyone in MPLA/no hoped-for committee appointments - 1

Conference offerings disappointing - 1

Committee appointment disappointing - 1

Own library provides professional resources & development - 1

MPLA doesn't offer me anything - 1

Lack of imagination - 1

Will renew – oversight - 4

Will consider renewing in future - 4

Can I contribute to Leadership Institute in lieu of membership? - 1

## Responses: Values/Benefits of MPLA:

### Leadership Institute

- Leadership Institute is one of the best things that MPLA offers.
- Leadership institute was fabulous
- Ghost Ranch program was one of the most rewarding opportunities I have had in my professional and personal life.
- Ghost Ranch was phenomenal
- I am very grateful for all I learned at the Leadership Institute and really support all your efforts to educate future leaders in the field.
- Institute was an absolutely wonderful experience.
- I benefited from the Ghost Ranch leadership institute, for sure!
- Ghost Ranch will always be one of the most incredibly valuable, and life changing experiences for me.
- Ghost Ranch Leadership Institute... is a truly beneficial and important program/benefit of membership.

### Conferences

- My favorite part of MPLA has been the conferences
- MPLA's value is highly positive. I think it's wonderful when regional libraries can connect and share experiences. To me, one of the best ways to do this is by attending the association's conference, something I've not been able to do.
- Discount to attend the annual conference.

### General

- MPLA is a great and useful organization
- MPLA is very valuable

- If the economic situation improves and I can again get involved with things, I think I would prefer to do so at the regional rather than state level. I think it would benefit me better professionally.
- MPLA listserv is useful and of considerable benefit.

## **Suggestions/comments**

### Participation

- I never seemed to hear from an 'actual' person. I volunteered for many interest groups/committees and never heard a peep. I didn't seem to be getting much value for my money so I didn't renew. It was unfortunate because I really did enjoy the leadership institute and things seemed so promising there for getting involved but once I got home—nothing.
- I did try to make an active contribution to the organization. I felt like the committee was a waste of my time- it seemed we were more worried about what our logo & brochures looked like than addressing the reasons people weren't renewing
- The number one suggestion I would have for you folks is to make sure your new members get some contact, especially if they are eager and reaching out to you!
- I can't see membership unless I can both give and receive.

### Programming

- Interest groups in MPLA offer webinars for those who can't always make it to conference.
- More webinars or local programs on small topics it might be more beneficial.

### Conference

- At NM weren't many workshops that I felt would teach me anything new.

### Type of Library Focus

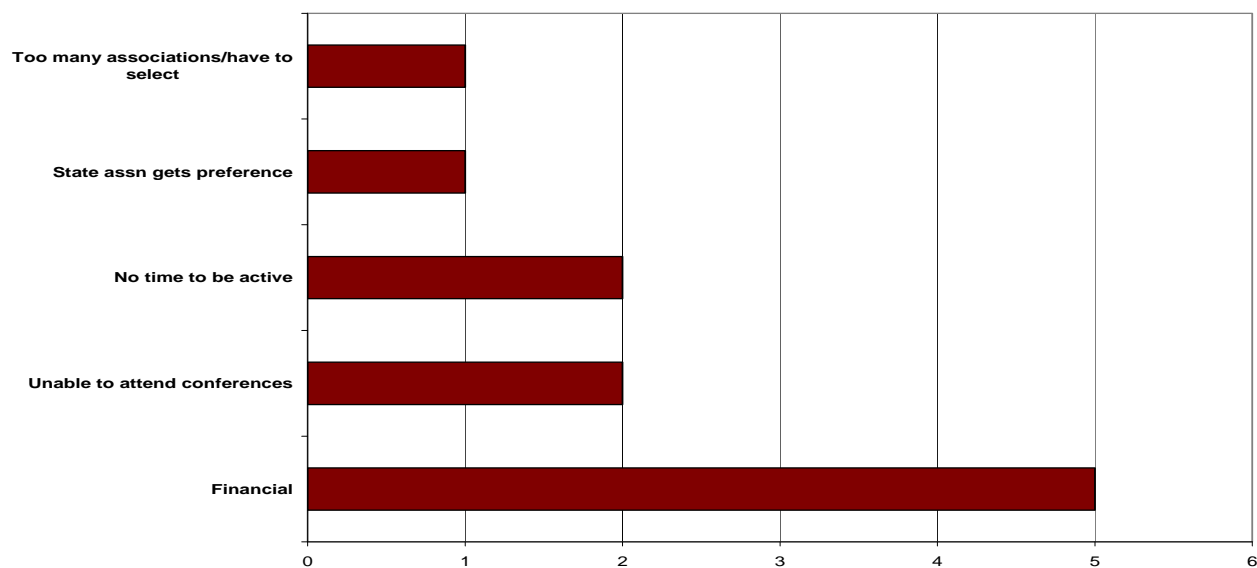
- MPLA just wasn't designed for librarians like me. I work in a large system, with lots of professional resources,
- I value MPLA but get the area of professional development needed in my organization
- I didn't get much use out of it for Special Libraries. I got the impression that (MPLA) strengths lie in public, schools and academics.

### General

- benefit ideas; discounts for travel services; for book purchases (even more discounts for being a member of MPLA); a credit card service that provides a percentage back to MPLA; discount on postal packaging services, discounts on any program's education/tuition
- To Leadership Institute add "Library Business 101" to include the different areas of business such as marketing, promoting, budgeting, human resources, management, forecasting, and other business core issues integral to the success of a library and their visibility.

## Board Choice Memberships

Board Choice Reasons for Not Renewing



### Responses: Reason(s) for not renewing

- Financial - 5
- Travel limited - 2
- Time/ not able to be active/ Active in other associations - 2
- State association membership gets precedence - 1
- Too many professional associations/have to be selective – 1

- Will renew - 1
- Will consider renewing in future - 1

### Responses: Values/Benefits of MPLA:

#### Conferences

- o enjoyed the conferences

#### General

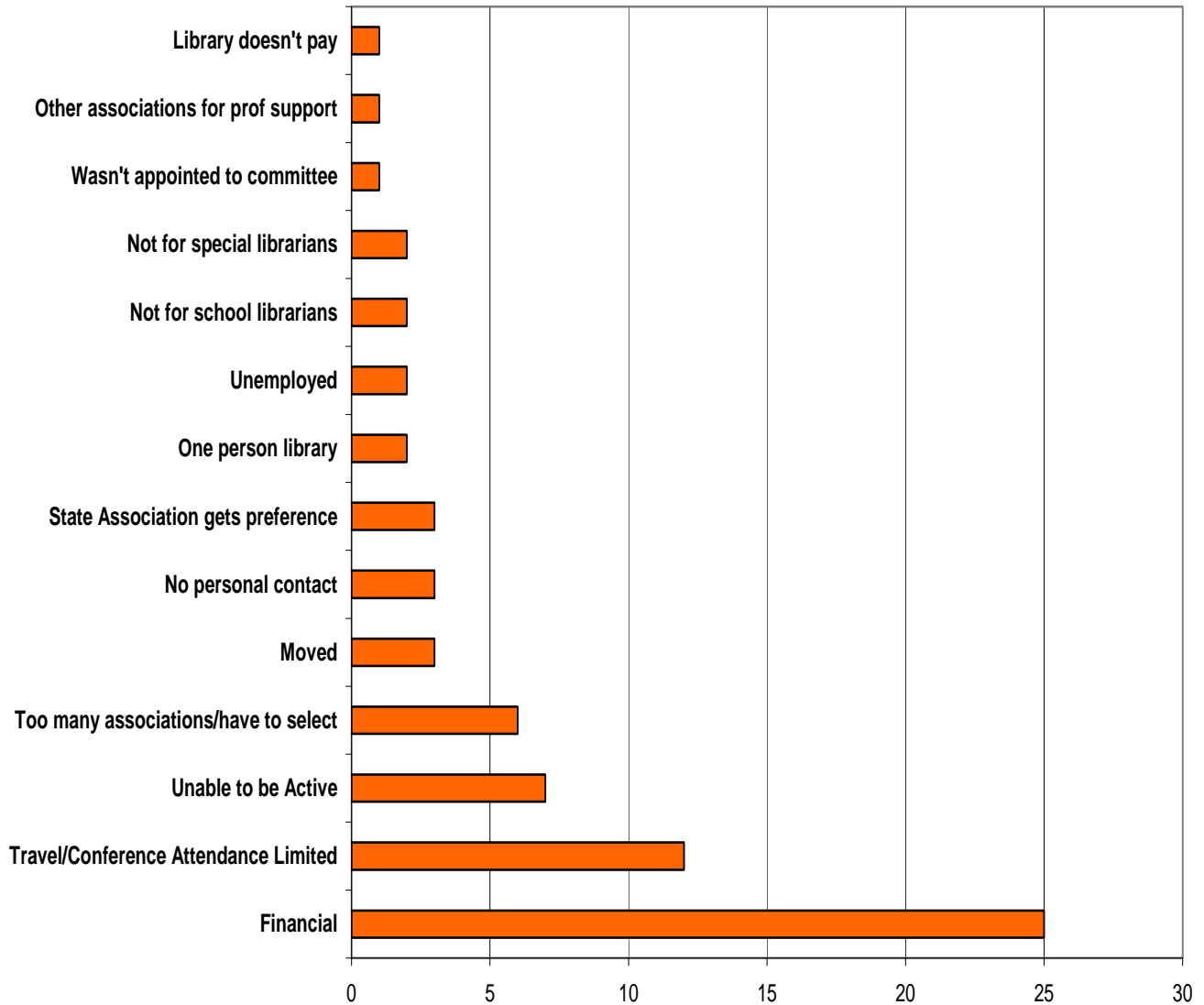
- o vital organization to the profession
- o enjoyed the publications and associations
- o valuable resource for it's members
- o bigger than any state association
- o more/better conference program
- o Not a lot of money to belong to MPLA; MPLA is less expensive.

### Responses: Suggestions/comments

- o I really want to be supportive.
- o free membership was great

## Free Conference Memberships

### Free Conference Members Reasons for Not Renewing



#### Responses: Reason(s) for not renewing

Financial – 25

Travel/conference attendance limited – 12

Time/ Not able to be active – 7

Too many professional associations/have to be selective – 6

Relocated out of region – 3

No contact with group except for newsletter – 3

State association gets preference – 3

One-person library - 2

Unemployed, or about to be – 2  
More for public librarians (not school librarians) - 2  
Not for special librarians (law/medical) – 2  
Wanted to on committee but wasn't appointed – 1  
Turn to other associations for professional support – 1  
Programs more geared to public/school libraries – or academic reference – 1  
Lack of institutional funding – 1

Will renew – 9  
Will consider renewing in future – 7

### **Responses: Values/Benefits of MPLA:**

#### Conferences

- I really enjoyed all the MPLA conferences
- enjoyed the conference
- I think MPLA can make a better argument for being a conference organization as it is uniquely positioned to provide a big picture view of the region's issues and challenges
- allows members an extra chance to get out of state ideas if the ALA convention wasn't going to work for a member any year
- Presenting at the joint Conference ... is a very positive opportunity for me and very useful as well for my professional development.
- I especially like the co-conferences that MPLA holds with member-state library organizations
- Working with state conferences is a great idea
- very helpful to network with librarians from neighboring states at last year's conference
- worthwhile organization that offers a lot to the membership, including an excellent conference every year
- I do like MPLA and have gone to and presented at a couple of the conferences.
- meetings (which I would consider one of the major benefits of belonging to MPLA
- MPLA has a good niche for the library community since it is regional and therefore may be more accessible to the library community than national meetings
- Selection of programs and workshops

#### Newsletter

- I really enjoyed the one year subscription
- It was interesting to get the MPLA newsletter for a year

#### Website

- You have a nice website
- I really loved your homepage, it was very informative

#### Leadership Institute

- Leadership programs and such sounded wonderful.
- Quite interested in participating in the Leadership Institute.
- I will be extremely interested in the Leadership training (the one that used to be at Ghost Ranch). So a chance of being eligible to attend that would be a huge incentive to renew my membership.

## General

- o learned a lot from many great librarians and their schools and experiences
- o gained knowledge as to how I can apply for grants
- o pleased with the information that I received from MPLA
- o organization is a worthwhile one
- o found it to be a very helpful organization while I was still active as a school librarian
- o MPLA has good value
- o MPLA is an advocacy organization; and even though I do not actively participate in the meetings, I am supporting librarianship in some capacity by being a member.
- o spirit of togetherness
- o Keep doing what you do. MPLA is a wonderful association.
- o MPLA has a lot of great people!
- o MPLA has a lot to offer as a regional professional association
- o Many of my colleagues are prominent members of the MPLA and I wish to continue with this association
- o MPLA is very valuable as a regional association
- o MPLA appears to be beneficial for public libraries
- o MPLA has value as a regional professional association. It allows us to network outside of our state
- o MPLA may have a stronger role for small libraries -- especially public libraries

## Suggestions/comments

### Conferences

- o At times the location of the meetings are problematic since the cost of getting to some of the locations can be quick prohibitive especially for those members who live too far away to drive to the conference.
- o Re: joint conference - too many accommodations for MPLA programming, given the space available.
- o In exchange to attend the annual MPLA conference and for memberships, volunteer/work study should be considered.

### Free Memberships

- o continue to offer the free memberships, I liked getting mine
- o I think the free memberships are great
- o Giving out initial memberships is a great way to get people started with MPLA.
- o I am appreciative of the one year of free membership and hope that I have the opportunity soon, when I have some extra money, to renew my membership.
- o continue to offer this free memberships, as it certainly would draw those who are interested to renew
- o Free membership was great, and it was fun to win. MPLA should continue this promotion
- o Free memberships are worthwhile, even if I can't be active.
- o I would urge the board to continue such memberships. I think it is an excellent outreach program.

### Web

- o even larger Web.2 presence
- o when I went to continuing education what I found was a list of state library associations, while most other links on that page were broken
- o My district blocks Facebook so that is not a useful site as a school librarian



- I would like to see a re-focus on web casting conferences and/or getting the information on-line after the conference to be shared.

#### Programming

- Training is needed in new technologies and innovations.
- More virtual meetings / sessions of interest. As our travel budget is limited a virtual session would help.
- offer some programming via webinar or other 2.0 product
- As a school librarian I would appreciate programming on AASL's updated standards

#### General

- I don't necessarily understand how the librarians of Kansas relate to the librarians of Utah any more than the librarians of Delaware, so I would think that MPLA might be more appropriate as a group within ALA which it is in some ways but why does it have its own dues?
- My suggestion for programs or benefits which might add value for a member of MPLA would be more of a marketing strategy. It would include a quick history of why and how MPLA got started, feature that the benefits are comparable to ALA, and why it ends up being more valuable for members.
- If my state didn't have such a strong state association, I would certainly be a member of MPLA.