BUSINESS REPORTS

ATLA Association Update

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ABSTRACT The ATLA Association Update provides highlights of ATLA's accomplishments for the year, an overview of finances for fiscal year 2018, and a brief preview of the projected budget for fiscal year 2019.

Both members and staff have been busy during the past year with projects and activities supporting ATLA's mission and organizational ends. Just a few of those activities are included here. Additional information can be found in the committee and task force reports included in the 2018 *ATLA Yearbook*.

One significant area in which ATLA has made progress is facilitating open access publishing in the study of religion and theology. The recently formed ATLA Publishing Program created a more coherent structure for all of ATLA's publications. It distinguishes between ATLA's association-related publications that are staff driven and also created the ATLA Press, which covers the publications that are primarily member driven. Part of the long-term plan was to create a staff position to oversee this new structure and coordinate the various editorial boards. In October 2017, ATLA hired Christine Fruin, who is now our Member Programs and Scholarly Communication Manager. A detailed ATLA Press Update is included elsewhere in the 2018 *Proceedings*.

A key area of ATLA's work is global collaboration. Over the past two years, several of ATLA's peer groups, including BETH (the European association of theological library associations), ForATL (the Forum for Asian Theological Libraries), and ANZTLA (the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association), have been in discussion with ATLA about education for theological librarianship. A joint task force that includes representatives from around the world and those with expertise in various countries is being coordinated by ATLA. Chaired by Dr. Kelly Campbell, the task force has outlined their work in their report in the 2018 *ATLA Yearbook*.

The Task Force on Scholarly Communication in Religion and Theology was formed in 2016. The group learned about various aspects of scholarly communication and created learning opportunities for ATLA members. For example, the THATCamp session held immediately prior to the 2018 ATLA annual conference was the product of the Task Force. The group is also investigating other ways that the ATLA community can have an impact on scholarly communication. One example is a cooperative effort between ATLA and Vanderbilt University to ensure that a forthcoming De Gruyter book is released as an open access publication available to all. *Digital Humanities and Libraries & Archives in Religious Studies*, edited by Clifford Anderson, includes several chapters written by other ATLA members, including Bo Adams, Bobby Smiley, and Michael Hemenway. Another initiative of the task force is exploring the potential for creating a collection of OERs—Open Educational Resources—to support theology and religious studies courses.

A major accomplishment of staff this past year was the November 2017 release of a new full-text collection. Called ATLASerials PLUS™ (ATLAS PLUS™), it includes the full text from ATLASerials® (ATLAS®) as well as full text from more than one hundred additional titles. As part of this project, the metadata previously included in the *ATLA Catholic Periodical and Literature Index® (ATLA CPLI®)* is now part of the *ATLA Religion Database® (ATLA RDB®)*. This allowed us to add new Catholic full-text content in both *ATLAS®* and *ATLAS PLUS™*.

Following ATLA's overall long-term plan to significantly expand ATLA's coverage of diverse content published around the world, in addition to those added from *ATLA CPLI*, the number of titles indexed in *ATLA RDB* has grown significantly over the last three years. Since

June 2015, 262 new titles have been added to the index—forty-three of those just since last year's ATLA conference. This reflects the work staff has been able to accomplish as the result of an investment in a new editorial platform a few years ago. The new platform has helped ATLA's Production Department be more productive, allowing the expansion of the scope and coverage of the databases. Currently *ATLA RDB* indexes 948 titles from fifty-five countries; of those, 579 (61%) are peer reviewed, and 211 of the 948 titles (22%) are open access.

The full-text content in ATLA products includes publications from thirty-three countries. The depth of the content has been expanded as well, with a significant number of the titles in *ATLAS* and *ATLAS PLUS* including content for issues going back to volume 1, issue 1. Of the 334 titles in *ATLAS*, 64% go back to volume 1, issue 1, as do 67% of the 458 titles in *ATLAS PLUS*. ATLA continues to maintain the high level of quality of the content, with 59% of the titles in both *ATLAS* and *ATLAS PLUS* peer reviewed. Open access titles continue to be represented in the full-text content, with 7% OA titles in *ATLAS* and 6% in *ATLAS PLUS*.

These efforts to improve and expand the ATLA products have been popular with libraries. More than 1,500 libraries in sixty-five countries now subscribe to ATLA databases.

During the current fiscal year, ATLA has a budget of $7.8 million. By far, most of ATLA's funds are generated through revenue derived from royalties as the result of library subscriptions to ATLA databases (94%). Additional sources of revenue include member dues (2%), the annual conference (1%), and other miscellaneous income such as income from investments (3%).

ATLA uses that revenue it receives to support the work needed to achieve its mission and organizational ends. Some money is used for ongoing maintenance and expansion of the databases (36%) and to provide administrative services to support the organization, including staff in the Member Programs Department (25%). Another 15% covers overhead expenses such as legal service, rent, and insurance. Ten percent goes to research and development to improve products, conduct market research, and investigate potential new products and services, while 5% supports the work of the board and committees. Other expenses include travel and professional development for staff (5%) and the annual conference (4%).

While ATLA is blessed with a significant revenue stream from its products, to be a good steward of resources, the association must always set aside funds for less prosperous times. Thanks to the efforts of the Endowment Committee, contributions from members, and the stock market, as of May 30, 2018, the balance in the ATLA Endowment Fund was $636,606, up from $560,426 last August. ATLA continues to make good progress toward the short-term goal of reaching $1 million.

Staff is still in the process of finalizing the FY19 budget. The uptake of *ATLAS PLUS* has been encouraging so far, but, due to the timing of many library budget cycles, a realistic revenue forecast can best be made once library subscriptions with a July 1 start have been confirmed. At the time of the ATLA annual conference, the draft projection for fiscal year 2019 was a budget of $7.668 million. This is down slightly from the $7.8 million budget for 2018. The projection is based on an expectation of slightly higher revenue from products, offset by the need to use less money for research and development.

Many of the capital projects started this year will continue into next year. These include implementation of new software for managing association operations, along with implementation of new content management software followed by a redesign and rewrite of the website.

As always, ATLA's accomplishments are the result of the collective efforts of many people. Without volunteer contributions on committees, interest groups, and task forces, along with the work of staff, ATLA would not be able to accomplish its goal of promoting worldwide scholarly communication in religion and theology by advancing the work of libraries and related information providers.