Kelvin Watson Executive Director Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

First of all, I want to thank Beta Phi Mu for this opportunity to address your members’ insightful questions.

**How would you describe the relationship between ALA and the Affiliates?  Could you discuss your ideas for helping to strengthen the bond/relationship and mutuality between ALA and Beta Phi Mu?**

I have been a member of ALA for many years and am a recent member of Beta Phi Mu, and understand the value and positive impact that both organizations have on my fellow members. Both Beta Phi Mu and ALA operate from a foundation of shared values, which focus on supporting members’ professional goals and encouraging excellence within the library profession. I believe that we must explore ways to work more closely together to expand and grow our shared mission. Strengthening the bond with ALA will also help to expand Beta Phi Mu’s agenda and outreach as we adjust to the new normal that we all face.

Throughout my career, especially with my leadership roles in BCALA, I have learned that there is great power in partnerships within our profession. I believe that Beta Phi Mu and ALA can benefit from more collaboration and forming shared outside partnerships that add both reach and potential revenue sources.

My recommendation is for Beta Phi Mu to start by taking two proactive steps:

* Target three goals that are shared by both organizations and build ways to tackle them together, possibly through joint programming.
* Keep communications flowing between both organizations on a regular basis, possibly through a quarterly eNewsletter to all members and regular Zoom calls among leaders.

**What can ALA do to help the Affiliates (specifically Beta Phi Mu, an Honor Society) grow their memberships and possibly cross-promote membership and engagement between the Affiliates (Beta Phi Mu) and ALA?**

I started my career in the library profession as a member of an affiliate group – the Black Caucus of ALA. The welcoming and supportive atmosphere that I found as an affiliate member helped me to grow my leadership skills. This showed me first-hand the nuances and benefits of belonging to affiliate groups and was my first introduction to understanding the opportunities and challenges faced by the library profession.

As a matter of practice, ALA does not promote the affiliate groups to their membership as part of their business model, so it’s not possible for Beta Phi Mu to rely on ALA to be a driver of membership. However, it is totally possible and encouraged for Beta Phi Mu to pro-actively market itself to ALA and affiliate members. This is where my suggestion of communication between the two groups especially comes into play. By working together on a few key goals, ALA members will see the value in joining the affiliates that interest them.

If elected, I will encourage Beta Phi Mu to take the lead in making this great organization more visible and relevant to ALA members, and fuel the synergy that naturally existing between the two groups.

**How would you address the vision for Beta Phi Mu to stay relevant within ALA, college and university chapters and the state library associations?**

I empower Beta Phi Mu to see its sustainability and growth as being within its own hands. Just as ALA needs to do a better job of marketing, I encourage Beta Phi Mu to take the lead and show its value to existing and future members through a marketing plan that includes a more robust public relations, events, digital communications, and regular contact with ALA leadership and members. Beta Phi Mu should share its proud legacy with new librarians and promote the benefits of membership through proactive outreach efforts on college campuses, creating new partnerships, collaborations, and programming, and leveraging the powerful voices of current members. I also would encourage increased communication with other ALA Affiliates.

Thank you for this opportunity to address these important questions, and if elected as president of ALA, I look forward to working with you to bring more collaboration!