

Merritt Fund Forum

Jim Kuhn

This Midwinter 2006, The LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund, IFRT, and a number of other ALA units will be hosting the first Merritt Fund forum. It will be open to all ALA members who would like to learn more about resources available to individual librarians and library workers who have been denied employment rights based on their support of intellectual freedom principles or discriminated against. It will also allow attendees to learn how they can provide support for individuals in need and the organizations dedicated to assisting them.

The LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund was established in 1970 as a mechanism to make it possible to provide direct financial assistance to librarians in distress due to their defense of intellectual freedom. In 1975, the scope of the Fund was broadened to include librarians discriminated against on the basis of sex, sexual preference, race, color, creed, or place of national origin. The Merritt Fund is supported solely by donations from concerned groups and individuals and is administered by the Office for Intellectual Freedom.

In recent years IFRT established a Merritt Fund subcommittee to help the Fund's trustees promote greater knowledge among librarians of the Fund's existence and purpose. We are pleased to sponsor this forum as part of that effort.

For more on the history of the Merritt Fund, or to find an application, please visit www.merrittfund.org. If you have questions about the forum or anything else, contact Jonathan Kelley at (800) 545-2433 x4226 or email jokelley@ala.org.

Mary Elizabeth (Ma'lis) Wendt, Merritt Trustee
Jim Kuhn, Merritt Trustee and IFRT Director
Lucille C. Thomas, Merritt Trustee
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