

ALPA NEWSLETTER

January 2021



Affordable Learning PA Virtual Event: Talking OER with Faculty

Tuesday, February 9th, from 3 - 4 p.m.

Interested in sparking more conversations with faculty about open educational resources (OER), but not sure where to start? Join the Affordable Learning PA OER Specialists for an interactive workshop on starting conversations, promoting OER, and engaging your campus with Affordable Learning PA.

Registration is now open at

<https://palci.regfox.com/affordable-learning-pa-faculty-engagement-workshop>.

PDE Announces \$500,000 to Support Equity in Higher Education

In December, the state Department of Education (PDE), through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL), announced \$500,000 in funding to support efforts of affordability and equity in higher education. These funds will be offered through an OER Grant Program funded by the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER), to be administered by PALCI. The OER Grant Program is designed to increase equitable, affordable access to higher education by decreasing course-related costs for students through the adoption of open or zero-cost course materials. Mini-grants and stipends will be distributed by PALCI for faculty to create, adapt, and adopt OER or zero-cost materials. The first round of applications will open in March 2021. Read more here: <https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/Education-Details.aspx?newsid=1013>

National Highlights: Open Textbook Pilot Program Renewed

Prior to the end of 2020, the U.S. Congress passed a spending package that included \$7 million renewal funding for the U.S. federal grant Open Textbook Pilot program, which is now in its fourth year. The Open Textbook Pilot program supports projects at higher education institutions that create or expand the use of open textbooks to increase cost savings for students. Since 2018, the program has been awarded \$24 million in total funding. You can view the 2020 funded projects, as well as information about the program, at this link:

<https://sparcopen.org/our-work/open-textbook-pilot/>

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Call for volunteers - get involved with ALPA

Are you interested in getting more involved with the ALPA community? We are looking for volunteers to join a variety of groups and projects this spring—more details are below:

2021 Affordable Learning Summit Planning Committee

Following our successful Second Annual Affordable Learning Summit in 2020, we're planning to keep the momentum rolling by beginning to plan this year's event, which will take place in August 2021. At this point in time, you can expect that the Summit will be a virtual first event. It may be fully virtual, or it may be some sort of hybrid event that includes in-person events if health and safety guidelines allow.

Here's where we need YOU: would you be interested in helping to plan the 2021 Affordable Learning Summit? We're looking for a small group of volunteers to help with all aspects of this year's Summit planning, including programming, communication, and logistics.

If you are interested in helping to plan this flagship event, please [complete this form](#) by February 20, 2021.

ALPA Social Media Team

This newly convened group will select the best social media outlets for ALPA, grow and manage those social media accounts, and promote awareness of those accounts to our members and beyond. We currently are focusing on Twitter and YouTube.

Some of the tasks expected of the Social Media Team include but are not limited to:

- Creating and maintaining a schedule for regular posting
- Identifying external sources of interest to our membership for potential reposting
- Uploading completed conference and meeting videos to YouTube
- Soliciting information for content from the various heads of committees and task forces
- Creating visual posts that provide information and attract attention
- Following and responding to comments/questions when necessary
- Keeping track of monthly and annual statistics of hits, likes, followers, etc.
- Creating hashtags for various events and functions within ALPa, then tracing use of those hashtags

If you'd be interested in joining this group, please [complete this form](#) and the Communications and Outreach group will contact you shortly.

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Call for volunteers - get involved with ALPA (continued from page 2)

ALPA Assessment and Data Working Group

The Assessment and Data Working Group is welcoming new members who are interested in helping us to support collection and sharing of data, metrics, and analytics, as well as qualitative assessment of affordable learning programming and related activities in the region.

Please [complete this form](#) if you are interested in joining the A&D Working Group.

Do you have an event, program, or other information you'd like highlighted in an upcoming ALPA Newsletter? Send us your submissions via [our online form](#).