

MLC 70th Anniversary – Travis Ferrell

I first learned about MLC by attending the 2010 Military Libraries Workshop (MLW) in Destin, FL and the 2013 MLW in Huntsville, AL.

Note: MLW became the Military Libraries Training Workshop (MLTW), which in turn became this year's Military Libraries Virtual Training Summit (MLVTS). By whatever acronym, this is MLC's biennial training event. It is the only meeting of its kind that brings together military librarians from all branches of the military and from all different types of librarianship (academic, medical, public, and technical) to share challenges and ideas.

I was very pleased with both MLW 2010 and 2013. I was really impressed that MLC offered stipends for members to attend the 2013 MLW due to reduced travel funding that year. An organization that invests in its members naturally got my attention.

I got involved with MLC at the 2014 SLA Annual in Vancouver. I was very impressed with MLC's programs and membership and was looking for a professional home.

In the last nine years, I have been the Student Liaison; twice the Director – Conference Planner, which plans MLC events and sessions at SLA Annual; and twice the Director – MLTW, which chairs the committee that plans MLTW.

Working with a team to plan a MLTW is both very demanding and highly rewarding. The most challenging MLTW for me wasn't 2021, which was virtual because of the pandemic. The hardest was 2017, because we did not have a host library. A host library is a military library that volunteers to help plan MLTW. The efforts of a host library make planning MLTW ten-fold easier.

I am very proud of all the work that MLC members put into MLTW 2017, because it was, frankly, exhausting. I have hardly ever been so tired in my life. That said, the quality of programming that year was superb. Our team really pulled it off under profoundly trying circumstances. It was a privilege to work with a team that really went above and beyond to deliver for MLC members and MLTW attendees.

Although I no longer work at a military library, I am still involved in MLC. I value the personal and professional connections that I have made there. I firmly believe my MLC volunteer experiences helped prepare me for my current position.

A very happy 70th Anniversary to MLC, and here's to many more.

Sincerely,

Travis Ferrell