From Ristiina Wigg, NYLA's Legislative Chair:

With no decisions yet from the Capitol, we must keep up the fight for full funding

In last month's NYLA Bulletin I said, "If, as you read this, the budget has not yet been passed, call your legislators. Say, 'My library is important to me. Please add $13 million to the Governor's appropriation for libraries.' This month I say, "Continue calling your legislators until the budget passes."

As I write, the budget has still not passed, and legislators are continuing to discuss tax relief, Medicaid takeover, and aid to education. There is no word on library funding. And yet legislators have been discussing libraries. In February, 70 members of both parties in the Assembly signed a letter addressed to Speaker Silver from Assemblyman David Sidikman, which included the words: "In the upcoming 1994-95 legislative session, I would like to see $86 million appropriated for library aid to allow libraries to plug into the expanding technology of the 21st century...." On March 24 Senator Hugh Farley initiated a letter to Senator Marino requesting full funding for Chapter 917; all Republican Senators signed the letter.

So, with all this support, why hasn't library funding been resolved? Are we involved in the negotiations? Are legislators listening to librarians? Do they care? Does all this lobbying effort matter? YES, YES, AND YES!

Always, always the biggest budget issues are resolved first because they are the most difficult to resolve. They have the biggest impact on local government and local property taxes.

Issues like libraries, the arts, transportation aid, parks and recreation, and motor vehicles come last because they have less financial impact on the state budget and on local governments.

Some legislators understand libraries. Some value libraries. Most legislators think about libraries in the way they think about AIDS, social services, arts funding, scholarships for college students, fire districts, school bus safety, etc.- and that is when they are asked. When legislators are caught up in the crush of making hundreds of budget decisions, we have to be there reminding them that library services are vital and require funding. Susan Keitel, lobbyist for NYLA, is in constant contact with legislators, aides, staff in the budget committees, and key staffers in the Governor's budget office. Susan's lobbying is most effective when we, library supporters and librarians throughout the state, have visited, written, called and FAXed messages to local legislators and to legislative leadership indicating that voting constituents value library funding.

Do libraries get all the support they need? No. Are there any guarantees? No. Can we quit? No.

Are we effective? Yes. Legislators are becoming more aware of library issues. Funding for libraries is increasing. Frustrating though it is, local efforts on behalf of libraries are key and you are doing a terrific job. WE MUST ALL KEEP IT UP.

Aceto named interim dean at Albany

Professor Vincent Aceto, associate dean at the University at Albany's School of Information Science and Policy, has been named the school's interim dean. SISP had been without a member of its faculty as its formal leader for more than six months, after former Dean Richard Halsey stepped down and rejoined the teaching ranks.

Aceto's appointment, which took effect immediately upon its March 23 announcement, was announced by H. Patrick Swygert, president of the university.

Swygert said he acted at the recommendation of Vice President Karen Hitchcock and Provost Richard Nathan.

Aceto said the appointment would likely last about one year, the length of time required for a search committee to produce a permanent replacement for Halsey.

NYLA position sought on ALA Code of Ethics

The Committee on the Profession has been asked to recommend a NYLA position on ALA's revised Code of Ethics for the May New York Library Association Council meeting.

ALA is soliciting comments until June 1.

Copies of the revision are available from the NYLA office by calling 800-252-6952.