

**Janice Lachance and Gloria Zamora
SLA Leadership Development Institute
Alignment Presentation
Sunday 14 June 2009**

GLORIA:

Hi, Janice! Here we are, together again!

JANICE:

I have to say, I have been looking forward to taking the “Gloria and Janice Show” onstage one more time.

GLORIA:

Me, too. But can we call it something different?

JANICE:

Certainly!.... Like what?

GLORIA:

How about.... “Align in ’09.”

JANICE:

I like it! “Align in ’09 . . . starring Gloria and Janice.”

GLORIA:

That will work. With the centennial celebration, it may be a good way to distinguish this ’09 from the other one.

JANICE:

Oh, you mean 19-09 . . . the year SLA was founded. As a matter of fact, I have been thinking about 1909 quite a lot lately. I have been trying to put my mind around just why those librarians got together and started a professional association that now has almost 11,000 members in 75 countries.

GLORIA:

Yes, it has been quite a journey from the shadows of Mount Washington in New Hampshire to where we are today. But I see both times as new beginnings—1909, when SLA came together, and 2009, when we launch our second century with the Alignment.

JANICE:

Instead of a verandah, we are in a conference room, of course. But we are here with SLA Leadership—the very people who will lead our organization into its next century.

GLORIA:

Well, at least this time, we don't have to start from scratch. When John Cotton Dana and his colleagues got together on that verandah, they had no idea where they were going. They only knew that the world was changing in a way that made organizations . . . from manufacturers to professionals . . . demand specialized information they could use to become more successful.

JANICE:

And librarians became their partners. The partnership was based on a revolutionary idea that is the cornerstone of SLA: information and knowledge are practical, not just intellectual. Working together, librarians and their organizations could put knowledge to work.

GLORIA:

And that is what we continue to do today. Yet almost everything else has changed. When SLA was founded, radio broadcasting was still more than a decade away. Yet last week, those of us in the U.S. switched to a whole new digital television broadcasting system.

And just as dramatic? The changes in the roles and activities of information professionals, and the way they are perceived by the organizations that employ them.

JANICE:

You're so right, Gloria, and that is why we launched the Alignment Project two years ago.

The pioneers of the information profession began SLA's journey without a roadmap.

As we begin our second century, we not only have a roadmap—you might say that we have GPS. We have conducted unprecedented research about how information professionals view themselves—and how they are viewed by the people for whom they work. And as a result—we are already beginning to develop tools that will help you

align your knowledge, experience, and skills with your organization's needs.

GLORIA:

At the risk of oversimplifying . . . After one hundred years, we can finally answer the age-old question—and don't try to tell me that you haven't heard it!:

What is so special about special librarians?

JANICE:

Oh, I have heard that question alright—quite literally, around the planet. People outside the library world—and more than a few in it—just do not understand what information professionals and special libraries do for a living. And without that understanding, they cannot be expected to see the critical role information pros can play in achieving their organization's strategic goals.

GLORIA:

That is a big reason why I am excited about one of the outcomes of the Alignment research—and that is a better grasp of the best words and messages I can use . . . the best language we all can use in speaking about the value that information professionals add in the workplace.

You might ask why words matter so much. To find out, : [GO TO POWERPOINT 1]