





served as a business unit managing director at the U.S. Government Publishing Office, as an associate director of justice libraries in the Justice Management Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, and finally as departmental head of history and culture libraries at the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, before becoming chief of humanities and social sciences at the Library of Congress in 2014.

Sánchez has been a member of AALL since 2012, serving on both the Government Law Libraries Special Interest Section (SIS) and the Government Documents SIS. Here, she shares her professional journey and career insights, and offers advice to those just entering the field.

#### **Describe a typical day.**

The Law Library must remain flexible to respond to the needs of Congress on a daily basis, so no two days are ever alike! Thomas Jefferson noted, “There is in fact no subject to which a member of Congress may not have occasion to refer.” We must be responsive to our Congressional colleagues’ needs—whatever the subject may be. One day, a Member of Congress could ask our foreign law specialists about fees charged for asylum applications. The next day, we could receive a request to use a rare book for a swearing-in ceremony. Recently, I donned a hard hat to tour the active construction site of the Law Library’s new secure storage facility—a second, much-needed space to hold our precious rare book collection. Another day, I looked over the blueprints for a law stacks replacement shelving project. On another day, I had the pleasure of poring over one of the many research reports produced by our foreign legal specialists, including: Miranda warning equivalents abroad and the regulation of drones around the world. Finally, the Law Library is digitizing a number of primary legal documents to make them freely available (at no cost) to the world.

#### **What have the positions you’ve held taught you about the Law Library of Congress and the role it plays in society as the world’s largest law library?**

When I worked at the Department of Justice (DOJ) library, I was an external customer of the legal research done by the Law Library of Congress. At a time when the National Security



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large institution) or determining others who could benefit from your collections and services. Get involved in your organization's activities (e.g., helping develop a strategic plan) so you can continue to shape expectations, and remain relevant as things change.

**What role has AALL played in your career?**

AALL was instrumental early in my career when I was at BNA, Inc., a respected legal publisher. To be able to meet our subscribers face-to-face at annual conferences was extremely important for me in understanding the needs and wants of our customers. I learned what they wanted from BNA as a provider of legal information. Now, in my current role, I appreciate AALL's advocacy on behalf of law librarians and the legal information profession.

**What lessons have you gained through the leadership roles you've held?**

When I first became a manager in the 1980s, a colleague passed along some advice (from her father, actually!) that I try to live by every day. That advice was to treat everyone fairly. Being fair means applying policies and practices uniformly across the organization, and being open to listening to all sides before making decisions.

**What career advice would you give to newer law librarians?**

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