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ALA American Library Association

Center for the Future of Libraries
Miguel A. Figueroa, Director

Mr. Ricardo Salinas
c/o The Aspen Institute
Communications and Society Program
One Dupont Circle, NW Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036-1133

September 15, 2015

Dear Mr. Salinas:

Thank you for supporting my participation in the Aspen Institute's Dialogue on Public Libraries' Leadership Roundtable on Innovation. Public libraries in the United States transform and improve lives by supporting education, advancing civic discourse, providing access to technology, and defending free and independent thought. These are critically important issues at a time when the very nature of information is being revolutionized and the composition of our communities is being transformed.

As a Mexican American, I often find that my perspective is under-represented in decision-making and that my needs are bundled within a broad category of minority. My professional work, however, has been inspired by an educational program that explored libraries from Hispanic perspectives with considerations for how our culture creates, shares, and accesses information. That experience has helped me to continue exploring new and emerging perspectives and their role in supporting innovation.

I was therefore very excited to participate in this Aspen Institute dialogue on innovation in libraries. I looked forward to hearing from library partners and supporters and I was gratified to hear them emphasize the importance of innovating *with* community. I was happy to join my librarian colleagues and appreciated their responsiveness to needs, not just categories. I was encouraged by the dialogue's mix of participants and felt confirmed in my belief that solutions to challenges reside in dialogue across perspectives and experiences. Looking around the room, it was clear that our professional community needed greater representation from across nationalities and age groups. I appreciate the efforts made by the Aspen Institute to include more voices in this process and I hope that my participation allowed some additional perspective into the conversation.

Thanks to your support, I will continue the spirit of the Aspen Institute in my work— exploring diverse views, identifying shared principles, involving more participants, and recommending action around a shared strategy. I have greatly benefited from the connections made in Aspen and I hope to continue to share the Institute's work with an ever larger community of innovators supporting the nation's libraries and cultural institutions.

Sincerely,



Miguel A. Figueroa

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