american libraries

November/December 2021

Big Ideas
for Small Business

p. 22

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from the EDITOR

From Our Table to Yours

Sanhita SinhaRoy

Small businesses, much like libraries, are a mainstay of communities across the country. Almost two years into the pandemic, many of these companies continue to struggle. In "Big Ideas for Small Business" (cover story, p. 22), Claire Zulkey talks with library workers who are developing creative solutions to assist small business owners, especially BIPOC and non-English-speaking entrepreneurs.

In various parts of the country, public libraries are facing challenges—not from some external threat but from their very own boards and trustees. In "A Conflict of Values" (p. 28), Cass Balzer explores this troubling trend of locally elected members who are advocating for the removal of materials and pushing for agendas that counter the tenets of librarianship. "What we're seeing with library boards is not happening in a vacuum," says Megan Murray Cusick of ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office. "It's happening ... across our country and with our civic discourse."

On a lighter note, our Newsmaker this issue (p. 20) is *Top Chef* host Padma Lakshmi. The TV personality and author talks with Managing Editor (and foodie) Terra Dankowski about her relationship with libraries and how her grandparents inspired her passions for cooking and reading. Hear more of our interview with Lakshmi on a food-themed episode of *Call Number with American Libraries* in mid-November (bit.ly/CallNumberPodcast).

In "Cafés with a Conscience" (p. 14), Emily Udell reports on how some libraries are converting unused or new space in their facilities into cafés to help address hunger in the community and provide workforce training for people who have faced barriers to employment. Partnering with local social justice groups and schools, these mission-minded cafés are also opening the door to the resources that libraries have to offer.

Rounding out the mix is our Bookend interview with T-Kay Sangwand, a librarian at UCLA Library who has a side gig as a DJ. Read about how her time in the college radio scene influenced her library school experience ("The Right Track," p. 56).

As 2021 winds down, our team at *American Libraries* wishes you the happiest and safest of holidays.

> In parts of the country, public libraries are facing challenges—not from some external threat but from their very own boards.

Sanhita

Solidarity on Sustainability

The climate crisis requires we act and adapt now to avoid disaster

Patricia "Patty" M. Wong

Librarians' core values include a commitment to social responsibility, sustainability, and equity. It's not just essential we step up at this crucial juncture—it's our job.

In early August, a major new scientific report concluded that when it comes to global warming, it may be too late to change course.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a body of scientists convened by the United Nations, issued an assessment so stark, the UN secretary-general called its findings a "code red for humanity" (bit.ly/UN-CodeRed).

Writing in *The New York Times* in response to the report, Greta Thunberg and other young climate activists took adults to task: "For children and young people, climate change is the single greatest threat to our futures. We are the ones who will have to clean up the mess you adults have made, and we are the ones who are more likely to suffer now."

Climate change will also disproportionately impact those who are under-resourced and historically affected by systemic racism and practices that hinder generational wealth accumulation, such as redlining. Librarians' core values include a commitment to social responsibility, sustainability, and equity. It's not just essential we step up at this crucial juncture—it's our job.

Libraries have important roles to play in preparing our communities for the impact of climate change, and we must pledge to center sustainability in our operational practices. We must decarbonize our facilities and lean into our roles as providers of ongoing education. Libraries are perfectly positioned to help cocreate community resilience, both by modeling good choices and convening events that help people come to terms with the realities of climate change so that we can all work together to plan for the future.

There is excellent work being done on these fronts throughout the country. In Middle Island, New York, Longwood Public Library became the latest library to be certified through the Sustainable Library Initiative's Sustainable Library Certification Program (bit.ly/Longwood-sustain). The first of its kind in the world, the program assists libraries of all types in assessing opportunities to make better choices on behalf of the local and global community. In Longwood's case, the library prioritized sustainable design of its facility and grounds and engaged in a methodical review of policies, practices, services, and programs. In the process, it committed to the triple bottom line—a concept in which decisions are reviewed through the lenses of environmental sustainability, social equity, and financial feasibility.

A big capital project or renovation offers obvious opportunities to make buildings greener, but small changes make a big impact too.

In rural western Pennsylvania, Bailey Library on the campus of Slippery Rock University has engaged in practices such as composting, paper reuse, printing reduction, and single-use plastic reduction (bit.ly/AL-SRU). Los Angeles Public Library has changed the way prizes for reading challenges are selected and purchased, opting for practical US-made goods like reusable water bottles rather than imported nonbiodegradable plastic toys (bit.ly/AL-GreenSwag).

I'm not the only library leader to commit publicly to sustainability or to call on colleagues to be a part of the solution. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions President-Elect Barbara Lison will also focus on sustainability in her presidential year, noting that climate change brings new threats to libraries and the communities they serve (bit.ly/IFLA-sustain).

This is a time to stand together in solidarity—with activists like Greta and colleagues like Barbara—to meet the enormous challenges of the climate crisis and summon the effort to deal with its impact. Climate change is a unifying issue for libraries across the globe, and we must commit to doing all we can to prepare our communities for its effects. **AL**

PATRICIA "PATTY" M. WONG is city librarian at Santa Clara (Calif.) City Library.

Membership as a Movement

To fulfill ALA's social impact, we need strength in numbers

Tracie D. Hall

Associations have long been among the most effective catalysts, carriers, and counters of evolving social thought and political development.

Over the past year, ALA has developed the "Pathway to Transformation," a five-year strategic plan that launched this fall (bit.ly/ALAPivot Path). It will culminate in 2026, the year ALA turns 150, and is shaped by the Association's mission and its 12 core values.

Lately, however, we have faced mounting external pressures against those core ideals. To name just a few: barriers placed on equitable access, a persistent lack of diversity and equitable mobility in the US workforce, proliferating attacks against intellectual freedom with increased challenges to LGBTQIA and antiracist content, the pandemic's disruption to education and employment, and denials of climate change that stymie conversations about our environmental crisis.

Associations have long been among the most effective catalysts, carriers, and counters of evolving social thought and political development. They serve as a "powerful instrument" when "applied to a wider range of purposes," as French historian Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in the early 1800s in *Democracy in America.*

It is that potential and ability to shift public policy—and inform practice and attitudes at the service level—that make ALA so necessary. The Association continues to advance LIS and social practice in the areas of adult and family literacy, digital access, intellectual freedom, copyright, and services to people without shelter and those who are or have been incarcerated. (This fall the Association launched a comprehensive update to its standards for library services to the incarcerated and detained.)

As new generations (my own, Generation X, as well as millennials and Generation Z) rise to leadership, they place new and necessary expectations of social resonance and accountability on associations. These shifting needs should inform areas where mobilization is needed and ensure long-term relevance.

In her writings on systems change, social scientist Hildy Gottlieb asks, "What might be possible … if socially minded organizations and businesses acted more like movements than organizations?"

As she contends, "The more intentional organizations are in structuring their end goals, leadership, and means to become more movement-like, the more likely those efforts are to succeed in creating a healthier, more humane world."

ALA is recalibrating each stream of change that Gottlieb cites: its "end goals" via the new strategic plan; "leadership" via the Transforming ALA Governance Task Force, which will conclude the restructuring work initiated by the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness and Forward Together; and "means" via the first review of its operating agreement in more than two decades.

Propelling these efforts are ALA members and staff who have shown incredible ingenuity and dedication to bringing an unprecedented number of grants, services, advocacy and policy victories, and technical assistance supports to the field, as well as to underwriting membership and conference registration for those financially affected by COVID-19.

If ALA is to realize its mission "to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all," at a time when both are so embattled, we must seek to double our ranks and to question everything—old practices, biases, silos, binaries, elephants in corners—that stands in the way of that. This is an extraordinary period, as ripe with opportunity as with challenge. When I envision ALA's sesquicentennial, I see a diverse and expanded body of visionary leaders rising. The time is now to cultivate membership not for its own sake but for the larger work of movement building. AL

TRACIE D. HALL is executive director of the American Library Association. Reach her at thall@ala.org.

The Unfolding Crisis

At the time of the attacks on September 11, 2001, I was director of Arlington (Va.) Public Library. Arlington is a small, densely populated community located outside Washington, D.C., and it's home to the Pentagon. Our fire departments were deeply involved in the response to the attacks, and when I recently attended the annual commemoration events here, it all felt close and personal.

I appreciated the articles in *American Libraries'* "The Legacy of 9/11" package (Sept./Oct., p. 28) but felt something was missing. More attention should have been paid to what public libraries did in response to the incident itself as it was evolving, and what was learned. I remain deeply proud of Arlington Public Library's immediate response to the attacks and its contributions to the long-term recovery.

The flexibility of public libraries and their ability to act and respond as a crisis is evolving is one of the often forgotten reasons that a public library plays such an important role in its community. I was reminded of that recently when I learned from a *Washington Post* article about public libraries distributing free COVID-19 tests. The community trusts public libraries, and libraries are to be commended for taking action.

Ann Friedman
Arlington, Virginia
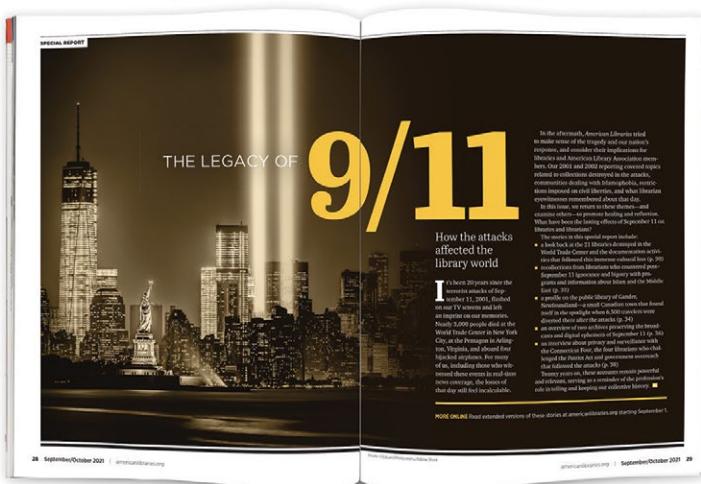
Whitewashing History

I was pleased to see the American Library Association's June 26, 2020, statement that it "accepts and acknowledges its role in upholding unjust systems of racism and discrimination against Black, Indigenous, and people of color." But, as I've written in at least one article I've published since, "It is impossible for members of the nation's library community to fathom the full burden of that responsibility if such large chunks of that past ... remain unknown to the present."

The August 18 statement by the ALA Executive Board, a reaction to the controversy over critical race theory, concludes with this sentence: "For more than 140 years, ALA has been the trusted voice of libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all."

That last statement is simply not true, and there are numerous historical examples of the Association's inaction on issues of equity and access: staying mum on a sit-in at a segregated white library in the late 1930s, choosing to file amicus briefs in censorship cases rather than desegregation cases in the South in the 1960s, and failing to acknowledge racist practices among white education administrators in the South. (Read my article "Separate—and Unequal," AL Online, Oct. 6, 2020, for more on this).

For several years now I have been calling upon ALA to follow the example of other professional associations and establish a commission on racism. The findings of such a commission may be the only way to guard against such historically incorrect statements as the one quoted above.

I find it sadly ironic that in a statement opposing censorious initiatives, ALA whitewashed its own history.

Wayne A. Wiegand
Walnut Creek, California

A Fond Farewell

By the time I began working on my MLIS degree, circa 2010, Meredith Farkas's In Practice columns in *American Libraries* were already required reading for some of my courses. Moreover, as an early adopter of Twitter and netizen of the blogosphere, I connected with her writing in ways that spoke directly to my experience and interests. I have

listened to Farkas speak more than once on conference panels, and she has always existed, for me, in the pantheon of contemporary library thought leaders. Because of this, I was saddened to read her final entry ("All Good Things …," June, p. 54).

Upon reflecting on my own career and, in particular, perspectives on academic libraries, I cannot help but notice how much my own journey mirrored hers. All along the way, her columns provided mentorship and inspired me to think more broadly about user experience, technology, empathy for colleagues, and work–life balance.

I appreciate her willingness to step aside to make space for new and more diverse voices. Many more of us in this profession need to follow her example. Thank you, Meredith, for all you've given us. Onward and upward.

John M. Jackson
Los Angeles

Back to School Libraries

I wanted to say thank you to ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall for her monthly columns in *American Libraries.* I look forward to seeing what new insights she brings each month, her thought-provoking comments on the impact of libraries, and challenges to the library community regarding how they can expand outreach to their constituents. As the legislative consultant for the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) and a retired school librarian, I also want to say thanks for always including something related to school libraries in her columns. I regularly use that information to advocate for

school libraries in New Jersey, sharing that information not only with NJASL members but also with legislators and the New Jersey Department of Education.

Knowing that ALA is inclusive of all types of libraries in its outreach is what makes my membership in ALA so valuable. Thank you for remembering the needs of school libraries.

Mary Moyer Stubbs
Millville, New Jersey

Thanks, Obama

Former President Obama's talk was a wonderful conclusion to ALA's Annual Conference and Exhibition Virtual. Obama's description of libraries as "citadels of knowledge and empathy" gives librarians a lens through which to view our own programs. How are we viewing issues of access and safe spaces for all of our patrons, including those that haven't yet walked through our doors? What does this look like virtually?

Obama encouraged us to rethink our libraries as institutions that have underlying values but also must remain relevant to the communities they serve. In the same conversation, Obama and his interviewer Lonnie G. Bunch III, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, discussed how Americans examine the past and present as a way to explore our future. The same general sentiment could be applied to libraries. We should be constantly rethinking how patrons engage with our institutions.

Kudos to Obama for making us all better through this conversation.

Tom Bober
St. Louis

UPDATE

ALA Praises Senate Passage of Infrastructure Bill, Introduction of Connectivity Bill

The American Library Association (ALA) praised the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act by the US Senate in an August 10 statement. The legislation, which heads next to the House for consideration, would provide critical funding for libraries to expand high-speed broadband service and provide digital skills training to patrons.

"[The bill] recognizes libraries as key partners in advancing digital equity," said ALA President Patricia "Patty" M. Wong in the statement. "Technology is only as good as the user is proficient, but connecting communities is at the heart of what libraries do. Beyond providing access to Wi-Fi, hotspots, and connected devices, libraries enable new users to adopt technology and build lifelong digital skills."

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes nearly $2.8 billion for the Digital Equity Act, which calls on states to develop actionable plans to connect individuals lacking access to affordable internet, and nearly $43.5 billion for broadband deployment at eligible households and institutions, including libraries.

"It will be critical that libraries collaborate with state and local partners to implement this historic expansion of high-speed internet service for libraries and library patrons," Wong said. "Elected officials and leaders across the country understand the value of libraries, and library leaders must continue to work with them to expand the reach and effectiveness of library resources and programming."

ALA also welcomed the introduction in the Senate of the Securing Universal Communications Connectivity to Ensure Students Succeed (SUCCESS) Act. The bill would extend the Emergency Connectivity Fund by five years and provide $8 billion annually to libraries and schools.

"Today's libraries are committed to improving internet access and providing the digital literacy support essential to advancing educational and economic opportunity for all," Wong said in a July 22 statement. "The promise of the SUCCESS Act means more libraries will have access to critical funding to sustain or initiate broadband equity programs through the Emergency Connectivity Fund." ●

Booklist Reader Launches

Booklist, ALA's book review publication, in September launched *Booklist Reader,* a digital, patron-facing magazine featuring diverse readers' advisory recommendations for readers of all ages.

Each month, *Booklist Reader* will showcase top 10 lists, must-reads, interviews with (and articles by) top authors and illustrators, and adult, youth, and audio recommendations. *Booklist Reader* also plans to highlight authors and books that library patrons might not have otherwise discovered and to encourage patrons to explore them in their local libraries.

The first two issues are now available at booklistonline.com and will be freely available to all through 2021. (*Booklist Reader* will be available to *Booklist* subscribers only in 2022.) The initiative is supported by a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

IMLS Funds More Research on US Library Programming

ALA has received $498,805 in funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to conduct a foundational three-year research project into library programming, the second phase in ALA's National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment (NILPPA). The assessment's second phase will advance the library field's understanding of library programming by exploring what program impact looks like for libraries and communities, and how libraries partner with other organizations and leaders to achieve that impact, especially through the pandemic.

The project—a collaboration with nonprofit research organization Knology and administered by ALA's Public Programs Office (PPO)—will bring together researchers and advisors to collect and interpret data through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. The process will be based in the Transformative Paradigm, a research framework that emphasizes social justice and supports the inclusion of marginalized voices. Insights will be shared widely with the library field through a white paper, blog posts, webinars, conference presentations, and tools.

Inaugural LibLearnX Event Will Be Virtual

The ALA Executive Board announced in a September 15 statement that the first-ever LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience (LLX), scheduled for January 21–24, 2022, in San Antonio, will take place virtually. It is the fourth Association-wide conference to shift to an online format since early 2020.

"Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and surge of its variants, coupled with the size, scope, and location of LibLearnX, it is necessary to cancel the in-person portion of the event," said ALA President Patricia "Patty" M. Wong in the statement. "As such, the Executive Board voted to transition the in-person portion of LLX in January 2022 to a virtual-only conference."

LibLearnX, ALA's all-new January event, is a member-focused conference designed to inspire and engage discussions that will shape the future of libraries and their communities. LibLearnX will feature active and applied learning, networking opportunities, and celebrations of the positive impact libraries have on society. Register and learn more at alaliblearnx.org. ●

The NILPPA Phase 1 white paper (bit.ly/NILPPA-1), published in 2019, shared a categorization framework of public programs and a set of nine skills areas required for effective public programming. Building on this work, Phase 2 seeks to develop a national standard for measuring and comparing the results of library programming.

New ALA Report on Library Skills and Competencies

In September, ALA released *Skills for 21st-Century Librarians: Learning Objectives for Library Programming,* a report marking the Association's next steps toward the creation of a programming curriculum for library workers and students.

Through its Skills for 21st-Century Librarians project, administered by PPO and supported by an IMLS grant, ALA convened a task force of 12 leaders in libraries and library education to explore how library programming skills can be taught in library degree programs and professional development trainings. Their discussions resulted in recommendations for learning objectives within nine core library programming competency areas: organizational skills, knowledge of the community, interpersonal skills, event planning, creativity, content knowledge, outreach and marketing, financial skills, and evaluation. (The task force's work builds on NILPPA's first phase.)

The report proposes specific learning objectives within each competency area and offers resource recommendations based on suggestions from the library field. The report also proposes next steps for the development of a programming curriculum. Read the final report at bit.ly/ProgrammingSkills.

AASL Award Applications Open

Applications for the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) 2022 awards and grants are now available at ala.org/aasl/awards, along with detailed criteria. AASL members are encouraged to nominate a colleague or themselves for their outstanding talent and dedication to the profession. AASL awards and grants recognize excellence and showcase best practices in the school library field in categories that include collaboration, leadership, and innovation.

Applications for the National School Library of the Year Award are due January 1; all other applications and nominations (such as those for the AASL Chapter

of the Year Award and the Collaborative School Library Award, among others) are due February 1.

60 Libraries Selected for NASA Partnership

The Space Science Institute's National Center for Interactive Learning, the Lunar and Planetary Institute, the Education Development Center, and ALA have announced that 60 libraries in 32 states have been selected to participate in NASA@ My Library, a program that provides resources, training, and support to increase STEM learning opportunities for library patrons. NASA@ My Library is made possible through the support of the NASA Science Mission Directorate, as part of its Science Activation program.

The libraries, selected through a competitive application process, will host around three NASA events—beginning with the launch of NASA's newest telescope in December—and programming, have access to a university subject matter expert to support patron engagement, and receive $1,600 for programming expenses through September 2022. See the full list of libraries at bit.ly/ NASAlibrary.

Nominations Open for IFRT Oboler Award

Nominations are now open for the Intellectual Freedom Round Table's (IFRT) inaugural Eli M. Oboler Memorial Award, honoring journal articles in even-numbered years (starting in 2022) and books in odd-numbered years (starting in 2023). The award is $500 and a certificate and will be presented at ALA's Annual Conference each year.

The Oboler committee is now seeking nominations for the 2022 award honoring a journal article. The award honors a literary work or series of works in the area of intellectual freedom. This can include ethical, political, or social concerns related to intellectual freedom. The article may be stand-alone or a series of thematically connected articles published on the local, state, or national

Survey Highlights Role of Libraries in Digital Equity

A new report from the Public Library Association (PLA) published on August 31 details how public libraries are expanding their technology services and resources in the face of ongoing pandemic limitations. The 2020 *Public Library Technology Survey* report provides the most current and complete picture of how libraries serve as digital equity hubs. View the summary report at bit.ly/ PLA-report-20.

"Library workers make technology more accessible for every person of every age in our communities, including students, job seekers, and the millions of Americans who still lack broadband access and skills," said PLA President Melanie Huggins in an August 31 statement. "The new survey report details how our nation's public libraries serve as critical infrastructure for bridging digital divides, empowering lifelong learning, and advancing economic recovery."

Results show that more than half of respondents report circulating technology (such as hotspots, laptops, and tablets) for patron use off-site; a similar percentage had provided streaming public programs (such as storytimes and author events) in the previous 12 months. Many libraries also offered 24/7 internet access by leaving on or extending their Wi-Fi signal while facilities were closed. The report also includes data on libraries providing services like digital literacy training, employment assistance, homework help, and mobile printing, as well as the pandemic-era boom in ebook checkouts. ●
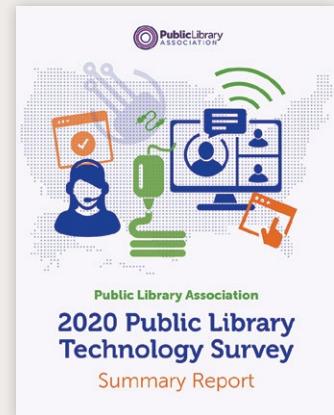
level in English or English translation. The articles should be dated either 2020 or 2021.

The nomination form and selection criteria are available at ala.org/rt/ifrt/ oboler. The deadline for submissions is December 1.

2022–2023 ALA Scholarships Available

If you require financial help to complete your graduate program, more than $300,000 in scholarship funds is available to students pursuing master's degrees in library science or school library media through ALA's Scholarship Program.

Awards range from $2,500 to $8,000 per student per year. They include scholarships for those interested in children's librarianship, youth librarianship, federal librarianship, new media, and library automation. In addition, there are scholarships available for those belonging to minority or underrepresented groups, persons with disabilities, and people who are already employed in libraries but do not have an MLS.

To be considered for one of these scholarships, applicants must be enrolled in an ALA-accredited, master's-level program in library and information science. Applicants interested in school librarianship must be in a program that

meets AASL/Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation curriculum guidelines.

The deadline to apply is March 1. Visit ala.org/educationcareers/scholarships for details.

Apply for Women's Suffrage Discussion Series

In September, PPO announced a new grant for libraries designed to spark conversations about American history and culture through an examination of the women's suffrage movement.

Through Let's Talk About It (LTAI): Women's Suffrage, participants will read a series of books curated by humanities scholars and discuss the people and events related to this topic. Twenty-five libraries will be selected to receive a $1,000 stipend to support programming costs, 10 copies of five themed books, access to programming guides and support materials, virtual training on the LTAI model (originally launched by ALA in 1982), a suite of online resources, and more.

To qualify for this grant, funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities, the applying institution must be a library (public, tribal, school, academic, or special) in the US or its territories. Library workers should apply by December 1 at ala.org/ltai.

Carnegie-Whitney Grants for Library Resource Guides

Through the Carnegie-Whitney Grant awards, the ALA Publishing Committee annually provides up to $5,000 for the preparation of print or electronic reading lists, indexes, or other guides to library resources that promote reading or the use of library resources at any type of library. Learn more and apply at bit.ly/CW-grants. Applications must be received by November 5; recipients will be notified in February.

Funded projects have included "A Resource Guide about Disabilities, Disability Theory, and Assistive Technologies" and "A Bibliography for Queer Teens," among others.

ALA Partners to Promote Vaccine Confidence

ALA is partnering with Communities for Immunity, a collaboration between libraries and museums to boost COVID-19 information and vaccine confidence in communities across the US. Communities for Immunity provides funding to libraries, museums, science centers, and other cultural institutions, with support from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and IMLS, and leverages resources and research disseminated through the Reopening Archives, Libraries, and

Executive Board Recommits to Social Justice

On August 18, the ALA Executive Board released a statement opposing initiatives to censor information resources, curricula, and programs addressing racial injustice, Black American history, and diversity education.

"As members of a profession committed to free and equitable access to information and the pursuit of truth, we stand firm in opposing any effort to suppress knowledge, to label 'controversial' views, or dictate what is orthodox in history, politics, or belief," the statement reads. "A commitment to intellectual freedom and social justice requires that libraries not only protect the truth from suppression but also prevent its distortion. Consequently, ALA has joined other educational institutions and civil liberties organizations in opposing any legislative proposal or local initiative intended to ban instruction, consideration, or discussion about the role of racism in the history of the United States, or how systemic racism manifests itself in our schools, workplaces, and government agencies."

The statement continues: "We commit to supporting libraries, library workers, schools, and universities facing these challenges and to develop tools that will prepare library workers to defend their collections, counter falsehoods, and engage their communities in these important conversations."

For a list of the organizations opposing legislative efforts to restrict education about racism, visit bit.ly/PENstatement. ●

Museums project from IMLS, OCLC, and Battelle. It also builds on existing resources and efforts, including the Smithsonian Institution's Vaccines and US: Cultural Organizations for Community Health initiative and efforts from the CDC, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and others.

Building on the many ways libraries have supported their communities during the pandemic, the partnership supports institutions as they create and deliver evidence-driven materials and develop resources, programs, and approaches specifically designed to engage diverse audiences in vaccine confidence. The national coalition of partners is also creating a community of practice to develop and refine vaccine education resources that will be shared with the broader library and museum community. Learn more at bit.ly/AL-immunity.

AASL Research on Admin Support for School Librarians

Research published in August from AASL's peer-reviewed online journal *School Library Research* explores how school district administrators can foster information literacy by supporting school librarians. Articles can be accessed for free at ala.org/aasl/slr.

In "Enabling School Librarians to Serve as Instructional Leaders of Multiple Literacies," researcher Melanie Lewis explores how school district leaders can foster the development of effective school libraries. Lewis, assistant professor of media at University of West Georgia in Carrollton, collected data from district-level personnel and

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building-level school librarians using interviews, focus groups, documents, and observations. Results demonstrated that positive relationships serve as significant support for enabling school librarians to function as instructional leaders of multiple literacies.

Lewis undertook this research to fill a gap, as she notes that very little research has been conducted to examine the support needs of in-service school librarians.

New Resource on Legislator Tours

ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office has published "How to Conduct an In-Person Library Tour," an updated checklist to help library advocates as they meet with their elected officials during congressional recesses. The resource walks advocates through best practices and steps for requesting and scheduling a library tour, things to consider when

developing the content and points of interest of the tour, and how to publicize the visit to relevant audiences on social media.

With several important discussions and legislative opportunities for libraries currently being negotiated—such as ensuring that funding for library facilities is incorporated in an infrastructure plan through the Build America's Libraries Act—ALA encourages library advocates from libraries of all types to conduct library tours, particularly during periods when legislators are likely to be in their districts. Download the checklist at bit.ly/AL-tours, and browse more advocacy resources at ala.org/advocacy.

RUSA Accepting Webinar and Course Proposals

The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) invites experienced librarians and subject matter experts

to submit proposals for webinars and online courses to be added to RUSA's digital learning offerings. The division particularly encourages submissions that address innovative services and trends, emerging technologies, management and leadership, or staff training in the areas of reference services, user instruction, assessment of services, collection development, resource discovery and usability, resource sharing and interlibrary loan, and trending topics.

Proposals for webinars (bit.ly/RUSA-webinar) and online courses (bit.ly/RUSA-course) are accepted year-round. Webinars and online courses approved for presentation will be offered through August 31, 2022. Webinar presenters and online learning instructors are compensated for their work and will receive training and support for the Zoom platform and Moodle, the online tool used for courses. **AL**

TRENDS

Foodlink Community Café in Rochester (N.Y.) Public Library's Central Library provides culinary training and work experience for people who have faced barriers to employment.

Cafés with a Conscience

Libraries partner with social justice groups on meals and missions

BY Emily Udell

After the last of a revolving door of businesses left the existing café space in the Central Library of Rochester (N.Y.) Public Library (RPL), staffers considered how the retail space could be used to serve the community more than just coffee.

"We talked about how we could make things better in our neighborhood," says Patricia Uttaro, director of RPL and Monroe County Library System. "We have been doing a lot of work with our library on social justice and conversations on race. We wanted to find a solution there."

RPL collaborated with Foodlink, a local nonprofit food bank that addresses community hunger and provides training and experience in the culinary arts for people who

have faced barriers to employment, including those with histories of substance abuse, formerly incarcerated individuals, and immigrants and refugees. Foodlink Community Café opened in RPL's Central Library in May after COVID-19 lockdowns postponed plans to open in spring 2020. At the café, the menu of soup, sandwiches, salads, sides, and cookies changes each week, with a focus on homemade, nutritious fare. The library waives the rent for the café, which runs on a pay-what-you-can model: Patrons can pay nothing, a suggested price, or extra to cover others' costs and to support Foodlink's mission.

"It seemed like the right thing to do," Uttaro says. "We'd gone several years with no income from

rent and had absorbed it into our budget."

"This program and the café are nonjudgmental," says Olvin Cortez, who has been working with Foodlink in Rochester for two years and hopes to one day open his own restaurant. "If you come from a hard place, they're here to help."

RPL is one of several libraries around the country that are using café space on their campuses to house mission-driven food and beverage service to library patrons and community members.

Creating community stars

At Gadsden (Ala.) Public Library (GPL), teens with disabilities have been preparing and serving scratch-made vegetarian meals at the Beautiful Rainbow Café since 2017. The collaboration between GPL and Gadsden City High School began after a café and bookstore vacated their space in GPL's former genealogy wing. At the time, special education teacher Chip Rowan was already running a gardening and culinary program for students with disabilities—first through the city's middle school, then through the high school—and inviting community leaders to sample their creations. He hoped to eventually open a full-service restaurant.

"Our [program's] mission is education—isn't that a library's mission as well?" Rowan says. "It seemed like a no-brainer."

The program pays the city $1 annually for rent; the school system pays Rowan's salary; and grants

> ## "I've seen students go from being very withdrawn to being stars in the community."

CHIP ROWAN, special education teacher whose students work at Gadsden (Ala.) Public Library's Beautiful Rainbow Café

cover student wages, food service equipment, and gardening supplies. Sales sustain the food operation and generate extra funds that get reinvested into the café. Much of the produce used in the seasonal fare is harvested from a garden across from GPL. The garden is also tended by Rowan's students, who participate in a cooperative education program that allows them to use part of the school day for paid, on-the-job training.

"When the bus arrives in the morning and drops the kids off, they are all smiles," says GPL Director Craig Scott. "It's not drudgery. They are eager to work."

The program is geared toward students with disabilities ages 16–21 who are in need of community-based employment. "We try to focus on the lower-functioning students," says Rowan. Many students go on to get jobs at area businesses. "I've seen students go from being very withdrawn to being stars in the community."

Building a thriving city

Marianne's, a café in development in the D.C. Public Library (DCPL) system, will provide workforce training while enticing patrons

with grab-and-go food in a bustling locale. Last year DCPL concluded a large-scale renovation of its Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Memorial branch—a 1972 Ludwig Mies van der Rohe building that was in dire need of modernization—including a counter built for the café.

"MLK is very well positioned—it's right in the middle of the city. It's central to all Metro lines, there are a ton of bus lines right there," says Linnea Hegarty, director of events, exhibits, and development at DCPL. "We knew a café would be a place to attract patrons to stay at the library longer."

After an open procurement process, DCPL chose the established antihunger and antipoverty nonprofit D.C. Central Kitchen to run the café. Fellowships to work at Marianne's are awarded to applicants who have an interest in the culinary arts and face barriers to employment, such as a history of homelessness, incarceration, or trauma. They will receive paid, hands-on culinary and job-readiness training and support to launch their careers in the food service industry.

"Revenue was not our driving decision-making factor," Hegarty says. "We structured the contract in a way that advantages both partners if the café is successful, but it doesn't put an onus on D.C. Central Kitchen."

She says rent is offered to their nonprofit partners below market rate, and café revenue should cover the cost of operations. Pandemic precautions delayed the launch

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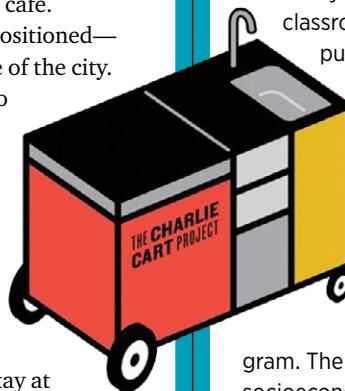
Libraries and Food

350
Number of classes offered annually through Free Library of Philadelphia's (FLP) Culinary Literacy Center. According to FLP, this kitchen classroom is the first of its kind created at a public library in the US.

$9,000
Amount that Chattanooga (Tenn.) Public Library spent on a Charlie Cart—a mobile kitchen that includes a convection oven, an induction cooktop, a rinse station, and utensils—for its Flavor Lab program. The kitchen is used to teach kids from all socioeconomic levels about cooking.

4.5 million
Number of copies that the novel *Like Water for Chocolate* (1989) by Laura Esquivel has sold. The book, which has been translated into 35 languages, is noted for its combination of romance, magical realism, and Mexican recipes.

220
Number of seed varieties available for loan at St. Thomas (Ont.) Public Library. Patrons can check out up to 10 packets a year and are encouraged to plant, grow, and harvest seeds to return to the seed library.

20
Number of individually wrapped Kraft Singles slices bound together in the book *20 Slices of American Cheese* by Ben Denzer. The copy in the special collection at University of Michigan's Art, Architecture, and Engineering Library in Ann Arbor is one of only 10 in the world. ●

Jeff Whalen, special collections librarian at Long Beach (Calif.) Public Library, records an episode of *Don't Know Beach about History: Short Histories of Long Beach* in August.

Broadcasting the Past

Library podcasts explore local history

BY Bill Furbee

Keloni Parks, manager of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (Ohio) Public Library's (CHCPL) West End branch, is passionate about West End history. Her father was born and raised in the area, and Parks used to visit family and friends there regularly while growing up. "The West End was one of the few places in the city where African Americans could reside," she says. "[It] was dense, vibrant, and thriving."

That all changed in the 1950s, when parts of the neighborhood were partially destroyed to make way for Interstate 75. "[The area] will never be what it was," she says.

In an effort to share this history with her city, Parks started *The West End Stories Project,* a monthly podcast that preserves the fading narratives of African Americans who grew up in the area, before their stories are lost to time. The podcast, which debuted in September 2020,

was inspired by two events: the construction of a soccer stadium that further displaced many West End residents and the death of local author John W. Harshaw Sr., who wrote the book *Cincinnati's West End: Through Our Eyes* (2011). "Memories [were] erased with [Harshaw's] passing, and the further destruction of the community really lit the fire to get the project started," she says.

Parks is one of several librarians across the country using their research and tech skills to create podcasts that capture community histories—especially those perspectives that are often forgotten or marginalized. Many in the profession find that podcasting is easy to learn, and that audio brings a vibrance and immediacy that often can't be replicated with the written word. Another reason for this medium's popularity is the low barrier to entry, as library staffers are privy

to the many free tools that are now available for recording, editing, and hosting podcasts.

Labor of love

Shoshanna Wechter, reference librarian at Ypsilanti (Mich.) District Library, created the podcast *Ypsi Stories* in November 2020 to explore overlooked aspects of the town's history.

"It was an opportunity to showcase different experiences, narratives, and histories that you don't normally see in a history book or even from local history organizations," she says.

Ypsi Stories was inspired by the local history programs that the library had hosted before the pandemic. When in-person events became impractical or impossible, Wechter turned to podcasting to fill the void. The monthly show features local historians and experts discussing everything from city infrastructure and Black liberation to organizational histories and personal narratives. The library supplements each episode with related videos, photos, bibliographies, and biographies on its website. "Ypsilanti has a rich and diverse history," Wechter says, "and there are many people working on telling this history from different angles and through different lenses."

One common thread running through these podcasts: It's a labor of love.

"Doing a history podcast takes much longer than anyone probably

thinks it should," says Jeff Whalen, special collections librarian at Long Beach (Calif.) Public Library. "It's much more work than seems reasonable."

Whalen's podcast, *Don't Know Beach about History: Short Histories of Long Beach,* has explored the city's everyday, sometimes eccentric aspects since its inception in June 2020.

"Super-interesting Long Beach stories are all over the place," Whalen says. "It's really more the digging in to find the best, most reliable information and then putting it all together in a way that's as accurate as possible. You really have to piece it together yourself."

Don't Know Beach about History's first nine episodes have showcased some of the more bizarre moments in Long Beach's history—an abandoned mummy at a funhouse, a daredevil who attempted to set a world record in flagpole sitting, the arrest of baseball great Babe Ruth in 1927. "I loved growing up in Long Beach," says Whalen, "but I didn't have any idea the place had so many gripping, human stories."

Whalen didn't have to go far to find his city's stories; they were waiting for him in the library's local history collection. Uncovering them was a task he had trained for.

"You use all the tricks you learned in school and all the tricks you've learned on the job—how to work the databases and navigate books, newspapers, vertical files, scrapbooks, archives," Whalen says. "You find clues that lead you to other clues that lead you to dead ends that lead you to try something else in some other part of the collection. You end up finding so many interesting details around the edges. I still have so much to learn about Long Beach's collection. The podcast has helped me in that process."

Assembling an episode

Parks records interviews for *The West End Stories Project* using Google Voice and edits audio using open source software Audacity. After she writes a rough outline and records narration with her phone, she sends her audio files to Kent Mulcahy, grants resource librarian at CHCPL and the podcast's coproducer, to assemble the episode in Audacity.

To produce *Ypsi Stories,* Wechter also uses Audacity: "I taught myself as I went," she says. She recommends using Spotify's podcast distributor Anchor.fm to host episodes.

Sharing human stories via podcasts has allowed these libraries to maintain and strengthen outreach with the patrons they serve. For Parks, her podcast is about preserving the memories of a once-dynamic community.

Sharing human stories via podcasts has allowed libraries to maintain and strengthen outreach with the patrons they serve.

"[Our patrons] believe in the value of this work," Parks says, referencing an email that she received from a listener. "They wrote: 'Though I am getting on the old side, it's refreshing to hear older people talk about their experiences growing up. It reminds me of listening to one's grandparents reminisce. I always come across things I did not know, and it's always interesting to think about how things once were.'" AL

BILL FURBEE is a writer living in Melbourne, Kentucky.

At Gadsden (Ala.) Public Library (GPL), teens and early adults with disabilities prepare scratch-made vegetarian meals for the Beautiful Rainbow Café.

of the café, which will operate in a high-traffic area of the library where bestsellers, holds, and ample seating are located.

"Workforce development is an important part of library service, and a café is a very tangible representation of that work," Hegarty says. "The café is one piece of what we hope will be a much broader scope. Seeing that partnership intentionally begin with this café was important to us."

The collaboration with DCPL could eventually include a rooftop garden and food literacy programming, but in the meantime the program will connect workers with classes, technology, and other library offerings.

"We are expanding opportunities for the residents of D.C. by giving them job training and skills and a place of employment at the library," Hegarty says. "They also can take advantage of their job at the library to learn and explore more of the library's resources. And this in turn helps to build a thriving city with more opportunities for all." AL

EMILY UDELL is a freelance writer based in Indianapolis.

The Virtual Interview Lab at Do Space in Omaha, Nebraska, is equipped with a computer, webcam, microphone, and ring light.

Acing the Interview

Tech library assists locals in finding jobs by providing access to digital tools

An estimated 19 million Americans—or 6% of the population—still lack access to fixed broadband service at threshold speeds. And as more job interviews have moved online during the pandemic, those without access face a major roadblock to finding employment. That's where Do Space has stepped in. In July 2020, the Omaha, Nebraska–based community technology library launched its Virtual Interview Lab to offer locals access to high-speed internet, reliable computer equipment, and space to participate in job interviews. While the current unemployment rate in Omaha is relatively low at 2.6%, it had peaked in April 2020 at 8.7%, and the nation continues to recover from the highest overall unemployment rate since the Great Depression. For libraries considering replicating Do Space's approach, Technology Manager Michael Sauers offers advice.

BY Michael Sauers

As we say on the Do Space website, "The future belongs to those who understand technology, and the only way to ensure we'll be part of this future is to dramatically change technology access and education in Omaha."

Since our opening in November 2015, the nonprofit Do Space has been providing access to a variety of technologies, including a computer lab, laptops, high-speed internet, laser cutters, and 3D printers. We also offer innovative education programs on technological topics for all ages, from toddlers to older adults. Run by the Community Information Trust, a privately funded nonprofit, Do Space offers no-fee membership, and most services are free.

After a temporary closure earlier in the pandemic, we reopened with limited services in June 2020. That meant fewer computers, to encourage social distancing, and converting all in-person programming to an online format. Our meeting rooms stood empty, ripe for repurposing.

Among the questions we asked ourselves: What services did the public need during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic? And what new services could we provide?

First, the pandemic highlighted the already significant digital divide. Someone interviewing for a job online may lack simple tools such as a quality webcam or microphone, or they may not have the bandwidth at home to successfully videoconference. Worse, they may not have access to a computer at all.

Second, as with the trend toward remote and hybrid work, some form of virtual job interviews are likely here to stay.

With these realities in mind, my colleagues and I converted our small conference room into a single-occupancy Virtual Interview Lab designed to offer the public access to the hardware, software, and bandwidth needed for success.

For hardware, we added a PC and a 27-inch monitor, a 1080p high-definition webcam, a Blue Yeti microphone, a ring light, and headphones. For software, we installed every virtual meeting platform we could think of, including Zoom, Adobe Connect, Microsoft Teams, GoToWebinar, GoToMeeting, and more, placing shortcuts to all programs and online services on the desktop for easy access.

Since opening for bookings on July 1, 2020, the lab has been used by one to five job seekers per week. Members who have used the lab are

Photo: Do Space

grateful for its existence. One piece of written feedback we received noted that the room is "ideal, quiet, [has] no distractions," and that the user appreciated the ability to hear and see the interviewers' faces clearly.

Do Space staffers assist members before their interview, helping with setup, adjusting displays, and framing them on-screen when needed.

Have there been glitches? Given that we're dealing with technology, the answer is yes, of course. But luckily these setbacks have been minor. For example, in a few cases, Zoom has needed last-minute updates, which staffers quickly addressed.

Someone interviewing for a job online may lack simple tools such as a webcam or microphone, or may not have the bandwidth to videoconference.

Today, Do Space has resumed full-service operations with a mask mandate in place. Because our space needs have changed, the Virtual Interview Lab now sits in a meeting room that is also being used for in-person workshops. But our goal at the lab remains the same: to connect the people of Omaha with the technology they need for a successful job interview. **AL**

MICHAEL SAUERS is technology manager at Do Space in Omaha, Nebraska. He has worked as a reference librarian, serials cataloger, technology consultant, and public library trustee, among other roles.

GLOBAL REACH
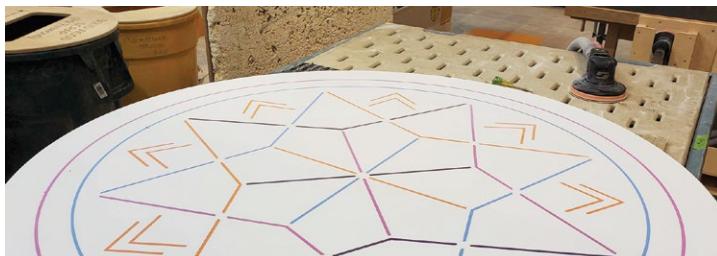
A table with quill basket patterns is one of the pieces Indigenous patrons and Sheridan College furniture design students built for the Brodie Resource Library in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Indigenous Partnerships

CANADA Thunder Bay (Ont.) Public Library paired 10 Indigenous patrons with students from Sheridan College's furniture design program to design and build pieces for Brodie Resource Library's Indigenous Knowledge Centre. During the two-year process, students and faculty traveled to Northwest Ontario for brainstorming sessions, communal meals, and land-based activities including snowshoeing in subzero weather up Animikii-wajiw (Mount McKay). Participants created tables, bookshelves, children's stools, benches, and a podium—all of which incorporate Indigenous worldviews and values, like egalitarianism rather than hierarchy. A grand opening for the redesigned space is planned once pandemic restrictions ease.—*CBC News,* June 25.

HONG KONG In July, police arrested five members of the General Union of Hong Kong Speech Therapists responsible for a 2020 children's book that portrayed prodemocracy activists as sheep and police as wolves who tore down their houses, ate their food, and sprayed poison gas. The five were detained under a colonial-era law on seditious publications and accused of instilling hatred of the government among children. —*The New York Times,* July 22.

ZAMBIA Zambia Library Service (ZLS) and the Ministry of General Education has begun distributing 6,000 STEM books donated by Book Aid International. ZLS also received funding for nearly 600 more books and 400 exam prep guides. The four schools that received the donations will use them to encourage female students to learn STEM subjects. —*Lusaka Times, July 31.*

SOUTH AFRICA Rebuilding the Jagger Library Reading Room at University of Cape Town is expected to take 18 months. A temporary roof has been installed over the reading room, and salvaged materials have been sent to various campus locations for temporary storage. A wildfire that started on Cape Town's Table Mountain April 18 destroyed about half of Jagger Library Reading Room's materials, including large parts of its African Studies monograph collection and approximately 3,500 DVDs of African films.—**University of Cape Town, Aug. 18.** ●

Padma Lakshmi

TV personality reveals her two greatest loves in life
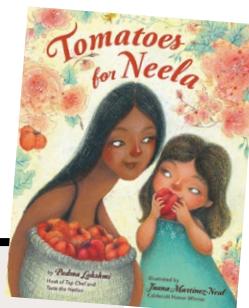
Model, author, and television host and producer Padma Lakshmi is having a productive year: The 18th season of her reality competition show *Top Chef* concluded this summer, snagging five Emmy nominations; she released a children's book, *Tomatoes for Neela* (Viking Books for Young Readers, August), with illustrator Juana Martinez-Neal; and her travelogue series *Taste the Nation* returns to Hulu on November 4 with a collection of holiday episodes. *American Libraries* talked with Lakshmi, fresh off her appearance at the American Library Association's 2021 Annual Conference Virtual, about the intersection of cooking and family and the value of creating space for everyone's food story.

BY Terra Dankowski

You've authored two cookbooks, a food encyclopedia, and a memoir. What made you want to write the children's book *Tomatoes for Neela*? This book is based on a story I would often tell my daughter, who is now 11, as I was putting her to sleep in earlier years. I think one of the best things you can do for a child is impart a love of food and the preparation of that food from early on.

It was important to me to be able to write a children's book specifically about food and family. It's important to instill in children a consciousness of who's making their food, who's bringing them their food, where it comes from, and what environmental effects the way we eat has on our world. Having as many generations in a family as possible contribute to your child's learning gives them different perspectives that one person cannot do themselves. That's why themes of agricultural history and ancestral knowledge were included.

Your show *Taste the Nation* showcases the culinary contributions of our country's immigrant groups. When filming, which place left the biggest impression on you? El Paso is a place I had never been to before we filmed there. There is not just a Texas culture or a Mexican culture but this third thing, this Tex-Mex culture, which has people going back and forth across the border in this symbiotic relationship [with] the city of Juárez. It was really eye-opening. It taught me about the implications that a false border or wall or other delineation has for separating people—people who just want to live their lives freely and peacefully and prosperously.

Top Chef exalts this rarefied experience, and it's wonderful because many of us will not have the opportunity to go to those fine-dining restaurants. But [with *Taste the Nation*], I wanted to do a show that taught and explored how most of us eat. Whether you eat kimchi and *japchae* or mango pickle and yogurt rice, your personal food-ways are valuable, they're compelling, and they're no less interesting than anyone else's story or experience.

Writing has been a large part of your career. What's your relationship with books and libraries? When I was growing up, I would spend a lot of time in the library because it was just a cool place to do my homework after school. Not all my upbringing was peaceful, and the library offered me a safe, quiet, protected haven. I relied on the staff to help me explore whatever my interests were.

I grew up flitting back and forth between here in New York City and India, at my grandparents' house, where I spent every summer of my school-age life. [There was] my grandmother's love of cooking—she's a very practical woman, and the life lessons that she taught me came from spending time with her in the kitchen. My grandfather, on the other hand, was this incredibly scholarly man. He could quote Wordsworth and Shakespeare by heart. He read books on everything from physics to ancient history to cricket statistics. I am very much a product of their influence and their counsel, because I love books and I love food. Those are the two things I love most in the world. AL

Photo: Anthony Jackson

"I was an immense introvert with an older brother who wouldn't let me speak, so I was the biggest reader. My parents didn't guide me in any way; I'd just go to the library and see what I could find, so it would be Nancy Drew or Jane Austen and then a book about railroads."

LAUREN GROFF, in "Lauren Groff: 'I Often Get Very Lonely Because My Job Is Very Lonely,'" *The Guardian* (U.K.), Sept. 11.

"You know how little girls dream of their weddings? I dreamt of houses. I would go to the public library in Chicago and get out design books and look at houses and then think about my perfect house. I knew that I wanted a window seat, and I wanted some sort of a bed that had little curtains, like the kinds you see in fairy tales. Something that was safe."

SANDRA CISNEROS, in "How Sandra Cisneros Found Space to Be 'Barefoot' and 'Rude,'" NPR *Code Switch,* July 27.

"Google, as the platform that practically invented surveillance capitalism, is not a library. We might more accurately describe it as the antithesis of a civic institution, in that its ultimate aim is exploitation [of], rather than service [to], the community. Regardless of how many pages are captured in its search index, or how many tech sectors it monopolizes, Google deserves no trust, and no authority, in the public sphere."

MARK HURST, "Public Libraries Are Better Than Google," Creative Good, Aug. 27.

"SHOUT OUT TO LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY WORKERS. WE LOVE AND APPRECIATE YOU. 📚 THAT'S ALL."

US REP. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ (D-N.Y.), @AOC on Twitter, Aug. 14

"Shower thought: Now that most folks in the US want to work more from outside of the office, how about we invest in modernizing libraries to offer great transient workspace? I'd prefer money go to libraries [rather] than WeWork."

MATT AIMONETTI, @mattetti on Twitter, Sept. 18.

"[**The school board is**] **banning material from** *Sesame Street* **but not** [**from**] **David Duke. They're banning PBS but not the KKK. They've even banned the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators' statement on racism—which acknowledges that racism exists and is bad.**"

LAURI LEBO, Pennsylvania State Education Association spokesperson, in "'Afraid to Teach': One Pennsylvania High School's Book Ban List Targets Black, Latino Authors," *The Morning Call,* Sept. 1.

Big Ideas
for Small Business

How libraries strengthened their small business programs to reach those who needed them most

BY Claire Zulkey

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in early 2020, it exposed the precarious financial situation of many small businesses in the US. About half of these businesses were operating with fewer than two weeks of cash reserves at the time, according to research by JPMorgan Chase. Though federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans were available to help them weather mandated closures, many minority and non-English-speaking small business owners found that these funds could be difficult to secure.

In fact, the number of minority-owned small businesses that reported trying and failing to get a loan to help with the pandemic was 60% greater than nonminority-owned small businesses, according to an August 2020 study by the US Chamber of Commerce and MetLife. Additionally, minority-owned small businesses were almost 10% more likely to report that they might have to close permanently.

"As the numbers came in from the first round of loans, we went, 'Oh my gosh, less than 10% of this money went to the businesses that need it most,'" says Morgan Perry, business outreach specialist at Mid-Continent Public Library (MCPL) in Independence, Missouri.

Perry says it was impossible to ignore how many small business owners struggled with the digital divide and were therefore not getting the help they needed. As Perry and MCPL branch manager Megan Garrett shifted programs to a more virtual format, they tried to imagine how people with varying technological abilities, devices, and access might be able to find and use the library's small business support network and resources. They envisioned learners who could access materials only on a phone instead of a computer or tablet. "We'd stop in the middle of looking at [business resource] slides and I'd get my cellphone out and look at it as if I was a customer," says Perry.

While the pandemic has had an outsize impact on small businesses, it has also led to creative solutions from the librarians who serve them. Libraries like MCPL have adapted to the pandemic's challenges by expanding their small business programs, bringing them online, and helping people navigate federal and local aid, specifically focusing on people of color, immigrants, and other groups underrepresented as business owners.

Prioritizing resources

MCPL wanted to make sure its resources made it into the hands of local entrepreneurs who were most likely to lack a support network: microbusinesses, up-and-coming startups, "your cousin who had a lawnmower and a T-shirt with their logo on it," says Morgan. The library developed Pair Up with a Pro, a program that connected entrepreneurs with professional accounting, loan application, and grant-writing services at no cost. Using leftover programming money, MCPL hired a certified public accountant and business consultants to work with small business owners and designers to produce professional-looking signage to assist with pivots to curbside pickup.

Coming up with creative solutions stretched her team, Perry says. When strategizing how to make

Looking to help small business owners?

Be inclusive. Adriana McCleer, community partnerships supervisor at Appleton (Wis.) Public Library, says she and her colleagues prioritized making the library a welcoming space for marginalized residents to help attract minority business owners. She suggests the tools and resources provided by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (racialequityalliance.org) as a starting point. Additionally, McCleer says that the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has an inclusive services assessment that her library has used to look at inclusivity with a broader lens, including ADA accessibility and LGBTQ inclusion and equity. These assessments "will help us move the needle not just on small business but equity in general," she says.

Partner with those doing the work. Seek out existing local organizations that support small business so your library can learn with these groups and complement what they're doing. "Connect with places like [your] chamber of commerce or local small business associations and help demonstrate the value of broadening that community," says Megan Janicki, project manager for Libraries Build Business. "The library has a lower barrier to entry than [other organizations] and automatically is a more inclusive space because of that."

Connect entrepreneurs to legal resources. Legal questions can be a hurdle for any new business owner. Hadiza Sa-Aadu, small business engagement specialist at Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library, suggests Legal GPS, a platform that helps demystify the process of registering a business. Janicki also recommends connecting with law libraries: "We talked to the LA Law Library. They do a lot of really cool legal stuff for business and have a lot of references and resources."

Apply for Libraries Build Business. The initiative offers peer coaching and a Slack discussion board, with evaluation materials and forthcoming guides on adaptable and replicable program models. Visit bit.ly/LBB-info for more information and to sign up for peer coaching. ●

library resources available to entrepreneurs who could most benefit from them, she thought, "I have to go where the community is. I can't get them to come to the library." Perry and her team mailed and handed out fliers advertising the library's offerings. For instance, members of the local Somali business community would meet locally, and though library staffers weren't allowed to attend because of COVID-19 restrictions, Perry says she was able to drop off handouts translated into Somali and safely greet attendees before the program began.

By diverting funding typically used on catering, MCPL was able to hire someone to translate small business curriculum documents into Spanish and found a virtual partner to help start an online series for Spanish-speaking business owners. As the program evolved, "we began to not only get the classes out of [our partner] but use her connections to show how things were going in Detroit or Miami," says Perry. The library also shared event announcements about the series to roughly 25 Spanish-language Facebook groups in the region.

In the final week of Hispanic Heritage Month in October 2020, MCPL broadcast a tour of local restaurants on Facebook Live and interviewed the entrepreneurs behind them. "We hid a little bit of business education in the last five minutes," Perry says. She knew the outreach had been successful when someone who didn't realize Perry was behind the video told her about it: "This restaurant is all over Facebook. Do you want to go with me?"

> ### "As the numbers came in from the first round of loans, we went, 'Oh my gosh, less than 10% of this money went to the businesses that need it most.'"
>
> **MORGAN PERRY,** business outreach specialist at Mid-Continent Public Library in Independence, Missouri

Bypassing barriers

Appleton (Wis.) Public Library (APL) offered online courses, databases, and other materials and tools for small businesses, but wanted to do more to support their creation and retention. So Adriana McCleer, community partnerships supervisor at APL, decided to join the American Library Association's (ALA) Libraries Build Business (LBB) cohort in 2019. LBB is a national grantmaking initiative designed to build capacity in libraries offering business programming

and services to local entrepreneurs and their small business communities.

Using money from an LBB grant, in August 2020 APL launched its Small Business, Big Impact program, which aims to provide support and resources specifically for people of color and immigrants. With the help of a local business consultant, APL offered an eight-part virtual academy focused on fundamentals including sales and marketing, leadership, team building, and growth strategies. To widen the field of applicants, the library invited video and audio submissions instead of only offering an online application with blanks to fill in. This approach encouraged business owners who might otherwise not have applied.

The library also hosted a virtual entrepreneur storytelling series to spotlight local Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) business owners, asking them to share strategies and stories to help build community. The online series drew owners of established businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs, and business community support staffers from area nonprofits.

APL staff members who promoted engagement around Small Business, Big Impact worked to connect locally with minority-owned businesses by calling and visiting in person (using a list provided by the City of Appleton). They also connected with community partners including a local technical college and business-oriented nonprofits to spread information about the program to aspiring entrepreneurs not yet on the city's list of business owners, McCleer says.

"It's tough to reach people who have traditional barriers in their way," says Sheldon Burke, librarian supervisor at Broward County (Fla.) Library and program coordinator for META Broward, an initiative aimed at breaking barriers to affordable technical training and business development for underrepresented groups. As an LBB cohort member, Burke was able to build visibility and trust through strong community outreach. With help from Broward County Economic and Small Business Development and its partner Prosperity
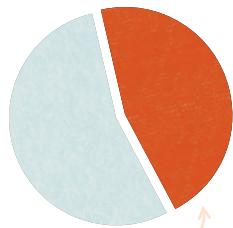
46% of those who participated in the Built in Broward workshops were nontraditional users who seldom or never used library services.

Broward—an advocacy initiative focused on the six zip codes in Broward County with the highest unemployment—the library was able to target an audience with a high need.

Burke was pleased with participation and signups for courses like visual design, artificial intelligence, and data analytics for beginners through the library's Built in Broward program. The program also provided one-on-one mentorship with local experts, from start-up owners to marketing and branding professionals. The library recorded the workshops and reminded small business owners who couldn't access live virtual meetings that they could watch them using the library's computers and free Wi-Fi. "We also encouraged all participants to utilize our existing online databases and Creation Station Business," says Burke, referring to the library's small business incubator that supplies conference rooms, wireless printing, US Patent and Trademark Office information, and access to web conferencing with instructors.

Listening and evaluating

Hadiza Sa-Aadu noticed a pattern during her first year as the small business engagement specialist at Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library (KCPL). "I would be meeting with individuals—who happen to be Black women—who were expressing something about their business idea, saying that they didn't necessarily have the most confidence in their idea." Many had already sought business guidance from SCORE, a free nationwide business mentoring organization. "To put it very frankly, SCORE is definitely skewed to the male demographic in terms of the mentors who volunteer. I suspected there was not that much listening happening."

Sa-Aadu focused on guiding her patrons to the best tools to help them evaluate their ideas. When it came to the library's own resources and programming, "I didn't want to duplicate anything that was going on," she says. She noticed the library's Bluford branch was in an area with a lot of small business activity but not a lot of small business programming, and what existed was "probably not free and not necessarily the most consistent or high-quality or accessible," she says.

In 2019, Sa-Aadu and her team helped found Bluford Business, a series of workshops geared toward topics like legal issues, cash flow, and capital access, and included panels with local experts and a resource fair where entrepreneurs and support organizations could network. Sa-Aadu says that since the library opened to the public again, she has noticed an uptick in requests for face-to-face business meetings from people who weren't comfortable with technology. However, she says, "Who knows how long we'll stay open?"

Marking success

Built in Broward programming has already shown tangible benefits for its participants. By the end of her cohort program, a woman who was unemployed before the pandemic was running two e-commerce sites, including a family jewelry business. Plus, Burke says, "One of her clients liked her so much they decided to hire her … so she works full-time for an aviation company and has her own business." Her husband joined the cohort, too, dabbling in making 3D-printed parts for drones. When his work hours were reduced, Burke says, "We steered him toward turning his drone business to photography and video-making." Burke adds that 46% of those who participated in the Built in Broward workshops were nontraditional users who seldom or never used library services.

Sa-Aadu at KCPL notes that many of the Black women who came to her for business mentorship worked on ideas they developed during the pandemic. Some are now launching nonprofits, even ones that focus on entrepreneur support for young business owners. "That's something that's very cool," she says.

MCPL's Perry says that Sewing Labs, a nonprofit with an emphasis on teaching vulnerable populations to sew, is another example of a local small business that paid it forward after using library resources. Applying know-how gained from the library, one of the cofounders put her classes online and caught the attention of Singer. The sewing machine company not only donated 30 refurbished sewing machines but also contributed "a full suite of software, lighting, cameras, and an industrial embroidery machine," Perry says. "She took what we had to offer and ran with it." AL

CLAIRE ZULKEY is a freelance writer and author in Evanston, Illinois.

An Interview with Dr. J. Michael Durnil

The Scripps National Spelling Bee executive director talks about the evolution of the Bee, the benefits of participating, and how libraries can get involved.

Zaila Avant-garde, 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee champion

The Scripps National Spelling Bee has become an American institution since its inception in 1925. How has it changed in the past 96 years? There are a lot of ways the Bee has maintained its status as iconic, quintessential Americana but has also changed with the tide. The competition has leveled up and gotten considerably harder. We lovingly recall that our very first champion's winning spelling word was *gladiolus.* It seems uncomplicated compared with some of the words people hear now in competition. The other piece that has really grown is our commitment to academic achievement and educational enrichment. We engage almost 11 million schoolchildren across the country every year—and we make sure that the teachers, sponsors, communities, parents, and spellers all feel they're part of the year-long experience.
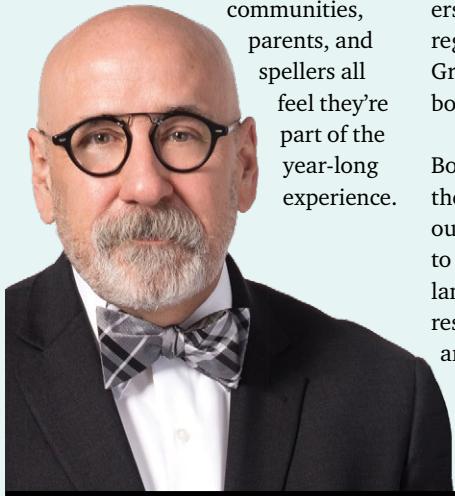
In addition to building a love of literacy and learning, what are some of the benefits kids can enjoy by participating in the Bee? The feedback from spellers is that the Bee has been instrumental in helping them build self-confidence. The ability to gather poise under pressure, stand in front of that microphone, and answer those questions—it's a sport where everybody is not competing so much against each other as they're competing against the dictionary. The spellers have a lot of camaraderie.

What educational programs and resources does the Bee offer for students, parents, and educators? Every year we release our Words of the Champions study list to give spellers the words needed to prepare for regional competitions. We also have Great Words, Great Works, a list of books where those words are used.

Another resource is The Bee's Bookshelf, the official book club of the Bee. This fall, we'll be releasing our 50th book selection. It's a way to engage readers in the totality of language. We also provide several resources to teachers on how to run and judge a bee in their community, including pronunciations from our official dictionary, *Merriam-Webster Unabridged.*

How did 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee champion Zaila Avant-garde prepare for and win the bee? I can't speak for Zaila, but it does come down to her love of words. She credits growing up in a family where there were books in the house and education was valued. We hear from championship spellers that words are critical to their lives. A lot of them cite the love of reading as one of the foundations of why they're good spellers. There is no one pathway to the national championship; it's about individual commitment, discipline, and curiosity.

How can libraries get involved with the Bee? What I know about libraries and about ALA's membership is that they want to make sure there's access to the world of ideas, and that's a lot of what the Bee is about. We have four library systems in the country that sponsor the Bee locally. In fact, one of our 2019 winners came out of the Howard County (Md.) Library System. Libraries are trusted and beloved institutions, and we're always open to finding new ways to collaborate. ▪

Listen to the full interview on *Call Number with American Libraries* in December. | **bit.ly/CallNumberPodcast**
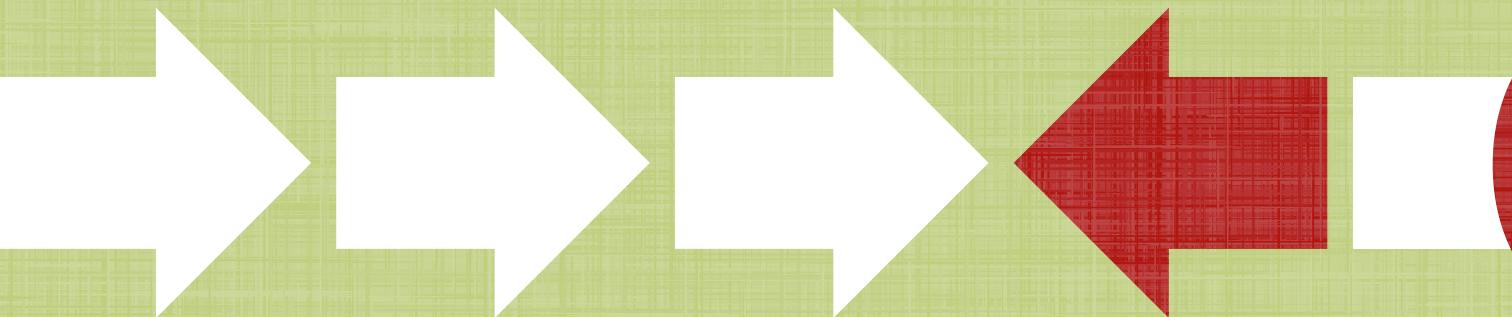
A Conflict of Values

How to prevent clashes between trustees and librarianship tenets // **BY** Cass Balzer
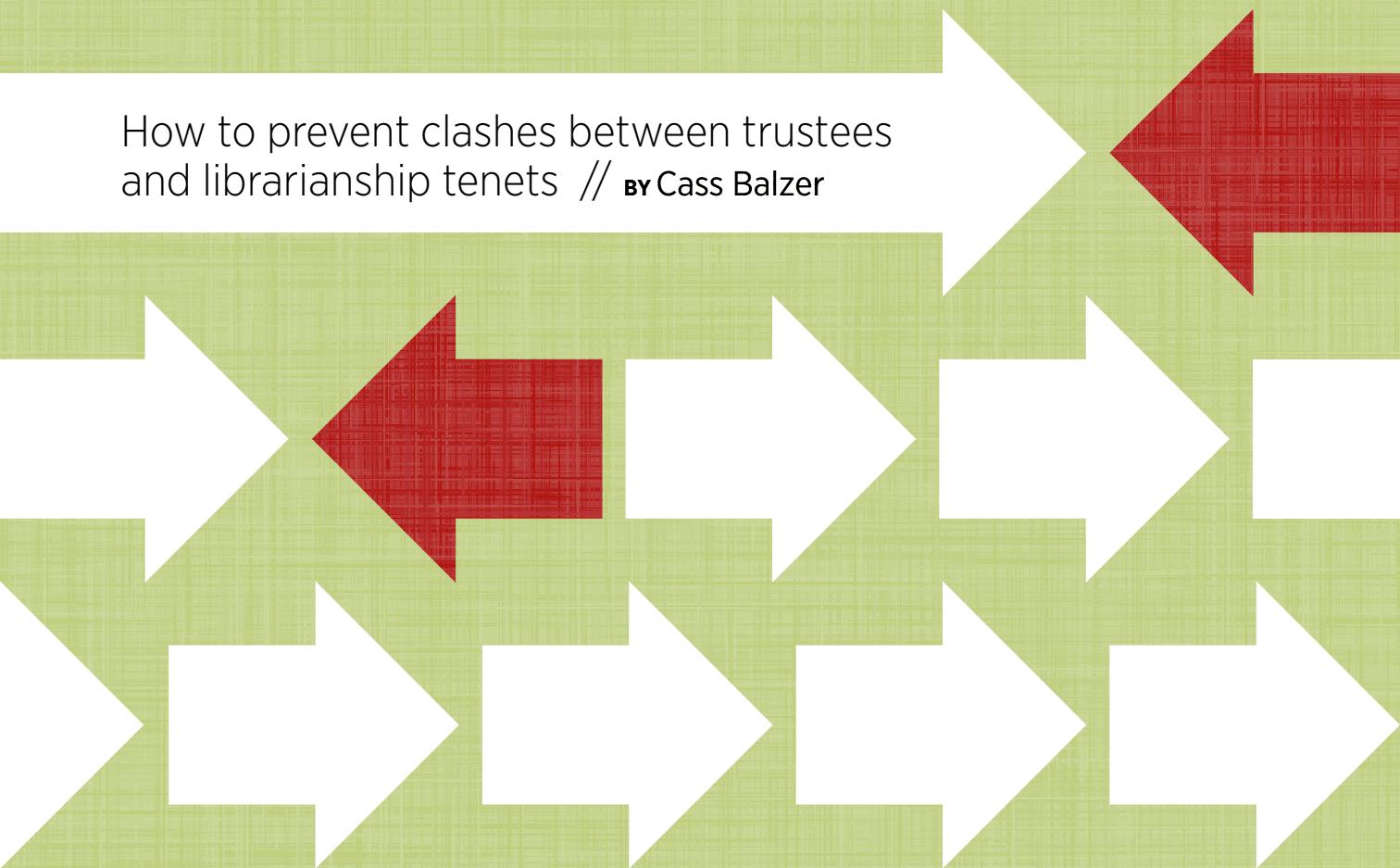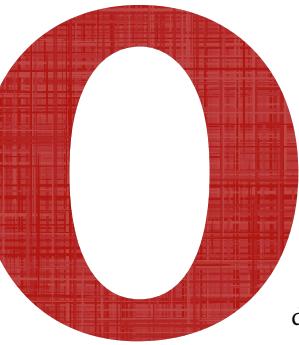
O n March 18, 2021, the Niles–Maine (Ill.) District Library (NMDL) held a candidate forum for its April board of trustees election—a forum that got widespread attention for all the wrong reasons. When a reporter asked candidate Joe Makula how to make the library welcoming to a diverse community, he answered, "Instead of stocking up on books in seven different languages, if we got people to assimilate and learn English better, I think we would do more good in that area than increasing our inventory of foreign language books" (bit.ly/AL-NMDLelection).

Incumbent trustee Becky Keane-Adams responded immediately, saying she wholeheartedly disagreed. "Books are windows," she began. "If you open a book and you can never see yourself in it, then it's hard to figure out who you are."

The comments of Makula—elected in April along with candidates Olivia Hanusiak and Suzanne Schoenfeldt, who like Makula identify as fiscally conservative—illustrate a trend unfolding in library boards across the country. Public libraries are facing a wave of trustee candidates whose goals challenge intellectual freedom, community service, and other core values of librarianship. While many potential board members run on platforms that explicitly involve fiscal issues and budget cuts, libraries are increasingly seeing candidates openly campaign on collections and programming decisions, particularly involving social issues and topics like Pride Month and Black Lives Matter displays.

"When this sort of disruption happens, it is really difficult on the director and staff," says Megan Murray Cusick, assistant director of state advocacy for the American Library Association's (ALA) Public Policy and Advocacy Office. "What we're seeing with library boards is not happening in a vacuum. It's happening within the context of what's happening across our country and with our civic discourse."

Conflicting understandings of library leadership

In Kootenai County, Idaho, a four-way race emerged last May for two seats on the Community Library Network's (CLN) board, which helps run seven libraries across the county. Challengers Vanessa Robinson and Rachelle Ottosen won their elected seats and have begun six-year terms on the board of trustees. In a new experience for this local election, they received support from the Kootenai County Republican Central Committee.

"To have a political group endorse specific [library board] candidates, to my knowledge, that had not happened previously," says Amy Rodda, CLN director. "From everything that I watched and heard, this board election was very different."

In past library board elections, political partisanship has not played a significant role, Rodda says. Instead, a candidate might emerge to run on a different fiscal approach. But with the endorsement of a political group, she says, "more attention was paid than there had been in the past."

Both Robinson and Ottosen ran on platforms that advocated for the removal of certain materials from the children's section of the library. These materials deal primarily with social issues such as racism, sexual orientation, and gender identity. During the campaign, Ottosen's website (which has since been taken down) outlined her platform in clear terms: "I don't think the public libraries need to be an extension of scriptural knowledge only, but they sure shouldn't be forcing taxpayer funding of satanic agendas that lead to the destruction of our nation" (bit.ly/AL-Kootenai).

Rodda began her tenure as library director shortly before the election and has been communicating with the new board members to foster a supportive partnership. "The community that we're in is more conservative, so it should make sense that we have those voices

An April 21 Twitter post by Kootenai County (Idaho) Republican Central Committee endorsing Rachelle Ottosen, a candidate for the Community Library Network's board.
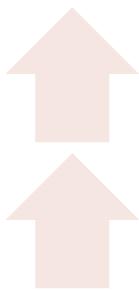
on our board as well," she says. "I don't care about [the new board members'] political viewpoints or background as long as we're working together to provide the best service we can to our community."

In other public libraries, board challenges are more explicitly fiscal in nature, with financial platforms allegedly serving as a vehicle for more ideological changes.

"I think they are trying to hide some of those [ideological] goals within these fiscal arguments," says Elizabeth Lynch, an organizer with #SaveNilesLibrary, a campaign of the Niles Coalition. Lynch, who works as director of teen services at Addison (Ill.) Public Library, says she moved to Niles for the robust programming at NMDL. "There is a natural tendency to believe, for a certain group of people, that money is being wasted and that governments are corrupt," she says. "That's an easy story to convince people of."

At NMDL, Makula is now board treasurer. He immediately slashed $1.5 million, or 20%, from the preliminary FY2021–2022 budget proposed by NMDL staffers. Cuts included canceling a roof replacement project (estimated at $716,000), reducing library hours and staff salaries, and eliminating outreach to local schools and nursing homes (bit.ly/AL-NMDLbudget). News of the reductions brought hundreds of protesters to a July 20 public hearing. The final budget passed the next day with an adjustment to restore hours and not lay off any current staff members.

The NMDL election received an unprecedented amount of media coverage in the aftermath of Makula's remarks at the March 18 forum. But Cyndi Rademacher, executive director at NMDL, who was appointed by the board of trustees after longtime NMDL Executive Director Susan Dove Lempke resigned in June, characterizes the election as one that has facilitated important conversations within the community. "It's a pretty dynamic library, which is a good thing, and we're happy for that," she says. "One of the things libraries are pushing for is to have public forums and to have a place of conversation, and I think that's happening."

Building a supportive, knowledgeable community

While board challenges and appointments are common, libraries can use a variety of preparedness strategies to protect themselves in cases where the ideologies of board members do not align with the library's mission or local sentiment. According to Cusick, a strong relationship with the community should be the first line of defense.

"Libraries need to communicate their impact on the community, but these things shouldn't just happen around an election, a referendum, or a ballot initiative," she says. "These are things that have to be ongoing."

Laying a foundation to establish a climate of support is the first step toward building a community that will keep the library's best interests in mind. This, according to Cusick, should include educating and informing the public around what the library does and how that work affects people. Programming that targets specific groups, like early literacy programs, workforce development, and health literacy, can show the breadth of a library's services. Additionally, coordinating with other organizations, like a local Rotary club or Lions Club chapter, can create inroads with community leaders.

This community-building, however, should not be limited to patrons. Getting elected officials to understand what the library does and how it functions is critical, especially if a library has an advisory board where members are appointed rather than elected.

"One of the things we recommend is that the [library] director and the board are in touch with the appointing body," says Beth Nawalinski, executive director of United for Libraries, a division of ALA that provides support to board members, foundations, and Friends groups. "That person or body needs to have a clear understanding of what the role of the trustee is." Nawalinski recommends providing whoever is responsible for appointing board members with basic information about member guidelines, such as an ethics statement, state and national standards, and articulated board rules and competencies.

Both Cusick and Nawalinski encourage libraries to build this community support through storytelling or organizing narratives around the library's core values. "Everybody has their own stories about what the library has done in their life," says Nawalinski. Patrons may have had experiences worth sharing, such as how a development seminar helped them get a job, but the board, Friends, and other volunteer groups are also a great source of library narratives. "There's an importance in knowing why you do something," she adds. "Know why board members and Friends are putting significant time into something they're not getting paid for."

Nawalinksi encourages libraries starting this storytelling process to refer to United for Libraries' "E's of Libraries" (bit.ly/AL-EsofLibs). This framework breaks potential library narratives into five categories: education, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement, and empowerment. This framework, she says, provides common language for folks to discuss what libraries

> "To have a political group endorse specific [library board] candidates, to my knowledge, that had not happened previously."
>
> **AMY RODDA,** director of Community Library Network in Kootenai County, Idaho

offer, helping to relay stories in a way that is more organized, memorable, and effective.

Eliminating the library reality–perception gap, or aligning a library's worth with public perception, can foster a community that understands the library's role and importance. "A very important common thread is that individuals are able to see themselves in some capacity in the library, whether in the staff, the building, or the materials." says Nawalinski. This type of advocacy can provide library supporters with effective ways to demonstrate a library's essential nature within a community.

But, as with community building, both Cusick and Nawalinski say the storytelling effort needs to be ongoing, both inside and outside the library. "Libraries have a history of facilitating community conversations," says Cusick. "But what should be happening now is the maintenance."

Documenting library policy

Prior to an election challenge, public libraries should have certain policies documented, like those around programming, budgeting, and services. This can become an important safeguard against reactionary policy implementation. "It's important that these documents are made based on principles of librarianship and service, not just in reaction to a particularly heated conversation or a supercharged moment in time," Cusick says.

Newly elected board members often enter their positions with little knowledge of executive library functions. In Kootenai County, Rodda says that the two new board members immediately wanted to discuss programming—specifically, an LGBTQ-friendly program called Rainbow Squad. However, library board elections occur just prior to the start of the fiscal year, which meant settling on a new budget was the first order of business.

"We've put [programming concerns] on the agenda in the fall, which might be the time and place to raise those specific concerns," says Rodda. "When our board is dealing with the budget,

A protester at the Save Niles Library rally in July. Organizers met at a local park, then marched to the library for a public hearing on proposed budget cuts.

it's time to focus on the budget. We've been funneling these issues into the time and place where they can be addressed."

In addition to clear policies, libraries should have documented ethics guidelines for trustees, volunteers, and Friends. Importantly, libraries should make these guidelines available to all potential board candidates and appointees before an election or position acceptance. Putting together a binder or online resource that includes policies, a meeting schedule, information about parliamentary procedure, and a job description can help prepare potential members for the job.

Once a new board member is elected or appointed, the library should have a comprehensive orientation that sets clear guidelines around the board's role in how the library functions. United for Libraries provides training resources such as Trustee Academy (bit.ly/AL-TrustAcad), a series of online courses to help trustees become proficient in their roles. The courses discuss strategies for working with library directors, helping draft budgets, and preserving intellectual freedom. Mandating trainings like this can establish a clear foundation for communication and support with newly elected board members.

When preparation isn't enough

Even if a library has a robust community of support, candidates running on platforms that oppose core library tenets can still win elections if library supporters don't vote. In Niles, fewer than 9% of eligible voters participated in the library board election. But in the election's wake, community members and groups have organized around library advocacy.

"I am very pleased with the interest that the community has in the library and that they're willing to come to meetings and express their concerns," says Rademacher. "This is what libraries are hoping for—to be a place of community and dialogue and public forums."

NMDL has managed to overturn a few of the new board's decisions, such as undoing some of the initial budget cuts. The board saw a power shift with the August 17 resignation of Hanusiak, who cited "other commitments" as a reason for not continuing in the role.

"I think people need to know that they need to make a stink," says Lynch. "They need to show up and be loud and hold up signs." AL

CASS BALZER is a writer in Chicago.

Conversations Creating Change

Small and
rural libraries
win grants to
transform their
communities

BY Phil Morehart

Small and rural communities face a complex set of intersecting challenges. Individuals in less-populated areas, for instance, are more likely to experience extreme poverty and food insecurity, while their public institutions and facilities are more likely to lack sufficient broadband internet and other crucial resources.

In September 2020, the American Library Association's (ALA) Public Programs Office announced it would provide nearly $2 million in grants to small and rural libraries of all types to help them address pressing concerns in their communities. Through this Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Focus on Small and Rural Libraries grant program, more than 600 libraries have been awarded $3,000 each to use in innovative ways to meet local needs. Grants have covered a range of expenses, from purchasing Wi-Fi hotspots and personal protective equipment to funding staff time for community engagement work. Grants were awarded in three rounds, in January, April, and October 2021.

Here, *American Libraries* takes a closer look at six libraries that received grants during the program's first round. These projects address issues as diverse as housing shortages, local media deserts, indigenous fish preservation, and climate change. AL

PHIL MOREHART is a senior editor of *American Libraries*.

Anne West Lindsey District Library

Carterville, Illinois | Population: 5,868

Teens are the least-served demographic at Anne West Lindsey District Library (AWLDL) in Carterville, Illinois, according to Jessi Baker, adult and teen librarian. AWLDL used its LTC grant to engage with the town's teens and survey their needs so that it could build programs and collections that would better serve, represent, benefit, and interest them. The library created a Community Young Adult Council comprising local leaders and students,

A display at Anne West Lindsey District Library in Carterville, Illinois, promotes its graphic novel club.

and established a graphic novel book club that focuses on subjects like civil rights, racial issues, gender inequality, the LGBTQIA+ community, immigration, and poverty.

The council's first meeting, held in-person on April 7, was themed "Teens and Summer," with students from Carterville High School and representatives from the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts of America, the City of Carterville, a local mothers' group called M.I.G.H.T.Y. Moms, and The Night's Shield, a homeless shelter for youth in nearby West Frankfort. Participants discussed issues such as homelessness, food insecurity, and summer jobs.

"Libraries are one of the few entities that see this diverse of a population daily," says Baker. "We see problems firsthand, often because we are asked to solve them. To many, we are expected to be the knowledge keepers of our community. If we find an issue that has not been addressed, we need to bring attention to it." ●
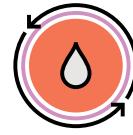
County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries, San Miguel branch

San Miguel, California | Population: 2,906

San Miguel, California, has prospered in recent years, with new wineries bringing jobs, tourists, and residential construction to the town and surrounding area. But those gains have also contributed to environmental troubles: an increase in air pollution, a depleted groundwater table, dying oak trees, and the Salinas River drying up, along with rising temperatures and dwindling annual rainfall. The library's San Miguel branch is using its LTC grant to explore the effects of climate change on this evolving community.

The library hosted Zoom discussions in March, May, and July, using David Attenborough's 2020 book *A Life on Our Planet: My Witness Statement and a Vision for the Future* as a starting point for conversation about local and global environmental issues. Copies of the book were purchased with grant funds and mailed to participants who registered in advance. "Attenborough's book really touched the participants by giving them a dose of the stark reality of the present and genuine hope for the future," says Judy Brown, director of the San Miguel branch. ●
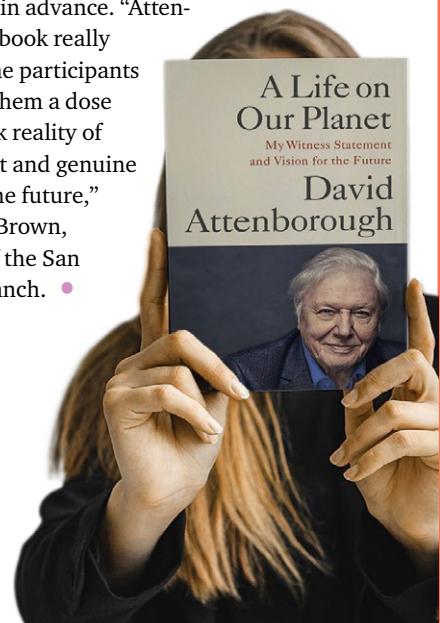
Stair District Library

Morenci, Michigan | Population: 2,298

The closure of the *State Line Observer* newspaper in December 2020 (following the retirement of its longtime owner, editor, and publisher) was a profound loss to Morenci, a small town on the Michigan–Ohio border. The community had relied on the publication for more than 150 years, and the loss also affected Stair District Library, which promoted its events in the paper. In a community survey conducted by the library board, nearly 60% of respondents named the *Observer* their primary source of information for learning about library programs and services.

Stair District Library is using its LTC grant to explore its shifting role in a community without a newspaper of its own. The library purchased Wi-Fi hotspots to distribute to patrons without internet access and Zoom licenses to host two virtual community conversations. The first meeting gave participants space to reminisce and mourn the loss of the beloved institution; the second was action-oriented, as patrons discussed possible solutions. "The conclusion seemed to be that we need to replace it with a newspaper [of some sort]," says Library Director Colleen Leddy. The conversations led the library to create a community calendar on its website, Leddy says, and the library plans to work with local government and schools to devise ways to further disseminate local news. ●

Igiugig Tribal Library

Igiugig sits on the banks of the Kvichak River in southwestern Alaska.

Igiugig, Alaska | Population: 71

Because the population of Igiugig—which sits on the banks of the Kvichak River near Lake Iliamna in southwestern Alaska—has more than doubled in the past 10 years, affordable housing options for new residents and youth who have grown up in the village are limited. Land is available for new houses, but because of the village's remote location, construction costs are high; building materials have to be flown in or hauled across the lake when it freezes in the winter. Igiugig Tribal Library is using its LTC grant to engage the community in discussions about the housing shortage and consider sustainable solutions.

The first meeting, held in March, was a storytelling session. Participants—both in person and on Zoom—shared their experiences building and buying homes in the area to help educate younger residents on the often-complicated process. The next session will target residents seeking housing and help them make an action plan.

"As librarians, we have had to remind ourselves that it is not our job to secure the housing but to facilitate the discussion on how that might be achieved," says Library Supervisor Audra Gooden. "It's going to take cooperation among the residents to advocate for themselves and the continued support of the local governing body to make new housing become a reality." ●
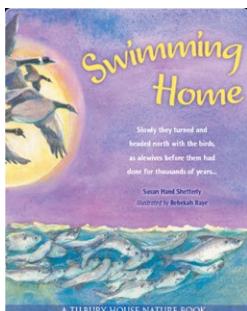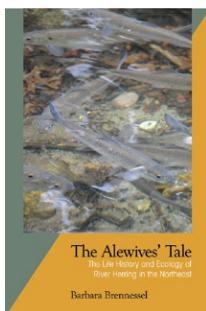
Vassalboro Community School

Vassalboro, Maine | Population: 4,363

The alewife is a species of fish that spends most of its life at sea but returns to inland freshwater to spawn. Alewives have lived in Maine's streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds for thousands of years, but their population has plummeted in the last two centuries because of dams, pollution, and overfishing. Vassalboro Community School, in partnership with Vassalboro Public Library, is helping raise awareness of the fish and its place in Maine history by promoting the restoration of a local migration path through a series of community conversations centered on two books: *Swimming Home* (2014) by Susan Hand Shetterly, a picture book about the annual alewife migration, and *The Alewives' Tale: The Life History and Ecology of River Herring in the Northeast* (2014), by biologist Barbara Brennessel.

Swimming Home was distributed to teachers at the school for classroom discussion, with the book's author joining a 5th-grade class via Zoom for a read-along. Three community events in May and June focused on *The Alewives' Tale,* with local experts discussing the book and related topics, such as dam removal, fish ladders, environmental factors, and the impact of alewife restoration on the economy. "Our team looks forward to continuing the conversations and teaching about our local environment and the annual return of this iconic fish," says Melora Norman, library media specialist at Vassalboro Community School. ●

Waimea Public Library

Waimea, Hawai'i | Population: 11,908

In 2019, the County of Kaua'i purchased a 417-acre parcel of land between the towns of Waimea and Kekaha that had once been home to sugar cane plantations but had fallen into disuse over the years. Waimea Public Library is using its LTC grant to participate in a project to reconfigure this site, called Waimea 400. Held in conjunction with the County of Kaua'i Planning Department, the library hosted two resident input sessions in June and August on its front lawn to gather ideas on how the land should be developed. "It was exhilarating to meet face to face after months of online meetings," says Michelle Young, library manager. The events yielded a plethora of suggestions for the land: community gardens, parks, agricultural spaces, and even a football field.

The library used a portion of its LTC grant money to provide meals before these gatherings. The purpose of this was twofold, says Young: warming up the crowd by sharing a meal together and supporting a local restaurant that has struggled during the pandemic following the area's drop in tourism.

Young says the LTC grant also benefitted the library by strengthening its relationship with local government, providing training for staff to facilitate discussions using ALA-supplied materials, and funding canopy tents and a portable PA system. ●
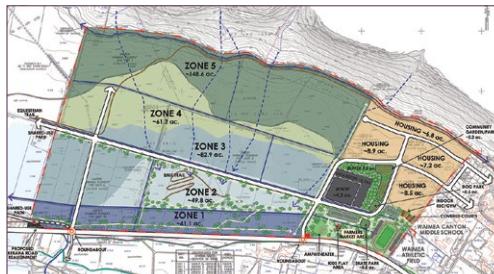
A map detailing the location of the 417 acres of land that makes up the Waimea 400 project.

OverDrive Leads on Corporate Responsibility

OverDrive has been a pioneer since its founding in 1986. As the provider of the largest digital book and media catalog in the world for libraries and schools and the creator of the award-winning Libby app for libraries, the company has consistently championed literacy. OverDrive founder and CEO Steve Potash talks about his company's social and environmental responsibilities, the increased demand for digital content during the pandemic, and how librarians "know how to get stuff done."

In August 2017, OverDrive became a Certified B Corporation, which represents a company committed to social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. What specific business policies and practices support those commitments? When I learned about the B Corp movement, I knew OverDrive already had a strong cultural foundation to pursue this certification. The core of what began as a startup in northeast Ohio—our business and our 20 years of serving public librarians and now school librarians—has been transparency with the rightsholders, authors, agents, and publishers.

Our Blue Sky Campus headquarters in Cleveland was designed as a LEED-certified building. We are conscious about our environment. We have a low carbon footprint and utilize green technologies and practices.

It has always been our strong belief that our ultimate asset is our human capital. The team at OverDrive has volunteered and contributed locally, regionally, and nationally in supporting the mission of our library partners and literacy campaigns.

We're accountable. We are financially responsible. We know how to protect and earn confidence and, we hope, earn and gain trust. And we're technically competent. We conduct our business with very high standards of ethics. We want to be the model, so we know that the partnerships we enjoy with so many of the world's greatest institutions is something we must earn every day.

When B Lab [the nonprofit that certifies B Corporations] randomly selected us to be audited this year, we received a higher score than we had in our prior certification process. It's clear we challenged ourselves on those metrics, and it shows we can always do better. We should invest in our people, our partnerships, our culture, our community, and the planet.

As CEO, what leadership changes have you made in the past two years in light of growing calls for racial and environmental justice? We were already talking to our library partners

Steve Potash, founder and CEO of OverDrive

and asking, "How can we contribute?" We immediately developed initiatives for inclusion and equality, and our leadership team at OverDrive met to help enable every reader's ability to access any book. We implored publishers, authors, and agency aggregators to offer simultaneous-use plans and cost reductions so libraries could serve their community of readers. Library directors came to me to say, "We need *White Fragility,* we need *The New Jim Crow,* we need Layla F. Saad's book [*Me and White Supremacy*]." There were many other titles that every library wanted, so we worked with the publishers and donated ebooks with simultaneous access or negotiated a low cost-per-checkout,

OverDrive

1986
Year OverDrive founded

88
Number of countries that it reaches

430 million
Number of titles borrowed across all OverDrive platforms in 2020

setting up a Community Read program about Black Lives Matter.

Last year we donated the equivalent of 6 million books. It's the kind of investment in our partnerships that we're proud of.

Digital library usage soared during the pandemic. More than 430 million titles were borrowed across your company's platforms in 2020, and the overall purchasing of books also rose in 2020. How is OverDrive keeping up with demand? Our library and school partners have experienced an unprecedented surge. How are we accommodating? Number one, we're hiring. And with that we're investing in librarians—our workforce now has almost 100 librarians and teachers on staff.

Number two, we're taking a targeted approach. We are focused on where librarians and educators are seeing gaps in their digital catalogs. For example, under the leadership of Melissa Jacobs [director of the New York City School Library System], the New York City Department of Education set up a digital collection for every student in the school district, where 100 languages are spoken. Our publisher services team is targeting those languages and titles where no ebook or audiobook has been available for schools and libraries.

Currently, there isn't an option for a librarian or educator to curate something like that. This is why we have a program to co-invest with legacy publishers, smaller and independent presses, and out-of-print publishers to show them there's demand for their books in both print and digital editions. We can provide our know-how and resources to help make the digital edition available for libraries and schools.

Third, we are attacking supply chain issues. I pride myself in being a relentless advocate for publishers, authors, and agents who have yet to appreciate that if their work is available for libraries and schools to acquire, it will grow their business, their print sales, their brand, their imprint, and their backlist. When a public library makes a digital work discoverable and available to borrow, it is in the authors' and publishers' economic interest, and everyone wins.

You've spoken with members of Congress as well as the UK House of Commons to advocate for libraries and library funding. What can other library advocates do to make an effective case? Like politics, it's localized. The most important thing librarians can do is to dial into every one of those federal funds available right now—the CARES Act, the American Rescue Plan Act, the infrastructure and broadband funds—and get in front of the state, county, and municipal agents assigned to distribute that money.

Do you have a librarian, foundation, Friends group, or advocate who will show up? Think about how you get to raise your hand and say, "Let me also mention that librarians have been first responders and know how to get stuff done." Whether it's infrastructure, broadband equity, career guides, pandemic response and relief, or telehealth, librarians need to be in all those city meetings and county planning meetings, and on broadband and infrastructure committees.

Anything else you would like library workers to know? Every great idea that OverDrive has had in the past 20 years came about because a librarian imagined it and said, "It would be cool if…." We try to be good listeners. And every librarian—in any role, in any size consortium, in a small community or the largest metro areas—we want to help make them more productive, more efficient, and ensure their tax-supported budget delivers more value to their community. ◼

2017
Year company was named a Certified B Corporation

150+
Languages supported by titles in OverDrive Marketplace

73,000
Number of libraries (including academic and corporate) and schools served by OverDrive

illegal alien
undocumented immigrant

Black~~s~~ person

enslaved person

DECOLONIZING THE CATALOG

RUSA webinar explores avenues for antiracist description practices

Blackface

Jim Crow laws

In summer 2020, during the national outcry that followed the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, the concept of antiracism—or actively opposing racism and promoting tolerance and inclusion—gained traction in critical conversations about library work. Earlier this year the American Library Association's Reference and User Services Association explored this theme further in a webinar titled "Decolonizing the Catalog: Antiracist Description Practices from Authority Records to Discovery Layers." The panel brought together academic librarians who have worked to promote inclusive language in cataloging, taking advantage of opportunities to improve the Library of Congress (LC) classification system and within their own institutions, with a particular focus on issues related to African-American materials and anti-Black racism.

The panelists included Elizabeth Hobart, special collections cataloging librarian at Penn State University; Staci Ross, cataloging and metadata librarian at University of Pittsburgh; Michelle Cronquist, special collections cataloger at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Kelly Farrell, program officer for the Triangle Research Libraries Network, a consortium of academic libraries in North Carolina. Ross and Cronquist serve as cochairs of the African American Subject Funnel Project at LC.

What are some of the challenges users face when searching for titles related to racism and antiracism in the catalog? What led you to start researching this topic?

ELIZABETH HOBART: Slate reported in June 2020 that bookstores were selling out of titles related to antiracism, as antiracism reading lists became popular. This piqued my curiosity as to how well libraries were representing these titles in their own catalogs and supporting discovery. If a user wanted to learn about racism or antiracism and wasn't starting from one of these reading lists, how much could the catalog help? I wanted to look at those pieces of information that are not transcribed directly from sources, as catalogers' judgment in these areas can really affect how usable and findable the material is.

ELIZABETH HOBART

I started my research by developing a core list of 21 titles related to racism and antiracism, culled from bestseller lists from Amazon and Barnes & Noble and popular antiracism reading lists by author Ibram X. Kendi and BuzzFeed. I then analyzed the catalog records for each of these titles in OCLC Connexion, particularly the summary and subject heading fields.

The summary field is a free-text field, meaning it doesn't draw from a controlled vocabulary. This text can be provided by the cataloger or material can be quoted from another source, such as publisher information or dust jacket copy. Catalogers have a great deal of freedom in how we construct these fields.

I noticed a few things when I looked at the summaries and subject headings on all of these records. First was inconsistent usage of keywords. Of the 21 summaries, 10 included some form of the word *race, racial,* or *racially*—that's less than half, despite being the most frequently used term on this list. The next most common term was some version of *racism, racist,* or *racists,* followed by *antiracism, antiracist,* or *antiracists.* Subject headings suffered from the same problem; there isn't one term that brings the titles together.

Looking at the publisher-provided summary for *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad, we can see it's fairly long and detailed and contains many of those important keywords: *racist, privileged, people of color,* and *white people.* A user searching those terms would find this book pretty quickly. By contrast, the cataloger-provided summary for *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou is one sentence: "An African-American woman recalls the anguish of her childhood in Arkansas and her adolescence in northern slums in the 1930s and 1940s." We might infer from this summary that the protagonist encountered racism but it's never stated, so it wouldn't come up in a search for *race* or *racism.*

The subject headings for *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, a seminal work of African-American literature, are limited to *African Americans, girls, Ohio,* and *fiction.* This is an extremely small number of headings, and some of the major themes of the book, including racism, discrimination, and poverty, aren't addressed at all. This work appears on many antiracism reading lists, but it would be completely missed in a general search of the catalog. By contrast, the record for *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander has a high number of subject headings, but there's an obvious one missing: *Jim Crow laws,* which doesn't exist in the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH).

The scope notes that govern how subject headings are used can be tricky as well. The LCSH scope note for *racism,* for example, essentially splits the topic into two headings: *racism* and *race discrimination.* The distinction is subtle and, on top of that, in most discovery systems scope notes are completely invisible to users, so most users would have no idea that they should be searching both headings.

(Hobart's full analysis is available in *College & Research Libraries News* at bit.ly/AL-antiracism.)

How did the African American Subject Funnel Project come to exist? How does the group work with LC to propose additions or modifications to LCSH?

STACI ROSS: The Subject Authority Cooperative Program (SACO) is one of four programs under LC's Program for Cooperative Cataloging, and the African American Subject Funnel Project was initially conceived in 1999 as part of SACO. Since 2017, funnel project leadership has updated and created outward-facing documentation, established workflows, and built an active membership comprising both subject and cataloging experts.

Our work has increasingly dealt with advocating for more inclusive terminology in LCSH. For instance, members of the funnel project have drafted a letter urging the cancellation of the *illegal aliens* heading from LCSH. (For more on this topic, see "Conscientious Cataloging," Sept./Oct. 2020, p. 16.) We have also asserted antiracist policies in our work and have pushed back on LC's attempts to neutralize more challenging headings. For instance, LC initially made drastic changes to our proposal for *Night Riders,* a term that describes persons who committed violent acts against African Americans and other people of color. LC wanted to include a more neutral usage, which describes a group of tobacco farmers who were resisting monopolistic business practices. As a group, we were able to get LC to repeal their changes, and we continue to see more discussion between us and the LCSH editors.

Once someone proposes a new term, we collectively gather sources to support the proposal. These sources are authoritative texts as well as popular media, both of which serve as references for common usage, which is a key factor of successful proposals. After submission there's a lengthy review period, and LC may make changes to proposals reflecting editorial deliberations.

Our recent work has focused on adding new concepts from the African-American experience not formally represented in LCSH. Terms such as *Black Wall Streets* and *sundown towns* are not new to those familiar with African-American history and culture. But these terms did not exist in LCSH until funnel project members collaborated to develop these headings from insider perspectives and scholarly references.

Over the past two years, the revamped funnel has submitted many new LC subject headings related to the African-American experience. *Blackface* and other related terms, for example, were developed at a time when it was being discovered that well-known politicians across North America had donned blackface and committed other caricature-based offenses, as documented in yearbooks and college photos. Before these terms were added, LCSH included only *Blackface entertainers* and headings related to minstrelsy. These were not suitable for describing this resurgent phenomenon.

Additionally, the funnel project has worked to make improvements to outdated and offensive terms. African-American members have expressed concerns with the outdated and increasingly offensive terminology used to describe Black and white people. We have begun the work of updating existing headings *Blacks* and *whites* to include the word *people,* and have compiled a spreadsheet of more than 180 related terms requiring changes, such as *church work with Blacks* and *working-class whites.* We've alerted LC early in the process and have been working closely with SACO specialists to tackle the many changes needed. In the same vein we are exploring changing the heading *slaves* to *enslaved persons,* following the guidance of slavery scholars. Work on these changes continues.

STACI ROSS

What challenges has the funnel project faced in this process? Do proposals ever get revised or rejected?

MICHELLE CRONQUIST: There are some general challenges we face. LCSH is a very old vocabulary that dates back to the late 19th century, and the terms in LCSH are interconnected. In order to change *Blacks* to *Black people* and *whites* to *white people,* as Staci said, you need to revisit every heading that includes the word *Blacks* or *whites.* So it's not just a matter of changing one thing but changing many things and convincing LC that it is worthwhile to make those changes.

We did a proposal two years ago for a new *Jim Crow laws* heading. If you were looking at a catalog record for a book about Jim Crow laws, you would see subject headings like *African Americans—legal status, laws, etc.; African Americans—segregation;* and *segregation—law and legislation.* Some members of our group felt that the Jim Crow era is a distinct period in history and that it would be useful for people to be able to search that in our catalogs. LC rejected that proposal, reasoning that there are segregationist laws from both before and after the Jim Crow period and it would be better to keep them all together.

Elizabeth made a very good point about the distinction between *racism* and *race discrimination* in LC's scope notes. If you have a work on racism directed against a particular group, the scope note directs you to enter it under the name of that group with a subdivision, such as *African Americans—social conditions* instead of *racism.* We felt that this practice basically hides works on racism, so we proposed changes, which were ultimately rejected by LC.

Fortunately, the conversation didn't end there: LC at least understood what we were getting at and acknowledged that the headings used for racism against specific groups are probably not intuitive to users. They gave us the option of proposing headings with the format *racism against a particular group,* so we have already put in a proposal for *racism against Black people.* I hope that soon there will be multiple headings in LCSH for racism against particular groups, and I think that that will improve access in the catalog.

We're also working on a proposal for the concept of *leasing of enslaved labor.* If you look at the historical literature, it consistently refers to this concept as *slave hiring.* We would prefer not to use the term *slave* and instead use more inclusive language to describe this concept, but LCSH tends to use the language that is commonly used in the literature. That's a challenge, because it takes a long time for the literature to catch up with current usage.

How can institutions promote more inclusive language within their own institutions and local catalogs?

KELLY FARRELL: I work with Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN), a consortium of four university library systems in North Carolina. We have a shared online index called TRLN Discovery that allows users to browse the catalogs of these four institutions.

In 2019 TRLN hosted a screening of the documentary *Change the Subject,* about a group of Dartmouth College students who challenged anti-immigrant language and LCSH. This inspired us to put together a metadata team to review the subject terms used in TRLN's discovery layer and then overlay problematic subject headings with alternative vocabulary terms.

An early project for the team was to draft and pilot a process for staff at TRLN institutions to submit terms for remapping, and then the team would shepherd the term through a review and decision process.

People submit headings they'd like to remap through a simple Google form. The only required field is the problematic term they think should be overlaid, but we also asked for suggestions on what term to use instead, sources for the suggested term, contact information, and comments. Submissions from the Google form populate a spreadsheet the metadata team uses to review proposals. Some terms require additional research, and usually this involves some follow-up discussion. For some terms, we reach out to the metadata interest group for their feedback; for others, we contact specific metadata experts who can help determine whether we should remap.

There's a variety of reasons the team might not recommend a term for remapping. These include, as Michelle and Staci suggested, that the term might already be getting updated via LC through SACO, or that the team could not agree on an adequate term to remap with. But if a term is approved and the product owners are all in agreement, the original term is added to the mapping file.

It's a pretty subtle change in terms of user experience. If the user searches the original term, such as *illegal aliens,* it will return results using the term; however, the subject facet and the item record subject will display the overlaid term *undocumented immigrants.* The remapping applies only to subject headings, so if *illegal aliens* displays elsewhere, such as the title field, then this information will not be overlaid with *undocumented immigrants.*

Our next step is to consider how to increase the transparency and visibility of the project. This might include wider distribution of the suggestion form beyond staff. We've also raised the idea of making some version of the form accessible via the user interface of Blacklight discovery services. There's also opportunity for us to improve and increase access of the underlying documentation for this project. AL

MICHELLE CRONQUIST

KELLY FARRELL
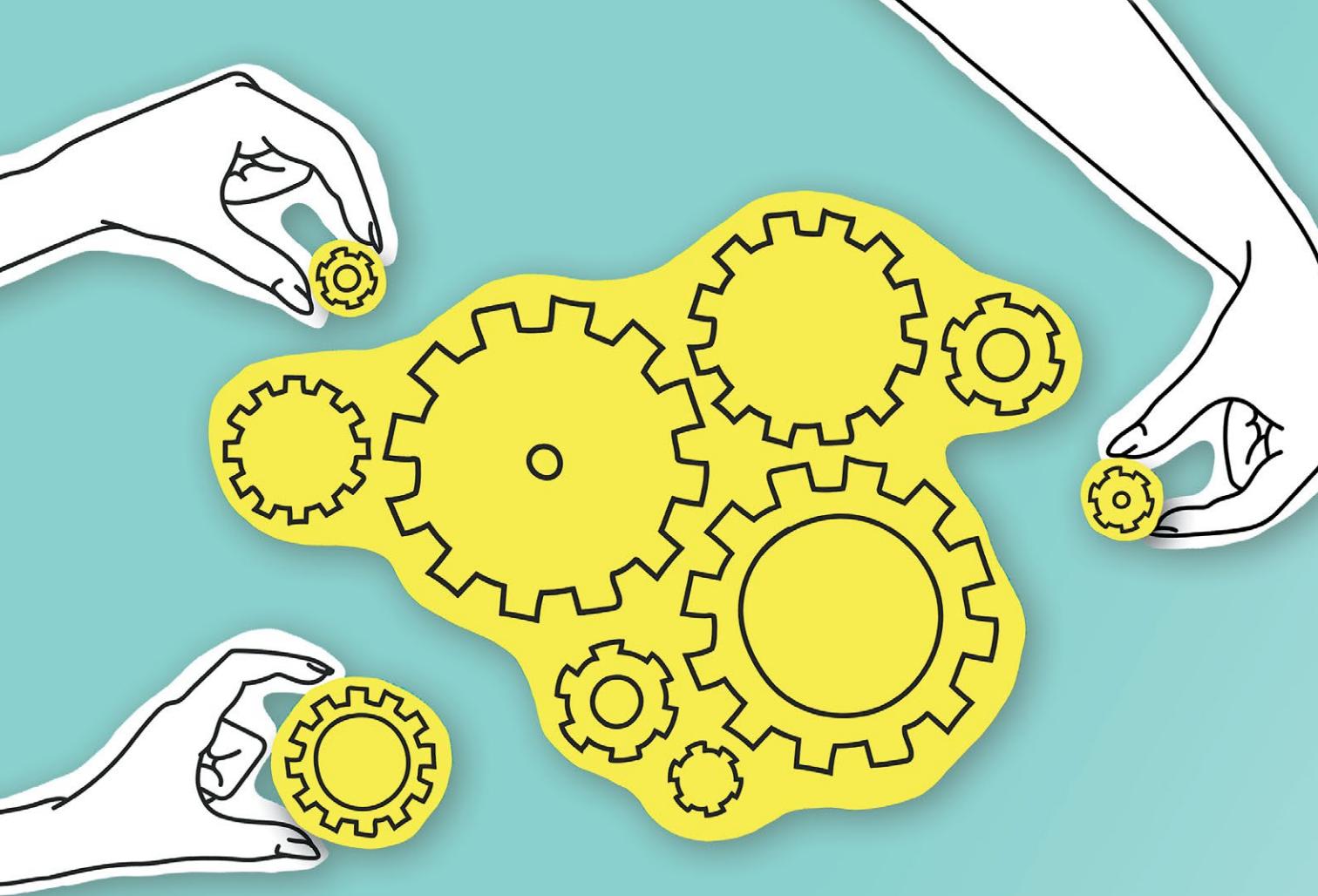
THE NECESSITY OF
COLLABORATION

How to make large-scale library initiatives more successful with partnerships

BY Valerie Horton

Most people think of collaboration as a soft skill and dismiss it with a shrug. Here's the thing: You don't collaborate to make people feel okay, because it's expected of you, or to earn brownie points. You collaborate because on large-scale projects, you have no choice.

I conducted an informal survey and found that a typical large academic library has around 15–25 collaborative partners, while a large public library has about half that number. For example, Georgetown University Library in Washington, D.C., has roughly 20 partners,

including large national organizations (HathiTrust), a regional consortium (NorthEast Research Libraries), campus partners (Georgetown Writing Center), and its local coffee shop. Denver Public Library (DPL) lists 12 local partners, including *The Denver Post,* Colorado Library Consortium, and Tattered Cover Book Store. George Machovec, director of the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries (another of DPL's partners), lists more than a dozen areas where librarians actively collaborate, from print volume storage to shared catalogs to resource sharing.

Ideally, collaborations in libraries share some basic characteristics, including:

- clearly defined vision and goals
- high levels of engagement
- intensive use of resources
- willingness to adapt and change local processes
- reciprocity coupled with negotiation and compromise
- congeniality, information-sharing, and dialogue
- shared power and decision making (perhaps most importantly)

To make a large-scale library project successful, you'll need to consider how deep your collaborative efforts should go. You may spend as much time dealing with partners as you would your actual day-to-day work. It's best to have a common language going into any joint effort and decide what type of buy-in you need from each participant.

WHY BOTHER?

Most decisions to cooperate come down to two core motivations: lower cost and better services. The fundamental questions a library director will ask are: "Can we save money?" and "Can we improve resources and services?"

Other possible reasons to collaborate include gaining a greater variety of perspectives, knowledge, and working environments, as well as improving efficiency and streamlining workflows.

COLLABORATION MODELS

Business professors Gary P. Pisano and Roberto Verganti have identified four collaboration models (bit.ly/AL-CollabModels). Their framework lets managers determine how to organize projects based on key metrics. To determine which collaboration model is best, you need to ask those in authority two questions: "How open or closed will our project be to potential partners?" and "Who will have final decision-making authority?"

Pisano and Verganti's models use a matrix based on, first, whether a project is open or closed to new members and outside input; and second, whether the project is flat (meaning all partners have equal decision-making authority) or hierarchical (meaning decision making is bureaucratic and controlled). The four resulting models are:

1. **Elite circle:** a closed, hierarchical network. One entity selects the members, defines the problem, and implements the solution.
2. **Innovation mall:** an open, hierarchical network. One entity proposes a problem, but anyone can propose solutions, with the originating entity choosing the best solution.
3. **Innovation community:** an open, flat network. Anyone can post a problem, many can offer solutions, and the group decides which solution to implement.
4. **Consortium:** a closed, flat network. A tightly defined group sets up a complex organization to decide which problems to solve, choose who will do the work, and implement the solution.

You will need to ask yourself some questions to determine the appropriate model. For instance, do you need additional money, labor, or physical resources to make the project work? If so, you will probably need additional partners, and that may mean you will have to allow more sharing of authority and decision making.

THE COLLABORATIVE MUSCLE

To make the collaborative part of your project work better, try adopting these tools and techniques.

Vision. Experts consider those who are guided by high-level aspirations to be more successful. Your vision helps you stay focused on what is important while keeping you aligned with your mission and goals.

Vision statements are inspirational and idealistic and often touch on emotions, which can make some people uncomfortable. But sharing a broad, inspiring vision that core participants hammer out and refine as new people and organizations join the project is the foundation for ongoing trust and resource commitments.

Developing a project's vision is no small task. Clarifying your project's aspirational vision is probably going to be one of the first decisions the preplanning group will make in conjunction with your governance structure. Starting with aspirational themes helps set the tone early. It says that in this project everyone has

This is an excerpt from *Launching Large-Scale Library Initiatives: Innovation and Collaboration* by Valerie Horton (ALA Editions, 2021).

a voice, and that, through compromise, your vision will get as close to a win-win situation as possible.

Participation agreements. As the project progresses, good intentions will not be enough. Creating an agreement can reveal agendas that help you identify the politics of the situation. In this step you define mutual expectations, clarify roles and responsibilities, identify accountability measures, and choose conflict resolution processes. You need a mutually binding agreement to ensure each partner will fulfill its obligations to the team, or which at least makes it more likely that the partners will fulfill their obligations. This agreement should be open to modification.

Formalize support. Make sure your authorizing documents are widely distributed. You will need a clear statement of what constitutes success. Lines of communication must be wide open.

> If the core goal of your project is not inspiring, you will spend a lot of time fighting the brushfires of discontent instead of moving your project forward.

Delegate some tasks and responsibilities. Any large project will include tasks that you won't like or that don't fit closely with your skill set. Lean into your strengths. You're going to have a million details to manage, so save your energy for where you can be most effective. Delegating tasks that are your personal energy-drainers can help you through difficult times.

Look for an early success. By starting with a miniproject, you can create wins that will help foster trust while keeping costs low. An early, small project gives you a chance to ask for ideas, identify the participants' previous experience, seek advice, and observe your potential partners. You'll quickly discover whom you can trust, whom you need to treat with caution, and how well your working groups function together.

Consensus decision making. You're going to be working with a core group of people, and that group may morph from a preplanning team into your steering committee (or leadership team). With that group, you want to start small and build consensus and agreement slowly. Plan how you introduce working norms to allow people to get to know one another and find a place where they can find consensus. Reaching consensus takes longer than top-down, bureaucratic decision making, but it comes with increased support and commitment to the project.

Give credit away. Be generous in giving others credit while downplaying your own work. A bit of modest behavior can pay dividends.

Build on existing relationships. Work to strengthen your existing personal relationships and create new ones. Collaboration works best when an element of interpersonal camaraderie exists within the project. Try to balance how much everyone is giving and getting during the long haul of the project.

Involve a broad base of participants. Go beyond the same contributors to achieve broader participation. Embracing a mindset of openness and inclusion will bring in the widest swath of contributors. Those unique participant viewpoints will ring with more energy than if you find yourself working with a group of like-minded libraries doing the same work for the same types of institutions. Don't grow complacent with the old crowd, even if it is prestigious.

Communication. You will be personally evaluated not just by the success of your final product but also by the frequency, structure, and quality of the project's communication.

A communication team can be your best friend during large-scale project implementation. This team can be as informal as one person or a group of four or five who coordinate sending a message across different media. You should form this working group before you think you need it and have it develop communication strategies even before you know what you want to say.

Project manager's communication. You need to communicate, communicate, and then communicate again. As a project leader, I found it most effective to be the primary voice early in the project's development and a leader during online meetings and conference presentations. But out-infront visibility has a shelf life of its own. If you are constantly appearing in someone's inbox, over time they lose interest in what you are saying. As the project progresses, have other people on the team become the messengers for noncritical information.

Communication tools. Many online tools are available to manage internal communication. Sometimes these tools are also helpful for external communication. Some are multimodal and quite effective, like Slack or Basecamp. Look into communication systems, but also pay attention to what systems are used by the majority of your participating libraries.

Live your values. Sometimes walking the walk is what catches people's attention. Look for ways to demonstrate collaborative values.
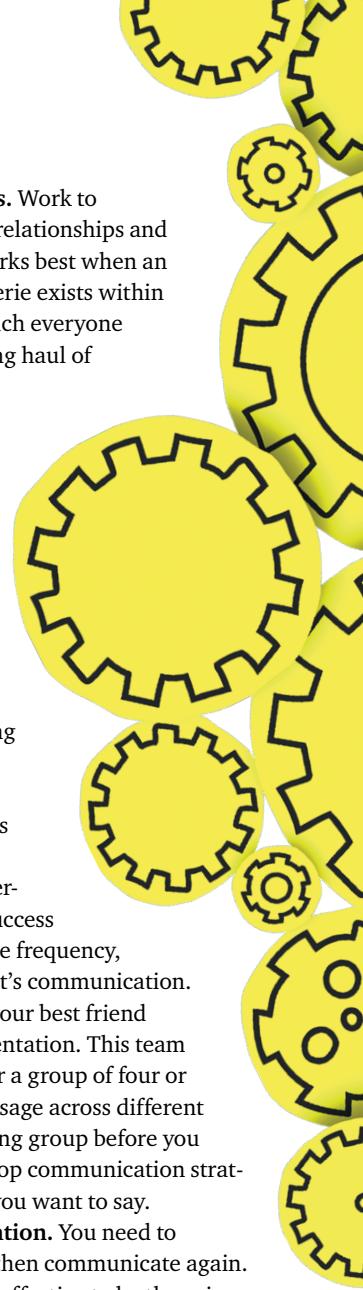
Take one for the team. You're going to have to model behaviors that may or may not come naturally to you. But you must master consensus-building, acknowledging failure, and giving credit. Partnerships are about sharing power and responsibility. You must demonstrate that you, and the most powerful stakeholders among your participants, will compromise. You may even go so far as to accept some painful compromises early on to show that you have the greater good in mind.

Large-scale projects are balancing acts, and the balance is often delicate. I have found that if I concentrate on our values and goals while listening and giving credit to others, I can survive a lot of other mistakes.

HARD TIMES

Many factors contribute to collaborative failure, including lack of financial resources, inadequate staffing and training, an uninspiring vision and weak goals, and ineffectual leadership.

If the core goal of your project is not inspiring, you will spend a lot of time fighting the brushfires of discontent instead of moving your project forward. If people are excited about the outcome, they will cut you more slack on day-to-day problems.

By far the most prevalent reason I've heard for collaboration failures is the participants' fear of losing autonomy. But the perceived loss of local autonomy can be compensated for by the additional resources gained. There are no perfect solutions to this dilemma.

As a project leader, you will spend a large amount of time explaining the benefits of your initiative. Given the complexity and problems inherent in cooperative efforts, you need to pay attention to participants' skills and knowledge level. You may need to either bring in training programs or send key people to gain facilitation or other skills.

With the typical academic library's involvement in 15–25 cooperative projects, burnout is not just possible but probable. Collaboration fatigue can threaten your project. Time spent in endless meetings is a particular source of concern from library staff. Make sure meetings are well run and productive.

THE COLLABORATION EQUATION

One way to determine whether a collaboration is worthwhile is to use the collaboration equation:

Total the perceived gains in efficiency, services, and resources.

+ Add that to the perceived cost of not making the improvement.

− Subtract the loss of productivity that comes with any collaborative project.

= The remainder is the value of your collaborative project.

Librarians are rightly cautious about committing to a new cooperative endeavor. It will be worth your while to anticipate the answers to some questions you may get from participants before they are asked:

- Can you clearly and succinctly state the initiative's vision?
- What goals will achieve the vision?
- What staff expertise is available on your teams? Or what expertise or skills do you need to gain?
- How will shared decision making work?
- Who has the final authority to make decisions and at what levels?
- Are your planning and resource commitments fair and equitable?
- Have you predetermined problem resolution strategies?
- How will you measure your progress?
- How will you evaluate the initiative's outcomes?
- How will you know you succeeded?

VALUES-BASED COLLABORATION

Your project will move forward because a diverse set of people are willing to have a civil dialogue and find compromises. Remember that collaboration is also about something higher than just achieving your goals—it is a values-based system of action.

Values-based collaboration means:

- Everyone has a voice that will be heard.
- Different ideas will be tolerated and explored.
- Actions will be as transparent as possible.
- Experts' knowledge is valued, but other voices are also heard.
- Leaders work toward the full participation of all participants.

OCLC Vice President and Chief Strategist Lorcan Dempsey has said that as libraries are forced to meet new institutional requirements and patron needs and expectations, the pull toward collaboration is strong. It makes sense to do things together at the right scale to stretch resources, gain experience, and improve customer service.

In the end, always remember that you are working to improve library services for our libraries and their patrons. AL

VALERIE HORTON is a library consultant. She is former director of Minitex, a three-state library consortium, and the Colorado Library Consortium.

Fighting Medical Racism

Academic librarians have a role in educating students and faculty

BY Naomi Bishop

NAOMI BISHOP is health sciences librarian at University of Arizona's Phoenix Biomedical Campus and a 2021 I Love My Librarian award winner.

As academic libraries open their doors to students again, public health and safety should be top priorities. And yet some states have banned mask mandates and won't make vaccinations compulsory for students and staff at public colleges and universities. These decisions about public health care affect everyone, but some populations feel the impact more than others.

I am a health science librarian at University of Arizona's Phoenix Biomedical Campus. I am also Akimel O'odham (Pima) from the Gila River Indian Community. From a Native perspective, the needs of the community are greater than the wishes of the individual. Mask mandates are in place on tribal lands, and colleges and universities occupy the unceded land of tribal nations. Earlier this year, I asked my supervisor to purchase KN95 masks for our staff members and wrote an open letter to students encouraging them to wear masks indoors (bit.ly/AL-BishopLetter). To me, supporting one another means, at the very least, wearing a mask in your library and in your community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted life for all of us, but infection and death rates among racial and ethnic minorities in the US are much higher than national rates. Sadly, this outcome fits a pattern: From higher infant mortality rates to the increased risk of being killed by law enforcement, communities of color are disproportionately affected by health care inequities. Learning about racism in medicine (bit.ly/AL-AcadResponse) and understanding our own privileges and biases are initial steps we can take as we advocate for change. Students must learn about the bias in algorithms and diagnostic devices that adjust risk assessments or outcomes based on a patient's race or ethnicity (bit.ly/AL-KidneyFn). For example, without offering sufficient medical rationale, the American Heart Association's Get with the Guidelines heart failure risk score assigns fewer points to all Black patients, thereby categorizing them as having a lower risk of death when admitted to the hospital, which could delay emergency care, putting their lives in danger.

Librarians can play an integral role in addressing medical racism. In 2020, my library created a LibGuide for the College of Medicine–Phoenix (COM-P) titled "Racism in Medicine and Healthcare" (bit.ly/AL-UALibGuide), which includes articles, books, and research studies on racism, discrimination, and health disparities. The guide has since been adopted by College of Medicine–Tucson for assigned student readings. I also co-led a journal club with about 20 faculty members, staffers, and students from our campus, as well as a librarian from University of California, Riverside, discussing the article "Changing How Race Is Portrayed in Medical Education: Recommendations from Medical Students" (bit.ly/AL-MedEd) and what actions COM-P could take in this area for our students.

Our libraries' archives and special collections document genocide, historical trauma, slavery, and government policies. Our job as librarians is to ensure that our materials and collections include these items as context for health disparities, social determinants of health, and structural racism. Our own policies regarding access to materials also need to be evaluated to ensure we are providing equitable access for students.

We can speak up to advise our institutions to conduct ethical research and ensure Indigenous data sovereignty (bit.ly/AL-DataSov), the right of Indigenous people to control information from and about their communities and lands. We can also support community-based participatory research, which bridges the gap between science and practice through community engagement and social action to increase health equity (bit.ly/CBPResearch).

The COVID-19 pandemic underscores how important public health is to our campuses and community. In responding to this crisis, we can transform our libraries so that the students we are training now—and the faculty and staff members who are teaching them—will make race-based health inequities part of the past. **AL**

> Communities of color are disproportionately affected by health care inequities.

Diagnose and Fix

Troubleshooting toolkit—and better
communication—can lead to faster internet   **BY** Carson Block

CARSON BLOCK
has worked in
library technol-
ogy for more
than 25 years
as an IT director
and consultant.

How can library workers in small, rural, and tribal libraries under-stand their technology well enough to troubleshoot common problems, make decisions about future technology needs, and advocate for improvements to their broadband connectivity?

The Toward Gigabit Libraries Toolkit is a free, open source learning, diagnostic, and advocacy resource funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The kit's Creative Commons license allows users to remix, adapt, and build on the work, making it a powerful starting point for training in library organizations.

The toolkit's aim is to empower library workers to diagnose and fix technology problems. During the pilot process, our project team sought opportunities to involve both technical and nontechnical staff in site visits. This pairing yielded two powerful discoveries: The toolkit can encourage stronger bonds between library workers and technical support staff, and it can lead to the formation of teams of subject matter experts with complementary skills from different agencies and organizations.

A site visit in Nebraska started with a group discus-sion of the library's technical challenges. City government had installed several Wi-Fi access points, but library staffers weren't sure of their loca-tions. We used a tool called a Wi-Fi stumbler to detect a signal coming from a ceiling covered in acoustic tile. One team member grabbed a chair, popped a tile loose, and found the hotspot.

When nontechnicians try to communicate with technical staff, they are often frustrated. Some simply give up. This communication break-down prevents libraries from maximizing technology applications for their communities.

Underlying this disconnect is the perception that technology is too difficult for laypeople to understand. I argue that few technological concepts exceed the grasp of an interested layperson, at least at a basic level. Further, it is important for staff members at all libraries, regard-less of size, to understand fundamental concepts in order to make wise choices about technology. This toolkit helps those without technical expertise learn these concepts and features a glossary of common technical terms.

Our team discovered that even in libraries where technical staffers were available, they rarely spoke with other library workers. In these cases, simply sitting down together to work through the toolkit instantly created a shared understanding of essential concepts and vocabulary. Naturally, once library staffers improved their technical understanding,

> When users discover that tech troubleshooting is a linear process, mystery turns into mastery.

the conversations quickly esca-lated from assessment to trouble-shooting. Some pilot libraries reported that the toolkit visit gave them their first opportunity to sit with their technical sup-port folks and actually speak the same language.

The process of troubleshooting can be mysterious. When users discover that technology trouble-shooting is a mostly linear process that can be diagrammed and shared, mystery turns into mastery.

While the toolkit itself proves to be an excellent way to inventory the network, assess status, and trouble-shoot, the real path to action is devel-oping a broadband improvement plan. After completing even a small part of the toolkit, many libraries will find areas for improvement.

During site visits, our project team saw that some libraries that qualified for the federal E-Rate program simply didn't know where to start in identifying their broadband service and equipment needs. Working through the tool-kit resulted in a tangible, action-able list of equipment and service needs. With the toolkit's planning template and a common language, you can identify your library's action areas. Learn about the Toward Gigabit Libraries project at bit.ly/TowardGigabit.

Adapted from "Using the Toward Gigabit Libraries Toolkit," Library Technology Reports vol. 57, no. 8 (Nov./Dec. 2021). Read more at bit.ly/ALA-LTR. AL

Building a Better Tomorrow

Intentionally rethinking work
through succession planning

BY Carolyn Schubert

**CAROLYN
SCHUBERT**
is director of
research and
education
services and
associate
professor at
James Madison
University
Libraries in
Harrisonburg,
Virginia.

The pandemic era has been a time of immense transition by nearly any metric. It has created opportunities for new and improved ways of working and led employees to fundamentally reevaluate their relationships with their jobs. It also has highlighted existing problems in the workplace, such as low morale, burnout, and overwork.

Personally, I've observed an increase in conversations among librarians on social media about leaving the profession, which seems in line with broader trends. More people are considering changing jobs—as many as 66% of US workers, according to a study by Personal Capital and Harris Poll published in August. Others are retiring altogether; in May, *The New York Times* reported an increase in retirements among Americans from the year prior. How can library organizations weather these immediate waves of transition and build strong teams for the future?

Succession planning, which involves documenting and transferring knowledge from an outgoing employee to a new staffing situation, is ultimately about change management. The process begins with stepping back to critically evaluate the current state of the organization and identify the library's needs. Including all levels of staff in these conversations is a great way to hear what employees need now and address why they might want to move on, which can inform retention efforts.

The next step is to translate your organization's vision into individual roles and responsibilities. What roles do you need to achieve future goals? Do they make up part of a job or require a full-time position to achieve them? What knowledge, skills, and attitudes do people need to be successful in those roles? How can you identify and assess these competencies? The Ohio Library Council's guidance on public library core competencies is a useful model (bit.ly/OLCcompetencies)—as are the competencies used by University of California, Berkeley Library, which connect performance evaluations to a systemwide standard (bit.ly/UCBcompetencies).

As you develop the competencies for your organization, carefully consider word choice and required versus preferred qualifications. Having unnecessary requirements can create or perpetuate barriers for certain groups. For example, a 2011 article in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (bit.ly/gender-jobs) indicates that using terms associated with male stereotypes (such as "dominant" or "competitive") in job ads can deter qualified female-identifying candidates.

Ask yourself what expertise you might need to seek outside your organization. Previously developed competencies help make this overall process more transparent. In my work onboarding new liaison librarians, I've found that having a framework helps provide an overall road map of expectations.

Finally, leaders need to consider what these broad plans mean for individual development. Who in your organization may already possess the competencies to be successful in a different role? Who shows the potential and interest to grow into a position? What training or tools can you offer people to help them be more effective with new responsibilities?

In library literature, mentorship is one of the most common ways to provide this type of support. It can also help reduce the sense of disconnect that many employees have been feeling during the pandemic—a feeling that ultimately contributes to turnover.

None of this work is easy, and the immediate challenges of staff departures and hiring hurdles may make it tricky to follow a precise template. Or, for those in a civil service setting, you may be training many people in the skills necessary to take up the role. However, I strongly encourage library leaders to explore opportunities to integrate small components of succession planning so that they can redefine the nature of work to be more flexible, more welcoming, and less exhausting. Small wins will contribute toward the larger victory of improved morale and smoother transitions. AL

> Succession planning is ultimately about change management.

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Up to the Challenge

Books to navigate threats to intellectual freedom

ALLISON ESCOTO is head librarian at the Center for Fiction in Brooklyn, New York.
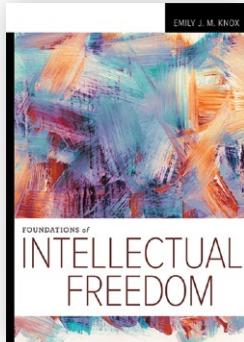
Foundations of Intellectual Freedom

By Emily J. M. Knox

This text is a practical introduction to intellectual freedom in librarianship. It provides a broad overview, including historical perspectives, key US case law and precedents, a presentation of opposing viewpoints, and an examination of various professional codes of ethics, among other essential topics. The work also incorporates timely social justice issues and their impact on intellectual freedom in various types of libraries. Though it is written for those new to the field, this resource is valuable for librarians at any stage of their career. ALA Neal-Schuman, 2022. 176 p. $55. PBK. 978-0-8389-3783-9.
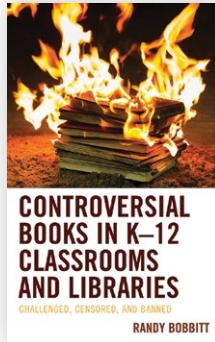
Controversial Books in K–12 Classrooms and Libraries

By Randy Bobbitt

This informative and insightful read considers censorship throughout the decades, providing a historical analysis of book banning in school classrooms and libraries. Starting with challenges in the 1950s, Bobbitt offers perspectives from authors, critics, and civil liberties groups and explores the motivations and goals of the parties that are often involved when a book is disputed. In addition to presenting case studies, this volume delves into the topics that commonly spur challenges to books in schools. It's a helpful guide that effectively puts the fight over so-called controversial material into context. Lexington Books, 2021. 226 p. $40. PBK. 978-1-4985-6974-3. (Also available as an ebook.)
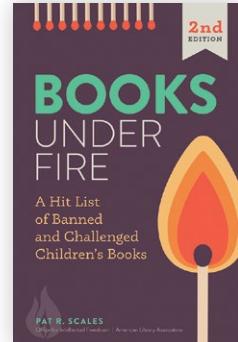
Books under Fire: A Hit List of Banned and Challenged Children's Books, 2nd edition

By Pat R. Scales

This edition contains a wealth of data for anyone dealing with challenged books, arming library staffers and educators with comprehensive information about frequently disputed titles. For each book entry in this reference guide, readers will find a summary, reviews, list of awards and accolades, issues and themes, useful talking points, additional resources, and read-alike titles. This updated volume, which includes challenged books published since 2015 and an array of timely subjects, is an asset to any reference collection. ALA Editions, 2021. 232 p. $55. PBK. 978-0-8389-4982-5.

BY Allison Escoto
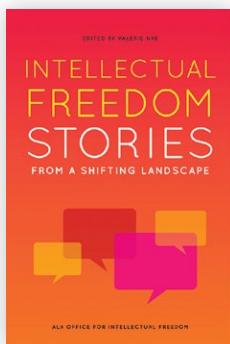
Intellectual Freedom Stories from a Shifting Landscape

By Valerie Nye

In her introduction, Nye states that this book is "at the intersection of intellectual freedom and storytelling." It's an accurate description of this enlightening look at libraries across the US that have exercised intellectual freedom, from drag queen storytimes to overcoming censorship issues at prison libraries. By examining these stories, librarians of all types can gain a greater understanding of the programs and services that experience challenges and difficult conversations. Divided into sections ranging from policy to public events to issues of cultural sensitivity, this compilation highlights current issues surrounding intellectual freedom in a way that is both intriguing and educational. ALA Editions, 2020. 208 p. $45. 978-0-8389-4726-5. (Available as an ebook.)
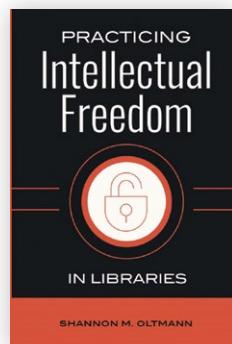
Practicing Intellectual Freedom in Libraries

By Shannon M. Oltmann

Combining theoretical discussion, examples from real-world situations, and an analysis through the lens of community, this book serves librarians who are interested in gaining a new understanding of intellectual freedom or expanding their grasp of the subject. The book is divided into two sections; one focuses on theory and the other looks at concepts in action. This holistic text considers the complexities of intellectual freedom in libraries and is a must for any collection. Libraries Unlimited, 2019. 193 p. $55. PBK. 978-1-4408-6312-7. (Also available as an ebook.)
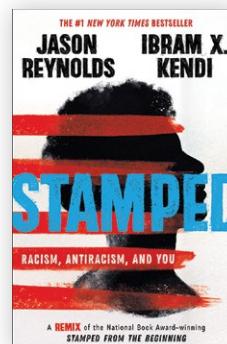
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You

By Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi

It's important for librarians to learn about new disputed books, and *Stamped* stands out as an exceptional and timely choice. Based on Kendi's National Book Award–winning nonfiction title, *Stamped from the Beginning,* and modified for young readers by Reynolds, this text opens the conversation about the history of racism in America and its present-day ramifications. One of the most frequently challenged books of 2020, *Stamped* is an important part of a national conversation on race. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2020. 320 p. $9. 978-0-316-45369-1. (Also available as an ebook.) AL

SOLUTIONS

In Your Neighborhood

Tools for bringing local history online

BY Carrie Smith

Want to preserve, share, and contextualize local history in your community? If so, technology can help move these activities beyond the special collections section. Online platforms created specifically for local history are allowing libraries to share information in more interactive ways, in turn reaching new audiences, educating patrons, and adding to the historical record. Here we talk with three library workers who are creating walking tours, collecting and archiving oral histories, and connecting with their communities.

St. Joseph (Mo.) Public Library uses Clio to create historical walking tours accessible online.

Clio

USER: JENNIFER SANDERS-TUTT, local history librarian at St. Joseph (Mo.) Public Library

What is Clio? Clio is a local history platform made by historians that allows you to create entries for points of interest and link them together into tours. It's web- and app-based, and anyone can open a free account.

How do you use it? We do a Local History Week every year, and I wanted a passive program that people could do outside if they wanted, so we devised a couple of different tours. You can create either an individual entry or a walking tour; the platform has guides on what to include. You can also add your own images, and we included some historic images from our downtown library's collection.

What are the main benefits? Clio allows us to get local history out there in another medium. The app will bring up any tours around you (if you allow it to use your location), so users can just jump in. The tours are immersive—you're looking at things that maybe you walked by a hundred times, but now you're seeing them in a different light. Plus, one of my favorite aspects of Clio is that you can upload and link your sources. As a researcher and historian, I want to make sure people know they are getting accurate information.

What would you like to see improved or changed? There are sometimes issues with Google Maps integration, and it'll pop you in and out of Google Maps and the Clio app. Overall, though, it's a fantastic platform.

TheirStory

What is TheirStory? It's a remote interviewing platform, like Zoom for oral historians. It allows for face-to-face interaction, which is nice when you're doing oral histories.

How do you use it? We use TheirStory for interviews done by our student historian in residence and for our Women Inspire and COVID-19 oral history projects. We're primarily an audio archive, and it allows us to download interview audio as a WAV file, as opposed to other platforms where you're downloading audio as an MP3 or other type of compressed audio file. It also allows us to export transcripts as Word documents that sync up with the tool that we use to put interviews online, the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer.

What are the main benefits? Not only can you do oral history interviews remotely and export high-quality audio, but you also have a transcription tool that gives a quality first draft. The interface is easy, too: You push a button to start a session and it gives you a URL that you can share. There's also a calling feature, so interview-ees can call in, and you can host multiple people.

USER: TROY REEVES, head of the oral history program at University of Wisconsin–Madison

What would you like to see improved or changed? TheirStory's team has been great to work with. They've been quick to figure out any sort of

TheirStory is a video interview platform designed for recording and archiving oral histories.

transcript glitch, and they've been very receptive to what few other issues we've had. They recently added an indexing tool, a feature we had wanted, and my students say it works well.

Historypin

What is Historypin? Historypin is a free website and mapping tool that allows individuals and organizations to archive historical photographs, videos, and audio recordings. Users can create collections reflecting different themes. Some of our library's most popular collections center on neighborhoods, local legends and heroes, and natural disasters like blizzards and floods.

USER: KARI KARP, teen services librarian at West Hartford (Conn.) Public Library

How do you use Historypin in your library? Our local-history department started a "Places and Faces" collection nine years ago, and so far there are more than 500 pins. We invite residents to bring us their old photos, 35mm slides, and negatives so that we can scan and add them to our Historypin channel. From 2014 to 2017, we also used Historypin as part of an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant called Memories of Migration. For that project, I helped train high school students on how to conduct oral histories, and we put photographs and links to the interviews on our channel.

Historypin collections can include photos, videos, and audio recordings.

What are the main benefits? Historypin is a user-friendly tool that makes history more accessible. Many people have photos in boxes and albums at home that would be of local interest. It also fosters patron engagement and community connections by letting patrons share personal memories with neighbors.

What would you like to see improved or changed? Historypin is very visual, with maps and large images that take up most of the screen. This is ideal for browsing the site, but I would like to see more organization, like collections and subcollections, and maybe a list of tags to make it clearer which types of photographs are available in a channel. AL

PEOPLE *Announcements*

ON THE MOVE

June 28 **Victoria O. Akinde** became head of organizational development and diversity at Northwestern University Libraries in Evanston, Illinois.

Isabella Baxter joined University of Maryland in College Park as STEM/agriculture librarian August 23.

In August **Stevie Bredeson** became librarian for St. Alphonsus School in Langdon, North Dakota.

Catherine Callegari started as assistant director of patron services at Scarsdale (N.Y.) Public Library June 21.

July 8 **Piper Cumbo** joined Auburn (Ala.) University Libraries as instruction librarian.

Maria Cunningham became director of special collections at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland July 7.

August 1 **K. Matthew Dames** became Edward H. Arnold University Librarian at University of Notre Dame in Indiana.

Ada Demlow joined Antigo (Wis.) Public Library in August as youth services librarian.

Fox River Valley Public Library District in East Dundee, Illinois, appointed **Amy Dodson** executive director, effective August 23.

August 9 **Richard Guinn** joined Marcive Inc. in San Antonio as data remediation specialist.

Danielle Masterson joined Wilmington (Mass.) Memorial Library as children's librarian in August.

Montclair (N.J.) State University appointed **Danianne Mizzy** dean of library services effective July 26.

Effective September 1, **Simon Neame** became dean of university libraries at University of Washington in Seattle.

Sue Polanka has been named dean of Appalachian State University Libraries

Kudos

Jennifer Alvino, director of Windham (Maine) Public Library, and **Ed Garcia,** director of Cranston (R.I.) Public Library, received the New England Library Association's Emerson Greenaway Award for distinguished service in librarianship in October.

Julia Bouwsma, director of Webster Library in Kingfield, Maine, was appointed the state's poet laureate in August. ●

in Boone, North Carolina, effective September 13.

Hoboken (N.J.) Public Library named **Jennie Pu** director, effective August 9.

In August **Deanna Riggleman** became director of Tamarack District Library in Lakeview, Michigan.

Lisa Shiota started as metadata librarian at University of Maryland in College Park July 12.

In October ALA President **Patricia "Patty" M. Wong** became city librarian for Santa Clara (Calif.) City Library.

PROMOTIONS

T. B. Scott Free Library in Merrill, Wisconsin, promoted **Andrea Bennett** to head of youth services September 1.

The Law Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., has promoted **Aslihan Bulut** to law librarian of Congress, effective August 15.

In August Transylvania County (N.C.) Library appointed **Laura Gardner** local history librarian.

Broward County (Fla.) Library promoted **Allison Grubbs** to director in July.

In August Pepperdine University Libraries in Malibu, California, promoted **Lauren Haberstock** to director of the Genesis Lab makerspace and librarian for emerging technology and digital projects.

Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina, promoted **Tamara King** to chief diversity and community engagement officer in June.

Chicago Public Library promoted **Therese Odlevak** to manager of its Bezazian branch in September.

August 27 Arizona State University Library in Tempe promoted **Alex Soto** to director of the Labriola National American Indian Data Center.

RETIREMENTS

Eleanor I. Cook, professor emerita and interim head of East Carolina University Music Library in Greenville, North Carolina, retired in July.

Kathy Gaynor, information literacy librarian and university archivist at Webster University in St. Louis, retired May 31.

Stacy Stevens retired as director of T. B. Scott Free Library in Merrill, Wisconsin, June 1.

Gregory Thompson retired as associate dean for special collections at University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library in Salt Lake City July 31.

David A. Wright retired as associate dean of learning resources at Surry Community College in Dobson, North Carolina, June 30.

AT ALA

Emily Day, conference content manager for Conference Services, left ALA July 30.

Office for Intellectual Freedom Program Officer **Ellie Diaz** left ALA July 14.

SUBMISSIONS
Send notices and photographs to
Amy Carlton, acarlton@ala.org.

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In Memory

Donald C. Adcock, 86, director of library services at Glen Ellyn (Ill.) School District 41 from 1963 to 1989, died July 15. He served as coordinator for program support of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and later as interim director. After leaving AASL, he became university supervisor and then interim director for the school library media program at Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois.

Richard "Rich" Hines, 74, librarian emeritus at University of Portland in Oregon and dean for information services until his 2006 retirement, died May 11. Hines worked in academic libraries for more than 20 years at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge; Duke University in Durham, North Carolina; and Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

Patricia Muir, 91, longtime executive secretary at the American Library Association (ALA) until her 1997 retirement, died February 12.

Linda Pletzke, 79, retired assistant chief of the Library of Congress Acquisition Division, died July 10. Pletzke was an active member of ALA and served on and chaired several committees. Her career included time as a children's librarian at Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library, reference librarian at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library, acquisitions librarian at Northwestern University Libraries in Evanston, Illinois, and head of the Special Order Section at the Library of Congress.

Don Reynolds, 79, director of Nolichucky Regional Library Center in Morristown, Tennessee, until his 2010 retirement, died August 16. Reynolds was founding director and 2007–2008 president of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries. In retirement he remained an advocate for libraries, staying active in Friends of Tennessee Libraries and serving as its president 2014–2017.

William Streamer Jr., 82, retired reference librarian at Montgomery College, Rockville (Md.) Campus, died June 23. Streamer also worked for more than 15 years for the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Library Development and Services.

J. Maurice Travillian, 83, former state librarian of Maryland, died July 14. He previously worked for the state's Division of Library Development and Services in the Department of Education for two decades, as library consultant, chief of public libraries, and, ultimately, state librarian. In the early 1990s, he envisioned and led the development of Sailor, a statewide network that brought internet access to underserved populations, which received the James Madison Award from the Coalition on Government Information in 1995. He also led development of MILO, the statewide interlibrary loan system. He had previously served as state librarian of Iowa; director of Marshalltown (Iowa) Public Library; a librarian at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa; and bookmobile driver at Daniel Boone Regional Library in Columbia, Missouri.

Lisa Harper Wood, 64, director of Keller (Tex.) Public Library from 1987 to 2007, died April 27. She also served as director of Richland Hills (Tex.) Public Library for five years. The Texas Municipal League named her Library Director of the Year in 1994.

Christine Lorraine Gehrt Wynar, 88, founder and co-owner of Libraries Unlimited in Littleton, Colorado, died June 28. Wynar also worked at several public and university libraries in the Denver area. During the Cold War, she cataloged and preserved volumes of Ukrainian history and literature as part of her work with the Ukrainian government in exile. ●

July 19 **Carla Jamison** joined the Young Adult Library Services Association as program officer.

Robert "Jay" Malone became executive director for the Association of College and Research Libraries September 7.

Sarah Ostman was promoted to deputy director of the Public Programs Office in March.

July 22 **Carrie Russell** retired as director of public policy and advocacy for ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office after 22 years with ALA.

Aimee Strittmatter, executive director of the Association for Library Service to Children since 2009, left ALA August 31.

Chrishelle Thomas, membership and marketing manager for Core, left ALA June 28. AL

The Right Track

When T-Kay Sangwand named her radio show *The Archive of Feelings,* she wasn't just being cute. In addition to being a DJ, Sangwand is librarian for digital collection development at UCLA Library, where she helms efforts to make archival holdings accessible online.

Sangwand's monthly show on nonprofit internet station dublab features curated sets that often highlight albums from countries she has visited; she started her record collection while studying in Brazil in 2007. One of her favorite sets kicks off with "A Dream of Los Angeles with Clear Blue Skies" by the Life Force Trio—a quintessential local track, she says—then fades into a Smithsonian Folkways field recording of West African folk music before traveling to Cuba, Jamaica, South Africa, and the UK.

"[When I worked at a college radio station, we] had a commitment to playing music that was not going to be heard on commercial radio … music from independent,

underground labels," she says. "That ethos really influenced me when I went to library school."

In May, as vaccinations rolled out across the country, dublab partnered with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health to present Celebration Spectrum, a public art installation at Grand Park in downtown L.A. that featured interpretations of the idea of celebration by the city's different immigrant communities. With Sangwand's help, the exhibit paired archival photos from UCLA's collections with playlists curated by 24 guest DJs, herself included.

"People were feeling euphoric at being able to be out in public again," Sangwand says. "It was this collective moment so many of us were waiting for, to be able to go out and experience art and music, some of the things that make Los Angeles so enjoyable." AL

THE BOOKEND showcases librarians, their work, and their work spaces. For consideration, email americanlibraries@ala.org.

Photo: Amanda Lopez

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