

# american libraries

November/December 2022

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

## THE BURDEN OF

## BOOK CHALLENGES

p. 20

### Helping Ukraine

p. 30

### NEWSMAKER: Nina Totenberg

p. 18

#### PLUS:

Goat Yoga,  
Library TikTok,  
Critical Media Literacy



# Gifts for Readers and Library Lovers

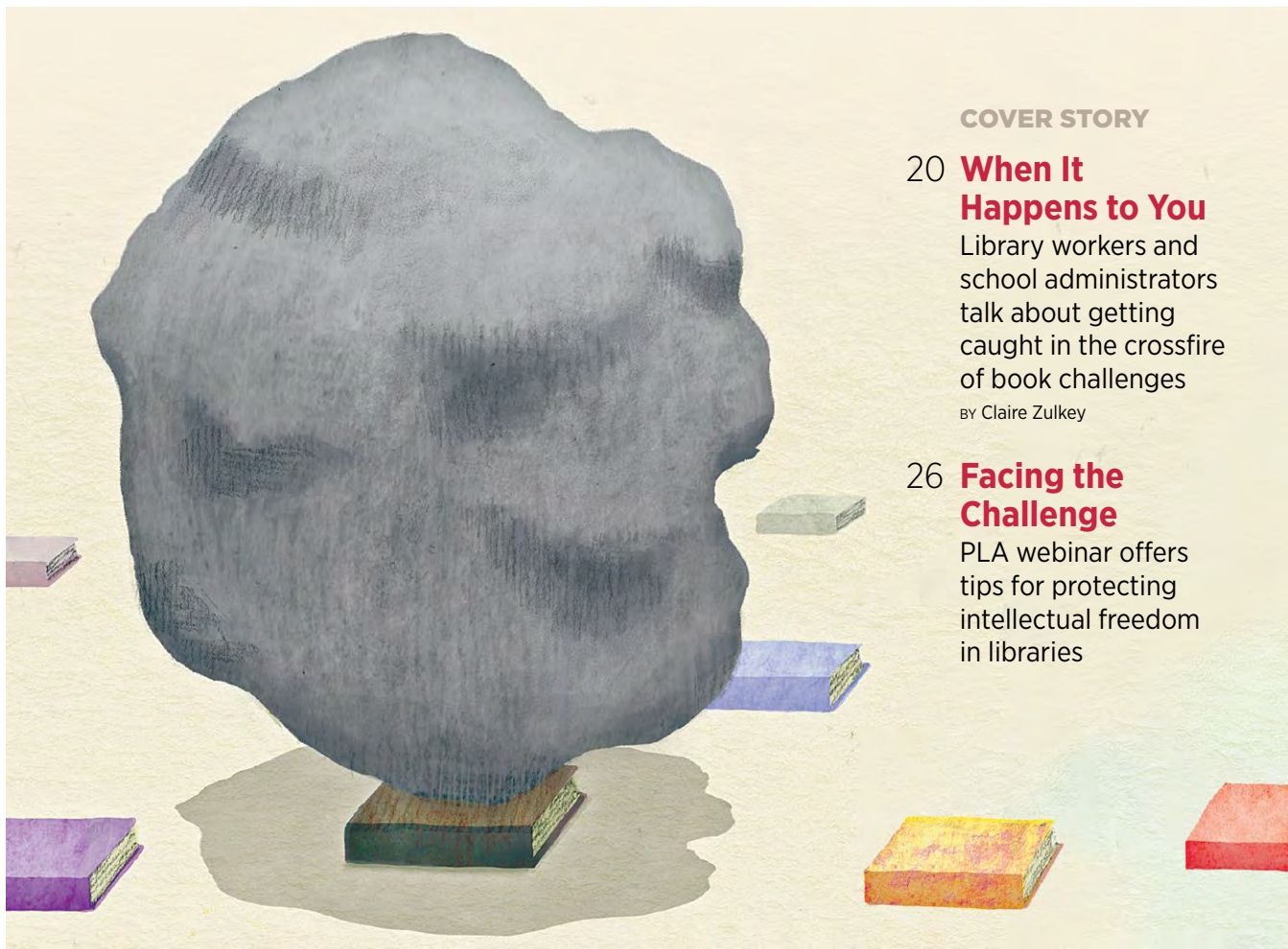


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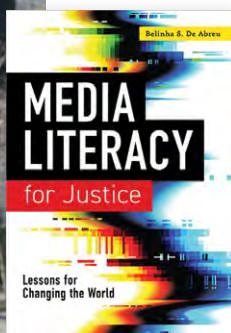
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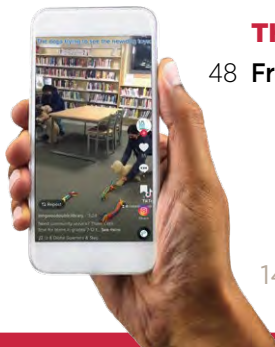
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from the  
**EDITOR**

## On the Front Lines



**Sanhita SinhaRoy**

This issue takes a close look at book challenges, a topic that has been on many people's minds lately. In "When It Happens to You" (cover story, p. 20), reporter Claire Zulkey highlights stories of five libraries affected by banning attempts and the toll that struggle has taken on staff members. As one library director says, while the experience has been hurtful for her and her colleagues, she was humbled to see the support the library received from around the country.

Another feature, "Facing the Challenge" (p. 26), is excerpted from a March 4 Public Library Association webinar about the current wave of coordinated banning attempts. In the piece, school and public librarians discuss effective ways to respond to those challenges and partner with each other to bolster those efforts.

We know that the stories of BIPOC and LGBTQ individuals have been at the center of many of these challenges, which makes Jimmeka Anderson's feature, "Learning to Read Representation" (p. 34), especially relevant. In it, she discusses ways educators can help students understand the influence of media messaging on "our beliefs about ourselves and others." Anderson's piece is excerpted from *Media Literacy for Justice: Lessons for Changing the World* (ALA Editions, 2022).

Rounding out the issue are a few light articles—including two featuring farm animals. First, Bill Furbie reports on how several libraries are hosting goat yoga programs to attract more people to the library ("Baa-maste!," p. 12). Next, read about a unique sheep-to-sweater program at a public library in North Carolina ("Close-Knit Community," p. 16).

If TikTok is more your speed, check out Taylor Hartz's story about how some librarians are using the video-sharing social media app for programming and engagement ("60 Seconds of Library Fame," p. 14).

Finally, find out what happens when a librarian walks onto a Texas high school football field ("Friday Night Librarian," p. 48). Clearly, there are challenges to be tackled just about everywhere.

*Sanhita*

We look at how book challenges are affecting libraries around the country—and how library workers have shown immense resilience in the face of these attempts.



# Where Do We Go from Here?

Investing in equity and collective power to build a path forward



**Lessa Kanani'opua  
Pelayo-Lozada**

The path forward is investment: economic and moral investment in accessibility, paired with strong partnerships and training components for library workers.

**W**hen I began the journey toward the role of ALA president in 2020, I had no idea what the future would hold for our libraries, for us as library workers, or for our Association. I did not foresee the ways many of us would work to create a more equitable world—necessary steps taken in the face of a pandemic, racial injustice, and a cultural backlash against freedom of information, among other obstacles. Now, almost three years later, I wonder how many of these changes will remain.

As we approach a new year, I challenge each of us to take the lessons we've learned and make these changes permanent. I challenge us to continue making programs and services more accessible for as many as possible, such as by offering livestream and hybrid options. When we center universal design, we are serving all members of our communities. And when we advocate to provide information access for all, that includes those inside and outside our buildings.

We must also value our library workers. We cannot have libraries without library workers, many of whom are stretched thin and are feeling burned out and frustrated in the face of book challenges, budget cuts, and uncertain socioeconomic landscapes. We sensed this before the pandemic, but a 2021 article from researcher and library leader Kaetrena Davis Kendrick confirmed it. In "Leaving the Low-Morale Experience: A Qualitative Study," published in *Alki*, Washington Library Association's journal ([bit.ly/WLA-Alki21](https://bit.ly/WLA-Alki21)), study respondents said that workplace stressors—such as understaffing, overreliance on part-time employees, and high turnover—"degraded availability or quality of library services, which were expected to continue at the same level or standard even as administrative or financial support decreased."

And more recently, the 2022 Urban Library Trauma Study ([bit.ly/ULTS22](https://bit.ly/ULTS22)) confirmed what

many of us have experienced over the past few years: a repetitive cycle of outside stressors and adverse events; professional community response (or lack thereof); and internalization, or self-blame, for traumatic experiences. These factors—on top of continually strained budgets, budget cuts, and low pay across the library sector—contribute to workplace trauma.

The path forward is investment: economic and moral investment in accessibility, paired with strong training components for library workers and partnerships within the accessibility community.

For library workers, that means we invest in the person and their working conditions. We can bolster these efforts by leveraging the power of our associations to advocate for us on the broadest of levels.

We have two associations working for us: ALA works for all of us in many ways, such as through its legislative efforts that have generated millions of dollars a year for libraries across the nation via the Public Policy and Advocacy Office. The ALA–Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA), our companion professional organization, evaluates salaries and working conditions to help library workers reimagine, realize, and leverage their career potential.

In our challenge to do better, I ask that we join together to envision what can be possible for ALA and ALA-APA going forward. This reimagining will begin in full force in 2023 and will continue with President-Elect Emily Drabinski. Because the impact of our collective voices and holding ourselves accountable—both to our communities and to one another—is essential to empowering all. **AL**

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**LESSA KANANI'OPUA PELAYO-LOZADA** is adult services assistant manager at Palos Verdes Library District in Rolling Hills Estates, California.



# ‘Scared Money Don’t Make None’

Why it’s time for bold library investment



Tracie D. Hall

The irony is that the very library services that current political discourse has sought to weaponize are ones that offer the greatest potential for bringing communities together.

When I was about 12 years old, the house next to ours was burned down. We had been cryptically forewarned. Late at night there had been a knock on the window, followed by the tip: “You should leave right now.” My mom gathered us quickly, and we took refuge in a relative’s home. By the time we returned from work and school the next day, the house that had once stood to our west was just a smoldering frame. The people who rented it had managed to escape unharmed, and we never saw them again.

I learned so much from that ruin. I learned the term *flipping houses*. I learned that wealthier people saw the homes in our neighborhood as “assets” but not places they themselves would ever live. But even more than that, before the property was sold to flippers, I learned about the gray market and the underground marketplace. Trades and exchanges were constantly being made in the backyard of that burned-out house. Some were scary and would cause me to run for the safety of the indoors. Others, like the nighttime dice games, would thrill me; I’d hide in the shadows listening to the singsong dice calls of betters pressing their luck. One of my favorites was “Scared money don’t make none!”

This dice call was usually accompanied by big bets and longshots—and both the *ohhhs* that occurred when the gambler tried and failed and the *ahhhs* inspired by their triumph. The call reminds me of the risks and opportunities that the American Library Association (ALA) and the larger library and information services sector face at this moment of mounting incursions on the right to read, wealth disparities, information inequity, and ongoing disinvestment and transactionality in public education and libraries.

The irony is that the very library services that current political discourse has sought to weaponize—such as collection development,

reference, book talks, and storytimes—offer the greatest potential for bringing communities together through collective inquiry and debate.

Rather than being underfunded and over-scrutinized, libraries and library staffers should be recognized for their indispensable role in informal and formal public education. In a period when access to early and adult literacy education, postsecondary degrees, living wage employment, and even the most basic needs are still not as widely distributed as they should be, libraries continue to widen their scopes to fill those gaps. Rarely are they funded accordingly.

Libraries need catalytic funding and a new cadre of philanthropists and investors who understand that they are foundational social and democratic infrastructure.

Libraries need community stakeholders who understand that societies have always convened around and progressed through their greatest sources of tension. It has been the heated debates about fair wages and climate change, about housing discrimination and marriage equality, that hold up the mirror and propel us to action. None of these debates have been resolved by ensuring that everyone is comfortable. As author Salman Rushdie notes, “A mature society understands that at the heart of democracy is argument.”

I wholly agree. Merely keeping everyone comfortable is not the highest work that libraries, or that ALA itself, should strive toward. The highest work is to educate, to illuminate, to convene, to facilitate, to shorten the distance between information and action and between action and change—and to do that work boldly. In my next two columns I will focus on libraries making huge investments in their communities’ favor and on a few moonshots that ALA is taking as well. **AL**

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**TRACIE D. HALL** is executive director of the American Library Association. Reach her at [thall@ala.org](mailto:thall@ala.org).



Excellent issue of @amlibraries arrived in the mail this week!

Beautiful library designs featured. Excellent articles by President @Lessa4Libraries and Director @TracieDHall1 for librarians to read!

@SKYLINELIB2, in response to our Sept./Oct. issue

Loved reading Angelo Moreno's piece in the latest @amlibraries about building a union and negotiating a first contract for library workers at East Lansing PL!

@KELLYMCE, in response to "United We Stand" (Sept./Oct., p. 41)

## Inspiring Change

I just completed the last article in ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall's series on literacy in libraries ("Librarianship as Resistance," Sept./Oct., p. 5; "Calling a Thing a Thing," July/Aug., p. 4; "Fugitive Literacies," June, p. 6). I appreciate Hall tackling this issue in our industry at this time. I am new to librarianship and was surprised that the public library I work for does not have a literacy program among its offerings. I've been inspired by Hall's articles to change that in my own library.

LaCharmine Jefferson  
Southfield, Michigan

## Field Experience

The article "In Training" (June, p. 48) inspired us at Ignacio (Colo.) Community Library to create a similar program but with an older group of youth: 13-to-18-year-olds. We hope to start the program at the beginning of the second semester of this school year.

We have long offered a youth volunteer position but have not had more than a few volunteers for short periods of time in the several years I have been here. One of the goals of our Librarian in Training program will be to build our youth volunteer program with graduates from the training program.

In the past, youth volunteers were assigned easy tasks that did not seem very exciting, like



shelf reading—and after a couple of weeks they disappeared. By introducing them to all that goes on in a library—having them spend time in each of the departments and then choosing where they have an interest—the library will have more useful volunteer applicants and the volunteers will have more choice and opportunities. In turn, this will hopefully lead to longer-lasting and more productive relationships.

Ronald Schermacher  
Arboles, Colorado

## Lighting a Path

The September/October issue of *American Libraries* was the first issue I received since beginning my MLIS program and entering the field of librarianship, so I was thrilled to see articles on both library signage and wayfinding design ("Show and Tell," p. 36) and sensory spaces ("Good Vibrations," p. 44).

Working in a university classroom and with campus operations during the pandemic involved plenty of signage and wayfinding and is what led me to this field. The science and psychology behind space use and design is fascinating. As "Show and Tell" says, libraries are complicated. When we assume all people understand how to navigate a library, or hold patrons to unwritten rules and unspoken norms, we do them an enormous disservice. Clear, accessible signage and wayfinding tools help patrons navigate these spaces, tailor their experiences to what best suits their needs, and feel comfortable and welcomed—especially for those who are neurodivergent or may be new to the library.

We can't nurture confident, lifelong library users by keeping them in the dark. Functional signage is one way we can act on our commitments to building accessible spaces welcoming to all patrons. I hope to continue seeing more content on this topic.

Sarah Leck  
Greensboro, North Carolina

## CORRECTION

In the September/October issue, we incorrectly stated that Sarah Pritchard retired from Northwestern University in October (People, p. 47). She stepped down from her role as dean of libraries August 31 and will officially retire in February 2023.

**WRITE US:** The editors welcome comments about recent content, online stories, and matters of professional interest. Submissions should be limited to 300 words and are subject to editing for clarity, style, and length. Send to [americanlibraries@ala.org](mailto:americanlibraries@ala.org) or *American Libraries*, From Our Readers, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60601.

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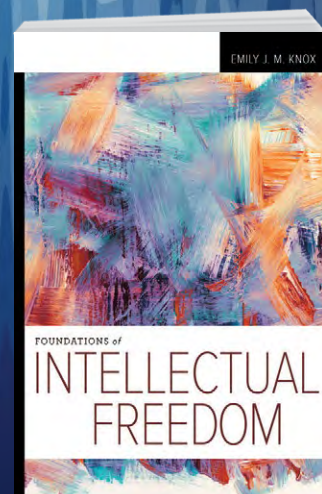
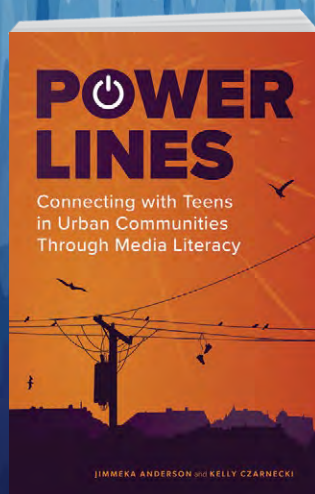
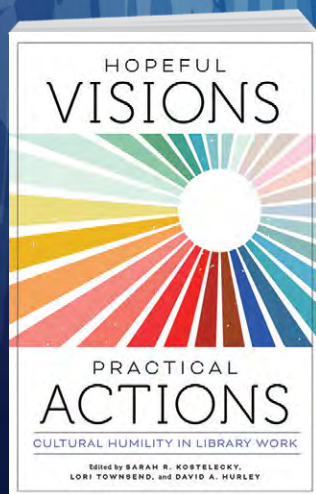
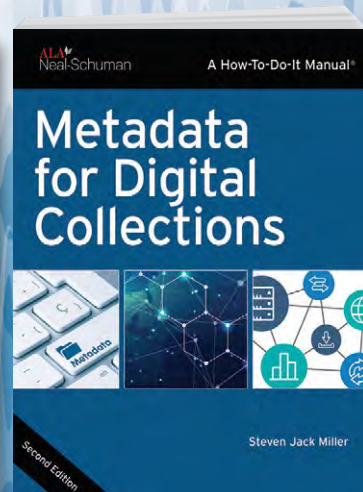
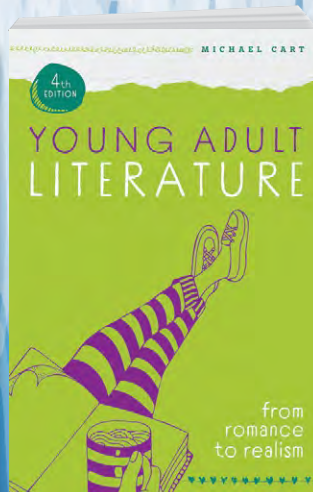
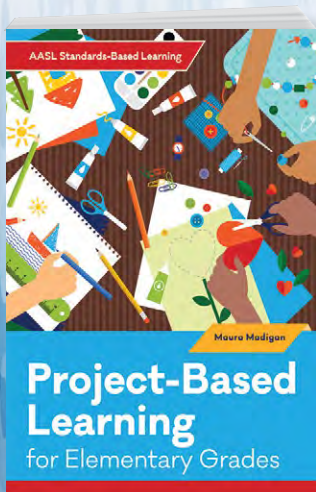
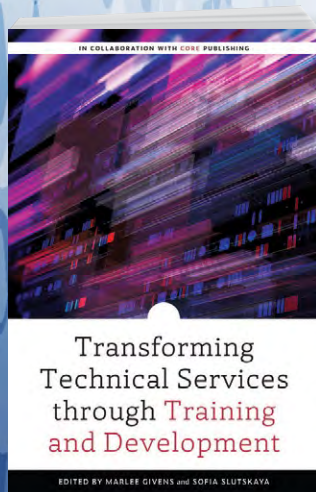
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## Book Challenges Expected to Surpass 2021's Record High

On September 16, the American Library Association (ALA) announced findings that indicate book challenges in 2022 are expected to exceed the record-setting number of challenges in 2021.

Between January 1 and August 31, ALA documented 681 attempts to ban or restrict library resources, with 1,651 unique titles targeted. In all of 2021, ALA reported 729 attempts to censor library resources, targeting 1,597 books, which represented the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling these lists more than 20 years ago. Additionally, more than 70% of the latest attempts to restrict library resources targeted multiple titles; previously, most challenges to library resources had targeted only a single book.

"The unprecedented number of challenges we're seeing already this year reflects coordinated, national efforts to silence marginalized or historically underrepresented voices

and deprive all of us—young people, in particular—of the chance to explore a world beyond the confines of personal experience," said ALA President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada in a statement. "Librarians develop collections and resources that make knowledge and ideas widely available, so people and families are free to choose what to read. Though it's natural that we want to protect young people from some of life's more difficult realities, the truth is that banning books does nothing to protect them from dealing with tough issues. Instead, it denies young people resources that can help them deal with the challenges that confront them.

"Library professionals trust individuals to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. ALA and our partners in the Unite Against Book Bans campaign are asking readers everywhere to stand with us in the fight against censorship." For more information, visit [bit.ly/UniteABB](https://bit.ly/UniteABB). ●

### ALA Executive Director to Receive Literarian Award

On September 7, ALA announced that Executive Director Tracie D. Hall had been selected to receive the 2022 Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community from the National Book Foundation.

Given by the foundation's board of directors, the award is traditionally presented to an individual for a lifetime of achievement in expanding the audience for books and reading. The recipients of the Literarian Award represent a variety of activists who have helped to increase access to and diversity in literature. The award comes with a prize of \$10,000.

According to the announcement from ALA, Hall's long history of working toward greater inclusion and opportunity for all was a reason she was selected for the honor. Hall will be honored on November 16 during the 73rd National

Book Awards ceremony in New York City. This will be the second consecutive year the Literarian Award has been given to a librarian.

### Coretta Scott King Book Donation Grants Awarded

The Coretta Scott King (CSK) Book Awards community announced on September 2 the three recipients of its annual CSK Book Donation Grants. They are Hilltop Special Services Center (HSSC) in San Francisco, the Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida (QLC) in Fort Myers, and Son of a Saint (SOAS) in New Orleans.

The grants are given to three libraries, schools, or nontraditional organizations that provide services to children and provide books to help expand collections.

HSSC, which works with pregnant teens and teen mothers to provide them safe academic environments to prepare

for postsecondary education, will provide the CSK books for mothers to read with their children as well as for their own enjoyment.

QLC, an afterschool program with an arts, character, and education portion for at-risk youth ages 5–18, will use the grant to bolster literacy in the wake of ongoing censorship attempts in Southwest Florida.

SOAS, a Black-led organization of mentors for young men with absentee fathers, will use the CSK grant to build a collection of books in a new building.

To read more about the recipients, visit [bit.ly/CSKAwards22](https://bit.ly/CSKAwards22).

### PLA Releases First Staff and Diversity Survey Report

The Public Library Association (PLA) published its inaugural *Public Library Staff and Diversity Report* on August 23. The report looks at beginning librarian

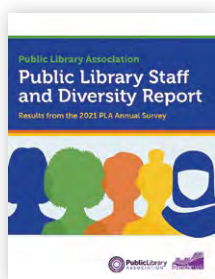
# Providing Information on Reproductive Health

On August 9, the ALA Executive Board issued a statement in response to proposed legislation in some states that would censor library materials or put at risk the library workers who provide access to information, including information about reproductive health care. The statement, in part, reads as follows:

“ALA stands committed to the free, fair, and unrestricted exchange of ideas and the right of library patrons to seek information free from observation or unwanted surveillance by the government or other third parties, in accordance with the law and the US Constitution. ALA opposes policies and legislation that ban content, restrict access to information, or compromise library users’ right to seek information without the subject matter of their inquiries becoming known to others.

“It is the professional responsibility of library workers to curate resources and provide assistance to library users seeking information without imposing their personal beliefs or engaging in viewpoint discrimination. They do so in compliance with state and federal laws and the US Constitution, including those provisions that safeguard information access and patron privacy. Library workers do not provide medical or legal advice.

“ALA is developing guidance for libraries and library workers and providing direct support to impacted library workers and trustees.” To view the full statement, visit [bit.ly/ALA-RH](https://bit.ly/ALA-RH). ●



and library director salaries; traditional and emerging staff roles; staff diversity, recruitment, and retention efforts; and public library equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) goals and activities.

In total, 773 libraries completed the survey in late 2021. The results were weighted to account for response rates. The report also includes suggestions of possible starting points for action and additional resources that libraries may find helpful.

The survey found that 95% of public libraries engage in at least one type of

EDI activity and 25% have dedicated EDI staff roles. While traditional library staff roles, such as youth and adult services, are the most common, the prevalence of roles that incorporate social media and digital outreach (74%), workforce and small business development (18%), and social work (8%) illustrates a growing range of programs and services in public libraries.

To read the full 2021 report and access other PLA data resources, visit [bit.ly/PLA-surveys](https://bit.ly/PLA-surveys).

## Speakers Announced for 2023 ACRL Conference

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) announced in July that author and podcaster Rebecca Nagle and author and activist Heather McGhee will

be keynote speakers at the ACRL 2023 Conference, to be held March 15–18, 2023, in Pittsburgh.

Nagle is an award-winning advocate, writer, and citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Her work, centered on Native representation and tribal sovereignty, has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, and *The Huffington Post*. She hosts the *This Land* podcast, which began its second season in 2021.



Rebecca Nagle



Heather McGhee

McGhee is author of *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can*

## CALENDAR

NOV.

**International Games Month**

[bit.ly/ALA-igm](https://bit.ly/ALA-igm)

NOV. 4–6

**YALSA's Young Adult Services Symposium** | Baltimore

[ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium](https://ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium)

JAN. 27–30

**LibLearnX** | New Orleans

[alaliblearnx.org](https://alaliblearnx.org)

APR.

**School Library Month**

[ala.org/aasl/slm](https://ala.org/aasl/slm)

APR. 15–21

**Money Smart Week**

[moneysmartweek.org](https://moneysmartweek.org)

APR. 23–29

**National Library Week**

[ala.org/nlw](https://ala.org/nlw)

APR. 25

**National Library Workers Day**

[ala-apa.org/nlwd](https://ala-apa.org/nlwd)

APR. 26

**National Library Outreach Day**

[bit.ly/ALA-NLOD](https://bit.ly/ALA-NLOD)

APR. 30–MAY 6

**Preservation Week**

[preservationweek.org](https://preservationweek.org)



*Prosper Together*, which spent 10 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list and was longlisted for the National Book Award and Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction.

For more information on the ACRL 2023 Conference, visit [bit.ly/ACRL-2023](https://bit.ly/ACRL-2023).

Framework for Racial Equity Published

The Joint ALA/ARL Building Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity Framework Task Force’s final draft of the Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity framework was approved by the boards of directors of its four partner organizations—ALA, ACRL, Association of Research Libraries, and PLA—during summer 2022. The framework is a guide for developing personal, organizational, institutional, and systems-level knowledge and understanding

of the nature of racism and its many manifestations.

According to an August 22 press release, the framework’s goal is “to provide the grounding needed to effect change in thinking, behavior, and practice that will lead to better outcomes for racialized and minoritized populations.” For a full draft of the framework, visit [bit.ly/ALA-REF](https://bit.ly/ALA-REF).

ALA Past Presidents Appointed to National Library Board

Julius C. Jefferson Jr. and Jim Neal, two past presidents of ALA, were among 11 new appointees to the National Museum and Library Services Board announced August 19. The appointments, which last five years, were recognized by President Joe Biden. The board advises the Institute of Museum and Library Services on policy as well as the annual



Julius C. Jefferson Jr.



Jim Neal

selection of National Medals honorees.

Jefferson served as 2020–2021 ALA president and currently works for the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress. Jefferson is also cochair of the ALA Branding Workgroup.

Neal served as 2017–2018 ALA president and was awarded this year with honorary

membership in the Association, ALA’s highest honor. Neal is university librarian emeritus at Columbia University and is a consultant, author, and speaker at national and international conferences.

PLA Releases New Strategic Goals Prioritizing EDISJ

PLA’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026 is now available, following its unanimous approval by PLA’s board of directors in June. Informed by member surveys, member and partner interviews, and PLA leadership and staff engagements, the strategic plan centers equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice (EDISJ).

In forming the new strategic plan, the board considered the pandemic, the national outcry for racial and social justice, and the impact of both on public libraries. The plan focuses on all library workers as critical to the success of libraries. For more information, visit [bit.ly/PLA-plan2022](https://bit.ly/PLA-plan2022).

New Conference Travel Grant from Jason Reynolds

During the 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., ALA Council approved the Jason Reynolds/Simon & Schuster Travel Grant. According to an August 17 news release, the grant will cover the expenses of five Black youth or teen services librarians, school librarians, or media specialists who work in either public or school libraries.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation			
In compliance with the United States Postal Service requirements, the following statement is published as it was submitted to the postmaster on PS Form 3526.	Extent and nature of circulation	Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	No. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
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	Electronic copy circulation		
	Paid electronic copies	0	0
	Total paid print copies	44,683	45,199
	Total print distribution	45,734	47,809
	Percent paid	97.7%	94.54%

## PLA and AT&T Award \$1 Million to Public Libraries

On August 16, PLA announced it had selected 160 public libraries to host digital literacy workshops across the country, thanks to more than \$1 million in contributions from AT&T.

The PLA Digital Literacy Workshop Incentive, supported by AT&T, is designed to help public libraries boost digital skills for all members of their communities. The workshops offer online digital literacy courses that are created by PLA in collaboration with AT&T and are available to anyone.

Funds will be used to expand digital literacy education programs or create new ones, host digital literacy workshops using new and updated course materials, and promote the courses and workshops with patrons and the community.

"The mission of libraries has always been about equitable access to information, literacy, learning, and culture," said PLA President Maria McCauley in a statement. "In the age of COVID-19, this mission has only become more vital as libraries have played a critical role in keeping communities connected and online."

"It will take a collective response to narrow the digital divide," said Charlene Lake, chief sustainability officer and senior vice president of corporate responsibility (environmental, social, and governance) for AT&T.

For more information and to access courses, visit [bit.ly/PLA-ATTfund](https://bit.ly/PLA-ATTfund). ●

Recipients will receive \$1,500–\$3,000 to pay for expenses related to attending the Annual Conference, including but not limited to travel, housing, registration, and a ticket to the CSK Book Awards Breakfast. The first five recipients will be acknowledged during ALA's 2023 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Chicago at the CSK Book Awards Breakfast.

Applications will be accepted from September 1 to December 1 each year. For more information, including the selection criteria, visit [bit.ly/ALA-JRfund](https://bit.ly/ALA-JRfund).

### Libraries and Small Businesses Report Released

On September 14, ALA released a report detailing the effects of the Libraries Build Business initiative on the library profession and on small businesses and entrepreneurs across the country. *Libraries Build Business Initiative Highlights*, which was finalized in July, provides examples of libraries involved in

the entrepreneurial ecosystem and their impact in urban, suburban, rural, and tribal communities.

Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library, for instance, supported aspiring and existing entrepreneurs who were formerly incarcerated as they navigated the business landscape with the New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator. The program offered wraparound services, monthly classes, and business mentors. In Missouri, at Ferguson Public Library, small business owners were supported with business development resources, a meeting space, computers and equipment, and reference support.

To read the report or for more information about the Libraries Build Business initiative, visit [bit.ly/ALA-LBB](https://bit.ly/ALA-LBB).

### ALA's Civic Imagination Stations Cohort Announced

Twelve artists and library staff teams have been selected for the pilot cohort

for ALA's Civic Imagination Stations, supported by the Estée Lauder Companies Writing Change initiative. The initiative is a three-year global literacy program in partnership with award-winning writer Amanda Gorman, an Estée Lauder Global Changemaker and the youngest inaugural poet in US history. Libraries will partner with local artists to implement arts programming that builds literacy and digital skills. Teams were selected from a national application process conducted in June and July.

From August to March 2023, the cohort will participate in workshops and coaching led by Civic Imagination Stations lead artists Willa J. Taylor, director of education and engagement at Goodman Theatre in Chicago, and Michael Rohd, founding artistic director of Sojourn Theatre and cofounder of the Center for Performance and Civic Practice (both in Portland, Oregon). Cohort teams will develop and implement original arts-based projects that can be easily replicated by libraries everywhere.

For more information, including the full list of cohort members, visit [bit.ly/ALA-CISPilot](https://bit.ly/ALA-CISPilot).

### ALA Awards Spectrum Scholarships for 2022

ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services (ODLOS) announced 60 recipients of the 2022 Spectrum Scholarship on August 9. Since 1997, the Spectrum program has awarded more than 1,300 scholarships to students pursuing graduate degrees in library and information studies.

This year, the scholarship program received four times as many applications as there were available scholarships. A committee of jurors selected this round of Spectrum Scholars based on their commitment to community building, leadership potential, and planned contributions to prioritizing social justice in the work of library and information studies.

For more information, including the full list of award recipients, visit [bit.ly/ALA-SS22](https://bit.ly/ALA-SS22). AL



# TRENDS



In fall 2021, Bedford (Tex.) Public Library hosted a Halloween-themed goat yoga program during which goats were dressed in silly costumes.

She describes the whole event as “a belly-laughing, picture-taking, goat-cuddling good time.”

## Downward dog, meet graceful goat

As with other forms of yoga—and animal appreciation—the audience for the activity isn’t limited to any one demographic.

Catherine Folk-Pushee, adult services librarian at Johnson Public Library in Hackensack, New Jersey, cosponsored a goat yoga event in May with neighboring Rochelle Park Free Public Library. The event featured one session for adults and one for kids.

If you’re wondering how much actual physical contact goat yoga practitioners have with the animals, the answer is: It varies. “For the adults, the yoga teacher began with some stretching and warm-up exercises while the goats wandered throughout,” Folk-Pushee says. Adults then form a line in tabletop pose (or other goat-friendly poses low to the ground), she explains, as the handler leads a goat across everyone’s backs.

Obviously, not every library will have an outdoor area suitable for goat yoga.

“The space has to be even bigger [than for traditional yoga] to accommodate jumping, inquisitive, sometimes head-butting goats,” advises Sarah Kleiva, community engagement manager for Orland Park (Ill.) Public Library (OPPL). It also must be an area, she says, “where goat piddle won’t be an issue.”

## Baa-maste!

Patrons herd together for goat yoga

BY Bill Furbree

It’s not every day that patrons dodge prancing barnyard goats while navigating instructor-led yoga sessions, but goat yoga (exactly what it sounds like—yoga in the company of goats) is finding a surprisingly warm reception in the library world.

The novel form of exercise, which was founded by Lainey Morse in 2016 with her Original Goat Yoga company and has since found loyal fans all over the country, gives new meaning to community engagement.

Just ask Mary Woodward, circulation services supervisor at Bedford (Tex.) Public Library (BPL). After considering ways to rethink her library’s approach to programming, she contacted a local vendor who was able to present a yoga experience that was well off the beaten path.

“It looked like so much fun,” Woodward recalls thinking when she booked the goat yoga session as part of her library’s fall 2021 programs. “They even brought the goats in Halloween costumes.”

“[The event was] a belly-laughing, picture-taking, goat-cuddling good time.”

**MARY WOODWARD**, circulation services supervisor at Bedford (Tex.) Public Library

In OPPL's case, an existing, fenced-in backyard with durable decking worked well. “We still had to put up [additional] temporary fencing to prevent the goats from eating our garden,” Kleiva notes. That's because—aside from the need to keep the goats inbounds—some of the plant species in the yard were potentially toxic to them.

### No goats, no glory

It's important for any library interested in presenting a similar program to work with a reputable goat yoga company. For a fee of \$400, Nature's Trail Goat Yoga provided OPPL with an instructor, eight goats, and three wranglers for one hour—about 35 minutes of yoga and the rest of the time for cuddles and photos.

Goats used by well-run companies are brought up to be comfortable around people. “Goat yoga companies raise their goats from babies to be socialized to doing yoga classes with people,” Kleiva says. “They tend to use smaller breeds and know their goats' personalities very well.” Young ones are especially fun; she suggests asking your local contact when babies may be ready for goat yoga classes so you can schedule a class that month.

A goat yoga company can also handle some of the

behind-the-scenes logistics. BPL's program was led by a certified goat yoga instructor (yes, that's a thing), and two wranglers made sure everyone had ample one-on-one time with the goats. The company, Woodward says, took care of both setup and cleanup. “Participants registered and paid on Goat Yoga Dallas's own event page,” she says, “and our city attorney required all participants to sign a liability waiver in case of a goat catastrophe.”

As with any activity that includes animals, librarians advise over-preparing. Kleiva suggests attendees bring older exercise mats or towels that they're not worried about getting messy.

Mostly appealing to yoga beginners and, perhaps, people who enjoy getting up close and personal with animals, goat yoga encourages patrons to find the connection between nature and self-care as they practice breathing exercises and learn about goats and their behaviors. The program is a good fit for libraries, assisting them in their core mission to provide programming that educates and creates a healthy community. At OPPL, library staffers happily took plenty of “goat-back selfies,” Kleiva says, and helped participants get petting time in as well.

“Librarians are always looking for new ways to bring people to the library,” Woodward says. “Unique programming like this is a great way to attract them. Our goat yoga event was so much fun and a big success. I took the class myself and had a blast. I've already booked another one.” **AL**

**BILL FURBEE** is a writer living in Melbourne, Kentucky.

## BY THE NUMBERS



## Veterans

### 19 million

Current number of US veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The figure refers to living people who have actively served in the armed forces.

### 115,000

Number of collections—which often include oral history recordings, manuscripts, and photographic materials related to an individual service member—held by the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

### 89%

Percentage of US veterans who are men; 11% are women. By 2046, the share of female veterans is expected to increase to 18%, according to the Pew Research Center.

### 2013

Year that Sedona (Ariz.) Public Library started ☞ Coffee with a Vet, a monthly program that gives community members an opportunity to meet local veterans and learn their stories.

### 8

Number of weeks that veterans spent learning filmmaking and storytelling skills through Veterans Make Movies, a program sponsored by Los Angeles Public Library and Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The Institute of Museum and Library Services-funded initiative ran from 2016 to 2019 and gave cohorts a safe space to explore the veteran experience through art and share short films with the public. ●





## TRENDS



**gvhslibrary**

gvhslibrary

297 Following 59.1K Followers 1.1M Likes

GVSD. Run by Miss B. Wishlist in bio link. See bio link for comment statement.



Tutorial for our library ass...



What to read after you fini...



Me, making my ...

Kelsey Bogan, library media specialist at Great Valley High School in Malvern, Pennsylvania, uses her school library's TikTok account to create videos of book reviews, tutorials, and more.

'Popular on TikTok' display table gets a lot of continual circulation, and students are constantly coming in and asking for books that they saw first on TikTok."

### Endless opportunity

Bogan uses TikTok for book "unboxings," where she opens boxes of new deliveries to the library—most recently a box filled to the brim with new anime and manga titles. She added gifs, graphics, and an upbeat song by Kacey Musgraves to show off a shelf of the library's Top 10 Sweet Queer Graphic Novels and highlight the 10 most-checked-out nonfiction books this year.

She also uses the platform to teach skills to other librarians, including how to cover a hardcover book with a dust jacket protector and how to switch from static shelving—spines out, all in a row—to dynamic shelving that displays some books with their front covers facing forward.

But Bogan's most popular content has been about her decision to ditch Dewey Decimal Classification at her library, where she explains to viewers how awareness of biases in the system prompted her to make that change. She has found that, while posting book reviews is the heart of the BookTok community, her most-viewed content has been about the classification system.

Bogan says she's not sure what caused her videos on the topic to go viral—some content works for some TikTok creators while other content doesn't—but she thinks it may have to do with the passion she conveyed.

# 60 Seconds of Library Fame

Librarians use TikTok for programming and engagement—and go viral

BY Taylor Hartz

**R**ing lights, check. Tripod, check. Phone camera, check. Ideas for what trend to hop on, check.

Librarians are making the most of the video-sharing social media app TikTok, recording and uploading 60-second clips (sometimes longer) of themselves and others talking about programs, cool things at their library, book reviews, and more. Many of these librarians help make up BookTok, a subcommunity of users on the app who upload and share content based on their favorite books, using hashtags such as #librariansoftiktok and #librarytiktok.

According to cable news channel CNBC, TikTok clocked 1 billion users in September 2021. Kelsey Bogan, library media specialist at

Great Valley High School (GVHS) in Malvern, Pennsylvania, joined the six-year-old app almost three years ago and has garnered more than 59,000 followers globally. That her first TikTok to go viral was so wildly successful was thanks, in part, to her students spreading it to other schools.

"If I weren't paying attention to [TikTok], I'd be missing an opportunity to connect with students in a way that they're currently connecting with reading," Bogan says. She adds that she has noticed that since BookTok began gaining traction on the app, students at her library tended to check out books that went viral in the subcommunity. "At least eight out of the 10 of our highest circulating titles last year were books that trended. Our

Bogan says that when she first started using TikTok, she was one of only a handful of librarians on the app; but now it has grown into a global support network, fostering a sense of community among libraries that might otherwise not connect with one another.

Carlotta Capuano, library associate at Anne Arundel County (Md.) Public Library (AACPL), says she came across Bogan's TikTok account—specifically her viral videos about the Dewey Decimal Classification—and was inspired by how she used the platform to share her knowledge.

AACPL's TikTok account covers everything from meal-prep videos made by a staff member to quick, funny moments from the library's summer programming. "There are just so many ways to engage on TikTok," Capuano says. "If you want to talk about your favorite book or if you're interested in making a meal, there's a bit of something for everyone."

### Teens and TikTok

Longwood Public Library (LPL) in Middle Island, New York, has a program called TikTok Time, in which teens create TikToks to market library programs while also earning community service credit. "I love this as an opportunity to make the library feel more accessible," says Shelby Broderick, teen services programming librarian at LPL. "We're promoting services but we're also not taking ourselves too seriously."

In one video—that so far has reached more than 800 community members—teens used

stuffed animals and music from the movie *Encanto* to promote a program where patrons could make dog toys for a local animal shelter. In another, teens compiled a high-light reel from a Halloween party that included clips from the movie *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, patrons' painted pumpkins, and the costumes attendees wore. The program started with a standalone TikTok 101 session where teen patrons taught librarians how to pick out trends, stitch together sound clips, and add text.

LPL's goal in implementing TikTok was to increase audience engagement during the peak period of COVID-19 restrictions, when staff members were relying mostly on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to connect with the community. They noticed that their social media posts were mostly reaching adult patrons, not younger library users—but TikTok was a different story.

"Because our teens are involved in making the TikToks, they're learning from this program, they feel empowered," says Ashley Sabatino, also a teen services programming librarian at LPL.

"It's teaching them about marketing as well, about how to use these

"If I weren't paying attention to [TikTok], I'd be missing an opportunity to connect with students in a way that they're currently connecting with reading."

**KELSEY BOGAN**, library media specialist at Great Valley High School in Malvern, Pennsylvania

platforms that they use all the time to [now] advertise things going on in the community," Broderick adds.

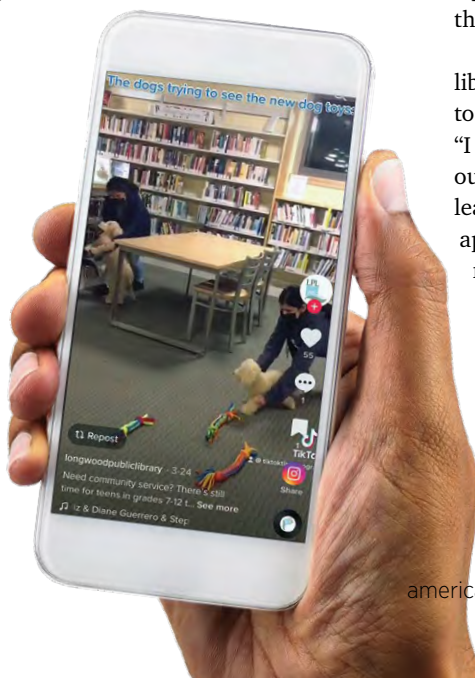
### A growing community

Finding and understanding one's niche is key to being successful on TikTok, GVHS's Bogan says, and it can take some time.

AACPL is still experimenting with its TikToks, Capuano says: "We're trying to figure out what our voice is and how our [patrons] can engage with us." Her goal is to create a physical production space at AACPL where teens can make TikToks and tap into their passions. She hopes the planned space is one that "teens can take ownership of, a place where they can fine-tune their interests."

"The number-one tip for a librarian who wants to use TikTok is to start as a consumer," Bogan says. "I think that's the best way to figure out how the app works but also to learn about different styles and approaches. You don't need to repeat what other people do to be successful. You just have to find the thing that matches your enthusiasm, the thing that people respond to from you." **AL**

**TAYLOR HARTZ** is a multimedia storyteller in New London, Connecticut.



Teens at Longwood Public Library in Middle Island, New York, learned marketing and video production skills by creating TikToks that highlight and promote the library's programs.





# Close-Knit Community

Program series showcases wool production and local heritage

In March, Hickory (N.C.) Public Library held its Sheep to Sweater program series, designed to take patrons through five different stages in the wool and clothing production process.

Hickory (N.C.) Public Library (HPL) Community Engagement Librarian Dacy Shute was looking to host a program that would celebrate the city's agricultural legacy as well as create connections among its maker community. In March, she launched the Sheep to Sweater program series—five sessions that showed patrons, step-by-step, where wool comes from, how it's made, and how it can be used in crafting. Naturally, the journey started on the farm.

by Dacy Shute

Wool has been a staple in garment-making for centuries, from its origins in ancient Persia to the famous Aran sweaters that have been produced in Ireland's Galway Bay for generations to today's hobbyist industry. But any knitter will tell you: Making a sweater is no small feat. It can take 20 hours to several weeks—and that time doesn't include the labor required to raise and shear sheep as well as clean, process, spin, and dye their wool.

While advancements in technology have made wool production easier, these developments have significantly distanced consumers from the process. This realization gave me an idea for a program series at HPL. As community engagement librarian—and a hobby knitter who grew up going to fiber fairs with my grandmother—I was

looking for a way to highlight local businesses, show people the work involved in producing an artisan material, and get patrons involved in a craft. What resulted was the Sheep to Sweater Series, a five-part program that invited the community to participate in the farm-to-product process while paying homage to our city's 200-year legacy of textile manufacturing.

The series was designed so that each session would represent a different stage in wool and clothing production: a trip to a sheep farm, a class on spinning wool, a class on dyeing yarn, and instructional classes on knitting and crocheting. To plan these sessions, I started with a visit to my local yarn store. The owner directed me to a sheep farm in the area that sells yarn at the downtown farmers market. The owner also introduced me to a

crochet teacher and offered to teach the knitting class herself. I already had a partnership with a heritage life skills instructor who could teach the drop-spindle method (a process of hand-spinning wool), and I opted to teach the yarn-dyeing class. To maintain continuity, I scheduled each of the five sessions in March.

Participants in these sessions got a hands-on experience. At the farm, patrons could touch raw wool fleece that had been sheared from the backs of Montadale and Romeldale sheep. In the drop-spindle class, participants immediately understood how time-consuming and difficult it is to create yarn without a spinning wheel or industrial machinery. Historically, if a person outgrew a sweater made from hand-spun yarn, the sweater would be *frogged* (unwound, ripped, or unknit) and reused for a new sweater. This knowledge added a component of appreciation—and sustainability—to our lessons.

The most intensive session was the hand-dyeing class. In the program, we learned the chemistry and ratios for a stock solution, how to mix acid dyes, and how to prepare raw wool for dyeing. What

we discussed only scratched the surface of a complex process that takes trial and error to master.

Participants were not required to attend every session, though many registered for multiple events. Through donations from local businesses and instructors, I was able to offset program costs.

Each session hit capacity and program feedback was positive. One mother who homeschools her children told me how important the farm visit was because her kids could see where our goods come from. The knitters and crocheters expressed how they enjoyed being able to ask in-depth questions about how wool becomes yarn. And many in the dyeing class took notes so they could set up the process at home.

While we don't currently have plans to repeat this series, I'd like

to form a larger how-to series at the library—one that combines heritage life skills with modern life skills and literacies. Our community has a rich history of furniture-making, so I'd like to tackle caning and reupholstering next.

For those looking to host a farm-to-product series, I recommend reaching out to community members who might be willing to participate or help you build connections. Consider how you might adapt a multipart program for your audience. For example, what agricultural product is your area known for? What are the different stages in its production process? Perhaps you could build a series around a regional vegetable that culminates in cooking classes.

Overall, I learned: Don't be afraid to try new things. I had never

I was looking for a way to highlight local businesses, show people the work involved in producing an artisan material, and get patrons involved in a craft.

brought a group of people to a farm for a library program, but it was a great opportunity to connect people to their roots. Plan your programs daringly and you might be pleasantly surprised with the results. **AL**

**DACY SHUTE** is community engagement librarian at Hickory (N.C.) Public Library, where her specialties are programming, outreach, and partnerships.

## The Beat Goes On!



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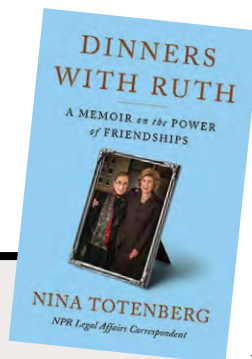
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# Nina Totenberg

Heralded journalist on her friendship with Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the state of SCOTUS



In 1971, reporter Nina Totenberg called then-law professor Ruth Bader Ginsburg for help making sense of a legal brief. That conversation launched a decades-spanning friendship and Totenberg's career. The journalist joined NPR in 1975 and currently serves as the non-profit media organization's legal correspondent; Justice Ginsburg was appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in 1993 and served until her death in 2020.

Totenberg has written a memoir, *Dinners with Ruth* (Simon & Schuster, September), covering her own career and the relationships that helped shape it. She spoke with *American Libraries* about friendship, journalism, and covering SCOTUS in unprecedented times.

BY Lara Ewen

## What made your friendship with Ruth Bader Ginsburg special?

It was special because she was special. All my friends were very much a part of my formation. I was not trying to break any glass ceilings; I was just trying to get a foot in the door. We were all very close because there were so few of us, but also because they were special. There's more to the book than just the dinners [with Ruth], just like there's more to a dinner than the main course. [Ruth] is one of the starring roles, but there are many other stars.

**How common is it for journalists to become friends with the people they cover?** It's somewhat common and somewhat uncommon. When I first came to Washington, there were reporters who covered from the outside, and those who covered from the inside. I was initially only an outsider by virtue of the fact that I was a woman—a single woman—and the people I covered were men. And when I first met Ruth, we were both outsiders. She was in her 30s; I was in my 20s. I had no idea she was going to be a Supreme Court

justice, and by the time she was, we were real friends.

**You recently wrote an article for NPR titled "The Supreme Court Is the Most Conservative in 90 Years." In it, you said that the current SCOTUS has no ideological center. How does that affect the way you cover it?** We're not PR agents for these people. Our job is to cover what's going on, and if there is no center, there is no center. It's really pretty simple: It's a very good story, a very interesting story. And more than that, it's my job.

## What role have libraries played in your work?

I got a couple of great scoops when I was young by using the Library of Congress to find books that were out of print and

had stuff in them. So, in that sense, the library—before the times [when you could] google any damn thing you wanted—was episodically and only occasionally but nonetheless very important to stories that I did.

**What's next for you?** I'm going to do my job. I write news. I write analysis of news. I don't write opinion pieces. I'm sort of glad I don't, these days, because there are too many opinions and not enough straight information. I don't really like the idea of retirement. I'd like to work not quite as hard as I do now, but I don't know how to do that and cover a beat like mine.

I hope [my] book evokes a sense of the joy of journalism as well as the joy of friendship. And I hope it makes people think about how we conduct our lives today. Hopefully with a little less anger. **AL**



Photo: Allison Shelley/NPR



“Libraries have a higher approval rating than any governor, than Donald Trump, than Joe Biden, than the GOP, and than the Democratic Party. Don’t mess with libraries.”

Journalist **CORY DOCTOROW**, @doctorow on Twitter, September 20.



“It’s embarrassing that we are banning books in this country, in this culture, in this day and age. We have an aversion in this country to knowing about our past, and anything that is unpleasant we don’t want to deal with... Read the books they’re banning. That’s where the good stuff is. If they don’t want you to read it, there’s a reason why.”

Actor and television host **LEVAR BURTON**, on *The View*, June 9.

“The cover of this book is bright, broad rainbow stripes, [and] says *This Book Is Gay*. Can you imagine being 14 years old and having the backbone and the courage to take that book off the shelf, walk through the library with it, hand it to me—a 62-year-old woman, whom you barely know, perhaps—and check it out? That’s an act of courage and trust. I respect so greatly—and value so greatly—that a teenager trusts me enough to hand me that book and knows that they’re safe in my hands. That kind of transaction happens every day in our library.”

Librarian **MARTHA HICKSON**, in “I Put the Students First”: A Public School Librarian on Book Bans,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 22.

“At library science school, I learned about intellectual freedom and book policies and selection policies, but it’s all theory-based. These classes don’t teach us how to deal with the emotional impact of being at a public meeting that is being recorded or dealing with what happens [when] somebody will walk in with a list in their hands and go searching for the titles and take pictures of supposedly offensive or harmful materials.”

Wyoming Library Association President **CONRRADO SALDIVAR**, in “‘We’ve Moved Backwards’: US Librarians Face Unprecedented Attacks amid Right-Wing Book Bans,” *The Guardian (UK)*, September 20.

“I USED TO SAY IT WHEN I WAS IN SYRIA THAT I’M WORRIED ABOUT FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN SYRIA. NOW I’M WORRIED ABOUT THAT EVEN HERE IN AMERICA.”

Poet **OSAMA ALOMAR**, in “Exiled Writers Reflect on Freedom of Speech in America in Light of Rushdie Attack,” NPR: *All Things Considered*, August 24.



# WHEN IT HAPPEN TO YOU

Library workers and school administrators talk about getting caught in the crossfire of book challenges | **BY** Claire Zulkey

**T**he movement to ban books has escalated throughout the country. The American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) tracked 681 challenges to library, school, and university materials and services between January 1 and August 31, resulting in more than 1,651 unique titles targeted—figures that are likely to be even higher by the end of 2022.





High-profile book banning and boycott stories have included everything from Susan Meyers and Marla Frazee's *Everywhere Babies* to Pizza Hut's Book It! program, which some attacked in June for featuring LGBTQ books in celebration of Pride Month. These stories, especially when shared on social media, have accelerated the culture wars and negatively affected library workers and administrators, their work, and their roles in their communities. Here, *American Libraries* highlights five such stories.

"It's important to know that this is a nationwide trend, and it's very possible it will arrive where you are," said Megan Cusick, assistant director of state advocacy in ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office, at "Prepare Your Library for Today's Censorship Battles" ([bit.ly/AL-ChallengingTimes](https://bit.ly/AL-ChallengingTimes)), a session at the 2022 Public Library Association Conference in March. She recommended that libraries prepare for this eventuality by having conversations in their communities, mobilizing their trustees and Friends groups, building relationships with key decision makers, and developing a communications plan. One of the best defenses? Having an airtight collection development policy, said Cusick's fellow panelist and OIF Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone.

Library workers and administrators who find themselves caught in a book challenge or in the media spotlight should visit OIF's resource page ([bit.ly/OIF-Resources](https://bit.ly/OIF-Resources)) and report their issue. For more insight, see "Facing the Challenge" on page 26.



## 1 SPARING STAFF THE STRESS

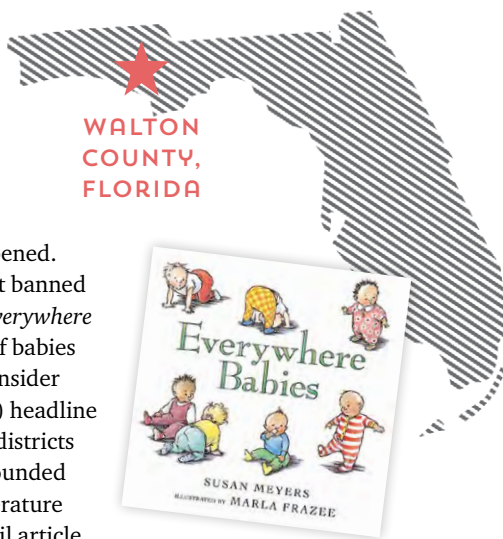
Sometimes a book challenge story that goes viral omits key details, leaving local librarians, administrators, and book merchants the time-consuming task of clarifying what really happened.

“A Florida school district banned a rhyming picture book [*Everywhere Babies*] with illustrations of babies playing and sleeping,” an Insider (formerly Business Insider) headline reported in April. “School districts ... are letting bigoted, unfounded claims dictate access to literature for all,” began another April article from PEN America. Both stories were written after the conservative nonprofit Florida Citizens Alliance (FCA) published the *2021 Objectionable Materials Report: Pornography and Age-Inappropriate Material in Florida Public Schools*, pushing for Florida public schools to remove 58 books from their shelves.

Rather than go through a review process during what he says was an already difficult time for educators, Walton County (Fla.) School District (WCSD) Superintendent A. Russell Hughes located copies of 24 books on FCA’s list across the district’s school campuses and—“being proactive,” according to his April 22 letter to the public—pulled them for review of content and age appropriateness. Hughes said the review will be conducted after the school year; as of late September, it had not been conducted. Contrary to what had been initially reported, “We did not pull *Everywhere Babies*, as we do not own the book,” clarified WCSD’s Deputy Superintendent Jennifer Hawthorne. A handful of media outlets that had initially misreported this incident clarified through corrections that the book wasn’t in fact banned by the district but had only been included in the FCA document. The pulled books remained available to parents who requested them, Hughes tells *American Libraries*.

Hughes says that as an education leader, he is tasked with “making sure that we keep a rein on good culture.” He thought, “Nobody’s going to be arrested or ridiculed, not my teachers or principals,” and he removed the books. “I took that on my shoulders to continue the trajectory of academic success in this county,” he says, “and not allow what’s going around the state to infiltrate our teachers.”

Hughes was frustrated by the distraction the situation brought to his district. “I didn’t know the misinformation would go as wide as it did,” he says. The allegation that the district banned *Everywhere Babies* “was absolutely false, and it caused a firestorm where there should not have been.”



## 2 IMPOSING PERSONAL VALUES

In February, Maia Kobabe’s memoir *Gender Queer*, and a few other books, were pulled from Virginia Beach (Va.) City Public Schools (VBCPS) after a school board member petitioned for their removal. (What’s more, a Virginia politician sought a restraining order in May against the local Barnes & Noble to block the bookstore from selling *Gender Queer* and Sarah J. Maas’s *A Court of Mist and Fury* to minors without parental consent. That case was dismissed in late August.)

And yet, like many school districts, this one already regularly reviews and culls books for age appropriateness, says VBCPS Director Sharon Shewbridge. The district maintains an existing policy through which parents can indicate the books their children may and may not access. It was an exceptionally busy year for book challenges (with 16 in total), she says, so her district is responding by examining policies and reading standing committees of parents, teachers, students, and library staffers to help review books the committees determine aren’t age-appropriate or relevant.

After several of those books went to committees for review earlier this year and the district received unwanted media attention, Shewbridge says she is particularly protective of the district’s media specialists. Critics, she says, malign them as “peddlers of pornography.” But they know their students, run makerspaces, and

help kids find good information sources and books to become engaged readers, says Shewbridge. “[Media specialists] are the backbone of our school.”



VIRGINIA  
BEACH,  
VIRGINIA

Shewbridge wishes more parents could see that, by agitating to remove books on behalf of their children, they are imposing their personal values on other people's children. "The library is a place of refuge and awareness and experiences of choice. What I'm doing with my children may not be what you're doing with your children."

### 3 GIVING TEENS ACCESS

In response to the spate of book challenges around the country, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library's (BPL) Books Unbanned project—launched through the library's Intellectual Freedom Teen Council—provides free e-library cards to applicants ages 13–21 from across the US who are experiencing book access issues because of censorship. Since the launch of the program in mid-April, more than 5,500 cards have been issued to young adult patrons in every state plus Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, and more than 35,000 digital items have been checked out. The library also hosts an internship program in which teens are trained to give book recommendations to other teens.

The states with the highest sign-up rates for Books Unbanned include Idaho, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, and Vermont. "You could be from what we would think of as a very liberal blue state, but there are small towns full of racist and homophobic people everywhere, and a lot of the time that filters down to who can check out what books," says Karen Keys, who oversees the Intellectual Freedom Teen Council at the library.

Keys says BPL staffers have heard from librarians in other parts of the country interested in launching similar programs in their branches. "It's been very eye-opening to see people writing over and over again



BROOKLYN,  
NEW YORK

to say they're Black, or they're queer, or they're Jewish, and they can't check out books about themselves in their communities," she says.

The experience has enlightened Keys to the many ways that censorship can present itself. "There can be sneaky censorship, where a library is afraid to purchase certain books, so they don't. It's not like they're banning them—they're just not there," she says. "It's not always obvious it's happening until you look for a book that is LGBTQ and you can't find it, or you look for a book that deals with police brutality and you can't find it."

### 4 A FRIENDS GROUP TO THE RESCUE

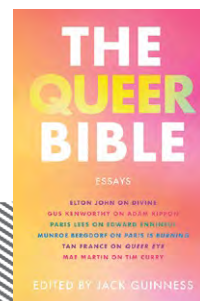
Madison County (Miss.) Library System (MCLS) has a process in place for dealing with complaints about materials. "If someone doesn't like a book, we have an informal conversation, and ... resolve it that way," says MCLS Director Tonja Johnson. A librarian may suggest books that better fit a patron's preferences, she says. But if a person objects strongly, they are welcome to submit a written complaint that leads to a review. Johnson says this process gets circumvented in many cases, and she has noticed that complainants are increasingly going directly to the mayor or aldermen.

Early this year, Gene McGee, mayor of Ridgeland, Mississippi, attempted to withhold \$110,000 in city-provided operational funds from MCLS's Ridgeland Library branch—about a quarter of the library's annual budget. According to Johnson, McGee told her via phone call he was responding to several complaints he'd received about LGBTQ books on display at the Ridgeland branch. The display in question featured more than 100 new nonfiction arrivals, four of which had LGBTQ themes.

In response to McGee's actions, the Friends of Ridgeland Library group raised more than \$112,000 to make up for the prospective shortfall thanks to an online campaign that went viral.

One of the four LGBTQ titles was *The Queer Bible*, a collection of essays celebrating LGBTQ history and culture. The title caught the attention of someone visiting the library, says Johnson, "and it was portrayed as if we were pushing pornographic books." Johnson says the fact that someone saw the word *queer* on a book cover and it led to such a disruption "was very unsettling."

Ultimately, the city funded the library for a full year because the aldermanic board treated the situation as a contract—not a censorship—issue. Johnson and her team are now working to determine how to best use the donated funds. Meanwhile, MCLS signed a new contract with the city of Ridgeland, including a memorandum of understanding that emphasizes viewpoint neutrality and states that the city does not wish to "censor, proscribe, or remove any [library] materials." The contract renews every year unless there is a call for review. "Our position is that we treat all books the same, and



MADISON  
COUNTY,  
MISSISSIPPI

we maintain our collection based on the needs of our patrons,” Johnson says. “That is not going to change.”

Johnson was pleasantly surprised and humbled by the support the library received from around the country, she says. But she is also ready to move on from the matter: “My staff commented several times that all we do is answer the phone and answer questions about those [challenged] books. We’re so ready for this to go away.”

What’s been most hurtful for Johnson is the implication that her staff had done something wrong or couldn’t be trusted to choose materials for their library. “My staff is dedicated to our communities and treats everyone the same and tries to meet their needs,” she says. “To have it insinuated that there was something nefarious in their intentions has been very difficult.”

## 5 FILING SUIT AGAINST CENSORSHIP

In April, seven residents of Llano County, Texas, filed a federal lawsuit against the county judge, the four county commissioners, the public library director, and four of the public library’s 13 board members for restricting and banning books from Llano County Library System. The books in question include *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson, *They Called Themself the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti, and *Spinning* by Tillie Walden.

According to the lawsuit filed April 25, the plaintiffs allege that the defendants “control which books are available at Llano County public libraries” and have “systematically remov[ed] award-winning books from library shelves because they disagree with the ideas within them” and “permanently terminated access to over 17,000 digital books [via OverDrive] because they could not censor and ban two specific ebooks that they disliked.” The suit also alleges that these local leaders have fired previous library board members and replaced them with ideologically and politically aligned appointees; that the county judge told new library board members they were not obligated to include a public comment component in their meetings; and that the library director told librarians via email to not attend board meetings, among other actions.

“We didn’t come looking for [this case],” says Ellen Leonida, the California-based attorney who is representing the plaintiffs pro bono. She and her plaintiffs have filed for a preliminary injunction to halt what she considers are the county’s attempts at censorship “while the court

## “THE LIBRARY IS A PLACE OF REFUGE AND AWARENESS AND EXPERIENCES OF CHOICE.”

**SHARON SHEWBRIDGE**, director,  
Virginia Beach (Va.) City Public Schools

resolves the larger issue of the First Amendment.” (As of late September, hearings for a preliminary injunction have been scheduled for October 28 and October 31.)

In a declaration from Llano County Library System Director Amber Milum filed by defendants July 15, Milum counters that plaintiffs are still able to check out and read the disputed books through

Llano County Library System via interlibrary loan, an “in-house checkout system” that will rely on personal or donated books made available to patrons, or through the Bibliotheca cloudLibrary, which she says went live to patrons May 9.

Milum also maintains that books were removed from library shelves “not because of the viewpoints or content expressed” but because the process was in line with “normal weeding procedures.”

Leonida says the lawsuit has been mischaracterized by the opposition in the media and in the community as having a political tenor to it. “It started with a bunch of citizens of different political affiliations who love their libraries,” she says. “They saw their books and their right to explore new ideas ... being taken away in secrecy. They banded together and said, ‘This is wrong.’ They want their library back.” **AL**



**CLAIRE ZULKEY** is a freelance writer for *American Libraries* living in Evanston, Illinois.





# Upskilling at the Library

Adults who want to hone their skills for the job market can turn to the public library. Udemy offers thousands of online video courses covering topics in technology, business, and personal development. Patrons can learn about anything from understanding the blockchain, to implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in the workplace, to yoga and healthy eating. These courses are taught by world-class instructors, with interactive Q&A sections where learners can get personal responses to further their learning. Udemy instructor Kyle Pew, a Microsoft Certified Trainer and Microsoft Office Master Instructor, teaches one of the most popular courses on Microsoft Excel. He has had a front-row seat for many of the changes in online learning since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic—and a host of success stories from his students.

**You started your career as a game designer. What got you into teaching online courses?** I started doing online training eight years ago. Before I entered game design, while I was in school, I was doing classroom training for Microsoft products, Adobe products, and so on. It's essentially how I supported myself and my family as I went to school.

**With the pandemic and hot job market, what are some of the trends you're seeing in the types of skills people are looking for? How have you adapted and updated your courses to keep up with these trends?** Since the pandemic, I've seen a big uptick in students completing the full course. When the pandemic hit, people started watching courses and were trying to upskill and be prepared. To accommodate that, I've ramped up the Q&A



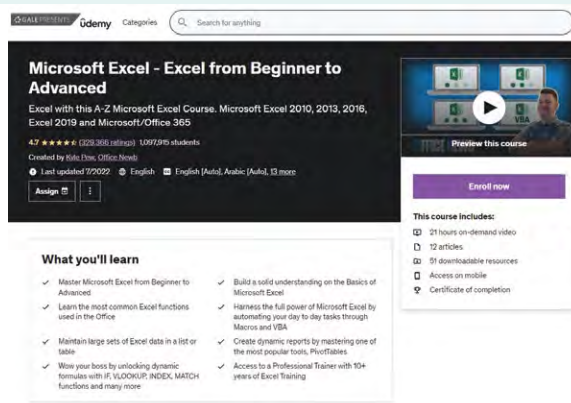
Kyle Pew

section on my course, and I've brought on other people to help me do that as well.

I've had to adapt and provide additional resources to students;

a lot of people are asking for additional exercises. For example, I have exercise files that they can download and follow along with, but a lot of people who are going back into the job market or switching careers want additional exercises to practice those skills. It helps them retain the information and helps them think more outside the box.

**What interactions have you had with students who have used the course through the library?** Within each course, I have a Q&A section where students can jump in and ask questions and get responses from me and others.



I have had people come in and ask a question and I'll reply, and then maybe a couple of days later, they'll come back and say, "Oh, I'm sorry I wasn't able to get here earlier, I'm doing this on a computer in the library." I think it's nice that they've been able to go to the library and pick up and learn a new skill.

**Have you heard from students who have changed careers or improved their salaries thanks to your courses?**

I've had students connect with me on LinkedIn and say, "Hey, I've started a new job. Thank you for the Excel VBA section." One was able to take a process [at their workplace] that took a few days and automate it through a macro inside of Excel. I've heard others say, "My boss was really impressed. I've now got a promotion." It's pretty neat to be able to see the change that happens within people's lives.

Learn more at [gale.com/public/udemy](https://gale.com/public/udemy). ■



Listen to the full interview on *Call Number with American Libraries*. | [bit.ly/CallNumberPodcast](https://bit.ly/CallNumberPodcast)

# FACING THE CHALLENGE

PLA webinar offers  
tips for protecting  
intellectual freedom  
in libraries

**A**s libraries, schools, and universities continue to confront unprecedented attacks on the freedom to read, the Public Library Association (PLA) invited library colleagues to participate in “Facing the Challenge,” a virtual town hall held March 4. As those who have endured book-banning attempts and related legislative efforts know, the experience is often isolating and stressful. During this event, speakers discussed effective responses to the coordinated attempts at censorship currently sweeping the nation. (For a look at some of these challenge stories happening nationwide, turn to “When It Happens to You” on p. 20.)



Illustration: Chelsea Feng



Presenters included Kathy Carroll, school librarian at Westwood High School in Blythewood, South Carolina, and 2020–2021 president of the American Association of School Librarians (AASL); Melanie Huggins, executive director of Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina, and then–PLA president; and Deb Sica, deputy county librarian at Alameda County (Calif.) Library. The session was moderated by Angela Maycock, PLA's manager of continuing education. To access the full conversation, visit [bit.ly/PLA-IFwebinar](https://bit.ly/PLA-IFwebinar).

## ORGANIZED BOOK-BANNING ATTEMPTS AREN'T NEW, ARE THEY?

**DEB SICA:** The current situation is very difficult, but it's nothing we haven't dealt with before and nothing for which we don't have huge amounts of support. I've lived in Texas and Mississippi, and now I'm in the East Bay of San Francisco, and I've seen intellectual freedom challenged for various reasons across the political spectrum.

The American Library Association (ALA) has had the Library Bill of Rights since 1939. It's a one-page document that has lived through wars, through political ups and downs, and it holds true. We have 28 hefty interpretive documents supporting it, addressing content evaluation, privacy protections, collection weeding, labeling and processing your collection, and other things. If you haven't revisited those documents lately, they're a wonderful way to get into the historical underpinnings of what we're going through now.



Kathy Carroll



Melanie Huggins



Deb Sica



Angela Maycock

## HOW DO SCHOOL LIBRARIES DIFFER FROM PUBLIC LIBRARIES WHEN IT COMES TO CHALLENGE ATTEMPTS?

**KATHY CARROLL:** With school librarians, most of our patrons are minors, and often that comes with erroneous expectations that the tenets of information freedom and the Library Bill of Rights do not apply. But they do. So we have to educate others that there is a set of guidelines that we all follow.

We have students at such a pivotal stage of their lives. They need to have access to information because they need to see themselves in the literature, they need to have that sense of self, and they need to see others and worlds that they cannot even think are possible. Besides providing the correct information, access leads to building core values of empathy and understanding.

Regardless of our situations, we must have a plan. We must be proactive and have policies in place. We should not work in isolation; we must have advisory groups and get other interested stakeholders involved. We have to talk to our administrators, and we have to tap into ALA and AASL resources.

It's so important to have certified, qualified librarians in school libraries. When you have someone with the educational background and expertise in collection development, that will often offset many of the concerns that arise.

We're not going to respond to attacks in kind. That is not who we are. We're going to explain. We're going to provide evidence. We're going to do the research needed to educate. But ultimately, we're going to stand on the side of the students.

## HOW CAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES SUPPORT THEIR SCHOOL LIBRARY COLLEAGUES? WHAT DO THOSE PARTNERSHIPS LOOK LIKE?

**MELANIE HUGGINS:** As a library administrator, when I see these challenges happening in public schools across our state, across our country, the first thing I want to say is, "How can I help you? Do you know that I have your back, that I will support you?"

If you can, get a group of library people together and start talking. Kathy and I have met with a group a few times and just chatted about what we were seeing. Our goal was not to be surprised and to stay ahead of what was going on in our state. We invited our state librarian to this group, and there's a member from a private school and a member from University of South Carolina.

A week or two after one of our first meetings, when we had started sharing an online folder of resources, I got a call from a school board



member at the school where my child goes. He said they had a group of parents coming the next week to talk with the board and asked me to help him get ready. And I was like, “Boy, can I ever help you!” Because I have these connections with Kathy and other resources.

If you’re a public library CEO, pick up the phone and call the superintendent of the local school district. If you don’t already have a relationship with them, make that connection. If you don’t know who the board chair is of the public schools that are facing these issues, call them and just say, “Hey, I’m here—whatever you need.”

**ANGELA MAYCOCK:** ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) provides support as well ([bit.ly/AL-OIF](http://bit.ly/AL-OIF)). Whenever you’re having a challenge, please contact them. ALA tracks the numbers so we can more accurately reflect what’s happening in the field and provides resources to folks who are directly responding to challenges.

## PUTTING OUR PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE ISN’T ALWAYS EASY. ANY TIPS ON HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHALLENGE IN THE MOMENT, AS IT’S HAPPENING?

**HUGGINS:** I wish I could say I knew exactly how to do this. I have had librarians in tears on the phone listening to people rail about something. For some public libraries it’s not so much about materials, it’s more about programs, because we do things that are very out-front.

I know school librarians sometimes are harassed outside of their homes—things have gotten so personal. It’s hard to say “don’t take it personally” when for so many people, it is personal.

**SICA:** One of the most horrifying experiences I’ve had in my career was with a mother with a high concern about content who just completely unloaded on me. The only thing I had going for me was a piece of paper: a request for reconsideration. Giving it to her took the energy off me and gave her a way to let her righteous indignation pour out. It’s not that we want to give people a form and send them away. It does take the heat off, and it is a coping mechanism. But the follow-up piece of that is, how do we respond?

## “IT’S SO IMPORTANT TO HAVE CERTIFIED, QUALIFIED LIBRARIANS IN SCHOOL LIBRARIES. THAT WILL OFTEN OFFSET MANY OF THE CONCERNS THAT ARISE.”

**KATHY CARROLL,** school librarian at Westwood High School in Blythewood, South Carolina, and 2020–2021 president of the American Association of School Librarians



As we go along in our busy library lives, we do all the things that make us function and serve our public and our students, but we often neglect collection development policy, or we do not have firm documentation or the proper forms in place. Staff training is also key.

I would say immediate engagement is not the way to go. Have that policy or that buffer in between; have reconsideration forms available at your desks and give them out and have a conversation later.

You want to be able to go back and look at the tools that OIF has given us to use and think about it. They have an entire section on just how to contend with challenges. Don’t get immediately in a line of fire—be thoughtful. And constantly remember that we’re modeling a behavior of inclusion here, a behavior of belonging, and trying to reassure people that there is something for everyone and that this one might not be for them.

**CARROLL:** School librarians are encountering many of the same situations, though sometimes the grievances aren’t directly communicated with us initially. That’s why it’s so important to be proactive. If something is happening, we want to be in on the conversation immediately. We want to give the rationale, be the calming force, articulate what’s going on.

It’s also important to be able to articulate why having books that are windows, mirrors, and sliding doors is integral to the development of our students. We would be remiss if we just had books that would provide one narrative—then we aren’t doing our jobs. So that’s something we need to be able to share as well.

**FOR LIBRARIANS WHO MAY FEEL ISOLATED OR FEEL THAT THEY DON’T HAVE ALLIES—**

## OR PERHAPS ARE FACING A HOSTILE BOARD—WHERE CAN THEY START?

**CARROLL:** My first tip is to navigate toward your state colleagues. Almost every state in the country has a strong chapter association. Start getting in touch with like-minded people. You can have productive conversations and come up with strategies as a group.

**MAYCOCK:** Many state library associations have an intellectual freedom committee or other group dedicated to these specific issues that can assist as well.

**SICA:** Reach out to community-based organizations, too. The mighty PFLAG parents will often come in and help support LGBTQIA content, or the preservation of access to that, for example. Sometimes there are supportive churches or other groups that will help to build the empathy piece of it. Building in a platform that enhances or complicates the narrative with the help of organizations that connect community is a way to go.

**HUGGINS:** If you have local allies and partners, that's going to go a lot further when talking to school boards and trustees, because—I'm sorry!—they don't want ALA telling them what's right for their community. You can be buoyed up by all the amazing resources that ALA has to offer. But the face and the voice of your campaign needs to be local.

I've been thinking a lot about students and parents. When that school board member called me, I told him to remember that the parents that are coming and complaining to you are in the minority. Do not have a knee-jerk reaction just because of a small, organized, vocal group. That made me think about how public libraries could better help organize parents and students who want to be activists in their own communities. The National Coalition Against Censorship's website ([ncac.org](http://ncac.org)) has good resources for student-led organizing and parents' organizing, so please check that out.

**SICA:** There's a good example happening in the Houston area. There's a small local independent bookstore—Katy Budget Books, shout-out to you—and they're supporting students. I think they gave away 150 banned titles. Book distribution and student activism are ways to counter the challenges. And if people need a place to rally, they can come to the public library and do it.

**CARROLL:** I think we can all agree no one has the righteous indignation of a teenager. When we get them on our side and we get them to rally together, they're quite vocal and have a sense of conviction like no one else. **AL**

Participate in the 2022 PLA Annual Survey!

## Public Library Services for Strong Communities

Take PLA's annual survey to help the field better understand current trends in how public libraries meet the needs of their communities. Participate now at [librarybenchmark.org](http://librarybenchmark.org).

All U.S. public libraries have free access to Benchmark to complete surveys and view their library's past PLA survey data. Survey participants will be entered into a drawing to win free PLA 2024 Conference registration and get a 10% discount on upgraded access to interactive dashboards in Benchmark. Learn more and view past survey reports at [ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys](http://ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys).

Need assistance? Contact [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org).







# A HELPING HAND

Librarians rally  
to support Ukraine

BY Diana Panuncial and Sanhita SinhaRoy



**R**ussia's invasion of Ukraine has dominated headlines since February, and the conflict has affected people globally—including American librarians. While it's easy to feel helpless when war breaks out in another country, some in our profession have found ways to offer meaningful assistance.

*American Libraries* spoke with three members of the library community who have rallied in support of Ukraine through efforts to preserve cultural information, raise funds for its libraries and affected population, and help its refugees settle in new places: Kristin Parker, lead curator and manager of the arts at Boston Public Library (BPL); Michael Dowling, director of the American Library Association (ALA)'s International Relations Office and Chapter Relations Office; and Millicent Mabi, director of community engagement and programming at Regina (Saskatchewan) Public Library (RPL).

## PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INFORMATION

Outside of Parker's work at BPL, she is part of First Aid and Resilience for Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis (FAR), a network of first responders working to save Ukraine's cultural history and provide preservation advice to library workers on the ground.

**How long have you been doing this work?** I have been involved since about 2016. What prompted me was an earthquake in Haiti. I got a call from a friend who's a filmmaker; she trains teenagers to make films down in Jacmel. After the earthquake, she called me up and said, "Hey, we want to recover our equipment as soon as possible so we can keep recording." The kids wanted to do this, and it was right in the middle of a horrific disaster where human lives were still being recovered, and yet people still were trying to document what was happening around them. I learned more and more that people were going in to rescue paintings in churches and things like that. I just became intrigued about the idea of how to recover cultural heritage during crisis times.

Since 2016, I've been participating in developing curriculum and working with other leaders from around the world; we have a network of people trained in [disaster] response all over the place.

**What kind of preservation work are you doing in Ukraine?** We have a dear friend there, Ihor Poshyvailo. He is founder of the Maidan Museum [in Kyiv]. He was able to evacuate most of his collection because he had a lot of experience.

Because we have such a strong network, we can mobilize people from around the globe whenever we need to, and that's critical. As soon as we knew that [the Russian invasion of Ukraine] was happening, [we] contacted Ihor in Ukraine and said, "What do you need?" And because it's a sensitive time—my network does not parachute into any country or anything like that—we just reached out to the people we know. We had a series of early meetings via Zoom, doing a situation analysis. It's getting all that practical information but also making sure people are safe, because human lives come first, no matter what.

KRISTIN PARKER



Full versions of these interviews were featured in Episode 74 of the *Call Number* podcast.

Listen at  
[bit.ly/CN-Ep74](https://bit.ly/CN-Ep74)

Ihor Poshyvailo, founder of Maidan Museum in Kyiv, holds the ceramic cockerel that has become a symbol of Ukrainian resistance.

**What are the parallels between librarianship and the work of cultural preservation? Where do you see skills overlap?** I've always worked in cultural heritage organizations, so I'm a trained librarian with a specialty in archives, but I've managed art collections my whole career. I've always worked within all kinds of media. But to me, it's about the mission, which is the preservation of knowledge in all different forms. There are multiple ways that librarians do the work of managing cultural assets, including books and libraries. You may not be able to help immediately unless you have a particular skill set, but in the aftermath, and in that early recovery period, you can show that you, as a professional colleague working in the same field, can shore people up. Look around you and you can find ways to reach out and support your colleagues in conflict zones.

**"LIBRARIES ARE  
A SAFE HAVEN.  
THEY'RE PRETTY  
MUCH RUNNING  
ALL THE TIME,  
ALMOST 24/7."**

**MICHAEL DOWLING**, director of  
ALA's International Relations Office  
and Chapter Relations Office

## DONATING DOLLARS

In May, ALA launched the Ukraine Library Relief Fund to support the country's libraries and librarians. Dowling spoke about the fund—which has raised more than \$17,000—and how those donations are being used.

**Can you tell us more about ALA's Ukraine Library Relief Fund?** ALA has a long history of helping out after disasters, whether domestic or international, man-made or natural. We are working with the Ukrainian Library Association, which has an account that they can take in funds for, but it's an account which you have to pay bank transfer fees to each time you add money. We got permission from them to be their collaborator to take in money from the United States, Canada, [and other countries] through credit cards. Each month we send the donations that we receive directly to that fund, so we're paying only one fee for all that money each month.

**How much has been collected since the fund began?** We've raised more than \$17,000. Things slow down a little bit as you move forward, but we're very pleased with the continued support from ALA members and others in the library community, or just supporters of libraries who have heard about the Ukraine Library Relief Fund and donated. We've had close to 200 individual donors, from small numbers up to pretty large numbers, so we're very pleased with that.

**What are some challenges libraries in Ukraine have faced?** In the eastern parts of Ukraine, many libraries have been either damaged or destroyed. There has been some loss of life of a few library staffers, a lot of displacement. Libraries still able to function have been trying to do that as best they can. I mean, there were libraries working just as fighting was going on down the street from them.

Libraries in the other regions are seeing so many displaced people coming to their communities that they want to provide services for. They used to do it for 1,000 people; now they've got 4,000 people coming in who need access to their computers, who are trying to find shelter or food. Libraries are a safe haven. They're pretty much running all the time, almost 24/7.

**What have the funds been used for so far?** They've used some of the money for a couple of locations that needed more computers. A lot of them are buying materials for stress relief for those who have been displaced. For children, art supplies and materials. The Ukrainian Easter was not too long after the war started, so a lot of the libraries created a program where kids could decorate Easter eggs.

**How can readers get information or donate to the fund?** ALA's Ukraine Library Relief Fund website ([bit.ly/ALA-ULAFund](https://bit.ly/ALA-ULAFund)) will take them to the main page with more information. Whatever they can contribute, big or small, we're happy to take that in. It's a continuous effort.

**MICHAEL DOWLING**





Ukrainian refugees traveling from Warsaw, Poland, arrive in Regina, Saskatchewan, on July 4. Regina Public Library began a program to teach English to Ukrainian refugees.

## BREAKING LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Mabi helped launch a program at RPL teaching English language and literacy to Ukrainian refugees in early July, after 230 Ukrainian refugees arrived at the local airport.

**How did your program start?** The program began with a conversation with our partner, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. We identified the need for new Ukrainian arrivals to learn English [or to] strengthen their English language skills, to secure employment once they are in Canada, and—a big one—to build social connections. There is a tendency for people to experience social disconnection when they seek refuge, and trying to connect them back into the community was one of the things that led to this program. We also wanted people to learn about the library and all the support it can provide.

**Do you see evidence that refugees are benefiting from the program?** We do hope that this program helps Ukrainians settle in, learn about their community, and, of course, get a job, because a job is really important to anybody to sustain their previous lifestyle and attain new ones. Some Ukrainians have already signed up for our English learning programs and for our employment program. In fact, one who signed up for our employment program secured a job within weeks of attending that program, and

they spread the news in the community about how helpful the library service was.

**What advice do you have for libraries who want to begin a similar program?** As public libraries, we serve every member of our community, so it's worthwhile to support people who have been displaced—some of them fleeing with little to nothing and starting all over. There's a lot of opportunity to provide a wide range of support to them, and libraries can offer these resources for free.

For us, partnering has really worked. I recommend partnering with other organizations that have similar interests in helping Ukrainians. If there is no Ukrainian-specific organization in the neighborhood, perhaps try immigrant settlement agencies, health authorities, and other organizations. But generally, partnership helps to reach more people. It was through the help of partners and volunteers that we got access to the 230 refugees as they stepped off the airplane. <sup>AL</sup>

**DIANA PANUNCIAL** is associate editor at *American Libraries*. **SANHITA SINHAROY** is editor and publisher of *American Libraries*.



MILLCENT MABI



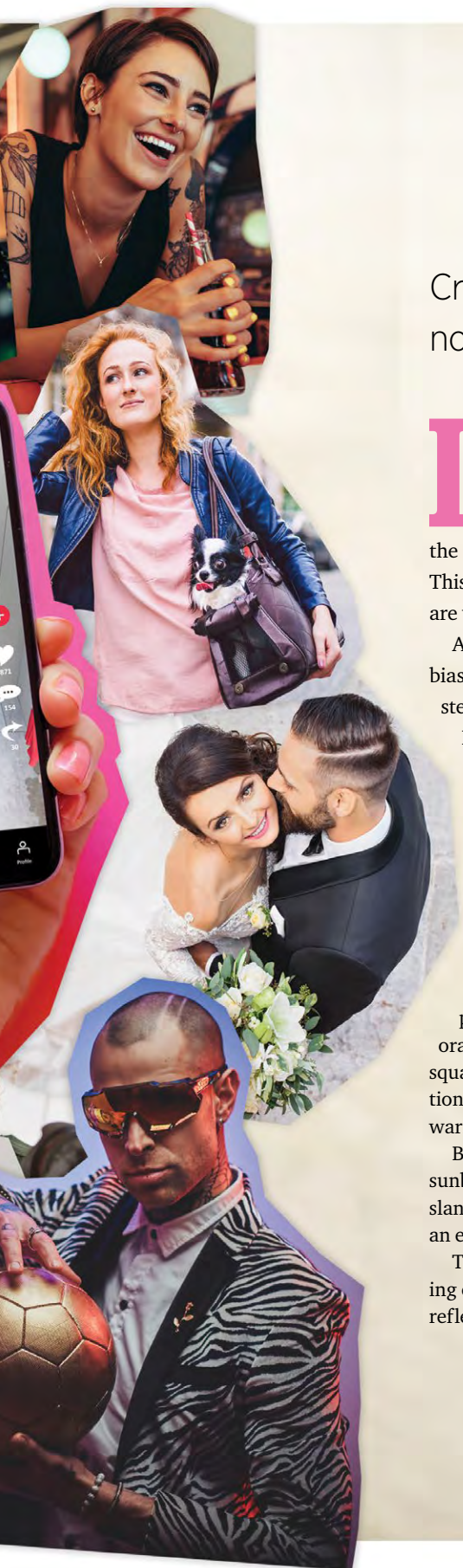


# Learning to Read Representation



Photos: ©Adobe Stock





## Critical media literacy needs to be taught, not left to chance | **BY** Jimmeka Anderson

**L**anguage in the media—whether through visuals, audio, or traditional text—has the power to influence our beliefs about people, groups, and even how we see ourselves. When it comes to media, white men have historically and predominantly been the creators of the language that we have consumed for many years. This has created a large gap between those who create and those who are visually represented in mass media.

As a result, media representations have contributed to negative biases about certain cultural groups and have reinforced harmful stereotypes of marginalized populations that limit opportunities.

Moreover, these representations have generated monolithic narratives for how groups and cultures are represented, while exalting the specific identities of the creators of media.

### CREATING MEANINGS

Representation is the use of language and images to create meanings about people, places, and things. It can be either reflective or intentional. Reflective representation emulates preexisting meanings; it reflects meanings already understood.

For instance, if I were asked to draw a picture of the sun, I would probably draw a circular object on the page and color it yellow, orange, or red. It would be quite peculiar if I drew a black or green square to represent the sun. This is because there is a preexisting convention as to how we depict the sun—in a shape and colors that symbolize warmth and brightness.

But what if you had a negative experience with the sun, such as a bad sunburn? You might want to draw an angry-looking sun with downward-slanted eyebrows, flared nostrils, and fire coming out of its mouth. This is an example of *intentional representation*.

Through intentional representation, people impose their own meaning on an object, person, or experience. Whether the representation is reflective or intentional, it may have been based on an experience or



## Social media gives marginalized populations and youth in general the power to tell their own stories—a power once granted only to professional journalists and media companies.



an impression acquired by the individual. And although the meaning behind that experience or impression may seem real to that individual, it is still only their interpretation.

### THE ILLUSION OF INCLUSION

When the global pandemic forced us all to isolate ourselves in our homes, Saturdays became a time for me to enjoy my favorite TV shows and movies with my 11-year-old daughter after a long school and work week. One Saturday, after watching several reruns of *The Thundermans*, a Nickelodeon show about a superhero family that we both thoroughly enjoy, I observed a trend in all the episodes we had seen: Everyone, in every scene, in every episode, was white.

While my daughter tends to sigh heavily with dismay or respond with “Can we just watch the show?” when I begin to critique any media, I saw this as an opportunity to discuss how the media world was connected to our physical world and the reality of the time. I wanted her to understand that our invisibility in some of our favorite TV shows as Black people, and more specifically as Black girls, should never be normalized. Thus, I began to ask her a few questions.

First, I asked, “Are there any characters in this TV show who look like you or our family?” She took some time to respond. “No, not really,” she replied. “But there are a few episodes with Super President Kick-Butt, who is a Black woman—although she is barely on the show.” We then began to discuss how the show was not an accurate representation of the world we live in and did not reflect how we see people every day who don’t look the same as we do.

As I thought about my experiences growing up watching TV shows with all-white casts, I realized I had validated my “wokeness” of being Black in this world by also watching shows with all-Black casts such as *A Different World* and *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*. So, while I enjoyed shows that could be perceived as anti-Black, in my mind my “Black card” was in good standing in my community, since I was also tuned into Black television shows and movies.

But just as black-and-white TV gave way to color in the late 1960s, and how we long thought the civil rights movement drove racism underground in the United States during that same time period, a critical lens reveals there has been only

the illusion of inclusion, both on the screen and in real life. And this is an illusion that has crippled progress in our society and enabled us to avoid deeper conversations about the 2020 murder of George Floyd, the protests that followed, and the Black Lives Matter murals that were painted on city streets.

### MIXED-UP MESSAGES

Nowadays, young people consume media on average eight hours a day, and Black youth report even more hours of engagement. Black youth are reading messages every day that depict destructive narratives about their existence and are witnessing the killing of people who look just like them. The invisibility and misrepresentation of marginalized communities in the media coincide with the absence of diverse representation in mandated school curricula, and this sends a clear message to the children of these communities that they do not matter.

Mass media is where we get our information and entertainment. But it’s also a commodity. Media is a big-business industry, and whoever owns the films produced, the TV shows we watch, and the personalities we see on our local news station has control over the representation and imagery presented there. Since the mainstream media is controlled by the elite, equitable coverage on issues that impact our society is at risk, and it is a challenge for the voices of communities that lack wealth or political influence to be heard. For this reason, it is important for educators to discuss media ownership with students.

There is a need for more diversity in corporate ownership and among the creatives behind the cameras, in the writers’ room, and sitting in the director’s chair. While media institutions are slow to change, youth can push for positive representation and create their own imagery through critical media literacy. The skills gained through critical media literacy support identity development and media creation, and may lead to media careers that can change the industry from within.

### NO ‘SINGLE STORIES’

One of the main downsides of limited representation or missed representation of marginalized groups in the media is the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes. It is important

to teach students that we are all uniquely different, and our differences should be reflected in the media with diverse representations that extend beyond race, gender, and sexual orientation.

As a Black woman, my experiences may be like those of other Black women, but they are also substantially different because of the other identities I possess. Thus, the need to dismantle what author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has called the “single story” is vital as we redefine representation through new media in our society.

Marginalized communities have used new media and social media to redefine their identities through counternarratives that resist the hegemonic ideologies that oppress their existence. Hashtags such as #BlackGirlMagic and #BlackTwitter have been created to engage in counter-representation in the media. Additionally, #BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName exalt the voices and stories of marginalized individuals who have experienced police brutality and whose deaths have not been covered in the mass media. Social media gives marginalized populations and youth in general the power to tell their own stories—a power once granted only to professional journalists and media companies.

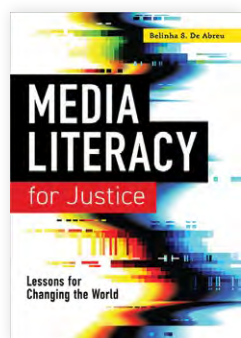
## PRACTICAL STEPS

It is imperative for media literacy educators to help students understand how representations are constructed in the media and how media messaging influences our beliefs about ourselves and others. Here are some exercises I have used to get the conversation started.

To warm up students with a critical thinking exercise, ask them what comes to mind when they hear the word *representation*. You may hear a wide range of answers or simply “I have no idea.” Either response is fine. Explain that representation is created by an individual and communicated to others about an experience or impression of a person, place, or object.

Ask students to name their favorite celebrity (YouTuber, artist, etc.) and describe them in three words. Then ask them to raise their hand if they have ever met that celebrity in real life. More than likely, most students will not raise their hands. Create an opportunity to discuss briefly with students how they were able to describe their favorite celebrity if they have never met them in person.

Help students realize that the representation of their favorite celebrity was created in their mind from what they saw in the media and that if they sat down to get to know them personally, it might be a completely different experience.



This is an excerpt from *Media Literacy for Justice: Lessons for Changing the World* by Belinha S. De Abreu (ALA Editions, 2022).

Therefore, media can make us think we know someone we’ve never met before.

Introduce the idea of *content worlds*. These are constructed spaces or places that exist in the movies we love, the TV shows that become a part of our lives, and the books that capture our imaginations. Some examples of content worlds include Wakanda from the movie *Black Panther* and the island from the classic 1970s television show *Gilligan’s Island*.

An example of a content world I tend to share with students is one that inspired me to pursue higher education as a first-generation college student. That content world was a place called Hillman College, from the 1990s sitcom *A Different World*. Hillman was a constructed place where Black young adults could visibly be themselves. It was a place where people who looked like me and were also bookworms, just as I was, thrived socially.

As an adolescent, I wanted to go to this world and eat at The Pit with Mr. Gaines or hang out in the dormitory with characters Kim Reese and Freddie Brooks. After I introduce Hillman College to students, I ask them to think about content worlds that exist in their own favorite television show or movie and answer some questions:

- **Who made this world?** By asking this question, students begin to understand that this is a constructed world with constructed representations. Have students research the network and corporation behind creating the show or movie.
- **What makes it interesting?** Have students reflect on the constructed elements or characteristics of their content world that engage their interest.
- **Who is present? Who is missing?** Allow students to analyze representation in their content world. Ask them to describe the people included in the world and challenge them to think about who is excluded.
- **Who benefits from this world?** Based on who is represented in the world, ask students to think about why this content world was created for them. Empower students to reflect on what opportunities are being missed in the world from those who are excluded.

Ultimately, thinking about such questions can lead students to reflect on how their identities are connected to, or disconnected from, the characters in their favorite content worlds. As media literacy educators, our goal is to educate them on how to use the media as a tool for positive influence, and to be cognizant of how the representations they construct can either help or harm our world. **AL**



**JIMMEKE ANDERSON** recently received her doctorate in urban education from University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is also founder of I AM not the MEdia, a nonprofit that empowers youth through media literacy curricula and community, and project manager for the Cyber Citizenship Initiative with the National Association for Media Literacy Education. Her book with coauthor Kelly Czarnecki, *Power Lines: Connecting with Teens in Urban Communities through Media Literacy*, was published by ALA Editions earlier this year.



# Deliver a Personalized Library Experience

**D**id you know?

- **Library usage increased during the pandemic.** In 2021, 32% of adults said they had used or visited the library at least once a month, compared with 27% reporting the same in 2020.
- **Libraries can attract new users by promoting electronic resources.** 63% of adults who don't use the library said that if the library offered free ebooks or e-audiobooks, they would be more likely to use the library. Most libraries already do! This suggests that libraries could reach nonpatrons by advertising services they already offer.

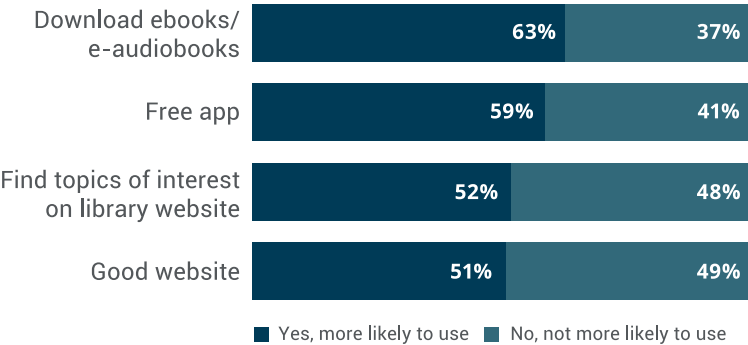
- **Library users want personalized services like those offered by online platforms.** 59% of library users would like their library to provide personalized lists of books to read. 66% would like their public library to send them personalized lists of resources, events, and services.

In late 2021, Innovative, part of Clarivate, teamed with an independent research firm to conduct market research on entertainment habits during the global pandemic.

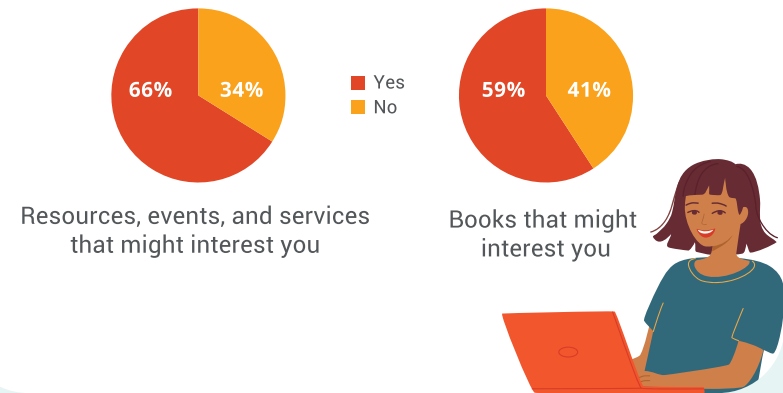
While library usage is up, library-goers are unaware of the full breadth of resources offered by their library. Community members and patrons are also looking for the Netflix-like experience—recommendations based on habits—when it comes to finding content, services, and programs.

That's why libraries are choosing the Vega Library Experience (LX) to engage patrons in new ways.

## Services to Engage Nonpatrons



## Would you like the public library to send you a personalized list of... ?



Vega LX is the first library experience platform of its kind. Encompassing a complete suite of modules, it empowers staff to effectively communicate and manage a full range of programs and services for the library community.

Innovative has made its full report available online. You can request a copy by visiting [iii.com/survey2021](https://iii.com/survey2021). Download the full report today and request a demo to learn how Innovative can help your library increase reach and community engagement. ■



## Library usage is up during the pandemic

Usage is up from  
21% in 2019 to  
27% in 2020 to  
32% in 2021



## Adults use electronic library resources



19%

of all adults reported  
downloading an ebook or  
e-audiobook during that two-year period



## Patrons want more services in more ways



- Free Wi-Fi or computers 
- Option to print at library printers
- Easier ways to obtain books
- Option to reserve makerspaces
- Option to reserve room/video space
- Museum passes on loan 

 **innovative**  
Part of **Clarivate**

Source: Proprietary survey based on a poll of 1,166 adults. Conducted on behalf of Innovative, part of Clarivate, October 28, 2021.

Download the complete library usage research report now. | [iii.com/survey2021](https://iii.com/survey2021)



# The Value of a DEI Audit

What an assessment can show you—  
and why you should care

BY Kawanna Bright



**KAWANNA BRIGHT** is assistant professor of library science at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina, and a DEI consultant.

Academic libraries have long understood the importance of assessing their work. For example, they can look at the impact of their information literacy programs on student success or determine whether their textbook lending program is cost-effective for the library and for students.

Assessment work is multifaceted and needs both leadership and expertise to be successful. When assessments include matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), you have an even more complex situation.

Traditional library assessment practices often exclude DEI elements, or many academic libraries may be unsure about DEI assessments. Yet it's crucial to consider: If institutions are already engaging in DEI work, what is the extent of the engagement? Where might they be missing the mark? What should their next steps be?

This is where two forms of assessment—the whole-library DEI audit and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Self-Assessment Audit (DEISAA)—may fill a void. In 2017, with insight and support from organization development expert Nikhat Ghouse, I created DEISAA to support DEI evaluation for an academic health sciences library ([bit.ly/DEISAA](https://bit.ly/DEISAA)). The library was interested in determining the status and progress of its DEI efforts, ranging from recruitment and retention of historically excluded populations to integration of DEI into library messaging and statements.

DEISAA is not a climate assessment that focuses on employees' individual experiences of DEI within the workplace; it's an attempt to offer a more holistic view of a library's DEI efforts. Ghouse and I modeled it after the Social Inclusion Audit, a toolkit developed by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council that assesses libraries for 12 social inclusion outcomes ([bit.ly/SIATool](https://bit.ly/SIATool)). We expanded and organized DEISAA into six sections suggested by the Star Model, an organizational design framework on which a company bases its design choices ([bit.ly/StarFrame](https://bit.ly/StarFrame)).

Through a free pilot program for individual libraries, DEISAA has evolved to include eight sections—structures, strategy, processes, rewards, people, external DEI, accessibility for users, and accessibility for employees—with more than 60 items for libraries to consider. We have seen through piloting and continued use that some audit items simply don't apply to every academic library, often because of larger institutional contexts outside the libraries' control. Libraries

may adapt DEISAA by removing items or indicating when an item doesn't apply.

Why should a library embark on such a rigorous DEI audit? The value of completing it is threefold: The library gets a baseline for a wide variety of DEI efforts in which it is engaged or wishes to engage in the future; a baseline for future assessment, allowing it to measure progress and growth; and improved organizational communication, as successfully completing the audit requires library-wide engagement and includes all voices. In many ways, our audit shows academic libraries the vast possibilities of DEI work. While this can be daunting, it showcases how important and ingrained DEI work should be within libraries.

Our DEISAA is a dynamic instrument, growing and chang-

ing with each use. It will never be perfect. But with DEI work, perfection should not be the goal; increased effort, improvement, and positive change are more achievable outcomes.

Think of the DEISAA as a starting point, helping libraries to better understand their DEI efforts

and providing them with information needed to make evidence-based decisions and move forward. With continued use, libraries should see fewer DEI items that aren't being addressed and increased engagement overall. **AL**

With DEI work,  
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# Mending Broken Links

Behind the scenes of managing and maintaining e-resources

BY Ashley Zmau and Holly Talbott



**ASHLEY ZMAU** is technical services librarian at Noorda College of Osteopathic Medicine in Provo, Utah.



**HOLLY TALBOTT** is electronic resources librarian at Kent (Ohio) State University.

Electronic resources are a cornerstone of modern library collections. With many libraries offering a robust selection of licensed, purchased, and freely available e-resources, users have come to expect near-instantaneous access to diverse, high-quality content. However, the systems in place to support the discovery and delivery of e-resources to patrons are complex. Depending on the library, a user may pass through as many as five distinct technology components to retrieve the full text of a single journal article. Since those components depend on the accurate and timely transfer of data among libraries, publishers, subscription agents, and discovery vendors, it's unsurprising that libraries and their users experience disruptions in e-resource access.

Like most labor performed in technical services, the work required to maintain e-resources and resolve access issues is largely veiled. We hope that highlighting the breadth and depth of e-resource access issues will help nontechnical services staffers better understand them. We also hope library administrators will reconsider what support—especially staffing—needs to be allocated to maintaining and troubleshooting the systems patrons rely on for seamless access to content.

When someone reports a broken link, the resolution is seldom as simple as correcting a URL. Most libraries today employ a knowledge base and central index to help manage electronic resources and make them discoverable. The benefits of using a knowledge base are many: The burden of e-resource management no longer falls on an individual library for millions of e-resource records, and with a central index, patrons can retrieve more granular, targeted results in their discovery searches. However, the volume of metadata that feeds into these systems is immense.

Broken or misdirecting links are often the result of metadata inaccuracies in these systems. Because the knowledge base receives data directly from content providers, each with its own internal standards, the quality of data can vary from provider to provider. Some knowledge base vendors attempt to augment or normalize this data to keep it consistent across providers, but this process can also introduce additional errors. Furthermore, providers frequently make changes to their platforms, the content on them, and the way that content is packaged and sold to libraries, making it difficult for knowledge base vendors to keep up with the changes. As a result, there is often a time lag between when a collection or resource is modified on the provider's platform and when its metadata is modified in the knowledge base.

Once a troubleshooter has determined and reported the metadata issue that caused the broken link, there can be a delay of several weeks while the knowledge base vendor verifies the issue. This could mean notifying the publisher and requesting corrections, or it could mean reprocessing or reloading publisher data. When the knowledge base is finally updated, it may still take time for the updates to be experienced by patrons in the library's discovery search.

While waiting, patrons need support to meet their immediate information needs. This is where library administrators and other staff members can assist. Administrators can support cross-departmental initiatives to train staff in providing content through alternative routes.

Other support systems can also be implemented, such as Ask a Librarian or contact information for help with access issues prominently displayed on the library's website. Finally,

administrators can do their part by keeping communication channels open with technical services leadership to ensure that any future resources needed to support their library's troubleshooting workflow are allocated as smoothly as possible.

*Adapted from "The Current Landscape of Electronic Resources Access Issues," Library Technology Reports vol. 58, no. 7 (Oct. 2022). AL*

The work required to maintain e-resources and resolve access issues is largely veiled.



# One Goal, Many Approaches

Using the framework of targeted universalism to promote equity

BY Linda W. Braun



**LINDA W. BRAUN** is a California-based consultant and a past president of ALA's Young Adult Library Services Association.

More and more, library staffers across the US are using an equity lens to evaluate and reimagine the programs and services they provide for and with their communities. Libraries have revamped everything from borrowing policies and building hours to job descriptions and outreach efforts to better meet the needs of marginalized groups.

Sometimes when patrons learn their library will take an equity approach to programs and services, they wonder, "What is going to happen to everything that I love about the library?" In anticipation of this question, equity consultant LaKesha Kimbrough suggested that the planning team for the California Library Association's Building Equity-Based Summers (BEBS) initiative ([bit.ly/AL-BEBS](https://bit.ly/AL-BEBS)), of which I am a part, talk about *targeted universalism*.

A framework developed by the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at University of California, Berkeley, targeted universalism aims for better policy outcomes for marginalized groups ([bit.ly/AL-YM-tg](https://bit.ly/AL-YM-tg)). According to the institute, targeted universalism involves setting universal goals with everyone in mind but achieving them with processes tailored to how different groups are situated within structures, within cultures, and across geographies.

San Diego Public Library's (SDPL) social equity policy reflects this framework. In 2019, SDPL decided that branches less likely to secure private donations should receive a higher allocation of city funds. This plan recognizes that less-endowed branches are often in neighborhoods that could benefit more from library services; it doesn't mean other branches don't receive adequate funding, just that a higher share of funds already comes from the community.

Targeted universalism doesn't need to be implemented on a large scale to be effective. When we connect with the people we seek to serve, we learn what support they need, what their barriers are, and what meeting a goal would look like for them. "We are all working together to get to the same place," Kimbrough says.

What does using targeted universalism look like when working toward mutual goals in youth services? The BEBS project provides some insights:

**Identify stakeholders.** We determined that staffers must look beyond traditional programming partners, such as schools and parks and recreation departments, and consider minority-owned businesses, faith-based organizations, and community-led organizations. Equity goals cannot be accomplished without partnering with stakeholders who live in and work with marginalized communities.

**Learn with and from your communities.** What are the strengths of and challenges faced by the groups we would like to serve more effectively? For instance, our project researched what summers are like for marginalized families and where they spend their time during those months. Look at people and groups as unique individuals and communities by disaggregating the data you collect.

**Consider barriers to targeted strategies.** Determine the systemic and structural challenges your staffers and stakeholders may face, and anticipate how to move beyond them. In our project, staffers tried to resolve roadblocks that had prevented partnerships with minority-owned businesses by bringing their observations to library leaders and community members.

**Develop varied approaches.** Acknowledge that to achieve your goal, you may end up designing and implementing different services for multiple and diverse populations. One participating staffer reimagined summer program registration to allow those in communities that

don't often participate in these programs an early registration period and different ways to sign up.

When library staffers adopt a targeted approach, users will come to realize that there is not a loss in services and that equity-based adjustments do not result in any one

group receiving less. Instead, they will see that everyone gets what they need in a way that best suits the individual or community. **AL**

Targeted universalism aims for better policy outcomes for marginalized groups.



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ALA JobLIST is a service of the American Library Association and Association of College & Research Libraries.



# Tools of Engagement

The many layers of social media marketing



**ALLISON ESCOTO** is head librarian at the Center for Fiction in Brooklyn, New York.

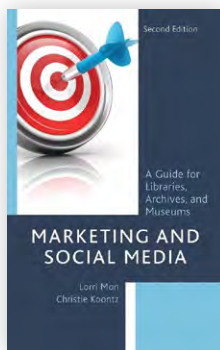


## Marketing with Social Media: A LITA Guide, 2nd edition

Edited by Beth C. Thomsett-Scott

Updated and extensive, this guide offers useful information on the finer points of using social media to market services and build community. Readers at all stages of their careers and at any experience level will find solid advice on choosing the most appropriate platforms for their library, tips on how to best communicate with various audiences, and hands-on technical information for optimal results. Covering Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and other channels, this accessible volume offers perspectives from seasoned library workers in many types of libraries, making it a must-have for anyone involved with a library's social media presence.

ALA Neal-Schuman and Core, 2020. 192 p. \$67. PBK. 978-0-8389-1631-5.

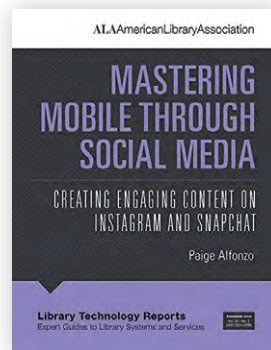


## Marketing and Social Media: A Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums, 2nd edition

By Lorri Mon and Christie Koontz

This comprehensive handbook is geared toward helping libraries, archives, and museums use social media to market programs and services. The chapters contain pointers on evaluating marketing needs, including a breakdown of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, as well as real-world case studies to help shed light on effectively using social media for community engagement. This second edition includes an extensive bibliography for further reading as well as a step-by-step outline for those newer to social media marketing. A great reference for libraries of all types.

Rowman and Littlefield, 2020. 322 p. \$52. PBK. 978-1-5381-4295-0. (Also available as an ebook.)



## Mastering Mobile through Social Media: Creating Engaging Content on Instagram and Snapchat

By Paige Alfonzo

Instagram and Snapchat are the focus of this *Library Technology Reports* issue. Highlighting many aspects of both of these apps, the author pays special attention to the transitory nature of both Instagram and Snapchat stories, providing case studies and advice on posting content to best engage with patrons. Practical through and through, this is a handy guide for any library focused on reaching populations that heavily use these platforms. The case studies are especially helpful in offering insight and ideas.

ALA TechSource, 2019. 44 p. \$43. PBK. 978-0-8389-1815-9.

BY Allison Escoto



### A Social Media Survival Guide: How to Use the Most Popular Platforms and Protect Your Privacy

By Melody Karle

This step-by-step introduction to social media is an approachable guide for anyone—especially patrons—navigating their way through social media platforms. Written for “regular users who just want to understand how things work,” the text delves into the why and how of various apps. Each chapter focuses on a different platform (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, and others); a brief profile of the platform is followed by a rundown of its features and an illustrated guide on how to post, share, and search on the site. This is a great book to recommend to new users of social media and an essential guide to the basics. Rowman and Littlefield, 2022. 184 p. \$19. PBK. 978-1-5381-7114-1. (Also available as an ebook.)



### TikTok for Dummies

By Jesse Stay

Like it or not, TikTok is a platform that has taken over attention spans worldwide, and libraries are increasingly using it to their benefit (see p. 14). This book shows how to create content for the platform and how to understand and navigate through its often confusing formats and algorithms. In classic For Dummies format, it is written for beginners and explains not only how to grow a marketing following but also the etiquette of the platform, as well as offering information on safety. Though not aimed specifically at libraries, there is plenty of information here that library marketers can put into practice. Wiley, 2021. 208 p. \$18.99. PBK. 978-1-119-80341-6. (Also available as an ebook.)



### Books and Social Media: How the Digital Age Is Shaping the Printed Word

By Miriam J. Johnson

Libraries always benefit from keeping up with what's going on in publishing and the book world in general. The topic at hand here should be of interest to librarians everywhere. Exploring the rapidly changing landscape of publishing in the age of social media, the author has a special interest in how writers who “just want to share their work with readers and make a connection” use social media to do that, frequently drifting away from traditional publishing models. Through interviews and surveys of authors and publishers, Johnson takes a close look at the new ways in which writers are working and what that could mean for the future of book publishing. Routledge, 2021. 172 p. \$44.95. PBK. 978-1-03-200135-7. (Also available as an ebook.) 



# PEOPLE

## Announcements

### ON THE MOVE

**Karin Adams** became director of Manitowoc (Wis.) Public Library September 19.

In July **John Baker** became director of Corbin (Ky.) Public Library.

Stony Brook (N.Y.) University appointed **Karim Boughida** dean of university libraries effective September 15.

**Johana E. Orellana Cabrera** became library service manager for branch services at Arlington (Tex.) Public Library effective April 4.

In July University of Utah in Salt Lake City named **Suzanne M. Darais** director of the James E. Faust Law Library, associate dean of university libraries, and professor of law.



In May **Dot Donovan** became special and digital collections program lead at University of Colorado Denver's Auraria Library.

**Brian Edwards** started as director of Monterey (Calif.) Public Library August 12.

**Stephanie Blue Fletcher** joined Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago as head of discovery, metadata, and technical services in July.

Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton named **Linda Marie Golian-Lui** dean of university libraries effective August 15.



**Abigail Higgins** joined Auburn (Ala.) University Libraries as instruction and student success librarian September 19.

In September **Bryan Howard** became director of Delaware County (Ohio) District Library.

### Kudos

In August, Ohio Library Council named **Kacie Armstrong**, director of Euclid (Ohio) Public Library, its 2022 Librarian of the Year. Armstrong—who is being recognized for her efforts to curb learning loss during the pandemic, provide more afterschool activities, and recruit minority librarians, among other achievements—is the first Black woman to receive this honor. ●



**Circe Johnson** began as director of Mansfield (Pa.) Free Public Library June 20.

**Lesley Kimball** became assistant director of outreach at Chelmsford (Mass.) Public Library July 12.

August 29 **Paula Laurita** became command librarian for the Army Materiel Command Headquarters at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama.



**Jake Magnuson** became director of Jacksonville (Ill.) Public Library August 15.

In January **Alejandro Marquez** joined University of Colorado Denver's Auraria Library as researcher support librarian.

**Amanda McLellan** became director of Wittenberg University's Thomas Library in Springfield, Ohio, August 1.

Mondovi (Wis.) Public Library named **Alexa Newman** as director effective May 16.

In June **Julia Pettit** became youth services librarian at Gulfport (Fla.) Public Library.

**Mariana Prestigiacomo** joined Auraria Library at University of Colorado Denver as researcher support librarian in January.

July 1 **Sarah Quigley** started as director of special collections and archives at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



July 26 **Dana Revilla** joined Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library as deputy director.



July 25 **James Ritter** became Tennessee's state librarian and archivist.

Auraria Library at University of Colorado Denver appointed **Kaiya Schroeder** online teaching and learning librarian in March.

July 1 **Jon Shaw** became university librarian for the Jean and Alexander Heard Libraries at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

Rainier (Ore.) City Library named **R. Allen Snider** city librarian in July.

Georgetown University Library in Washington, D.C., appointed **Jason "Jay" Sylvestre** rare books curator effective August 1.

In July **Leslie Vano** became director of Kewanee (Ill.) Public Library.

August 1 **Ryan Zohar** joined Georgetown University Library in Washington, D.C., as Middle Eastern studies liaison and reference librarian.

### PROMOTIONS

Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, named **Consuella Askew**

vice president for  
university libraries  
and university  
librarian effective  
July 18.



**Melissa Rice** was promoted to children's  
librarian at Cranberry (Pa.) Public  
Library August 1.

July 27 Cranston (R.I.)  
Public Library appointed

**Elena Rios** youth  
services librarian at  
its Central Library.



University of Pennsylvania Libraries in  
Philadelphia named **Brian Vivier** direc-  
tor of the Center for Global Collections  
effective July 21.

## RETIREMENTS

July 1 **Gayle Bradbeer** retired as  
researcher support librarian at Uni-  
versity of Colorado Denver's Auraria  
Library.

**Alberta Comer** will retire as dean of  
J. Willard Marriott Library at University  
of Utah in Salt Lake City December 31.

In June **Barb Mann** retired as dean of  
library services at Daniel J. Kaufman  
Library and Learning Center at Georgia  
Gwinnett College in Lawrenceville.

**George Needham** retired as director of  
Delaware County (Ohio) District Library  
September 30.

August 2 **David J. Nutty** retired as uni-  
versity librarian and director of libraries  
and learning at University of Southern  
Maine in Portland after 19 years in the  
position.

In March **Meg Thackoorie** retired as  
youth services librarian at Moorpark  
(Calif.) City Library.

**Inga Waite** retired as director of Monte-  
rey (Calif.) Public Library July 31.

## In Memory

**James A. Benson**, 78, whose library career at St. John's University in Queens, New York, spanned five decades, died June 27. He held the roles of dean of libraries, chief information officer, dean of information resources, vice provost of academic affairs, and professor of university libraries before retiring from St. John's as dean emeritus in 2010. Benson also previously served on the teaching faculties of Rutgers University, University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and as librarian at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) in San Marcos, Texas Southern University in Houston, and California State University, Chico. He volunteered with ALA's Committee on Accreditation and was on the board of directors for the Association for Library and Information Science Education.

**Missy Dillingham**, 64, children's services manager at John P. Holt Brentwood (Tenn.) Library for nearly 38 years, died August 1. She was an active member of the Tennessee Library Association (TLA), serving as head of the Children's and Young Adult Services Round Table and cochairing the Conference Planning Committee. She received TLA's 2011 Daniel A. Taylor Memorial Award for her contributions to children's and young adult services and the 2020 Frances Neel Cheney Award for her contributions to librarianship through the encouragement of a love of books and reading. Dillingham began her career at Sullivan County (Tenn.) Public Library.

**Judith Ann Schiff**, 84, chief research archivist at Yale Library in New Haven, Connecticut, died July 11. She had worked at the library for more than 60 years and served as New Haven's city historian since 2012. She collaborated with aviator Charles Lindbergh for more than a decade while assembling his archives and coedited his book *Autobiography of Values*, later coauthoring the biography *Charles Lindbergh: An American Life*. Schiff was also a founder or cofounder of several local and professional historical organizations, including New England Archivists, the Jewish Historical Society of Greater New Haven, and the Ethnic Heritage Center of New Haven. She was author of the Old Yale column in the *Yale Alumni Magazine* and in 2020 was awarded the Yale Medal, the Yale Alumni Association's highest honor for individual service to the university. ●



## AT ALA

**Marleen Coleman** joined the Public  
Policy and Advocacy Office as project  
coordinator July 11.

**Lian Drago**, meetings manager for the  
Public Library Association, left ALA  
August 12.

June 27 **Megan Janicki** was promoted to  
deputy director of strategic initiatives in  
the Public Policy and Advocacy Office.

**Abeje Schnake** became editorial assis-  
tant for *Booklist* July 18.

August 11 **Lina Zabaneh**, conference  
coordinator for Conference Services,  
left ALA. [AL](#)



# Friday Night Librarian

When Jessica Fitzpatrick, librarian at Mayde Creek High School in Houston, first walked onto the school's football field, she could sense the student-athletes' confusion. "They were very hesitant," she recalls. "The librarian doesn't come to football practice."

Fitzpatrick had noticed that one student group seldom visited the library: athletes. She reached out to football coach J. Jensen and collaborated with him to create a book study program for his players, designed to help boost literacy, ignite a love of reading, and provide a space to decompress.

For two months in fall 2021, the program took place either on the gridiron

or indoors (depending on the Texas heat). The 50-player team read *Trust the Grind* by Jeremy Bhandari, *Walk-On Warrior* by John Willkom, and *The Team Captain's Leadership Manual* by Jeff Janssen, among other books on leadership, empowerment, and sports. "We emphasized that it was not a grade and it was more about personal growth," Fitzpatrick says.

Since the program's start, she notes that many of these student-athletes have improved their grades. Visits to the school library overall have grown by 28% and circulation by 30%. "[The players] wanted more self-help books, they wanted to talk to [librarians], they

wanted to participate in our library events," she says.

Shortly after the football team's book study program kicked off, the boys' and girls' basketball teams established similar programs with Fitzpatrick. On deck to follow suit in the 2022–2023 school year: the softball, baseball, and girls' soccer teams. "It can be a lot of work at times," says Fitzpatrick, "but it's completely worth it getting to see the kids grow and become readers and making those connections to the library." **AL**

**THE BOOKEND** showcases librarians, their work, and their work spaces. For consideration, email [americanlibraries@ala.org](mailto:americanlibraries@ala.org).

Jessica Fitzpatrick (third from left) with Coach J. Jensen (third from right) and members of the Mayde Creek High School football team



Photo: Sadalia Ellis

# ALA

# eLearning



## Grow Your Skills!

### Webinars

*All Webinars begin at 2:30pm Eastern*

#### **Transforming Senior Services and Outreach**

A 90-minute webinar on  
Thursday, November 10, 2022

#### **Conducting a Privacy Audit**

A 90-minute webinar on  
Tuesday, November 15, 2022

#### **Building a Successful Community Literacy Project**

Two 90-minute sessions on Wednesday,  
November 16 and Thursday, November 17, 2022

#### **Transitioning Technical Services to Hybrid and Remote Work**

A 90-minute webinar on  
Wednesday, December 7, 2022

#### **Introduction to Web Accessibility and Usability**

Two 90-minute sessions on Wednesday,  
January 25 and Thursday, January 26, 2023

### ECourses

#### **Genealogical Research for Librarians**

4-week course starting Monday,  
November 7, 2022

#### **Adulting in the Library: Teaching Lifeskills to Teens**

6-week course starting Monday,  
January 2, 2023

#### **Using WebDewey and Understanding Dewey Decimal Classification**

4-week course starting Monday,  
January 2, 2023

#### **ADVANCED ECOURSE: 360° Marketing— A New Approach for Modern Library Work**

12-week course starting Monday,  
February 6, 2023

#### **ADVANCED ECOURSE: Cataloging for Non-Catalogers**

12-week course starting Monday, March 6, 2023



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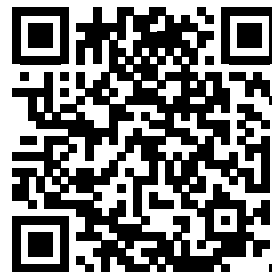


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