



# american libraries

January/February 2023

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

## LibLearnX Preview

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+ **New Orleans  
Dining Guide**

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**PLUS:** Rebecca Makkai,  
Director Resignations,  
Gender-Affirming Closets





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Address: 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1300  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Website: americanlibraries.org  
Email: americanlibraries@ala.org  
Phone: 800-545-2433 plus extension  
Career Ads: JobLIST.ala.org

**EDITOR AND PUBLISHER**

**Sanhita SinhaRoy** → Bananas Foster  
ssinharoy@ala.org | x4219

**MANAGING EDITOR**

**Terra Dankowski** → Oyster loaf at Casamento's  
tdankowski@ala.org | x5282

**SENIOR EDITOR**

**Amy Carlton**  
acarlton@ala.org | x5105

**ASSOCIATE EDITORS**

**Megan Bennett** → Lots of beignets!  
mbennett@ala.org | x4213  
**Diana Panunial** → Aunt Sally's pralines  
dpanunial@ala.org | x4218

**EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING ASSOCIATE**

**Carrie Smith**  
casmith@ala.org | x4216

**ART DIRECTOR**

**Rebecca Lomax** → Pani puri at Mister Mao (see p. 44)  
rlomax@ala.org | x4217

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR**

**Joanne Trestail**

**ADVERTISING**

**Melissa Carr** melcarr@ala.org | 704-491-7789  
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**PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT**

**Mary Mackay** → Gumbo!  
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Editorial policy: ALA Policy Manual, section A.8.2

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## New Year, New Vigor



**Sanhita SinhaRoy**

**T**his issue's cover photo has us feeling festive. LibLearnX makes its in-person debut in January, and what better (and tastier) place for that than New Orleans? Flip through the LibLearnX Preview (cover story, p. 36) and take in the culinary delights that Tami Fairweather plates up in our dining guide (p. 44).

Elsewhere in the issue, you'll notice a troubling throughline: Libraries and library workers are being directly and negatively affected by the pervasive anti-LGBTQ sentiment that has been intensifying recently in this country.

In "Under Pressure" (p. 20), Lara Ewen says "the proliferation of highly orchestrated, politically motivated book challenges in the past two years has been particularly difficult for library directors, many of whom take the brunt of sometimes highly personal attacks." Ewen talks with three directors about their experiences. It's a must-read.

For a broader perspective, turn to our annual Referenda Roundup (p. 30). Bill Furbee writes about "organized groups of politically driven voters" getting referenda on ballots to defund libraries that carry materials about LGBTQ people. In Arkansas and Michigan, for example, groups successfully defunded their local libraries over materials they found objectionable.

But all is not lost. In "Embracing Expression" (p. 18), Emily Udell looks at libraries that have created safe spaces for transgender, nonbinary, and gender-diverse youth to explore their identities. There was some push-back, unsurprisingly, but establishing a wide base of local support helped to fight it. As one library director says, "People were protective, like: 'We don't want folks messing with our kids and messing with the library.'"

And ALA President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada reminds us in her column ("One Voice," p. 4), the Association works tirelessly to combat censorship attempts, whether directed at the LGBTQ community or other marginalized groups.

As we reflect on this spate of book challenges, let us remember to turn to the care, resources, and support that will help us renew our commitment to our work.

*Sanhita*

Libraries and library workers are being directly and negatively affected by the pervasive anti-LGBTQ sentiment that has been intensifying over the past few years in this country.



# One Voice

Using collective power to advocate for libraries and democracy



**Lessa Kanani'opua  
Pelayo-Lozada**

We are as strong as our voices, and our voices are strong when we use them in unity. Let's use our voices to advocate for libraries and library workers everywhere.

When faced with unprecedented and seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the world and in libraries, I ask myself: What is our professional responsibility to one another to overcome shared challenges? The answer is often to connect to institutions of collective cooperation, like our democratic society and our member-led Association.

One of our greatest strengths is the simple and singular tool of using our united voice. When we unite our voices:

- We have the volume and power of a choir to amplify messages and make positive changes.
- Our message is informed by our unique and varied life experiences, our ancestors, and the goals we have for ourselves and communities.
- We act on our responsibility to uphold ALA's mission to "provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all."
- We uphold democratic values by providing our communities with opportunities to be well-informed when they vote.

And, when we unite our voices as a profession, we have tools to help members and nonmembers advocate for—and be the voice of—libraries across the country and the world.

Among those helping us channel the power of our member voices are ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office (PPAO) and its member-led committees. PPAO represents us in Washington, D.C., on issues like digital equity, ebook access, and federal funding for library infrastructure and programs.

I saw PPAO's advocacy efforts at work when I visited Tuscaloosa (Ala.) City Schools and saw certified school librarians providing high-quality books to every student and improving reading proficiency and critical-thinking skills

through projects, such as connecting places in the Jim Crow-era Green Book travel guide for African Americans to modern-world locations. The librarians were supported in large part by a recent Innovative Approaches to Literacy grant—funding that PPAO works to keep front of mind among federal lawmakers.

PPAO and its committees also work with state chapters and local libraries on legislation and policy. These issues range from ebook legislation to censorship threats and beyond. They make it easy for us to have our voices heard around library-related issues with advocacy alerts, sample emails, talking points, template letters to the editor, and more. Sign up for PPAO's alerts on ALA's Advocacy page ([bit.ly/ALA-Advoc](http://bit.ly/ALA-Advoc)).

Additionally, with ALA's Unite Against Book Bans (UABB) campaign, our voices have become a chorus. As we continue to face an unprecedented number of censorship challenges, the work of the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) alongside its member-led committees and round table never ends. OIF provides confidential one-on-one consultations that have amounted to hundreds of hours of assistance for libraries facing challenges. This help has included political and legal support as well as assistance developing and strengthening library policies.

The chorus must continue with vigor. All who love libraries, reading, and the promise of the Constitution must stand up for our freedom to read. UABB's campaign toolkit ([bit.ly/UABB-tool](http://bit.ly/UABB-tool)) helps everyone do just that with sample social media posts, grassroots organizing tips, and more.

We are as strong as our voices, and our voices are strong when we use them in unity. Please join me as we use our voices to advocate for libraries and library workers everywhere. **AL**

---

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



# ALA Finances on Track

Previous fiscal year serves as a building block for growth, stability



**Peter Hepburn**

The most uncertain days of the pandemic seem to be behind us. Like many of our libraries and, indeed, many of us, the Association has been through a lot. *A lot.*

**T**oward the end of week nine of the fall semester, I was looking at cumulative gate count numbers at my library, and I noticed something: Student visits to the library that week (12,727) had surpassed the population (12,017 at the time) of my hometown of Terrace in northern British Columbia. A cool stat for me personally, for sure, but it made me feel optimistic about the number of visits to the library.

As the new calendar year begins, I am carrying that optimism forward. We are approximately one-third of the way through the American Library Association's (ALA) fiscal year, which runs from September 1, 2022, to August 31. The most uncertain days of the pandemic seem to be behind us. Like many of our libraries and, indeed, many of us, the Association has been through a lot. *A lot.* With some sense of relief, and even excitement about times ahead, I bring you an overview of the current state of ALA finance.

The previous fiscal year had its bumps, most notably through the shift to holding the inaugural LibLearnX 2022 virtually. The year drew to a happier conclusion, however. Thousands of us came together for our annual conference in Washington, D.C. The decline in membership slowed, then reversed course somewhat. By the end of the year, ALA had made significant progress on paying down its loans. Throughout it all, the new chief financial officer, Dina Tsourdinis, and her team worked across the Association to close the fiscal year on a positive note; FY2022 was a terrific improvement compared with the two preceding years.

To what can we attribute FY2022's fiscal strength? Credit the divisions for controlling expenses so well. And while round tables contribute far less net revenue to the Association, they collectively did great work in securing revenues while keeping expenses below budget.

Contributed revenue, meanwhile, has grown markedly under the leadership of ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall.

The success we experienced in the last fiscal year sets up the current one auspiciously. When the Executive Board met in October 2022, it approved a final budget that is expected to result in a modest surplus. That alone is good news, but additionally, a welcome aspect of the final budget has been a 3% salary increase for ALA staff in the new year. This was greater than the 2% proposed in earlier iterations of the budget. Moreover, it reflects an appreciation for the hard work staff members continue to do and helps to compensate them for the furlough days the pandemic necessitated.

As encouraging as the previous and current fiscal years may be, the Association's finances are not yet fully stabilized.

The five-year financial plan indicates that we will get there, but it will require the following achievements:

- LibLearnX gaining traction and becoming a viable event year after year
- growing revenue derived from streams that have been highlighted in the Pivot Plan, including continuing education
- continued work by the Development Office to secure contributions

Meanwhile, contributions from divisions, grants, Membership, and Publishing will need to stay strong and grow.

Let me conclude by recognizing the work of the ALA Finance and Accounting Office. Tsourdinis and her team have done exemplary work this past year in stabilizing ALA finances and working with member leaders to communicate the Association's fiscal position. I'm grateful for the collaboration we enjoy. **AL**

---

**PETER HEPBURN** is head librarian at College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita, California.



# Information 911

Five libraries stepping in—and up—for their communities



Tracie D. Hall

**T**his second of three columns, focused on the ways libraries are shaping their services to meet resource gaps in the communities they serve, is in response to a question I was asked in a recent interview: “How will libraries need to change in the next 10–15 years to remain relevant, and where are there current examples of those changes?”

I answered by surveying the ongoing evolution of library and information services. If the first great wave in the late 18th through early 20th century served to pull the public toward literacy in all its dimensions, and the second wave in the latter 20th century helped introduce technological literacy, then the third great wave will be to close the digital literacy and data access gap. To do that, I continued, libraries need to take their rightful place as educational institutions, and library staff need to see themselves as educators.

But that question—like all good questions—stayed with me, prompting me to embark on a study tour to look at the ways libraries are responding to and anticipating information urgencies. My first stops were public libraries in Charlotte, North Carolina; Houston; Los Angeles; Nashville, Tennessee; and Tulsa, Oklahoma. All five have designed comprehensive response strategies for family and/or adult learning.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library’s (CML) shared building and collaborative service agreement with the Children’s Theatre of Charlotte has resulted in a 102,000-square-foot children’s library known as *ImaginOn*. With multiple classrooms, a teen library, production studio, and exhibit space, it is one of the leading providers of early learning and literacy in the nation. Expanding CML’s multi-generational reach is very much on the mind of CEO and Chief Librarian Marcellus Turner.

Under Executive Director Rhea Brown Lawson’s leadership, Houston Public Library’s (HPL) *TECHLink* centers should be LIS sector blueprints. Equipped with cutting-edge digital

resources—including podcast booths, large-format and 3D printers, and industrial embroidery and engraving machines—the centers are set in lower-income communities to create access through proximity and frequently coordinate with the Mayor’s Office for Adult Literacy, also housed at HPL.

At Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL), helmed by City Librarian John Szabo, staffers like Priscilla Rojas-Naiman coordinate with social workers to help unhoused adults find educational and employment support services. Rojas-Naiman told me LAPL’s Singleton Literacy Center has recently placed a special emphasis on reaching out to the transgender community after observing unmet need.

Before Director Kent Oliver retired from Nashville Public Library in summer 2022, library staff noted critical gaps in adult literacy services and not only stepped in to provide basic reading instruction and ESL services but also joined other community organizations in forming the Goal Collective, an initiative centered on strengthening adult learning outcomes.

Led by CEO Kimberly Johnson, Tulsa City–County Library (TCCL) is addressing the city’s history head-on by leading community conversations, programs, and tours that look at Oklahoma’s storied past and help inform future plans for a new branch near the Greenwood Historic District, which arsonists nearly destroyed during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

Bearing out ALA’s mission “to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all,” these libraries are stepping up for their communities in the places they’re needed most.

My next column will explore the school and academic libraries charting new territory in meeting the needs of students and educators. **AL**

Libraries need to take their rightful place as educational institutions, and library staff need to see themselves as educators.

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

# TRANSFORM THE FUTURE

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Look who's on the cover of *American Libraries* magazine this month! Downtown Atlanta's lovely Central Library is part of the design showcase. Reminds me of the advocacy effort to keep the library in this building. Fulton wanted to abandon it. I'm glad they stayed in the building and renovated it instead!

**@ALTURBANIST**  
in response to our September/October 2022 cover story

**f** Tracie Hall's article on censorship is awesome!

**HELEN KAY KENNEDY**  
in response to "Librarianship as Resistance" (Sept./Oct. 2022, p. 5)

## Where Are the Books?

How disappointing to open the September/October 2022 issue of *American Libraries* and turn to the 2022 Library Design Showcase (p. 20) and the 2022 ALA/AIA Library Building Awards (p. 28) articles and see that 16 of 18 pictures of libraries and library interiors were entirely devoid of books! In fact, even the discussions of these spaces seemed to articulate the "Who needs books?" idea. I felt as if I were reading an issue of *Better Homes & Gardens* or *House Beautiful*, with lovely pictures of living spaces that show that personal libraries are irrelevant.

If this is the way that our professional organization depicts the library of the future, can it be any wonder that the battle for funding from political forces becomes more and more difficult each year?

**Arthur L. Friedman**  
Rego Park, New York

## Expanding My Perspective

I have embraced professor Rudine Sims Bishop's metaphor of "mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors" to keep me mindful of the need for students to see themselves and others in books. As a white woman growing up in the 1950s, I was exposed to an all-white world on television. I saw no Black men, and the only Black women depicted were maids. All media contributed to the development of my implicit



biases, which I am working hard to get past.

Jimmeka Anderson's article "Learning to Read Representation" (Nov./Dec. 2022, p. 35) was a wake-up call on my need to expand my perspective to the visual world. Although people of color are more present than they were, in the animated world they are far less visible. I will be more watchful and aware.

**Hilda K. Weisburg**  
Aberdeen, New Jersey

## Abundance Mindset

Executive Director Tracie D. Hall's column "Scared Money Don't Make None" (Nov./Dec. 2022, p. 5) spoke to me in a profound way. As we look to the future, library workers will not only continue to share great stories of how #LibrariesTransform and positively impact their communities but must also manifest an abundance mindset and expectations from those called to support them.

The astronomical returns on social, economic, educational, and entrepreneurial good obtained when communities invest in their libraries demand no less than a boisterous, resounding call to action. As we face movements toward invasive governmental control on autonomy and access, and work to stem the tide of mass corporatization of most media and information, we must insist on fighting against disparity, against inequity, and for the right to read.

We must say our piece and demand our space to continue the good work of libraries.

**Sam Helmick**  
Iowa City, Iowa

## CORRECTION

In our November/December 2022 issue, we mistakenly swapped the photos of Dispatches columnists Ashley Zmau and Holly Talbott (p. 41). The corrected version appears online.

**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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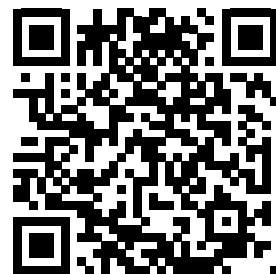


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### Hohl, Suess Seek ALA Presidency

The two candidates for the 2024–2025 presidency of the American Library Association (ALA) are Cindy Hohl, director of policy analysis and operational support at Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library, and Eric D. Suess, director of Marshall Public Library in Pocatello, Idaho.

Hohl is past president of the American Indian Library Association and an active member of other ALA affiliates, including the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, Black Caucus of ALA, Chinese American Librarians Association, and Reforma: the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking. As a member of the Public Library Association (PLA), a division of ALA, she currently cochairs the Membership Advisory Group and was on the PLA Strategic Plan Review Team. Hohl is a member of several round tables, including the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT), Library Research Round Table, and Social Responsibilities Round Table.

Hohl holds a bachelor's degree in organization management and leadership from Friends University in Wichita, Kansas; an MLIS from Wayne State University in Detroit; and a master's in business administration from Baker University in Baldwin City, Kansas.

"With recent activities threatening equity of library service, promoting censorship, and targeting library staff through harassment and other forums, there has never been a better time for an experienced library leader to stand for election as ALA president-elect to lend their voice and provide steady leadership when faced with adversity," Hohl said.

Hohl continued, "As a member of the executive board of the Freedom to Read Foundation, it would be an honor to serve our colleagues through these challenging times to promote a united front across the field, and I am committed to leading in a good way. As an ALA Spectrum Scholar representing the Santee Sioux Nation, I represent diverse viewpoints of our Association, as we continue to build an inclusive and welcoming community together where everyone belongs. We are stronger together!"



Cindy Hohl



Eric D. Suess

Suess is an active member of the Idaho Library Association, a chapter of ALA, where he previously chaired its Intellectual Freedom Committee. He was also a member of the ALA Council for more than 10 years and was involved in several Council committees, including the Committee on Legislation, the Committee on Organization, and the Policy Monitoring Committee. He is currently a

member of the following ALA divisions: the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), Core, PLA, and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). He belongs to several round tables, including the Games and Gaming Round Table, the Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table, IFRT, and the International Relations Round Table.

Suess holds a bachelor's degree in government from University of Notre Dame in Indiana and an MLIS from University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

"It is with enthusiasm and humility that I seek to serve as president-elect of ALA," Suess said. "This is a time of significant change and complex challenges. By seeking and welcoming the collective experience of our diverse membership, we can successfully address whatever comes our way.

"As a leader who has always valued a team approach, I hope to focus on the communication of ideas from every level of our Association with the understanding that excellent input can, and often does, come from unexpected sources. As we address issues of finance, organization, public perception, and the need for growth, it is crucial that we do so while upholding our professional values with intelligence and passion. As we succeed together, we must do so in a manner that inspires future generations to follow our lead," Suess said.

Hohl and Suess will engage in a virtual candidates' forum at 2:30 p.m. Central on February 15. Each candidate will have the opportunity to share a statement and answer questions from members. ALA members can register for the forum at [bit.ly/Pres24-25Forum](https://bit.ly/Pres24-25Forum). Immediately following the forum, ALA members can virtually meet each candidate.

Ballot mailing for the election will begin March 13 and will run through April 5. Individuals must be members in good standing to vote in the 2023 ALA elections. ●

## Right to Read Act Introduced

On October 6, ALA and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) welcomed the bicameral introduction of the Right to Read Act (S. 5064 and H.R. 9056) by US Senator Jack Reed (D-R.I.) and US Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.). The act ensures all students have access to a school library staffed by a certified school librarian. It will also authorize funding to increase student access to fully staffed and appropriately resourced school libraries.

“Today’s school libraries are dynamic centers of learning that provide access to a wide range of materials and technology,” said ALA President Lessa Kanani’opua Pelayo-Lozada in the announcement. “The Right to Read Act, like ALA, insists that all students have the right to read freely and deserve equitable access to a robust collection in their school library.... School libraries bridge the gap between access and opportunity for all learners. Now is the time to scale that success. Every school library should be staffed by a state-certified school librarian.”

“AASL thanks Senator Reed, Representative Grijalva, and their staffs for introducing the Right to Read Act of 2022,” said AASL President Kathy Lester in the announcement. For more information, visit [bit.ly/ALA-RTRA](https://bit.ly/ALA-RTRA). ●

### Legislators Support Library Facility Improvements

On October 28, 54 US Representatives sent a letter urging the House to support federal funding to modernize library buildings nationwide. Led by US Reps. Andy Levin (D-Mich.) and Adriano Espaillat (D-N.Y.), the letter urges the House to agree to the Senate’s proposal of \$20 million for improving library and museum facilities in the final fiscal year 2023 funding bill, passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee on July 28. The funding would be distributed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and would be the first such funding in 26 years.

### AASL Accepting Conference Program Proposals

AASL is accepting proposal submissions for one-hour sessions at its 2023 national conference, to be held October 19–21 in Tampa, Florida. The AASL National

Conference Committee will conduct a blind review of all proposals, evaluating for clarity, originality, and timeliness. Programming decisions will be finalized in May.

Complete proposals must be submitted by 4 p.m. Central on March 1. Submissions will be accepted only via online form. All questions regarding programming at the AASL National Conference should be directed to [aasl@ala.org](mailto:aasl@ala.org).

For more information, visit at [ala.org/aasl/aasl23](https://ala.org/aasl/aasl23).

### Apply for \$3.5 Million in Accessibility Grants

Library workers from small and rural libraries can apply online for the Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities grant through February 28. Up to 300 libraries will be awarded in this application period. A second application period will open in fall 2023

for an additional 300 grants. Apply at [ala.org/LTCAccess](https://ala.org/LTCAccess).

Selected libraries will receive \$10,000 or \$20,000 to support costs related to their community engagement project; virtual training to assist project directors in developing their community engagement, facilitation, and disability service skills; a suite of online resources developed to support local programs; and technical and project support from the ALA Public Programs Office (PPO) throughout the grant term.

To be eligible, a library must be located in an area that’s more than, or equal to, five miles from an urbanized area and with a population of 25,000 or less, in keeping with IMLS definitions of small and rural libraries.

### ALA Scholarship Applications Now Open

ALA has more than \$300,000 in scholarship funds available to students who

## CALENDAR

JAN. 27–30

**LibLearnX** | New Orleans  
[alaliblearnx.org](https://alaliblearnx.org)

MAR. 15–18

**ACRL Conference** | Pittsburgh  
[bit.ly/ACRL\\_2023](https://bit.ly/ACRL_2023)

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)



## UPDATE

are studying in library science or school library media programs at the master's degree level.

Scholarships range from \$2,500 to \$8,000 per student per year. They include scholarships for students who are interested in children's librarianship, youth librarianship, federal librarianship, new media, and library automation. There are also scholarships available for minorities, persons with disabilities, and people who are already employed in libraries but do not have an MLS. The deadline to apply is March 1.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/ALAMLSscholarships](https://bit.ly/ALAMLSscholarships) or call the ALA Scholarship Clearinghouse at 800-545-2433, ext. 4279.

### 2022 YALSA Teens' Top Ten Titles Announced

YALSA has announced its 2022 Teens' Top Ten winners. A list of winners, along with a list of other nominees and annotations, is available at [bit.ly/22YALSATT](https://bit.ly/22YALSATT).

The Teens' Top Ten is a teen choice list, for which teens nominate and choose their favorite books of the previous year. This year's nominators were selected by YALSA and represent book groups from 16 school and public libraries around the country.

### 2023 RUSA Achievement Awards Nominations Open

The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) is now seeking nominations for its 2023 Achievement Awards. More than 20 awards will be distributed across five categories.

Visit [bit.ly/RUSA2023Awards](https://bit.ly/RUSA2023Awards) for a full list. Nomination forms are linked below each award description. The deadline to apply is February 17.

### Advancing Digital Equity through Policymakers

On October 26, ALA released *Leverage Libraries to Achieve Digital Equity for All*, a new report illustrating libraries' work to advance digital equity. The report encourages policymakers to tap the



## Hall Receives Literarian Award

On November 16, Tracie D. Hall, executive director of ALA, accepted the Literarian Award for Outstanding Service to the American Literary Community at the 73rd annual National Book Awards in New York City. Hall became the second librarian, following Nancy Pearl in 2021, to receive the award.

In her acceptance speech, Hall noted that two groups of people have "lit a lifelong fire" in her: people who long to read, and people who fight for the right to read.

"Let history show of this period," Hall said, "that librarians, and the writers whose works they protect from being removed or erased, were on the frontlines in upholding our democracy." ●

expertise of library workers who have designed state and local digital equity plans that have secured federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Detailing the ways libraries represent an excellent return on investment, the report recommends how policymakers, state and local education agencies, Congress, and federal agencies can leverage libraries' existing resources, infrastructure, and reputation for digital equity planning, deployment, and sustainability.

Read the full report at [bit.ly/ALA-DEReport](https://bit.ly/ALA-DEReport).

### ALA and Knology Explore Disability and Accessibility

ALA and the nonprofit research organization Knology have published a review of literature and best practices concerning libraries and accessibility in *Accessibility in Libraries: A Landscape Report*.

The free report explores the different ways disability has been understood and defined over time, the history of

accessibility in US libraries, the current landscape of accessibility, and the resources that are available and most commonly used to include people with different kinds of disabilities into library programs and services.

Read the report at [bit.ly/ALAAiL](https://bit.ly/ALAAiL).

## Women's Suffrage Programming Guide Released

With funding from the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources program, ALA has published *Programming with Primary Sources: Women's Suffrage*, a free resource guide to inspire and help library workers bring primary source inquiry into their book clubs, crafts, and other programs.

Created by librarians in collaboration with PPO, the guide seeks to shed light on lesser-known histories and perspectives from the women's suffrage era and provide user-friendly resources so libraries across the US can lead impactful conversations about this part of our nation's past.

The guide includes six program models; suggestions of ways to pair primary source analysis with book discussions; and helpful resources for analyzing primary sources, learning about women's suffrage, and understanding copyright and fair use. Download the guide at [bit.ly/ALA-PSWS](https://bit.ly/ALA-PSWS).

## Site Chosen for 2023 Children's Literature Lecture Award

ALSC's 2023 Children's Literature Lecture Committee has chosen Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library and University of Dayton as the site of the 2023 Children's Literature Lecture featuring writer and illustrator Bryan Collier.



Bryan Collier

As part of Collier's visit to Dayton, children and teens will have ongoing programming during the week inspired by Collier's art. An announcement of the date and time of the lecture will be announced.

## New Research on School Librarians during Pandemic

Newly published findings from the AASL journal, *School Library Research*, examines school librarians' involvement during the move to online teaching and use of their own funds during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"School Librarians Leading from the Center in Online Learning Contexts: Informal Communities of Practice Creating Space for Connection and Collaboration" presents a study examining the nature and depth of school librarians' involvement. The study found that school librarians' involvement was not explicitly included in district and school initiatives; however, they voluntarily engaged in informal actions and worked independently outside district direction to support students and teachers. The study concludes that schools and districts can and should include school librarians in planning for technology use in teaching and learning and position them as leaders in this work. Additionally, there is evidence that online teaching and learning competencies should be intentionally embedded in preparation programs.

"The Personal Cost of Small Budgets and Underfunded Libraries: Out-of-Pocket Spending by School Librarians during COVID-19," gathers exploratory data on perspectives, details, and artifacts related to how school librarians used personal funds to purchase school-related items during the pandemic.

The research team presents findings that school librarians used their own money to meet student needs, to get what was needed quickly and conveniently, to obtain items they were not allowed to buy with school money, and to avoid dealing with time-consuming purchasing and reimbursement processes—if reimbursement was even an option. School librarians also spent their own money because library budgets were eliminated, reduced, or frozen during the pandemic. Findings also showed those who worked in rural areas with a higher proportion of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch spent the most money.

Articles can be accessed at [ala.org/aasl/slr](https://ala.org/aasl/slr). ●

## 2023 Carnegie Medal Shortlist Revealed

On November 15, ALA announced the six books shortlisted for the Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction. The awards recognize the previous year's best fiction and nonfiction books written for adult readers and published in the US.

The three fiction finalists are *Greenland*, by David Santos Donaldson; *Night of the Living Rez*, by Morgan Talty; and *The Swimmers*, by Julie Otsuka.

The three nonfiction finalists are *Constructing a Nervous System*, by Margo Jefferson; *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden World*

*around Us*, by Ed Yong; and *Vagina Obscura: An Anatomical Voyage*, by Rachel E. Gross.

The two medal winners will be announced at 4:30 p.m. Central on January 29, during RUSA's Book and Media Awards virtual event, to be held during LibLearnX.

More information on the finalists and the awards can be found at [ala.org/carnegieadult](https://ala.org/carnegieadult).

## Registration Opens for ACRL 2023 Conference

Registration for the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) 2023 Conference, to be held March 15–18,



# 2023 ALA Nominating Committee Council Candidates Announced

ALA's Nominating Committee annually nominates candidates from among the general membership for members-at-large of Council. Individuals not selected by the committee were eligible to run for office by petition through December 31. The submissions pool has yielded the following 61 candidates for 36 seats.

## Richard E. Ashby Jr.

Director  
Sharon Hill (Pa.) Public Library

## Caitlin Bagley

Instruction Librarian and Chair  
Foley Library  
Gonzaga University  
Spokane, Washington

## Jennifer Boettcher

Business Librarian  
Georgetown University  
Washington, D.C.

## Vivian Bordeaux

Head, Technical Services  
Bridgeport (Conn.)  
Public Library

## Steve Borrelli

Head of Library Assessment  
Penn State University Libraries  
University Park, Pennsylvania

## Kathleen Breitenbach

Teen Librarian  
Hamilton (N.J.) Free  
Public Library

## Joy Bridwell

Librarian  
Stone Child College  
Box Elder, Montana

## Jennifer Brown

Executive Director  
The Field Library  
Peekskill, New York

## Elizabeth Burns

Associate Professor  
Old Dominion University  
Norfolk, Virginia

## Nick Buron

Chief Librarian  
Queens (N.Y.) Public Library

## Diana Colby

District Library Facilitator  
and Library/Media  
Technology Specialist  
Keller (Tex.) Independent  
School District

## Kate Cummings

Research and Instruction  
Librarian  
University of Scranton  
in Pennsylvania

## LaKeshia Darden

Associate Librarian  
Palm Beach Atlantic University  
West Palm Beach, Florida

## Jim DeRosso

Assistant Director,  
Catherwood Library  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, New York

## Emily Dowie

Teen Librarian  
Greenburgh Public Library  
Elmsford, New York

## Jason Driver

Library Director  
Kitsap Regional Library  
Bremerton, Washington

## Diane Gill

Assistant Professor of  
Professional Practice  
Louisiana State University in  
Baton Rouge

## April Hernandez

Director  
Goddard (Kans.) Public Library

## Carrie Herrmann

Library Director  
Boone County Public Library  
Burlington, Kentucky

## Chad Hetterley

Acting Library Director  
Grapevine (Tex.) Public Library

## Mihoko Hosoi

Associate Dean for Collections,  
Research, and Scholarly  
Communications  
Penn State University Libraries  
University Park, Pennsylvania

## Aubrey Iglesias

Cataloging Librarian  
New Mexico State University  
in Las Cruces

## Barbara Johnson

School Librarian  
Jack Jackter Intermediate  
School  
Colchester, Connecticut

## Amanda Jones

Teacher-Librarian  
Live Oak Middle School  
Denham Springs, Louisiana

## Bradley Kuykendall

Floating Manager  
Dayton (Ohio) Metro Library

## Stephen Lajoie

Assistant Library Director  
and Technology Librarian  
Ipswich (Mass.) Public Library

## Nicole LaMoreaux

Assistant Director, Research  
and Instructional Services  
The New School  
New York City

## Binh Le

Interim Head Librarian  
Penn State Abington  
in Pennsylvania

## Dennis Leloup

Retired School Library Advisor  
Indianapolis, Indiana

## Tina Lerno

Librarian II, Digital  
Content Team  
Los Angeles Public Library

## Tatanisha Love

Library Media Specialist  
Baltimore County  
Public Schools  
Owings Mills, Maryland

in Pittsburgh and virtually, is open. Academic libraries are addressing an increased emphasis on remote learning, rising calls for social justice, and an acknowledged need for flexibility that supports a sustainable work-life balance.

ACRL 2023 will explore these issues and more around the theme of "Forging the Future."

Virtual registration includes live-streams of the opening and closing keynotes, hybrid programs with live

chat, virtual-only presentations, and networking and wellness opportunities. All registrants will receive full virtual conference access for one year. Early bird registration rates are available through January 10.

**Sandra McCarthy**

Faculty Librarian  
Washtenaw Community College  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

**Kerrie Mierop**

Youth Services Librarian  
Calabasas (Calif.) Library

**Anne Miskewitch**

Executive Director  
Schaumburg (Ill.) Township  
District Library

**Derek Mosley**

Archivist  
Fulton County Library System  
Atlanta

**Toni Negro**

Retired Librarian  
Rockville, Maryland

**Janice Newsum**

Assistant Professor,  
School Library and  
Information Science  
University of Houston–  
Clear Lake in Texas

**Nadia Orozco-Sahi**

Library Information Specialist III  
University of New Mexico  
in Albuquerque

**Michelle Osborne**

Branch Supervisor  
Gaston County Public Library,  
Stanley (N.C.) Branch

**Andrew Pace**

Executive Director  
University System of  
Maryland and Affiliated  
Institutions Library  
Consortium in Adelphi

**Liz Philippi**

School Program Coordinator  
Texas State Library and  
Archives Commission  
Austin

**Abigail Phillips**

Assistant Professor  
University of  
Wisconsin–Milwaukee

**Corinthia Price**

School Librarian  
The Green Vale School  
Old Brookville, New York

**Brenda Pruitt-Annisette**

K–12 Educator and Researcher  
DeKalb County School District  
Stone Mountain, Georgia

**Kathleen O’Connell Renaud**

Director of Operations  
Friends of the Ottawa (Ont.)  
Public Library Association

**Leah Richardson**

Special Collections Librarian  
George Washington University  
Washington, D.C.

**Alexandra Rivera**

Associate Dean for Diversity,  
Inclusion, and Organizational  
Development  
Michigan State University  
Libraries  
East Lansing

**Jillian Rudes**

School Librarian  
New York City Department  
of Education in Queens

**Edward Sanchez**

Head, Library Information  
Technology

Marquette University, Raynor  
Memorial Libraries  
Milwaukee

**Matthew Shaw**

Dean of University Libraries  
Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana

**Jahala Simuel**

High School Librarian  
District of Columbia  
Public Schools  
Washington, D.C.

**Heather Sostrom**

Library Branch Manager  
St. Johns County Public  
Library System  
St. Augustine, Florida

**Pauline Stacchini**

Executive Director  
Emporia (Kans.) Public Library

**David Stokes**

PhD Candidate and  
Teaching Assistant  
University of California,  
Los Angeles

**Melissa Sutter**

Outreach and Reference  
Librarian  
Rogers Memorial Library  
Southampton, New York

**James Teliha**

Dean of Library and  
Learning Commons  
Utica (N.Y.) University

**Joseph Thompson**

Director of Public Services  
Carroll County Public Library  
New Windsor, Maryland

**Gail Tobin**

Branch Manager  
Schaumburg (Ill.) Township  
District Library, Hanover  
Park Branch

**Janice Welburn**

Dean Emerita, Raynor  
Memorial Libraries  
Marquette University  
Milwaukee

**Harriet Wintermute**

Head, Metadata Services  
Iowa State University Library  
Ames

**Ning Zou**

Associate Director, Student  
Academic Services and  
Learning Design and  
Research Librarian  
Harvard Graduate School  
of Education  
Cambridge, Massachusetts •

## 2023 Election Dates

Ballot mailing for the 2023 ALA election begins on March 13. The election closes April 5. Renew your membership by January 31 to ensure that you receive your ballot for the 2023 ALA election. •



### President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities Reinstated

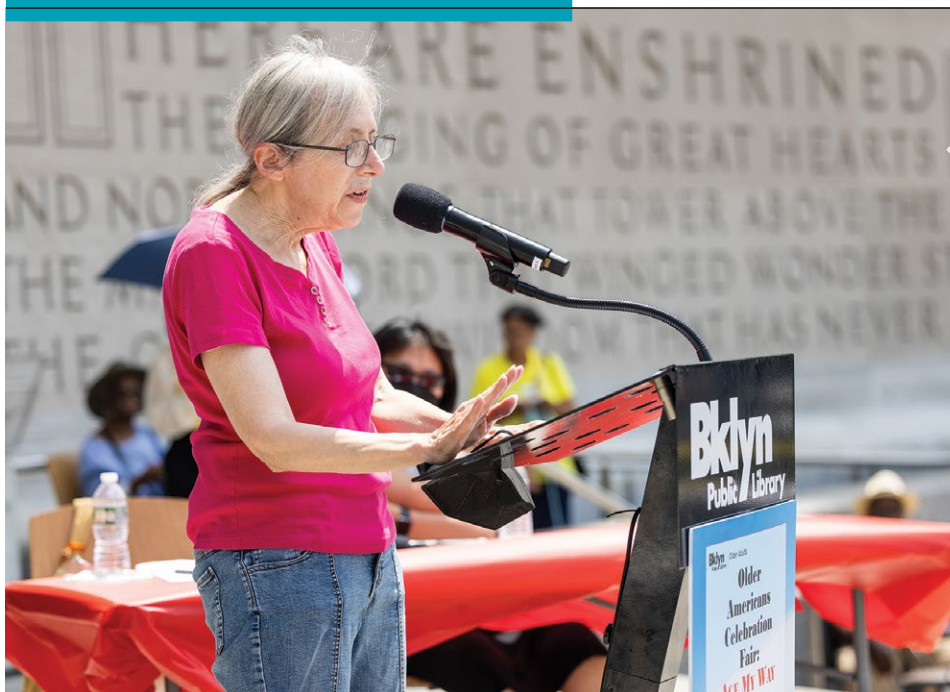
In an October 3 statement, ALA welcomed President Biden’s Executive Order on Promoting the Arts, the Humanities, and Museum and Library Services. The

Executive Order establishes the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities within IMLS. The order was announced on October 1, within a proclamation declaring October 2022 National Arts and Humanities Month.

The committee will work directly with the Biden Administration and three cultural agencies: IMLS, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, along with other federal entities. [AL](#)



# TRENDS



Starting in fall 2021, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library offered three pilot sessions of its Senior Debate program, during which older adults practiced and competed in debates.

## Making a Statement

Libraries bring debate clubs to new audiences

BY Megan Bennett

**A**s a library volunteer who works with elementary school students, Catherine Tong knows young people can have big opinions.

“Kids are very strong critical thinkers,” says the University of California, Berkeley, sophomore. “They’re natural at questioning the status quo.” Yet Tong says not many spaces exist for children to participate in conversations about social justice.

In 2019, as a high school junior, Tong approached San José (Calif.) Public Library (SJPL) staffers with a programming idea to teach kids about a variety of social issues and, at the same time, hone their public speaking and presentation skills. The result was Speech and Debate: Global Citizenship, a 12-week course for 3rd–5th graders that

launched in early 2020. SJPL has since run the program seven times.

With help from Tong and other volunteer instructors, students learn the basics of speech, such as proper body language and how to structure and support claims—for example, why people of various genders and sexualities should be able to express themselves without experiencing discrimination, or why people who are unhoused need support beyond shelter. Participants make a final presentation in front of the group, and each session centers on current or historic social justice topics, with the program so far covering Black Lives Matter, colonization, and LGBTQ issues.

“There are kids who don’t know they can have a voice,” says Bridget Kowalczyk, the SJPL youth services librarian who oversees the

program. “They’re learning they have every much right as any other child to speak out on something.”

Though many high schools and colleges offer speech classes and debate clubs, public libraries are increasingly creating programs for patrons who aren’t part of that traditional demographic—particularly elementary schoolers and older adults.

“In this day and age, it’s all about networking and being able to have conversations with people,” says Tamara Lyhne, head of children’s services at Fairfield (Conn.) Public Library (FPL), who organized a debate program for kids at her library in summer 2021. Instilling those skills in young people, she says, makes a community stronger.

### Keeping it civil

Program coordinators say debate not only builds participants’ confidence but also helps them develop research skills, as they learn to form credible arguments in a world rife with misinformation.

“The free exchange of ideas is what the library is all about,” says Lyman Clayborn, coordinator of the Services for Older Adults department at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library (BPL). In partnership with the nonprofit Association for Senior Debate, Clayborn’s department ran three six-week pilot sessions starting in fall 2021.

BPL defines *older adults* as anyone 55 and over; Senior Debate for Older Adults has attracted participants as

“The free exchange of ideas is what the library is all about.”

**LYMAN CLAYBORN**, coordinator of the Services for Older Adults department at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library

old as 94, says Berena Hughes, BPL’s outreach program assistant and a debate program coordinator.

“We have a diverse and dynamic senior demographic,” Hughes says. “A lot of them can bring their experiences, add that to a program like Senior Debate, and make the debates interesting, spirited, and fun at the same time.”

Each session culminated in a tournament in which teams argued the affirmative or negative to resolutions such as “The US should implement a universal basic income” and “Sending NASA to Mars would be a waste of taxpayer dollars.”

Above all, Hughes says Senior Debate promotes the concept of civil discourse.

“We don’t make things personal, and we don’t take things personally” is the instruction she gives participants. “Gladly disagree, not a problem, but we’re not going to get ugly.”

### Building connections

As COVID-19 forced BPL and other libraries to pivot their programming online, Senior Debate debuted over Zoom, though it eventually moved to a hybrid model. By the time the program started, Hughes said most participants had some experience with videoconferencing through other library programs or socializing with family and friends. Anyone

who needed extra help was referred to a BPL digital literacy associate who could assist with technology questions.

Early in the pandemic, Clayborn and Hughes say patrons especially wanted to take up new skills and feel less isolated. Senior Debate brought new faces to the library—and fostered new friendships. To spread the word about the program, Hughes advertised via email, social media, and the library’s website. When patrons returned to BPL in higher numbers in summer 2022, she set up promotional tables at 20 of the system’s 60 locations.

When FPL offered debate as part of its 2021 summer reading program, most people who signed up were library newcomers. FPL’s program met outdoors to accommodate social distancing, and a dozen 3rd–5th graders were able to socialize in a way that hadn’t been possible after more than a year of online schooling, Lyhne says.

Over four weeks, kids prepared for a final public debate inspired by Jerry Pallotta’s *Who Would Win?* children’s book series. Teams took sides arguing which animals would win in a battle: tiger versus cheetah, snake versus panda, and so on.

For their arguments, students learned how to conduct research using reference books, particularly learning how to use an index.

“We did not say, ‘Go home and google it,’” Lyhne explains.

After the students presented their positions to staffers and parents, Lyhne says the audience

## BY THE NUMBERS

# Presidents’ Day

## 1955

Year Congress passed the Presidential Libraries Act, establishing the Presidential Library System. Before that, many presidents’ archives were lost, destroyed, or separated.

## 887,000

Number of copies of Barack Obama’s 2020 memoir, *A Promised Land*, that sold in the US and Canada within the first day of publication—a record for publisher Penguin Random House.



## 166,573

Square footage of the John F. Kennedy Library. The library, located in Boston, is the Presidential Library System’s largest in terms of area.

## 16

Number of Pulitzer Prizes awarded for biographies written about presidents. The most recent was 2011’s *Washington: A Life* by Ron Chernow.

## 4,042

Number of reels that make up the notorious Nixon White House Tapes collection held by the Richard Nixon Presidential Library. As of 2018, the entire collection had been digitized.



## 6,400

Number of books housed at the National First Ladies’ Library in Canton, Ohio. The library is part of the First Ladies National Historic Site, located at and around the family home of former First Lady Ida Saxton McKinley.

Continued on page 19 ▶



# Embracing Expression

Gender-affirming closets offer youth a space to explore identities

BY Emily Udell

When a mutual aid organization approached Annika Clark about her library hosting a gender-affirming closet, she says the timing was perfect.

"We have a diverse staff that wants this kind of thing," says the associate librarian at Salt Lake City Public Library's (SLCPL) Glendale branch. And Clark had been looking for new ways to connect staff members with local outreach efforts.

Gender-affirming closets—places or events where people can sort through free clothing, accessories, and makeup to find items that help them explore or express their identities—have been appearing at schools, universities, and libraries across the country. SLCPL is one of a handful of libraries to partner with community groups to host these programs for transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse youth,

particularly those who may not have access to resources that support their identities or may experience discrimination when shopping for personal items.

"The response was incredible," Clark says of the August 2021 gender-affirming closet pop-up event that SLCPL collaborated on with Salt Lake Community Mutual Aid (SLCMA). "I could see patrons having fun going through the racks, commenting on cute clothes. I overheard [one] gushing over a pair of heels that fit perfectly."

Clark says she was able to collect a truckload of items from library staffers for the event, including gently used clothing and accessories like dresses, jeans, jackets, and scarves. The library worked with SLCMA to outfit one of the Glendale branch's meeting rooms like a browsable boutique, without any gendered sections. The aid organization also provided chest binders, garments used to flatten breast tissue to minimize its appearance.

A space adjacent to the meeting room served as a fitting room, and SLCPL staffers curated a collection of LGBTQIA-themed books and media available for checkout and displayed pamphlets on community resources. About 30 people attended the pop-up, and SLCMA kept leftover donations for similar future events.

"We have people on the staff who are transgender and gender-nonconforming, and it was affirming to have the system host an event," says Brooke Young, manager of SLCPL's Glendale branch. "The mood we were going for was really welcoming and open."

## Outside opposition

Planning and hosting gender-affirming events, however, has come with local and even national pushback. Last summer, a teens-only back-to-school bash at Fayetteville (Ark.) Public Library (FPL) was canceled after marketing materials that mentioned a drag show created a stir.

"It's a sad reflection of where we are that something like this happened," says David Johnson, FPL's executive director.

The event was meant to include a gender-affirming closet and haircuts, LGBTQ+ literature and community resources, a barbecue lunch, and a dance party with a DJ in the library's large event space.

The bash was scheduled for August 7, 2022, but on July 29 the mayor's office forwarded an angry letter to Johnson, which was followed by a cascade of calls and emails expressing opposition. A portion of the feedback came from outside Fayetteville and focused on the drag show, which was mentioned in promotional fliers produced by Equality Crew, a local LGBTQ+ youth support nonprofit and the library's partner for the event. Equality Crew ultimately decided to pull the plug on the event, though Johnson says the

"Projects like this send a very direct message to our young people that the library values them for who they are."

**KIRSTEN BRODBECK-KENNEY**,  
director at Driftwood Public Library  
in Lincoln City, Oregon





library is open to collaborating with the organization on future events.

"There was a fear and feeling of potential violence [from detractors]," Johnson says. "It's unfortunate."

### Cultivating support

At Driftwood Public Library (DPL) in Lincoln City, Oregon, a fundraising event for a gender-affirming closet last summer drew some ire in a local online group, followed by angry calls, emails, and social media posts.

"I got out of the shower, and my phone was blowing up with notifications," says DPL Director Kirsten Brodbeck-Kenney. "They were calling us groomers and pedophiles."

Conservative media outlets, including Daily Caller and Breitbart News Network, reached out to the library for statements. DPL turned to the city's public relations firm, local law enforcement, and Western States Center, an organization that monitors extremist groups, to navigate the onslaught of attention. After a stressful week of managing the situation, the library's August event went off without a hitch, attracting 120 attendees, raising more than \$800, and collecting many items for its gender-affirming closet.

The event, spearheaded by a teen intern at DPL, included a scavenger hunt, face painting, a silent auction, and a speech from transgender identity researcher Bethany Grace Howe. To

lay the groundwork for the fundraiser, the intern met with members from the local Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations.

The intern created an Amazon wish list for those who wanted to support the effort from afar or get ideas about what items to donate. DPL collected dresses, suits, binders, sports bras, and jewelry.

Brodbeck-Kenney says establishing a wide base of support in town was key in weathering the event's backlash.

She says that "when things went a little pear-shaped," the library received significant support from local businesses and community leaders. "People were protective, like: 'We don't want folks messing with our kids and messing with the library,'" Brodbeck-Kenney says. "That really helped."

A permanent location for the gender-affirming closet remains in limbo after space at the local high school failed to pan out. The library is partnering with a local organization that serves LGBTQ+ youth to identify a long-term home for the collection.

"Projects like this send a very direct message to our young people that the library values them for who they are," Brodbeck-Kenney says, "and that this is a place they can come to learn, grow, and find connections." **AL**

**EMILY UDELL** is a freelance writer based in Indianapolis.

◀ Continued from page 17

ended up not declaring any winners. "The [kids] just had a really good time," she recalls. "And it was nice to see because it had been such a long year."

Despite COVID-19 restrictions loosening, SJPL's program has stayed virtual to keep it accessible for students and volunteers across the city. The library provides laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots to participants who need them, says Tiffany Bradford-Oldham, senior librarian and branch manager at SJPL who helps manage the program.

Having a virtual program also enables greater transparency with parents, Bradford-Oldham adds, because they can listen in on sessions. "They could talk to their children about what they learned and maybe even give some insight into how that relates to their day-to-day lives," she says.

For libraries interested in creating a debate program for younger children, support from both caregivers and library administration is crucial, Bradford-Oldham says—especially if the program will cover subjects that could be deemed controversial.

"We haven't seen a lot of pushback, but I think it's [because of] the strength of where we are as a state and our willingness to be very upfront," she says.

Program coordinators also emphasized the importance of flexibility—not only to adjust the debate curriculum to match the pace of the class but also for those running the program. BPL's Hughes notes she had no debate experience before her library's program but gave herself room to learn alongside participants.

Debate is something any patron can master, Hughes says, regardless of age or experience level.

"Don't count [anyone] out," Hughes says. "No matter how old they are." **AL**

**MEGAN BENNETT** is an associate editor at *American Libraries*.



# Under Pressure

Why three library directors resigned following community challenges

by Lara Ewen

**W**hen a handful of books stopped being returned at Vinton (Iowa) Public Library, Janette McMahon suspected it was more than just forgetfulness. McMahon, the library director at the time, says residents of the east central Iowa town of 5,000 had been discussing book bans, and it had become heated.

“We had five books that a conservative community member objected to,” she says, referring to LGBTQ books and titles about President Joe Biden and Vice

President Kamala Harris. “We have the form to fill out. There’s a process that would work if people would go through it.” Instead, McMahon says, the patron did not file a complaint or reconsideration request with the library but rather chose to keep the books so they would no longer be in circulation. “There’s a fine line between being stolen and just being overdue.”

But then the situation escalated. “Staff were called heathens, and there were worse words for our LGBTQ staff,” says McMahon, who

has since become director of the DeWitt (Iowa) Community Library after resigning in July 2021. The attacks came from several community members, she says, and it was difficult to pinpoint exactly why they were happening. “I only saw the situation getting worse,” McMahon says. “I decided to leave, for my own mental health and happiness.”

## Personal attacks

Book challenges are nothing new, and most libraries have protocols in place for responding to complaints about materials, programs, and other issues. But the proliferation of highly orchestrated, politically motivated book challenges in the past two years has been particularly difficult for library directors, many of whom take the brunt of sometimes highly personal attacks.

Of the 2,532 bans of individual books logged by PEN America from July 2021 through June 2022, 96% of challenges did not adhere to the best-practice guidelines for book challenges outlined by the American Library Association and the National Coalition Against Censorship. The bans, and the controversies associated with them, have created environments so hostile that some library directors like McMahon have resigned as a result.

In Hillsdale, a town of 8,000 in south central Michigan, a board proposal to ban certain books led to compounding problems. “[Trustees] wanted more strict collection development,” says Bryonna Barton, who resigned from her position as director of Hillsdale Community Library in June 2022 after repeated character attacks directed at her related to the proposed bans.

“One social media post said I was grooming children,” says



Barton, now director at Eaton Rapids (Mich.) Area District Library. “[A library board member claimed] I had started to fill the library with LGBTQ, critical race theory, and pornographic materials. There were a lot of accusations, and my words continued to get twisted.”

Finally, Barton saw no choice but to leave. “Safety was a factor for me,” she says. “I also felt like it was a way to save the library’s reputation.”

### Crisis mode

When Martha Furman became interim director at ImagineIF Libraries in Flathead County, Montana—population 108,000—in summer 2021, she says the board was “continuously blurring the line between trustee and director.” Board members began involving themselves in operations like collection management and staffing decisions, she says, and “disregarding the professional advice of the experts on hand.”

The board often crossed professional boundaries, Furman adds, and members wanted to watch library staffers as they selected books to purchase. “None of these were casual requests,” she says. “There was a continued, prolonged pressure.” Furman served four months and now works as operations manager at Lewis and Clark Library in Helena, Montana.

She says a significant amount of her time was spent in crisis mode, managing board interventions and actions—and that staff members were profoundly affected.

“We had a handful of queer staffers who felt very shaken by some of the things being said in the community and the nature of the challenges,” Furman says, adding that the ImagineIF board

“Safety was a factor for me. I also felt like it was a way to save the library’s reputation.”

**BRYONNA BARTON**, former director of Hillsdale (Mich.) Community Library

also downgraded the director’s and children’s librarian’s salaries after she left in December 2021. “It’s hard on staff to feel devalued and defunded,” she says. “It felt like dismantling.”

### Escalating intensity

McMahon says hurdles still exist in her new position at DeWitt but that she’s handling them differently. In June 2022, the library featured Jason Tharp’s *It’s Okay to Be a Unicorn!* in a StoryWalk—an outdoor path that features children’s book pages and takes families on self-guided story-times. When pages disappeared from the path and she received a phone call saying the book was “inappropriate for the StoryWalk,” McMahon says the library put out a statement on social media and talked with the local newspaper. “We made it very public. We made sure everybody knew what was happening.”

McMahon says a resulting widespread community support for the library seemed to quiet the critics. “Maybe we would have been more protected [in Vinton] had everything been more public.”

Furman says that going public at ImagineIF helped garner community support, though it ultimately

didn’t prevent her resignation. When the situation intensified, she says, she posted a letter on the library’s Facebook page—and emailed it to county commissioners, trustees, and staff—describing what was happening, outlining community concerns, and explaining the duty of public libraries.

The response was “overwhelmingly positive,” she says. “It helped tamp down rumors and helped people understand why the library has things they might not approve of. I think of that as a bold move. [But] the board was not happy.”

For Barton, having a support system in the library community helped “talk me off the ledge.” Library worker friends prepped her on questions to anticipate, but she wishes there was an organized support group for librarians. “We’re not designed for that much hatred,” Barton says. “How do you get over that trauma?”

McMahon says she still wrestles with what happened in Vinton.

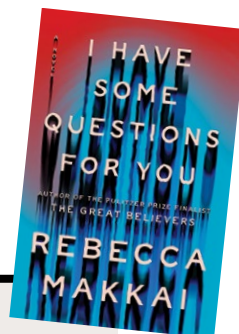
“I feel strongly about standing up for materials and intellectual freedom,” she says. “But am I not the fighter I hoped I was? Those thoughts run through your head. The other part of your brain tells you, ‘This is making you ill. This is making you hate your job.’ I still feel [leaving] was the right thing for me, even though there’s that tiny thing that says maybe if I had fought a little harder, it might have made a difference.”

Yet leaving also sends a powerful message. “The decision to resign was an act of self-preservation,” Furman says. “But it was simultaneously an act of resistance.” **AL**

**LARA EWEN** is a freelance writer based in Brooklyn, New York.

# Rebecca Makkai

Prize-winning novelist on trying to understand what goes on in other people's heads



**of being a predator for dating a younger woman (who was 21 years old) 15 years prior, before he and Bodie met.** Yes, that's the paradox Bodie finds herself in. We're seeing people pilloried for nuanced decisions, or for

things that maybe seemed okay to everyone 20 years ago but now don't seem okay. Does that mean we hold them to the standards of now versus the standards of then? Sometimes there's merit in that. There's merit in Bodie looking back at the murder case and at a predatory teacher.

Like so many of us who were on the receiving end of sexual harassment in the past, she thought having an issue with [harassment] was her problem. Or that she deserved whatever abuse came her way. Then

there's also the really serious matter of murder. I see my work as an author as taking a ques-

tion, an issue, and looking at it from as many sides as I possibly can. To examine the whole mess of it and then see what we make of it.

## MORE ONLINE

For the extended interview, visit [bit.ly/AL-Makkai](http://bit.ly/AL-Makkai) after January 3.

**Are you a big reader, and have libraries been important in your life?**

The Lake Bluff (Ill.) Public Library held grade-level writing contests when I was a kid, and I won those a few times. That was the first huge validation I got for myself as a writer. We went to that library every week. Now I'm doing a project in which I'm reading 84 books in translation over the next two years as a memorial to my father, who lived to be 84 and who was a poet and a literary translator. I feel like I'm a kid discovering the reading life all over again. **AL**

Each of Rebecca Makkai's five books is different in focus and style, and all are enthralling, incisive, and witty. Her 2018 novel *The Great Believers* won the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction, the Stonewall Book Award, and the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. Makkai is a Guggenheim fellow; an MFA faculty member at University of Nevada, Reno at Lake Tahoe, and at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois; and artistic director of the nonprofit StoryStudio Chicago. She spoke with *American Libraries* about her forthcoming novel, *I Have Some Questions for You* (Viking Penguin, February), book challenges, and rediscovering the joys of reading while paying homage to her late father.

BY Donna Seaman

**Your first novel, *The Borrower*, features a children's librarian and a bright, book-loving 10-year-old. What are your thoughts on the current spate of book challenges in libraries?** I'm always so flummoxed by the book-banning discussion because, first of all, what does someone think is going to happen when they try to ban a book? It just

draws attention to it and makes kids want to read it. At the same time, I try to think about where everyone's coming from. As a fiction writer, it's my job to think about what's going on in a person's mind. I think the answer is about education and broader conversations we need to have. Banning books is dangerous, and it's gone on for a long time all over the world. My grandmother was a novelist in Hungary, and her most important political books were banned there. This is something we all need to try to understand so that we can argue against it more effectively.

I think people misunderstand what librarians do. They not only assist people; they are radical defenders of the First Amendment and disseminators of information, including how to counteract a heroin overdose. It's a hell of a job.

**The narrator in your new book, Bodie Kane, is haunted by the 1995 murder of a classmate at her New Hampshire boarding school. A man was convicted and sent to prison, but Bodie later senses clues were missed and fears that justice has not been done. Meanwhile, her husband is ambushed online, accused**





“This rise in book banning isn’t simply a new form of ‘concerned parents.’ It’s a massive censorship campaign from organizations working with state and local officials to restrict access to books. It’s not just gay penguins these groups are attacking; it’s our children’s First Amendment rights.”

**PADMA LAKSHMI**, as host of the 73rd National Book Awards, November 16.

“This medal is for a *distinguished* contribution. It’s not an adjective I associate with cartoonists. In fact, I’m proud of my medium’s vulgar roots, its ability to stir controversy, to provoke, and sometimes even make people laugh.... If this is a lifetime achievement award, it’s got to include my decades working for Topps Bubble Gum, on Wacky Packages and Garbage Pail Kids, as well as my *New Yorker* covers—starting in the ’90s, they got a generation of readers in their 90s to cancel their subscriptions!”

Cartoonist **ART SPIEGELMAN**, in his speech accepting the Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters at the 73rd National Book Awards, November 16.

“THERE’S GOING TO BE ANOTHER Z-LIBRARY, MAYBE AN X-LIBRARY OR A Y-LIBRARY, IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS. YOU CAN CHANGE THE RULES, BUT YOU CANNOT STOP THE GAME.”

College student **JOSEFINA ESPINO**, in “‘It Was Truly a Tragedy’: NU Students React to Takedown of Book Piracy Website Z-Library,” *The Daily Northwestern (Evanston, Ill.)*, November 15.

“Reading is one means of understanding complex issues. Censoring books does not make complex or controversial issues disappear.”

**ANDREA FIORILLO**, Massachusetts Library Association Intellectual Freedom/Social Responsibilities Committee cochair, in “Book Challenges on Rise in Massachusetts Libraries, Schools,” *Gloucester Daily Times*, November 28.

“It was in libraries that I found myself, not only physically but spiritually. It was in books in the college library that I first saw and read about openly queer people, that I first read about the Stonewall riots and the gay rights movement. The books were stored in a corner of the library that almost no one seemed to visit, but I went there often. In the stacks, I learned that my difference wasn’t anomalous.”

Opinion columnist **CHARLES M. BLOW**, “Thankful for Libraries,” *The New York Times*, November 23.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

A look back at  
the news that  
affected libraries  
and library workers



## UNITING AGAINST CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS

Organized book challenges continued to proliferate. From January through August, 681 attempts to ban or restrict library materials had been made in the US, with 1,651 unique titles targeted. In response to mounting censorship threats, ALA announced in May its Unite Against Book Bans campaign, a coalition with more than 60 national partners as well as state and local groups that have banded together to protect the right to read. The campaign released an action toolkit ([bit.ly/UABB-tool](https://bit.ly/UABB-tool)), which includes ways to petition and seek pledges from elected officials and candidates.

## ROE V. WADE OVERTURNED

On June 24, the US Supreme Court ruled 6-3 in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* that the right to an abortion was not protected under the US Constitution. The decision allows individual states to ban abortions, overturning almost 50 years of precedent set by *Roe v. Wade*. The ruling came during ALA's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., leading many attendees to protest outside the Supreme Court building. On August 9, ALA's Executive Board issued a statement opposing proposed state legislation that would censor library materials or put at risk library workers who provide access to information, including about reproductive health care.

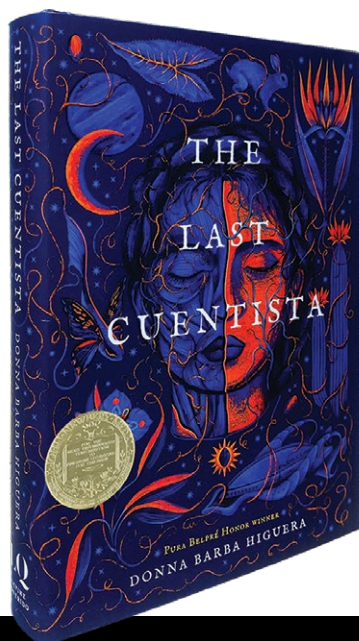
Illustrations: Adobe Stock



**CLOSED**

## VIOLENT THREATS AIMED AT LIBRARIES, LIBRARY WORKERS

Five public library systems—in Denver; Fort Worth, Texas; Hawaii; Nashville, Tennessee; and Salt Lake City—were forced to close temporarily in September because of shooting and bombing threats. The threats came amid a wave of book challenges and objections to programming. The ALA Executive Board shared its concerns for the safety of library workers and patrons in a letter to the FBI.



## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, NEWBERY

The Newbery Medal—the world's first children's book award—celebrated its centennial anniversary. To commemorate its legacy, *American Libraries* published features and interviews with past winners. The 2022 Newbery Medal winner was *The Last Cuentista* by Donna Barba Higuera.

## CORETTA SCOTT KING BOOK AWARDS ROUND TABLE LAUNCHES

On January 21, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards became an official ALA round table, continuing the award's mission of honoring African American authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults that demonstrate an appreciation of African American culture.



## TOGETHER AGAIN

Marking a new normal following the start of the pandemic, the library world reunited in 2022 at two of ALA's annual meetings. LibLearnX—ALA's reimaging of its Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits—made its virtual debut in January, and the ALA Annual Conference returned in person in Washington, D.C., in June.

Author Jarrett Melendez (left) signs copies of his graphic novel *Chef's Kiss* in the exhibit hall.





## PUBLISHER CONSOLIDATION CHALLENGED

The US Department of Justice successfully sued to stop the merger of Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster, which would have consolidated two of the Big Five publishers into the largest in the nation. The buyout bid officially ended in November.



## A BLOW FOR GREATER DIGITAL ACCESS

A federal court in June ruled that a Maryland law requiring book publishers to offer “reasonable” ebook licenses to public libraries is unconstitutional, dealing a blow to librarians and lawmakers who support greater access to electronic materials. Similar laws are currently being considered in Rhode Island, Tennessee, and other states.

## EXPANDING LIBRARY SERVICES FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) a \$2 million grant to expand services for people incarcerated locally and nationally. The grant will support a collaboration between SFPL and ALA.



## NATURAL DISASTERS AFFECT LIBRARIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

A spate of natural disasters took a toll on libraries and their communities. In July, flooding in eastern Kentucky shuttered several library systems, with school libraries in Letcher County reporting a loss of more than 25,000 books. In August, river flooding and infrastructure failure left Jackson, Mississippi, residents without access to safe drinking water, and many libraries were forced to close their buildings. Hurricane Ian made landfall in late September, causing water damage and material losses at many Florida libraries.

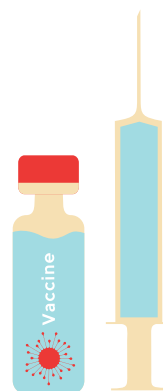
The Army National Guard distributes water at Hinds Community College's Academic and Technical Center on the Jackson, Mississippi, campus.

Photos: Brad Smith/Hinds Community College (water); ©Nuestrobarco/Adobe Stock (ebook)



## LIBRARIES RECEIVE COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS AND ASSIST IN VACCINATION EFFORTS

The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund distributed nearly \$1.6 million in grants to 77 academic, public, school, tribal, and correctional libraries that continue to experience pandemic-related economic hardship. Each library received \$20,000 in grant support. The Association also partnered with the US Department of Health and Human Services on We Can Do This, a public education campaign to share information about COVID-19 vaccines with families with young children.



## ALA ESTABLISHES UKRAINE LIBRARY RELIEF FUND

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February, ALA launched its Ukraine Library Relief Fund. Since its establishment in May, the fund has raised more than \$17,000 from 200 donors to help Ukrainian librarians continue to provide programs and services during the war.

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

## TRIBAL LIBRARIES BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR E-RATE

On January 28, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a report and order that updated the definition of *library* in its E-Rate rules and clarified that tribal libraries are eligible for the program. Five months later,

the FCC announced an agreement with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to jointly promote affordable broadband internet access.



## SMALL AND RURAL LIBRARIES RECEIVE \$7 MILLION IN ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS

In March, ALA announced it will distribute more than \$7 million in grants to small and rural libraries to increase accessibility to services, programs, and facilities for people with disabilities through the Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural

Communities program. The grants will be distributed over three years. Recipient libraries will gather input from affected populations to improve existing services or create new ones.



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...to increase awareness and advocate for the importance  
of libraries across the country and around the world.

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# LIBRARIES TRANSFORM<sup>®</sup>

## BECAUSE CHAMPIONS MAKE IT HAPPEN


Library Champions make the Libraries Transform campaign possible. This campaign educates and advocates to raise awareness of the value of libraries. In 2022, Libraries Transform grew to more than 16,500 participants, all committed to fostering public support for libraries and the ways they benefit their communities. Library Champions ensure that libraries across the country continue to thrive and grow.

### MEMBERS


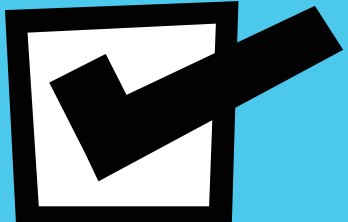
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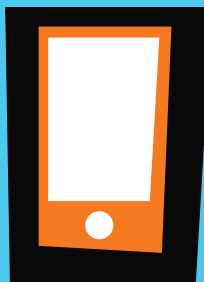


# REFERENDA ROUNDUP



How states performed  
on library ballot  
measures in 2022

BY Bill Furbee



Every year, voters from small towns and big cities alike decide on ballot measures that affect libraries. Last year was no different—and as in past years, *American Libraries* and the Public Library Association have partnered to look at some of the wins and losses across the country.

While libraries notched notable victories in 2022, some failed measures reflect broader cultural and economic shifts. One alarming trend: Organized groups of politically driven voters who oppose libraries carrying materials written by, about, and for LGBTQ people are banding together to reject levies that fund libraries—and fighting to get referenda on the ballot that defund libraries altogether.

In October, voters in Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska, were able to stave off efforts by an anti-LGBTQ group that would have crippled Ketchikan Public Library's budget. But on Election Day in Jamestown Township, Michigan, and Craighead County, Arkansas, two groups were successful in using the ballot to defund their local libraries over materials they found objectionable. How this current wave of censorship will affect funding in the long term remains unclear.

This final report represents only a sample of the many ballot measures that appeared in 2022. Vote tallies were accurate as of press time.

## ALASKA

On October 4, **Ketchikan Gateway Borough** residents rejected Proposition 2—a measure that would have defunded Ketchikan Public Library by removing a 0.7-mill tax on properties outside city limits that provides the library with \$500,000 of its budget—with 56% of voters opposed. KRBD-FM reported that the proposition was filed by a former borough assembly member on behalf of a group that objected to LGBTQ books and programming at the library.

## ARKANSAS

On November 8, voters passed two millage proposals that would drop property tax rates from 2 mills to 1 mill and decrease funding for **Craighead County-Jonesboro** Public Library. Both the Craighead County millage (by a tally of 5,626–3,520) and the Jonesboro city millage (with a vote of 9,017–8,969) were lowered, effectively halving funding for the library system. A group called Citizens Taxed Enough, which has accused the library of making available “sexually explicit” material to children, led the effort to get these referenda on the ballot.

On May 24, **Little Rock** voters considered a proposal that would reduce the capital improvement tax rate, lowering the millage from 1.8 to 1.3 mills and allowing Central Arkansas Library System to refinance and extend current bonds for the bookmobile and other resources. The reduction passed, with 68% of voters in favor.

## CALIFORNIA

On June 7, voters in **Oakland** approved Measure C, extending for 30 years an existing parcel tax that provides the city's public library system with \$18 million every year, or 40% of its budget. The measure passed 65,362–14,000.

**Pasadena** voters on November 8 were asked to weigh in on Measure L, a services continuation tax that would generate \$2.8 million annually for Pasadena Public Library for

15 years. The measure passed widely with 39,849 in favor and 7,241 opposed.

On November 8, **San Francisco** Public Library (SFPL) saw its Library Preservation Fund renewed for another 25 years—an update from its current term of 15 years—by a vote of 238,585–50,342. The ballot measure also included a charter amendment that would ensure SFPL’s main library and 27 branches would be open 1,400 hours per week systemwide.

## COLORADO

With more than 53% in favor, **Boulder County** residents on November 8 approved Measure 6C, a proposal that would create a new library district and institute a 3.5-mill property tax to fund Boulder Public Library.

## CONNECTICUT

A \$39 million bond that would fully cover the construction of a new, 75,000-square-foot **Manchester** Public Library passed 11,511–6,670 on November 8. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023, once designs are approved.

## ILLINOIS

*All votes listed in this section refer to Illinois’ June 28 primary.*

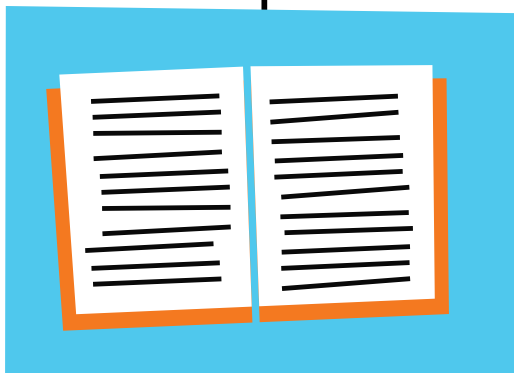
White Oak Library District voters from **Crest Hill**, **Lockport**, and **Romeoville** failed to pass a tax increase that would have expanded the library’s operating hours and services. The 0.19-mill increase was defeated 4,886–3,928.

Village of **Millstadt** and Millstadt school district voters rejected a referendum that would have annexed unserved territory to the Millstadt Library District and provide funding for the construction of a new library. The measure failed 1,841–863.

**In Arkansas and Michigan, groups were successful in using the ballot to defund their local libraries over materials they found objectionable.**

## IOWA

*All votes listed in this section refer to Iowa’s September 13 special election.*



Residents in **Slater** failed to approve a \$2.5 million general obligation bond to fund a new library and community center. While nearly 52% voted in approval, the measure required a 60% supermajority to pass.

**Story City** voters approved two ballot measures affecting Bertha Bartlett Public Library: With more than 73% in favor, voters extended an existing capital improvements reserve levy for another 10 years,

which would allow for a building expansion. With nearly 75% in favor, voters decided to expand the library board from five to seven members.

## LOUISIANA

In **Beauregard Parish**, voters were asked on April 30 to consider the continuation of a 7.85-mill levy over a period of 10 years for the maintenance and operation of public libraries. The measure passed 1,649–723.

## MAINE

On November 8, voters rejected a referendum that would have provided \$12.9 million for the expansion of **Scarborough** Public Library by a vote of 7,097–4,817.

## MASSACHUSETTS

At a special town meeting on October 24, **Swansea** residents voted 297–127 to approve \$19 million in funding for the renovation and expansion of its public library. The vote met the necessary two-thirds threshold to pass.

## MICHIGAN

On August 2, voters in **Allendale Township** passed by a vote of 1,429–1,380 a six-year millage of 0.3 mills that would provide operational funding for the public library.

By a tally of 1,870–1,374, residents of **Fraser** on August 2 passed a new 20-year millage at a rate of 1 mill, replacing a previous millage that had been in place and unchanged since 1963. Fraser Public Library will put the funds toward building issues, technology, and programming.



**Grand Ledge** voters on August 2 passed a 10-year, 1.2-mill levy for Grand Ledge Area District Library, 2,794–1,503. The levy represents nearly 90% of the library's annual budget.

Capital Area District Libraries in **Lansing** reported that a measure to restore the district's millage rate to 1.56 mills passed 33,961–15,550 on August 2. For the past two years, the millage rate was rolled back to 1.55 mills as a provision of the Headlee Amendment to the Constitution of Michigan. The increase will help the library system cover operational costs, such as staffing and technology.

On November 8, **Marquette Charter Township** voters renewed a 1-mill tax to support Peter White Public Library, 1,689–506.

Tuscola County voters on August 2 approved a 10-year, 1.25-mill tax benefitting Bullard Sanford Memorial Library in **Vassar** by a vote of 1,319–558.

## NEW YORK

On May 5, nearly 80% of voters in **Batavia** approved a tax levy increase of \$21,865 for Richmond Memorial Library's budget. This is the first levy increase the library has seen in three years.

**Canton** Central School District voters approved a \$26,364 funding increase—amounting to 0.89 mills—for Canton Free Library on May 17. The increase passed 354–76.

On May 3, voters in the **Gloversville** Enlarged School District approved a \$553,695 tax levy (equating to roughly 0.06 mills) for Gloversville Public Library 139–55. Most of the funds will go toward staff salaries and benefits.

**Kingston** voters approved on September 20 a 25-year, \$14 million bond to fund renovations at Kingston Library (362–75) as well as a \$1 million tax levy for the library's 2023 operating budget (388–54).

On May 17, voters in the **Lowville** Academy and Central School District approved a \$20,000 funding increase for Lowville Public Library and a \$5,000 funding increase for William H. Bush Memorial Library in Martinsburg by a vote of 387–99. The tax rate will go up approximately 0.04 mills to cover these increases.

At a special district meeting on October 18, Minisink Valley Central School District (MVCSD) residents voted against a proposition that would have increased school taxes by 1% for the establishment of Minisink Valley Public Library, at a budget of \$543,500. The measure was defeated 2,162–395. MVCSD is the only school district in **Orange County** that does not have access to a public library.

## MICHIGAN LIBRARY

## MAY CLOSE AFTER

## VOTE TO DEFUND

Voters on August 2 rejected by a tally of 1,904–1,141 the renewal of a property tax millage that would have provided Patmos Library in **Jamestown Township** with 84% of its \$245,000 annual budget. Multiple news outlets, including *Detroit Free Press* and *Bridge Michigan*, reported that a group of residents campaigned against the millage because the library would not remove LGBTQ materials from its collection.

On November 8, voters were again asked to approve library funding with a 0.6-mill proposal over 10 years that would have covered renewal of the previously authorized millage as well as a new millage. Despite the library receiving support and donations from around the world, the levy failed 3,060–2,427. Patmos Library Board President Larry Walton said the library will likely run out of money by 2024, *Bridge Michigan* reported November 9.

The Michigan Library Association released a statement on November 14 in which it called Patmos Library's defunding "a local tragedy with national implications" ([bit.ly/AL-MLA-Patmos](https://bit.ly/AL-MLA-Patmos)).



## NORTH CAROLINA

In July, **Greensboro** voters passed a \$70 million parks and recreation bond that would create a joint-use facility combining Windsor Recreation Center and the Vance H. Chavis branch of Greensboro Public Library, among other projects. The referendum was approved with nearly 67% of voters in favor.

## OHIO

**Belmont County** voters on November 8 passed a 1-mill continuing levy—rather than a 5-year levy, as placed on the ballot in the past—for Belmont County District Library by a tally of 7,802–3,328.

On May 3, voters approved a six-year renewal of a 4.5-mill operating levy for **Grandview Heights** Public Library by a tally of 1,709–271.

A five-year, 3.7-mill tax for **Toledo–Lucas County** Public Library was renewed 91,597–36,238 on November 8. The levy accounts for 55% of the library's annual operating budget.

By a count of 7,244–2,354, voters on May 3 renewed a 2-mill operating levy and passed a 1-mill increase for 10 years that would provide **Upper Arlington** Public Library with \$5.3 million in funding annually. The combined levy will go toward operational costs, including wages, materials, and utilities.

On November 8, a five-year, 1-mill renewal levy for **Wadsworth** Public Library was approved 8,064–3,297.

**Wyandot County** and **Seneca County** voters passed a 1.75-mill renewal levy for Dorcas Carey Public Library on November 8 by a tally of 1,325–351. The tax will generate about \$169,722 for the library each year.

## OREGON

On May 17, **Tillamook County** residents renewed a five-year, 0.65-mill levy for Tillamook County Library that was set to expire in June. The measure passed 5,572–3,557. The levy accounts for more than 95% of revenue for the six-location system.

Voters passed a five-year, 1.05-mill option levy for **Union** Carnegie Public Library on November 8 with 65% in favor. The levy replaces a 1.21-mill option levy that was set to

expire in 2023. Funds will be used to maintain staffing and operating hours.

A five-year local option levy for **Warrenton** Community Library that would have increased the tax rate from 0.33 to 0.38 mills failed 1,257–1,186 on November 8.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Irwin**, **North Irwin**, and **North Huntingdon** residents struck down a referendum on November 8 that would have cut a levy supporting Norwin Public Library from 1.2 mills to 0.2 mills. The measure, which was placed on the ballot by a group called Friends of the Norwin Library Reform, failed 12,163–6,941.

## TEXAS

On May 7, voters in **Fort Worth** approved Proposition C, a measure that would issue \$12.5 million in public securities (and impose taxes to pay the interest and principal on these securities) to provide for a new library branch on the city's northwest side. The referendum won 17,639–11,335.

## WASHINGTON

Voters in **Castle Rock** rejected a 0.3-mill excess tax levy for its public library on August 2. Over the past three years, levies have failed a total of six times, with the library being forced to depend entirely on donations. More than 58% voted in favor, but the proposition required a supermajority of 60% to pass.

## WEST VIRGINIA

On May 10, a five-year levy renewal that would have benefitted Parkersburg and **Wood County** Public Library failed to pass. Though voters were in favor 8,284–6,404, the measure did not meet a threshold of 60% plus one. The levy, which provides the library system with 30% of its funding, reappeared in a reworded format on the November 8 ballot and passed 16,508–8,321. The levy will provide the library with about \$580,431 annually; some funds will be directed toward the construction of a new building in Williamstown. **AL**



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





# *Celebrate* NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

APRIL 23–29, 2023

## *There's More to the Story*

Libraries are full of stories in a variety of formats from audiobooks to eBooks, and more. But there's so much more to the story. Libraries of Things lend items such as games and tools. Library programming brings communities together for entertainment, connection, and learning. Library infrastructure advances communities, providing internet and technology access. Use these materials to help convey your library's multi-faceted story!

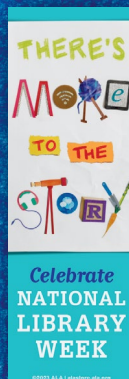


2023 National  
Library Week  
Poster

*Space for  
customization!*



There's More to  
the Story Mini  
Poster File



2023 National Library  
Week Bookmark

Shop these items at [alastore.ala.org](https://alastore.ala.org).  
Find additional products including t-shirts, totes,  
and stickers at [bit.ly/GraphicsGiftShop-NLW23](https://bit.ly/GraphicsGiftShop-NLW23).





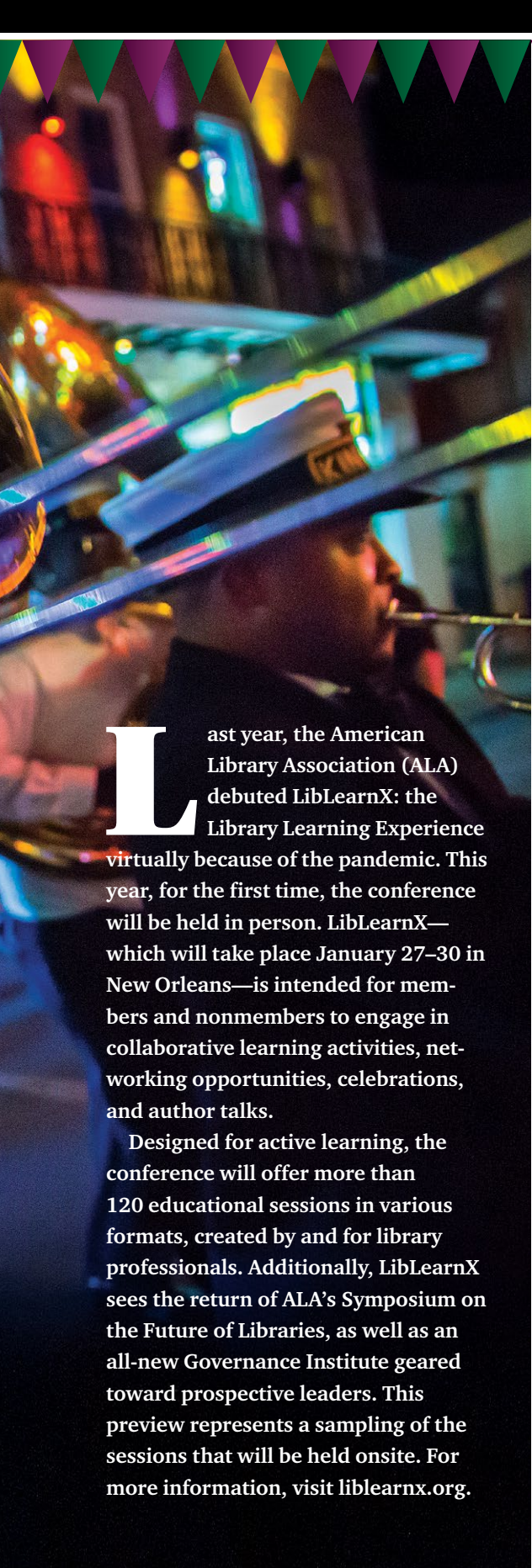


# 2023 LibLearnX Preview

Conference convenes January 27–30  
in New Orleans

EDITED BY Alison Marcotte

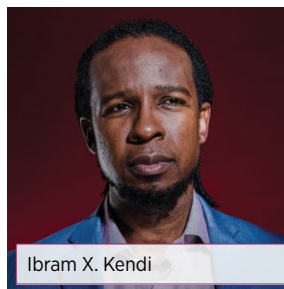




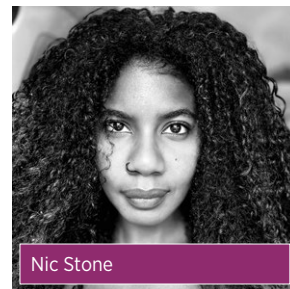
**L**ast year, the American Library Association (ALA) debuted LibLearnX: the Library Learning Experience virtually because of the pandemic. This year, for the first time, the conference will be held in person. LibLearnX—which will take place January 27–30 in New Orleans—is intended for members and nonmembers to engage in collaborative learning activities, networking opportunities, celebrations, and author talks.

Designed for active learning, the conference will offer more than 120 educational sessions in various formats, created by and for library professionals. Additionally, LibLearnX sees the return of ALA's Symposium on the Future of Libraries, as well as an all-new Governance Institute geared toward prospective leaders. This preview represents a sampling of the sessions that will be held onsite. For more information, visit [liblearnx.org](http://liblearnx.org).

Photo: Todd Coleman (brass band)



Ibram X. Kendi



Nic Stone

## CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

### MAIN STAGE SPEAKERS

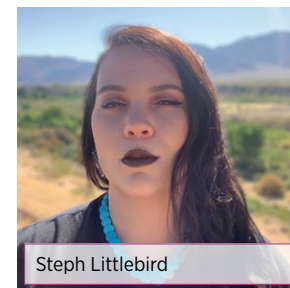
Joining LibLearnX are *New York Times*–bestselling authors **Ibram X. Kendi** and **Nic Stone**, coauthors of *How to Be a (Young) Antiracist* (Kokila, January). Based on Kendi's 2019 adult bestseller, *How to Be an Antiracist*, the new book serves as a guide for teens seeking a way forward in acknowledging, identifying, and dismantling racism and injustice. **8:30–9:45 a.m. Saturday, January 28.**

### STUDIO STAGE SPEAKERS

**Carole Lindstrom**, a *New York Times*–bestselling and award-winning author of literature for young people, will join **Steph Littlebird**, an Indigenous artist, writer, and curator, on stage to discuss *My Powerful Hair* (Abrams Books for Young Readers, March), their children's book about family history, self-expression, and reclaiming identity. Lindstrom is Anishinaabe/Métis and an enrolled citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe; Littlebird is a member of Oregon's Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. **10:30–11:30 a.m. Saturday, January 28.**



Carole Lindstrom



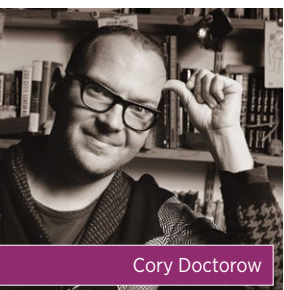
Steph Littlebird



Brian Selznick



Clint Smith



Cory Doctorow

**Brian Selznick's** Caldecott Medal–winning *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* was adapted into Martin Scorsese's 2011 movie *Hugo*. Selznick's forthcoming *Big Tree* (Scholastic Inc., April) is an epic adventure with nearly 300 pages of illustrations. **12:30–1:30 p.m. Saturday, January 28.**

*Atlantic* staff writer and author **Clint Smith** will discuss *Above Ground* (Little, Brown and Company, March), his new collection of poems exploring how becoming a parent recalibrated his sense of the world. **1–2 p.m. Sunday, January 29.**

**Cory Doctorow** is a science-fiction novelist, journalist, and technology activist. He will discuss his new book, *Red Team Blues* (Tor Books, April), a thriller about cryptocurrency. **2:30–3:30 p.m. Sunday, January 29.**

## PRESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

Presidential Programs are curated by current ALA President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada and ALA President-Elect Emily Drabinski.

### Intersectional Justice in Libraries

**11:40 a.m.–noon Saturday, January 28**

What does a profession centered on justice

look like? Speakers will define intersectionality, examine how it relates to justice, and build a deeper understanding of how it can dismantle systemic, institutional, and structural disparities.

### Organizing for Change

**10–11:15 a.m. Sunday, January 29**

We all see things we'd like to change in our libraries, classrooms, and communities. This session will introduce basic principles of organizing as a way to get things done. Emily Darowski (psychology librarian at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah) and Leah Richardson (special collections librarian at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.) will discuss how to build power and explore strategies for bringing people together around a common goal.

### Library Workers: Organize and Activate

Organizing and activism are foundational to libraries and library workers. In this Main Stage program, speakers K. C. Boyd, Lesley Garrett, Candice Mack, and Elizabeth Martinez will talk about how library workers can build those skills.

## SYMPOSIUM ON THE FUTURE OF LIBRARIES

The Center for the Future of Libraries (CFL) returns to sponsor its **Symposium on the Future of Libraries**, this year centered on the theme "Library Futures: Literacy Equity, Sustainability, Liberation, Play." The symposium, free with registration, will engage participants in a range of experiences and conversations at the intersection of futures thinking and library practice. Sessions will include the following, and more:

### Literacy Equity Insights Dashboard: Refining Our Understanding of Libraries' Roles in Literacy Access

**1:30–2 p.m. Saturday, January 28**

Ken Bigger, senior fellow at CFL, and Nick Freeman, cofounder and president of Innovare Social Innovation Partners, will introduce the Literacy Equity Insights methodology for assessing literacy access across communities.

### Libraries, Speculative Design Studies, and Civic Futures

**1:30–2:45 p.m. Saturday, January 28**

Michael Dando, professor at St. Cloud (Minn.) State University, will join library leaders in introducing projects that use speculative design principles and multimodal literacies to engage young people in imagining sustainable civic futures.

### Which World? Using Far-Fetched Scenarios to Map Out the Future of Libraries

**3–4:15 p.m. Saturday, January 28**

Led by Hawaii State Librarian Stacy Aldrich and Dawn La Valle, director of the Division of Library Development at Connecticut State Library, this session will show participants how to create functional views of alternative futures using hypothetical situations.

### Literacy, Play, and Civic Imagination

**3:30–3:50 p.m. Saturday, January 28**

ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall will discuss key outcomes from ALA's recent Civic Imagination grant, with implications for the interaction of literacy and play.

### Civic Fluency, Libraries, and the Future of Literacy Equity

**10:30–10:50 a.m. Monday, January 30**

This session, led by Bigger, will address the value of civic fluency as a guiding goal for literacy equity programs in libraries and elsewhere. The discussion will consider how civic fluency informs program development and improves equity by focusing on the future we seek to build together.



## EDUCATION SESSIONS

ALA has four types of active learning experiences during LibLearnX:

■ **ShopTalks** are bite-sized presentations, 15–20 minutes long, that focus on a specific idea, project, or workshop. They're ideal for learning about hot topics and picking up practical tips.

● **Ideas Xchanges** are about 30 minutes each and feature creative projects shared in peer-to-peer conversations.

▲ **Learning Labs** delve into current issues with action-based instruction and collaborative learning. Sessions are usually one hour and focus on methods, approaches, and opportunities that attendees can immediately apply in their libraries. Learning Labs may include panels, Q&As, polls and surveys, games, and breakout discussions.

★ **Accelerators** are led by facilitators and designed to introduce attendees to new ideas and challenge traditional thinking. Accelerator sessions last approximately three hours.

Some of the more than 120 education sessions, in nine primary content areas, include:

## ADVOCACY

### ▲ **How Librarians Can Strengthen Children's Privacy Literacy**

10–11:15 a.m. Saturday, January 28

Children increasingly experience the world through digital technologies, raising questions about how to protect their privacy. This session will involve a series of small group exercises designed to help librarians identify ways to integrate privacy-related information into activities and lessons.

### ▲ **Hammer, Vise, Lever: Better Tools, Stronger Advocacy**

3–4:15 p.m. Saturday, January 28

From software to social media to elbow grease, advocacy experts and practitioners will share tips and tools that individual advocates and organizations can harness to elevate their own legislative advocacy.

### ▲ **Building a Practical Toolkit for Censorship and Challenges at Your Public Library**

10:30–11:45 a.m. Sunday, January 29

Public library directors who have experienced intellectual freedom challenges will share their best practices and strategies for supporting staffers, board members, and school library colleagues throughout the different types and stages of challenges.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

### ▲ **Decolonizing Library Shelves through the Rise of Indigenous Children's Authors**

1:30–2:45 p.m. Saturday, January 28

In this author panel, attendees will learn how to build a catalog of Indigenous children's literature that can move all young readers toward real actions of reconciliation for North America's history of colonialism.

### ▲ **Inclusivity in Entertainment: Uplifting Black Voices**

2–3 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Four Black authors and creative professionals will present their upcoming titles and discuss the creation of Black-centered content, the increasing availability of diverse stories, and what representation of identities means across genres in book publishing.

### ▲ **Leveraging the Self-Publishing Process for Library Programming and Patron Services**

10:30–11:45 a.m. Sunday, January 29

Explore the process of self-publishing a book and uncover opportunities to create compelling and often low-cost events and training for your community in this session led by Julie Broad, author and founder of Book Launchers.

### ▲ **Tools for Adding Children's Books with Authentic Jewish Representation to Your Library**

1:30–2:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Four Jewish author-educators will help participants identify and use Jewish representation in youth literature to cultivate learning, empathy, and allyship in young readers. This session will cover unique tools and resources for future library acquisitions and how to identify what harmful stereotypes may exist in current collections.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

### ■ **Growing in the Profession: Career Support for Library Employees**

10:10–10:30 a.m. Saturday, January 28

Interested in starting a staff mentorship program at your institution? The Library Career Interest Group at University of California, Irvine (UCI), began as a library school support group for employees. Learn how it gradually transformed into a community for people seeking career growth and advancement.

### ■ **A New Frontier: Setting Your Library Up for Remote Work Success**

12:20–12:40 p.m. Sunday, January 29

For many professions, working remotely is standard practice. For librarians, it is often seen as a wild and forbidden frontier. Learn how librarians can lay the framework for successful remote work in a library setting.

## ★ Finding Your Public Library Leadership Pathway

1–4 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Public libraries offer multiple pathways to leadership. Attendees will hear from leaders at many levels of administration who will share tips on exploration, self-reflection, and networking to help them map out their career development journeys.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

### ■ Fires, Floods, and COVID: Libraries at Work

11:30–11:50 a.m. Saturday, January 28

Learn best practices gathered from more than 60 librarians who responded to hurricanes, explosions, freezes, fires, flooding, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ● Building Campus Partnerships through LibraryCon

11:30 a.m.–noon Saturday, January 28

LibraryCons are comic convention–inspired events where fandoms of all kinds come together to celebrate their shared passions in a library setting. Presenters from State University of New York at Delhi will discuss some of the benefits of hosting a LibraryCon and the planning process.

### ▲ Talking Climate: Resilient Communities Grantees Share Their Stories

1–2:15 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Representatives from ALA's Resilient Communities grantee libraries will share their experiences of talking about the climate crisis with their users. Panelists will discuss why their libraries participated, how their patrons benefited, which programs went

well (and which didn't), and their plans for future programming around resilience. The bulk of the session will be dedicated to a Q&A with the audience.

### ▲ Building a Model for Meaningful Partnerships between Delaware Schools and Public Libraries

3:30–4:45 p.m. Saturday, January 28

The need for developing strong partnerships between school districts

and public libraries is critical. Hear how Delaware Libraries and Colonial School District in New Castle, Delaware, are working to develop a statewide model to protect the role and importance of school libraries.

## LLX DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Can't join the group in New Orleans? The LLX Digital Experience is a virtual option that offers live and on-demand access to a selection of sessions, including the opening and closing sessions, Youth Media Awards, RUSA Book and Media Awards, authors talks on the Studio Stage, and a curated selection of education sessions. For more information, visit [bit.ly/LLX23Digital](https://bit.ly/LLX23Digital). ●

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

### ▲ Affirming Library Practices for LGBTQIA+ Kids in School Libraries

10:30–11:45 a.m. Saturday, January 28

In this session, presenters will discuss the proper terminology of the LGBTQIA+ community, identify microaggressive verbiage, share data on how and why libraries and school cultures that are affirming of LGBTQIA+ people save students' lives, and provide tips on how to create or extend affirming spaces.

### ▲ ¡Bienvenidos a la Lectura! Selecting and Leveling Books for Spanish-Language Readers

10:30–11:45 a.m. Saturday, January 28

Multnomah County (Ore.) Library staffers will present their ¡Bienvenidos a la Lectura! (Welcome to Reading) collection and speak about their path from advocacy to developing circulating collections.

### ■ That All May Read: Resources for Your Print-Disabled Community

2:10–2:30 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Learn how talking book and braille libraries can help people with print disabilities gain access to more than 100,000 audiobooks in more than 40 languages.

### ■ Telling Diverse Stories through Cookbooks

2:20–2:40 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Cookbooks are important in telling both personal and cultural stories. Presenters will share examples of books that are great for cooking and reading as well as discuss how to use cookbooks in displays and programming.

### ● School Library Circ Policies: How Do Yours Stack Up?

2:30–3 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Ever wonder what circulation policies in other school libraries look like? Presenters will share a survey of 426 school librarians and 205 former K–12 students and ask participants to examine their own school library policies and practices.

## STAY CONNECTED



Visit [2023.alaliblearnx.org](https://2023.alaliblearnx.org)



Track #liblearnx23 and follow @ALAConferences



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Keep up on Instagram with #liblearnx23 and @americanlibraryassociation

### ■ **The PASS Approach: Serving Patrons Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices**

3–3:20 p.m. Saturday, January 28

The PASS (Patience, Attention, Speak, Support) Approach is designed to assist librarians in effectively serving patrons who use augmentative and alternative communication devices. Attendees will receive hands-on training on how to implement the PASS Approach in their library and access to free printable materials.

### ▲ **Sensory Spaces and Creative Programming to Reach Your Diverse Community**

3–4:15 p.m. Saturday, January 28

The goal of a sensory space is to provide an environment where children and adults with autism spectrum disorders, developmental disabilities, post-traumatic stress disorder, cerebral palsy, memory loss, dementia, and sensory processing disorders can feel safe and welcome. Panelists from Ocean County (N.J.) Library will share the story of their sensory space, which opened in 2021.

### ● **Innovative Literacy Classes for New Americans**

10–10:30 a.m. Sunday, January 29

This session will equip attendees with ideas for implementing engaging classes for their immigrant adult patrons, such as “Survival English for New Americans.”

### ▲ **The Reading Culture Podcast Live with Ellen Oh**

10–11:15 a.m. Sunday, January 29

*The Reading Culture* podcast will record a live session with We Need Diverse Books cofounder Ellen Oh. Podcast host and Beanstack cofounder Jordan Lloyd Bookey will interview Oh about her revolutionary work and her journey as an author.

### ▲ **Engaging with Native and Indigenous Heritage: Guide to Indigenous Maryland**

3:30–4:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Learn how Maryland’s public libraries collaborated to develop an educational mobile app and website to engage the public with local Native and Indigenous heritage and culture.

## LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### ■ **Making the Library a Period-Positive Space**

1:30–1:50 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Learn how St. Louis Public Library’s Central Library staff worked with various period-positive initiatives, health agencies, and non-profits in their city to present Periodtober, a series that included programming such as “Period 101” and “Period Action Day.”

### ▲ **Beyond the Book: Using Archives to Enhance School and Library Education**

3:30–4:45 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Learn how to discover resources available in historic and contemporary children’s archives and how to use online archival materials with students from the curators of historic children’s

## ALA GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE

**A**LA will host its inaugural ALA Governance Institute (AGI) from 8 a.m. to noon on Friday, January 27. Intended for current and prospective ALA Executive Board, Council, and committee members—as well as anyone interested in leadership within or beyond the Association—this series will provide insight into critical issues related to effective governance.

AGI attendees will be able to choose two of three 90-minute sessions from member leaders and subject matter experts that focus on communications, financial analysis and review, and stewardship. The institute is free with registration and open to the first 200 people who sign up. For more information, visit [bit.ly/LLX23GovInst](https://bit.ly/LLX23GovInst). ●

## GOVERNANCE MEETINGS

### Friday, January 27

- 1–5 p.m. ALA Council Special Session: ALA Bylaws Convention

### Saturday, January 28

- 2–2:30 p.m. ALA-APA Council Session
- 2:30–5:30 p.m. ALA Council Meeting

### Sunday, January 29

- 12:30–3:45 p.m. ALA Council Meeting
- 4–5 p.m. Executive Board Candidates Forum

This year, the 2023 Virtual Membership Information Session for Members, Councilors, and the Executive Board will be held at 1–2 p.m. Central on January 20. To register, visit [bit.ly/ALA23InfoSession](https://bit.ly/ALA23InfoSession). The ALA Presidential Candidates Forum will be held virtually at 2:30 p.m. Central on February 15. To register, visit [bit.ly/ALA23PresCan](https://bit.ly/ALA23PresCan). ●

literature collections, including the renowned Kerlan Collection at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection at University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, and the Baldwin Library of Historical Children’s Collection at University of Florida in Gainesville.

### ■ **Embracing Teen Voices through Authentic Publication at the Library**

12:10–12:30 p.m. Sunday, January 29

New York Public Library’s (NYPL) young adult services department has leveraged print and digital media and the library’s own platform to show teens that their voices matter and their ideas deserve a broad audience. In this session, discover how NYPL has created innovative publication opportunities for teens and how attendees can do the same at their libraries.



▲ **All Together Now: Changing Lives through Library Adult Education and Learning Resources**

1:30–2:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

In this session geared toward those responsible for adult learning in public libraries, participants will learn strategies for maximizing the value of adult learning resources to create transformative outcomes in their communities.

■ **Trends in Research Impact Librarianship: Developing New Programs and Services**

3:30–3:50 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Though bibliometrics has been in practice for decades, research impact librarianship is currently trending as an area of specialization that goes beyond traditional citation analysis. Learn how University of Houston Libraries has developed its research visibility and strategies for creating a similar program at your institution.

▲ **Cooking by the Book: Tips for Using Video to Promote Food Literacy**

3:30–4:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Join the creators and hosts of the Cooking by the Book YouTube series, designed and recorded at Baltimore County (Md.) Public

Library. Make the best use of your cookbook collection by creating short YouTube videos and adjacent programming to help patrons become more proficient in the kitchen.

● **Post-Pandemic Curbside Services: Managing Library Goals and Patron Satisfaction**

Attendees will leave this session with new ideas for developing innovative curbside services at every budget level.

MENTAL HEALTH

● **Supporting Ourselves and Each Other: Mental Health Care within the Profession**

1:30–2 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Library workers can learn how to support themselves—and one another—at this presentation that will present mental health research as it relates to the industry.

▲ **Acknowledging What's Beneath the Cover: Creating Trauma-Informed Library Workspaces**

1:30–2:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Whether from patrons, coworkers, or community pressure, trauma affects library workers in different ways. Attendees will



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## LLX MARKETPLACE

**T**he LLX Marketplace, designed for collaboration and learning within an exhibit space, will host more than 200 exhibitors offering the newest titles, products, tools, and services. For more information, visit [bit.ly/LLX23Mkt](https://bit.ly/LLX23Mkt).

hear research from the groundbreaking *Urban Library Trauma Study* and leave with recommendations to address pervasive trauma in the workplace.

## READERS' ADVISORY

### ● **bANterbot: Delivering EDI-Focused Readers' Advisory through a Chatbot**

11:30 a.m.–noon Saturday, January 28

Learn how UCI Libraries has leveraged its existing chatbot to create bANterbot, an automated collection-promotion service with an emphasis on books by authors of color. Speakers will trace bANterbot from idea to implementation, focusing on workflow, results, and suggestions for improvement.

### ■ **Supercharge Your Reading Life: Leveling Up Your Readers' Advisory Skills**

3:10–3:30 p.m. Saturday, January 28

Has your mind ever gone blank when someone has asked you for a book recommendation? Attendees will learn concrete ways to organize their own reading life and enhance their skills as readers' advisors.

### ▲ **Navigating Challenging Topics with Graphic Novels and Manga**

3:30–4:45 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Graphic novels and manga provide a nuanced visual narrative where readers can connect with characters and immerse themselves in their lives. Speakers will discuss some of their favorite graphic novels and manga and focus on the ways they help readers talk about important, and perhaps difficult, topics.

## TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION

### ● **Unleash the Power of Google Data Studio in Your School Library**

11:30 a.m.–noon Saturday, January 28

Learn how to use data exploration program Google Data Studio effectively in a school library environment and see how one school librarian used a 40-book challenge to make customizable progress reports for individual students.

### ▲ **Hands-On and High Impact: Virtual Programs with Monthly Youth Activity Boxes**

10–11:15 a.m. Sunday, January 29

Inspired by the idea of themed subscription boxes containing crafts, toys, and media, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library staffers wanted to create a budget-friendly way for families to receive boxes based on science topics. Learn how to incorporate library resources and technology, plus your own crafting skills, to make all-inclusive STEAM activity boxes for different age groups.

### ▲ **Beyond Fake News: Updated Strategies in Digital Literacy, Misinformation, and Bias Instruction**

1–2:15 p.m. Sunday, January 29

Attendees will hear a case study from University of Utah and Granite School District in South Salt Lake City, Utah, about their digital literacy collaboration, which has provided learning experiences for young people and adults to identify, find, evaluate, and apply information.

## CELEBRATIONS

### **I Love My Librarian Awards**

6–8 p.m. Friday, January 27

These awards recognize the impact and accomplishments of outstanding public, academic, and school librarians. Ten winners will share their inspiring stories, and the ceremony will be streamed on ALA's YouTube channel. A celebration of the winners will follow.

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Observance and Sunrise Celebration**

6:30–8 a.m. Sunday, January 29

This conference tradition commemorates Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy and recognizes the connection between his life's work and the library world.

### **RUSA Book and Media Awards**

4–5 p.m. Sunday, January 29

The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) annually recognizes the year's best in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, audio-book narration, and reference materials. At this prerecorded event, RUSA, in coordination with cosponsor *Booklist*, will announce the winners of the 2023 Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction.



### **Youth Media Awards**

8–9:45 a.m. Monday, January 30

More than 20 awards recognizing outstanding books, videos, and other materials for children and teens will be announced, including the Newbery and Caldecott medals, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards, and the Michael L. Printz, Pura Belpré, Stonewall, and Schneider Family awards. **AL**

All times listed are Central. Times and dates of sessions may be subject to change. Check the LibLearnX conference scheduler for the most up-to-date information: [bit.ly/LLX23Sched](https://bit.ly/LLX23Sched).





Pickled  
mulberry  
pani puri at  
Mister Mao

# Crescent City Cuisine

Dining, New Orleans-style

BY Tami Fairweather



**F**rom the thick, humid air rolling off the river onto wrought-iron-wrapped balconies to clanking streetcars and rollicking brass bands, New Orleans is a sensory feast. Make that a tasty sensory feast—I'd bet *food* is one of the first words out of anyone's mouth when you mention you're going to the Big Easy for LibLearnX (January 27–30). Eating there is as much about diverse cultural influences as it is about the social culture of cuisine and community. If you find yourself talking with strangers, swaying to live music, or taking inventory of the strange trinkets on the back bar during your meal, you're doing it right—because honestly, it's hard to go wrong with the food.

As coauthor of the updated 2024 edition of *Frommer's EasyGuide to New Orleans*, I've compiled this intentionally eclectic selection of restaurants near the convention center (and close by, in the

#### PRICE GUIDE

Average price per person for a meal without drinks, tax, or tip.  
\$ under \$18  
\$\$ \$18–\$29  
\$\$\$ \$30 and up

French Quarter) with something for everyone, plus some farther-away destinations to take you a little deeper, doable by rideshare or even

public bike. Make dinner reservations where possible, and make sure to pack a jacket—that humidity hits colder than you might expect in the winter months, though an expertly mixed cocktail will do the trick as well.

## NEAR THE CONVENTION CENTER

### CARMO

527 Julia St.  
504-875-4132  
cafecarmo.com

Centering on a theme of tropical food opens up a world of Caribbean, West African, Southeast Asian, and Latin American flavors here, sustainably sourced with Gulf Coast ingredients. A beans-and-rice staple dish changes daily, as does the curry. Soups and salads are hearty, juices plentiful, desserts inspired, and proteins organic (and inclusive for vegans, pescatarians, and meat eaters). The ceviche and sashimi menu is one of the most eclectic in town with its blend of Japanese and Peruvian styles—cured, smoked, fermented, and ever-fresh. Happy hour is 3–6 p.m. daily; there's live jazz on Fridays and Saturdays with dinner. **B, L, D (Tue–Sun) \$–\$\$**

### COCHON BUTCHER

930 Tchoupitoulas St.  
504-588-7675  
cochonbutcher.com

As the name suggests, butchering and curing meat—as well as smoking it—happens onsite, resulting in superb small plates and world-rocking sandwiches. The boudin sausage is the best east of Acadiana (Louisiana's Cajun Country); the muffuletta may surpass Central Grocery's

(which, as of December 2022, has not reopened since sustaining damage from Hurricane Ida in 2021); and the pork belly with cucumber and mint is wondrous. Get the vinegary marinated Brussels sprouts, the dreamy mac and cheese, and don't hold back on starting with a fresh sausage plate if you're with a group. Counter service with no reservations, but the casual, high-top tables, which spill out onto the street via garage-style doors, turn over quickly. **L, D daily \$**

### COMPÈRE LAPIN

535 Tchoupitoulas St.  
(in the Old No. 77 Hotel)  
504-599-2119  
comperelapin.com

*Top Chef* alum and Saint Lucia native Nina Compton blends Caribbean, French, Italian, and Creole influences into playful, award-winning dishes, uncompromising in quality. Check out the popular curried goat with sweet potato gnocchi, the hamachi tartare with jerk pineapple and fried okra, and the scallion and jalapeño hushpuppies with cilantro crema. Don't miss the baked-to-order biscuits with bacon and honey butter. **D daily \$\$–\$\$\$**

### MERIL

424 Girod St.  
504-526-3745  
emerilsrestaurants.com/meril

This is Chef Emeril Lagasse's casual, spacious, and reasonably priced concept restaurant, and it bustles. The focus is on

## CATCH 'EM IF YOU CAN

**W**hat other cities refer to as street food vendors are called pop-ups in New Orleans, and they come in various forms: food truck, pickup truck, a folding table and some propane, someone else's kitchen, or even a bike (see Taco Bike NOLA: [instagram.com/tacobikenola](https://www.instagram.com/tacobikenola)). They're temporary, informal, and—just like a brass-band second-line parade—signals that you serendipitously have found yourself in the right place at the right time.

**CHEF LINDA, THE YA-KA-MEIN LADY** ([neworleanssoulfood.com](https://www.neworleanssoulfood.com)) After more than 20 years as the guardian of her family recipe for ya-ka-mein soup (aka “meal in a bowl,” aka “Old Sober,” aka “one of New Orleans’ best-kept secrets”), Chef Linda is receiving the national fame she deserves (see the New Orleans episode of Netflix’s *Street Food USA*). Try the soup, yes—but buy a ticket for whatever else the chef is offering to take the full ride. \$

**DAKAR NOLA** ([instagram.com/dakarnola](https://www.instagram.com/dakarnola)) Senegalese-raised Chef Serigne Mbaye’s West African food with a Creole twist reflects the deep cultural connection between Senegambia and New Orleans. His pop-up is a tasting-menu dinner event, held in different temporal locations around town—many times in collaboration with other notable chefs—where some true magic happens. \$\$\$

**HATCH AND HARVEST** ([instagram.com/hatchandharvest](https://www.instagram.com/hatchandharvest)) You’ll never know what’s on the ambitiously rotating menu of fish, meat, and veggie options with

delectable sides (smashed red potatoes, Peruvian white bean salad, apple fennel cabbage slaw), but you can count on the presence of roasted Hatch green chiles and egg rolls (a wait, but worth it). \$

**ONLY FLANS** ([instagram.com/onlyflansbychefely](https://www.instagram.com/onlyflansbychefely)) Ely Navarro Hernandez’s mom’s flan was a standout hit at her Cuban dinner pop-up during the pandemic, but she’s a

savory-leaning chef. She has found a way to blend the two ideas by creating an “only” that allows her to experiment with other ingredients and flavors (sweet potato, cinnamon, even squid ink) while maintaining the creaminess of flan. You can still get the classic sweet version, too. \$

**SOUTHERNS FOOD** ([instagram.com/southernsfood](https://www.instagram.com/southernsfood)) On a mission to make “the best fried chicken sandwich in all of New Orleans,” friends Gene Colley and Anthony Cruz took home the gold at the 2019 NOLA Fried Chicken Fest for the best use of chicken in a dish. Simple, crispy, juicy, and topped with perfectly sliced pickles, the sandwiches can be ordered with varying levels of Nashville-style heat. Call ahead for a quick pickup. \$ •



internationally inspired small plates and creative cocktails. Meatballs come with lemon-whipped ricotta, pomodoro, and toasted breadcrumbs; fried turkey necks get spiked with hot sauce. A good variety of salads, sides, and flatbreads makes this spot a crowd pleaser. **Brunch (Sun), L (F), D daily** \$\$

## LE CHAT NOIR

**715 St. Charles Ave.**  
**504-381-0045**  
[lechatnoirnola.com](https://www.lechatnoirnola.com)

Newly opened in 2021, Le Chat Noir kept the name of its former iteration as a cabaret theater but instead became a restaurant. Now the stage is an open kitchen, and the orchestra pit holds a wood-fired oven. Breakout stars are roasted vegetable sides and an already-legendary brick chicken (one person referred to it as “fowl magic”). Chef Seth Temple—a native of Lake Charles, Louisiana, near the Texas border—is focused on sustainability, sourcing 70% of ingredients locally through direct-to-farmer relationships. Oysters at the stand-up shucking bar are served cold and clean; the wine list is classy and affordable. Don’t skip dessert. **D (M-Sat)** \$\$

## PÊCHE

**800 Magazine St.**  
**504-522-1744**

[pecherestaurant.com](https://www.pecherestaurant.com)  
There’s nary a dud on the menu of this uber-popular, award-winning spot, known for its contemporary and rustic wood-fired seafood dishes. The raucous room works best for plate-sharing parties, not dates or deep convos. Ordering from all sections of the menu

(including the raw bar and large for-the-table specials) is the way to go. Start with beer-battered fish sticks and get the whole grilled fish; pair them with great craft beers and Eurocentric wines. Reserve well in advance for a table, though you can likely snag a single or double spot at the bar if you hover. **L, D daily \$\$\$\$**

## VYOONE'S

412 Girod St.  
504-518-6007  
vyoone.com

Enter through a narrow hallway, discreetly tucked into one of the busiest blocks for destination restaurants in the Central Business District, and you'll find a charming French Quarter-style courtyard spot serving up French Creole favorites. Fourth-generation New Orleanian Vyoone Segue Lewis will likely greet you (unless it's a Saints game day, in which case she's at the Superdome). A classically trained musician and former pediatric geneticist, she was motivated to become a restaurateur by her passion for cultural preservation, sharing the dishes she grew up with, and pure hospitality. The French onion soup and shrimp and grits have won awards. **Brunch (Sun), D (W-Sat) \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**

## THE FRENCH QUARTER

### ANTOINE'S RESTAURANT

713 St. Louis St.  
504-581-4422  
antoines.com

The oldest family-run restaurant in the country, Antoine's

is anything but modern. But the definitive New Orleans dining experience is worth it (especially for the prix fixe three-course lunch, dinner, and brunch menus at \$22, \$60, and \$38 respectively). Go for classics, drama, puffy soufflé potatoes to share, and oysters Rockefeller, a dish invented here. Make sure to ask to see the back rooms, a living museum filled with scepters, crowns, and sketches from the high-society origins of Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans, where the mystic parade krewes (and secret celebrity diners) still gather for private meals. There is a dress code, though the Hermes Bar onsite offers more casual access for a drink and some

small bites. **Brunch (Sat, Sun), L (M, Th, F), D (M, Th-Sat) \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**

## CAFÉ SBISA

1011 Decatur St.  
504-522-5565  
cafesbisanola.com

Established in 1899, this atmospheric stunner sashays with original woodwork, an intimate balcony, and courtyard patio dining. Chef Alfred Singleton's outstanding French Creole cuisine includes bayou crab cakes and an amazing turtle soup laced with sherry, served under the watchful eyes of a bawdy George Dureau mural. During Sunday brunch, live jazz fills the restaurant, providing a wonderful ambiance for such Creole classics as crawfish étouffée omelet, shrimp and



Beef with mille-feuille potato at Le Chat Noir

grits, and catfish almondine. Reserve a table on the balcony for alfresco dining. **Brunch (Sun), D (Th-Sat) \$\$**

## CANE & TABLE

1113 Decatur St.  
504-581-1112  
caneandtablenola.com

C&T's sophisticated, faded decor is marked by perfectly distressed plaster and brick walls, sparkly chandeliers, a gleaming white marble bar top, and a slim, sexy patio. But rum is the star attraction, mixed with house-made ingredients and squeezed-to-order juice by some of New Orleans' most revered craft cocktail pros. The fruity Hurricane & Table is a solid bet, but don't pass up the seasonal cocktails where the mixologists flex their creativity. Excellent small and large plates follow the Latin and Caribbean tide: Share the tostones but bogart the crispy ribs. There is no sign; it's next to Coop's Place. **Brunch, L (Sat, Sun) \$, D (W-Sun) \$\$**

## GW FINS

808 Bienville St.  
504-581-3467  
gwfins.com

This impeccable modern seafood shrine is one of the city's best restaurants, period. Ultra-fresh fish is picked up dockside and served in stylish preparations like the signature original scalibut, thin-sliced sea scallop "scales" atop grilled halibut on Royal Red shrimp risotto with snap peas and pea shoot butter. The catch hits the kitchen by 4 p.m., changing the menu daily. Order the pretzel-crusted salty malty ice cream pie, even if you have room for only a bite. **D daily \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$**



## IRENE'S CUISINE

529 Bienville St.

504-529-8811

[irenesnola.com](http://irenesnola.com)

Owned and run by Irene DiPietro, whose family emigrated from Sicily to New Orleans in 1956, this relatively underground French Quarter institution serves delectable pastas and sauces and delicious, unfussy French Provincial and Creole-Italian dishes that have been on the menu for decades. There's duck St. Philip with raspberry-pancetta demi-glace, shrimp and crawfish fettuccine, and seemingly simple chicken rosemary—marinated, par-cooked, re-marinated, and roasted—that is nearly perfect. Plan for a wait, even with reservations. **D (Tue-Sat) \$\$**

## JEWEL OF THE SOUTH

1026 St. Louis St.

504-265-8816

[jewelnola.com](http://jewelnola.com)

At this upper-Quarter gem, everything is truly jewel-like, from the exquisitely prepared cocktails (no surprise—the owner is legendary, award-winning New Orleans

bartender Chris Hannah) to the demure dining room and come-hither courtyard. While the bar team is intentional, passionate, and proud of their work, they're not precious. Patrons interested in mixology are willingly indulged; those with an appetite can enjoy finely plated modern tapas and caviar; those who come for fun or flirtation will find their needs fulfilled by the Best Restaurant Bar in America, an honor bestowed in 2022 by the Tales of the Cocktail Foundation (Hannah won Bartender of the Year, too). **Brunch (Sun) \$, D (W-Sun) \$\$-\$\$\$**

## LATITUDE 29

321 N. Peters St. (in the Bienville House Hotel)

504-609-3811

[latitude29nola.com](http://latitude29nola.com)

When rumors first arose that Jeff "Beachbum" Berry was moving to New Orleans to open up a bar/restaurant, the bartending community was ablaze. After all, Berry literally wrote the book on tiki. That the cocktails would deliver was never in doubt, but Latitude 29 succeeds because it's all the

tiki you could hope for and less: There's bamboo-and-thatch decor, but it's understated; the made-for-sharing rum bombs in bowls and giant clamshells are nuanced and ingredient-driven. The fare ranges from classic Hawaiian (Spam musubi, macaroni salad, and Loco Moco) to vegetarian chickpea curry and Filipino-style egg rolls. Don't worry—there are pork ribs, a burger, and fries too. Wait for a cozy bar stool that you'll want to sit at for a while. **D daily \$\$**

## SAINT JOHN

1117 Decatur St.

504-581-8120

[saintjohnnola.com](http://saintjohnnola.com)

Chef Eric Cook is a man of his people, born and raised in New Orleans and sticking with it—feeding troops through Hurricane Katrina and emptying out his freezers to feed frontline workers during the worst of the pandemic. Currently, he helms two of the best restaurants in the city—Gris-Gris, in the Lower Garden District, and Saint John, named *Louisiana Life* magazine's best new restaurant of 2022. Basic

Creole standards are anything but. You can't make a mistake here, but the oysters three ways, gumbo du jour, and deep-fried whole fish are personal faves. Cocktails rock, and the wine selection is solid and sweet; brunch is a great deal.

**Brunch, D (W-M) \$\$-\$\$\$**

## DESTINATIONS

### BYWATER BAKERY

3624 Dauphine St. (Bywater)

504-336-3336

[bywaterbakery.com](http://bywaterbakery.com)

This casual breakfast and lunch spot is a treat, with delicious pastries, scrumptious savorys, cool local art, and musicians frequently popping by to play. Try the breakfast gumbo (chicken-andouille filé gumbo with scrambled eggs over grits), the Cuban sandwich, or the local-to-New Orleans ya-ka-mein noodle soup using Chef Linda's famous recipe with permission, no less. (See sidebar, p. 46.) You're lucky to be here during the Mardi Gras King Cake season, and Bywater offers the most flavors anywhere, both savory (crawfish au gratin, boudin, and spinach artichoke) and sweet (their signature berry and fluffy mascarpone Chantilly concoction is a must). **B, L (Th-M) \$**

### CAFÉ RECONCILE

1631 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. (Central City)

504-568-1157

[cafereconcile.org](http://cafereconcile.org)

This culinary training ground serves grilled or fried catfish plates, jerk chicken, fried green tomatoes, po' boy sandwiches, and other sturdy New Orleans soul food while supporting a paid-workforce training

Arroz con pollo at Cane & Table



program that prepares the next generation for careers, college, and life. Bright and friendly, the café attracts a cross section of lunch-going New Orleanians and visitors alike, so conversation buzzes. **L (Tue–F) \$**

## CASAMENTO'S

**4330 Magazine St. (Uptown)  
504-895-9761**

**[casamentosrestaurant.com](http://casamentosrestaurant.com)**

Probably the best “erster” joint in the city, Casamento’s takes its oysters so seriously that it simply closes when they’re not in peak season. (Well, Gulf oysters are always in season nowadays, but everyone needs a vacation.) The subway-tiled restaurant has been family owned since 1919. The oysters are scrubbed clean and well selected, and the shucker is a hoot. (If you dare him, he’ll shoot a bivalve into your mouth from across the room.) Take the plunge and order oyster loaf: a whole loaf of bread fried in butter, filled with oysters, then fried again to seal it. **L (Th–Sat), D (Th–Sun) \$**

## DOOKY CHASE

**2301 Orleans Ave.  
(Tremé/7th Ward)  
504-821-0600**

**[dookychaserestaurants.com](http://dookychaserestaurants.com)**

The late Leah Chase—chef, hostess, activist, educator, and proprietress of Dooky Chase since the 1940s (founded with her late husband Dooky)—was a visionary who knew that food and grace could change the world. The Chases created a welcoming place for Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders to dine and work; it’s where Sarah Vaughan, Nat King Cole, Ray Charles, and



Seafood gumbo at Li'l Dizzy's Café

others hung out at all hours. Chase won just about every culinary award in existence, and after Katrina decimated the restaurant and Dooky passed, she persevered, “cooking with love” and making immeasurable contributions to New Orleans and the whole country. After her death at age 96 in 2019, younger Chases are continuing to offer traditional Creole cooking and a neighborly vibe. Come on a pilgrimage for the hallowed history and stay for the fried chicken, a contender for the city’s best. **L (Tue–F), D (F, Sat) \$\$**

## LI'L DIZZY'S CAFÉ

**1500 Esplanade Ave. (Tremé)  
504-569-8997  
[lildizzyscafe.net](http://lildizzyscafe.net)**

This Tremé mainstay is another quintessential family-owned neighborhood restaurant, resurrected (to the city’s great relief) by Wayne Jr. and his wife, Arkeshia, after founder

Wayne Baquet Sr.’s retirement in 2021. It’s warm and lively with locals and homecomers sitting elbow to elbow, satiating their cravings for fried chicken, seafood gumbo, bread pudding, greens, and candied yams under photos of Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, and other celebrity visitors. The trout is a standout daily special, a delicate fillet topped with garlic-butter sauce and lump crabmeat. **B, L (M–Sat) \$**

## MISTER MAO

**4501 Tchoupitoulas St.  
(Uptown)  
504-345-2056**

**[mistermaonola.com](http://mistermaonola.com)**

Abandon all culinary rules and expectations, and you shall be rewarded. Globe-hopping flavors zing off the teal tiger mural, zebra rugs, and grandmotherly tableware in bewildering, refreshing, and sometimes riotous ways. A section of the menu lists items

at the far end of the Scoville scale—steer clear if heat is not your thing. Try the enchanting pani puri—crispy lentil popper cups filled with potato masala, pickled blueberries, and mint water. The menu changes often, but octopus and scallop preparations are consistent. Servers are kindly, cognizant guides through the menu and equally eclectic wine list. Consider it if you’re heading to Tipitina’s for music; it’s just a short hop away. **Brunch (Sun), D (M, Th–Sun) \$\$**

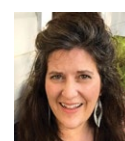
## QUEEN TRINI LISA

**4200 D’Hemecourt St.  
(Mid-City)**

**504-345-2058**

**[queentrinilisa.com](http://queentrinilisa.com)**

Owner and chef Lisa Nelson brings the African, East Indian, and Asian flavors of her native Trinidad and Tobago to what many refer to as the northernmost city in the Caribbean. Her barbecue-style chicken is award-winning, and her doubles (curried chickpea stew between two pieces of fluffy flatbread) are perfection. Nelson spent nearly a year refining her recipe for that classic Trini street food and serves it in a bigger, meal-sized version than you find in Trinidad. Look for the coco bread fish sandwich or seafood doubles on special in her bright brick-and-mortar eatery, which she opened in early 2022 after years of popping up around town. Get an extra hibiscus tea to go; you’ll be craving it later. **L, D (Tue–Sat) \$ <sup>AL</sup>**



**TAMI FAIR-WEATHER** is a writer based in New Orleans.

# Leveraging Talent

Strategies to improve library recruitment, retention, and diversity

BY Kimberley Bugg



**KIMBERLEY BUGG** is associate library director of Robert W. Woodruff Library at Atlanta University Center.

In 2015, I was working at a library with a fantastic leader who was recruited away and left the organization. We were without leadership for more than a year, which, for a small library team with a relatively flat organizational structure, meant the library lost the agency and advocacy necessary to move critical initiatives and strategic goals forward.

In sharing my frustration with others, I learned there was nothing novel about this scenario. Other librarians had experienced this phenomenon, which I refer to as a pipeline issue. The experience led me to write a paper, “Best Practices for Talent Acquisition in 21st-Century Academic Libraries,” rethinking traditional approaches to recruitment and retention ([bit.ly/CUNY-Bugg](https://bit.ly/CUNY-Bugg)).

I went on to work at other libraries that experienced this stagnation during periods of leadership change and wondered: What can be done beyond succession planning to fill gaps within an organization?

While succession planning can allow us to think about the future and put plans in place, creating an internal pipeline allows us to actively engage in everyday work and moving goals forward. That means thinking about the talent of those currently in our organizations and leveraging that talent, even before leaders or individuals in key positions leave.

Fast-forward to now: Libraries, like other industries, have faced tremendous workforce change. Not only did they grapple with meeting user needs in a largely remote environment at the start of the pandemic, but libraries continue to contend with staffers leaving positions at a faster rate than positions can be filled. Many positions, once posted, languish for extended periods of time, unfilled because of lack of interest or qualification requirements.

A diverse and well-qualified workforce is essential for the success and sustainability of the profession. In response, leaders within libraries are beginning to think differently about ways to attract candidates by making recruitment more transparent and equitable.

This transparency includes posting salaries, conducting pre-application information sessions, and sharing questions in advance of an interview. Additionally, efforts like the Association of College and Research Libraries’ Diversity Alliance program—which unites academic libraries committed to increasing the hiring pipeline of qualified and talented individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups—create a network of support for early-career librarians of color. Library residency programs can also be integral to recruitment and retention, as

noted by librarians Angela Boyd, Yolanda Blue, and Suzanne Im in their 2017 article “Evaluation of Academic Library Residency Programs in the United States for Librarians of Color” for *College & Research Libraries* ([bit.ly/CRL-LibRes](https://bit.ly/CRL-LibRes)).

Current efforts within libraries primarily concentrate on making positions more attractive to those who are already in the pipeline looking for a job. However, these efforts do not increase the number of individuals in the pipeline. To do that, one strategy would be for libraries to equip

individuals already at the organization with the skills to fill gaps. This might include cross-training opportunities, internal training programs for needed skills, and support for obtaining an MLS through funding and allocated time.

Individuals within an organization

have already demonstrated buy-in and commitment. Hiring managers at libraries must focus on recruiting individuals with shared values who are poised to meet future needs rather than solely individuals to accomplish specific tasks. They must also keep in mind the need to build internal organizational capacity to fill roles at the point of vacancy.

Expanding the pipeline, hiring, and retaining a diverse and well-qualified workforce can ultimately lead to a sustainable future for libraries. **AL**

A diverse and well-qualified workforce is essential for the success and sustainability of the profession.



# Covering Your Bases

What library directors should consider when acquiring insurance **by** Kate Hall and Kathy Parker



**KATE HALL** has been a library director since 2010, first at New Lenox (Ill.) Public Library and now at Northbrook (Ill.) Public Library.



**KATHY PARKER** has more than 35 years of library experience, with 16 years serving as director at Glenwood-Lynwood (Ill.) Public Library District.

Just the very mention of the word *insurance* can cause glazed eyes in many conversations. But your library needs different types of insurance coverage, just as you do in your personal life. As the library director, you need to know what types are available and what they cover before you can determine the appropriate coverage for your library. Health insurance for staff may be a large portion of the library budget, but it's not the only coverage you need. Other kinds fall under the category of liability insurance.

**Public liability insurance.** This covers the building and grounds, the contents of the building, library vehicles, and any accidents involving patrons on library property. It's important to have adequate coverage in the event of a major claim. It's also important that a library not be under- or overinsured. If underinsured, the library will have to make up for that lesser coverage in the event of a claim. Being overinsured costs more in premiums, and the coverage may not be necessary. Ask colleagues of similarly sized libraries in your region about their policies and premiums to get an idea of the amount of coverage you may need.

There are various coverages included in your public liability insurance. You have your building and contents, but there's also coverage for incidents caused by your HVAC system, which may be called "boiler and machinery coverage." If you have any vehicles, like a bookmobile or van, you will need automobile coverage. Some states may require flood insurance if your library is in a floodplain. Coverage can be purchased for just about any possible threat—mold, terrorism, coastal disasters—whatever your needs may be.

It's a good idea to have a building appraisal done to determine the worth of your facility and grounds. The appraisal should include all your furnishings, equipment, materials collection, and any art. You can hire an outside appraisal company to perform this service, which should be done every four to six years or whenever you have a major building change. An up-to-date appraisal is also helpful for your auditor when creating and maintaining a depreciation schedule for all your long-term assets.

**Cyber liability coverage.** A newer kind of coverage considers security breaches of financial and other institutions' networks, ransomware attacks, and additional cyber threats. Institutions, including libraries, have become increasingly more dependent on technology, so there is a need to protect that technology and our ability to use it. Recovering from a breach means far more than putting your network

and IT infrastructure right. If anyone's personal information is accessed or stolen as part of a breach, federal law requires the breached institution to pay for one year of credit monitoring for every person affected. You will also need to craft and release media messages addressing the breach. Public relations is an important component to combatting the panic that can sometimes arise in the wake of a cyber breach.

It can be very costly for your IT staff to repair the breached infrastructure. Entire servers may have to be rebuilt, and while this is being completed, a library still requires access to technology. Temporary servers may need to be brought in and configured. Computers may need to be cleaned of viruses and restored. All these additional costs could be paid out by your cyber liability insurance coverage.

Each insurance plan offers different benefits, and you will

need to decide which is most appropriate based on your board's preference, your comfort level, and past practices at your library. If you are feeling unsure about what to do,

don't forget to call on neighboring libraries and ask lots of questions until you feel comfortable making a solid decision.

*Adapted from The Public Library Director's HR Toolkit (ALA Editions, 2022).* **AL**

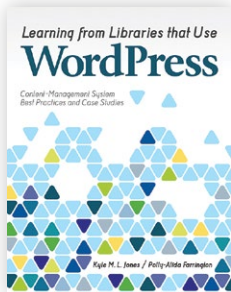
Have a building appraisal done to determine the worth of your facility and grounds.

# Decoding the Web

Taking the mystery out of back-end development, metrics, and more



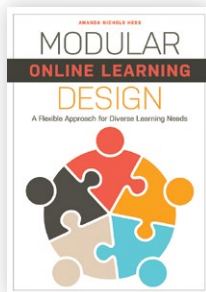
**ANDY GOODING-CALL** is associate news and social media editor at University of Massachusetts Amherst's Office of News and Media Relations.



## Learning from Libraries That Use WordPress: Content-Management System Best Practices and Case Studies

By Kyle M. L. Jones and Polly-Alida Farrington

The first part of this indispensable resource is an overview of WordPress. Not only does it cover the basics of this popular content management system, but it also includes the decision-making process for starting a WordPress site, how to choose plugins and themes, and what to do in special situations that call for customization. The book is appropriate for advanced beginners in networking and technological subjects. No coding experience is necessary, but the reader should know something about servers and how they work. Any library with a WordPress site—or especially one that is considering starting one—needs this book. ALA Editions, 2013. 176 p. \$67. PBK. 978-0-8389-1162-4. (Also available as an ebook.)



## Modular Online Learning Design: A Flexible Approach for Diverse Learning Needs

By Amanda Nichols Hess

With online instruction likely to remain important, this text should be considered critical to any academic librarian responsible for information literacy training. As a soup-to-nuts guide to online learning, it not only educates the reader about how to create effective learning modules but also takes them through a detailed planning, execution, and evaluation process. Concerns about accessibility, which sometimes get lost in online learning modules, are the subject of a full, nuanced chapter. This part in particular should be required reading for any academic or school librarian. Also of interest is the author's methods for future-proofing online learning programs. A good option for both beginners and seasoned veterans of online education. ALA Editions, 2020. 144 p. \$65.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-4812-5. (Also available as an ebook.)



## Using Digital Analytics for Smart Assessment

By Tabatha Farney

Any library interested in doing a deeper dive on its statistics would do well to glance at this text. Whether a library manages its own webpage, social media presence, or database subscriptions, the book has original insights on how to set up, manage, and use analysis for all types of data that can be digitized. This is true of data that is born-digital and data that originates in real life. The first half is a thorough how-to on analytics, starting with why this kind of evaluation is useful for a library and going right through to cover the different available tools, including a list of URLs with an analysis of each resource's strengths and weaknesses. Particularly helpful are the author's personal recommendations and experience in the field of digital analytics. ALA Editions, 2018. 168 p. \$65. PBK. 978-0-8389-1598-1. (Also available as an ebook.)

by Andy Gooding-Call

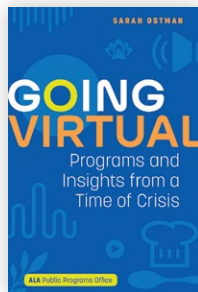


### Library Web Development: Beyond Tips and Tricks

By Jason Bengtson

Librarians who have taught themselves to support web functionality as well as professional web developers who work with libraries will likely find this short, handy book an invaluable resource. It is based around several task-oriented scenarios—from dealing with Google Analytics to visualizing a multilayer image—that often come up in library web support. Unlike many coding textbooks, it has a conversational tone that makes it an easy and even fun read. The book includes a lot of code and shouldn't be considered a primer for beginners. Suggested prerequisites include a strong grasp of JavaScript, HTML, XML, and JSON at least. But for librarians and library partners who are already experienced in web development, the book should offer plenty of good ideas and guidance. ALA Editions, 2019.

144 p. \$69.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-1830-2. (Also available as an ebook.)



### Going Virtual: Programs and Insights from a Time of Crisis

By Sarah Ostman

If you're searching for no-touch programming ideas, look no further. This book profiles a range of programs covering every conceivable topic and drawn from actual library events; helpfully, the book provides the name of the libraries that helmed them. Many of the programs are virtual events, but others don't require computer access except for promotional purposes. In one notable example, a library set up a socially distanced wildflower walk in a field and allowed patrons to guide themselves using flags. Public libraries are most likely to benefit from the book, but school librarians and teachers may discover practical ideas as well. While the initial COVID-19 lockdown of 2020 is over, the continued popularity of virtual programs will make this engaging volume useful for many years to come. ALA Editions, 2021.


104 p. \$34.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-4878-1. (Also available as an ebook.)



### The Librarian's Nitty-Gritty Guide to Content Marketing

By Laura Solomon

Content is any information that your library posts online, from Twitter posts to Facebook replies. Solomon's book, appropriate for complete beginners, emphasizes the importance of having a content strategy, describes how to create one, and offers instruction on how to execute good content and content management. While this may sound intimidating to libraries yet to find their place on social media, the author does a great job of breaking it all down in an informal, relaxed way. A brief overview of general content marketing strategy concludes with sample marketing content drawn from the real world. This title could be especially useful for libraries that initially "winged it" and now wish to present themselves online in a more organized and orderly, or even branded, way. ALA Editions, 2016.

128 p. \$50. PBK. 978-0-8389-1432-8. (Also available as an ebook.) 



# PEOPLE

## Announcements

### ON THE MOVE

July 1 **Kristine Markovich Alpi** joined the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Mount Sinai Health System in New York as associate dean of libraries and information sciences.



In September, **Bailey Badger** joined Pepperdine Libraries in Malibu, California, as librarian for description, documentation, and discovery.

In July, **Elizabeth Berney** became collection development librarian for STEM at Kansas State University in Manhattan.



Warren County (N.C.) Memorial Library named **Christy Bondy** director effective November 16.

**Jane Connelly** joined University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, as archivist and special collections librarian in September.

New Hanover County (N.C.) Public Library appointed **Dana Connors** director effective November 29.

November 7 **Joslyn Bowling Dixon** started as executive director of Oak Park (Ill.) Public Library.

**Amanda Hirst** became director of Public Library of Brookline (Mass.) August 22.

July 5 **Virengia Houston** became dean of library services at Denmark (S.C.) Technical College.

University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, named **Olivia Inglin** assistant archivist in August.

In October, **Kelsey Jones** became head of First Regional Library's James F. Anderson Public Library in Hernando, Mississippi.

### Kudos

**Miriam Erickson**, school library media specialist at Gibraltar Secondary School in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, for 30 years until retiring in 1999, was inducted into the Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame November 3. ●

**Jennie Levine Knies** was named associate dean for Commonwealth Campus Libraries at Pennsylvania State University in University Park December 1.



**Charles G. Leckenby** started as director of Milltown (N.J.) Public Library February 7, 2022.

Pepperdine Libraries in Irvine, California, appointed **Isabel Morales** graduate campus librarian in August.

**Kristin Peace** joined Pepperdine Libraries in Malibu, California, as research and instruction librarian in August.

**Lucy Perrin** became director and archivist for the Rushford Center and Churches of Christ Heritage Collection at Pepperdine Libraries in Malibu, California, in August.

**Joseph A. Salem Jr.** joined Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, as Rita DiGiallonardo Holloway University Librarian and vice provost for library affairs August 15.

November 7 **Isabelle Schenkel** joined University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as metadata librarian for Slavic languages.

October 11 **Daisy Domínguez Singh** became dean of libraries at University of Maine in Orono.



August 1 **Wendy Lee Spaček** became arts and humanities librarian at University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington.

In May, University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, named **Nick Triggs** discovery and user experience librarian.

### PROMOTIONS

August 29 **Renée Bosman** was promoted to head of interlibrary services at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

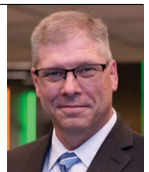
Iowa State University Library in Ames named **Hannah Scates Kettler** its associate university librarian for academic services September 6.



University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, promoted **Kim Loper** to executive director of Calder Memorial Library and associate dean for Health Information Services effective June 13.

In October, First Regional Library appointed **Jesse Pool** manager of its Senatobia and Coldwater branches in Tate County, Mississippi.

Orange County (Fla.) Library System promoted **Steve Powell** to director and CEO in August.



November 1 First Regional Library named **Amanda Tutor** branch manager of Batesville (Miss.) Public Library.

### RETIREMENTS

**Carol Ann Desch**, acting coordinator of statewide library services and director of the Division of Library Development at New York State Library in Albany, retired in September.

## In Memory

**Betty Joan Blackman**, 90, a founder of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA) and former ALA councilor, died October 4. Blackman served as dean of libraries at California State University, Dominguez Hills, from 1986 until her 1999 retirement. She had previously worked at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and California State University, Long Beach. She received BCALA's Leadership Award in 1994 and was interviewed as part of the California Library Leader Memory Project in 2014.



**Roberto Carlos Delgadillo**, student services librarian at University of California, Davis, died October 30. Delgadillo received ALA's I Love My Librarian Award in 2012, partially in recognition of his support for students from historically underserved communities. He created a program of embedded librarianship with UC Davis' Center for Latinx and Chicana Academic Student Success in 2017. Delgadillo was a longtime ALA councilor, 2013–2014 president of the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, and an active member of Reforma, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking.

**Kathryn Luther Henderson**, 99, professor emerita at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) School of Information Sciences, died August 18. She joined the faculty in 1965 after holding positions at the UIUC library and at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. She received UIUC's Award for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Teaching in 1991, ALA's 1993 Beta Phi Mu Award, and the Association for Library and Information Science Education Excellence in Teaching Award in 1995. She served on and chaired several

committees related to technical services, cataloging, and classification, and served on the editorial board of *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*.

**Guy A. Marco**, 94, who previously served as dean of Kent (Ohio) State University's library school from 1966 to 1977, died April 5. Marco also worked as chief of general reference and bibliography at the Library of Congress and chief of library services for the US Army at Fort Dix in New Jersey. He published several music reference books, as well as *The American Public Library Handbook*. He was active in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, editing the journal *Third World Libraries* (now known as *World Libraries*) for seven years and working as a consultant in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. He served as an ALA councilor and on several ALA committees.

**Jim Rettig**, 71, 2008–2009 ALA president, died August 17. Rettig worked in libraries in six states, including as assistant dean of university libraries at Earl Gregg Swem Library at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, and most recently as dean of libraries at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, where he served until retiring in 2017. Rettig was an active ALA member and held several leadership positions throughout his career, including chair of the Committee on Organization, president of the Reference and User Services Association, and a member of ALA's Executive Board. He was also a strong advocate for the Spectrum Scholarship Program to promote diversity in the LIS profession.



**Dorothy "Dottie" Anne Thomas**, 70, retired director at Ohio County Public Library in Wheeling, West Virginia, where she served for 25 years, died August 26. ●

**Roger Hiles** retired as library services manager at Arcadia (Calif.) Public Library July 1.

**Paige Owens** retired as director of New Hanover County (N.C.) Public Library in September.

July 31 **Joseph Weber** retired as director of library services at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

### AT ALA

**Megan Bennett** became associate editor for *American Libraries* October 24.

September 26 **Rebecca Headrick** started as chief information technology officer.

**Angela Hubbard**, program officer for projects and partnerships for the Asso-

ciation for Library Service to Children, left ALA August 31.

October 24 **Jim Takeshita** joined the Public Policy and Advocacy Office as public policy associate.

**Kerry Ward**, executive director of Core and interim director of the Communications and Marketing Office, left ALA September 23. AL



# Beats from the Bayou

In 1950s southern Louisiana and southeast Texas, a new kind of music filled hopping dance halls: swamp pop.

The genre, typified by electric guitars, pianos, brass instruments, and lovelorn lyrics, blended the emerging sounds of rock 'n roll with New Orleans-style rhythm and blues and traditional Cajun music.

Swamp pop was a favorite among teens in the region, according to Sandy Himel, associate professor and head of government information and the Cajun and Creole Music Collection at University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL). She grew up with it, and it holds a special place in her heart. "I'm a native of Ville Platte, designated by the Louisiana legislature as the 'Swamp Pop Capital of the World,'" she says. "My parents met at a prominent club for swamp pop music."

Himel started ULL's Cajun and Creole Music Collection with a grant in 2003. The collection boasts more than

9,000 artifacts: vinyl records, concert posters, photographs, awards, and even a vintage vocal recording booth.

Among these artifacts are items from swamp pop legends Johnnie Allan and Rod Bernard. In 2013, Allan donated his own memorabilia to the collection, including copies of his commercial recordings and more than 2,500 photos. "That was a highlight," Himel says. "I got a phone call, and you can imagine my excitement when he said, 'This is Johnnie Allan.'"

Today, music students and nonmajors, families of swamp pop stars, and modern swamp pop musicians frequent the collection to revisit old memories and glean inspiration. "[Swamp pop] can be upbeat, danceable, and fun music, and it can also have slow, bad-luck, ballad songs," Himel says. "It's got a little bit of everything, appealing to the young and old." **AL**

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



# We'll miss seeing you!

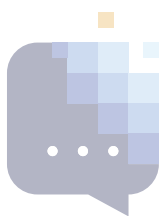


The San José State University School of Information remains a strong supporter of the American Library Association, but we are unable to attend the 2023 LibLearnX conference in Louisiana due to California State University travel prohibition.

At San José State University, we are committed to protecting our students, staff and faculty members from discrimination, including governmental restrictions on the rights of LGBTQ+ community members.



While we will miss getting to spend time with our ALA friends and colleagues in person, we welcome you to participate in SJSU iSchool's free **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Symposium** series. This monthly online forum brings together information professionals from across the nation to share insights, inspiration and thought-provoking conversations about different communities and cultures.



We invite you to join this ongoing journey toward Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion—and hope to see you soon!

**EDI resources are available  
free to all at [ischool.sjsu.edu](https://ischool.sjsu.edu)**

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