

american libraries

November/December 2023

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Lighting the Way

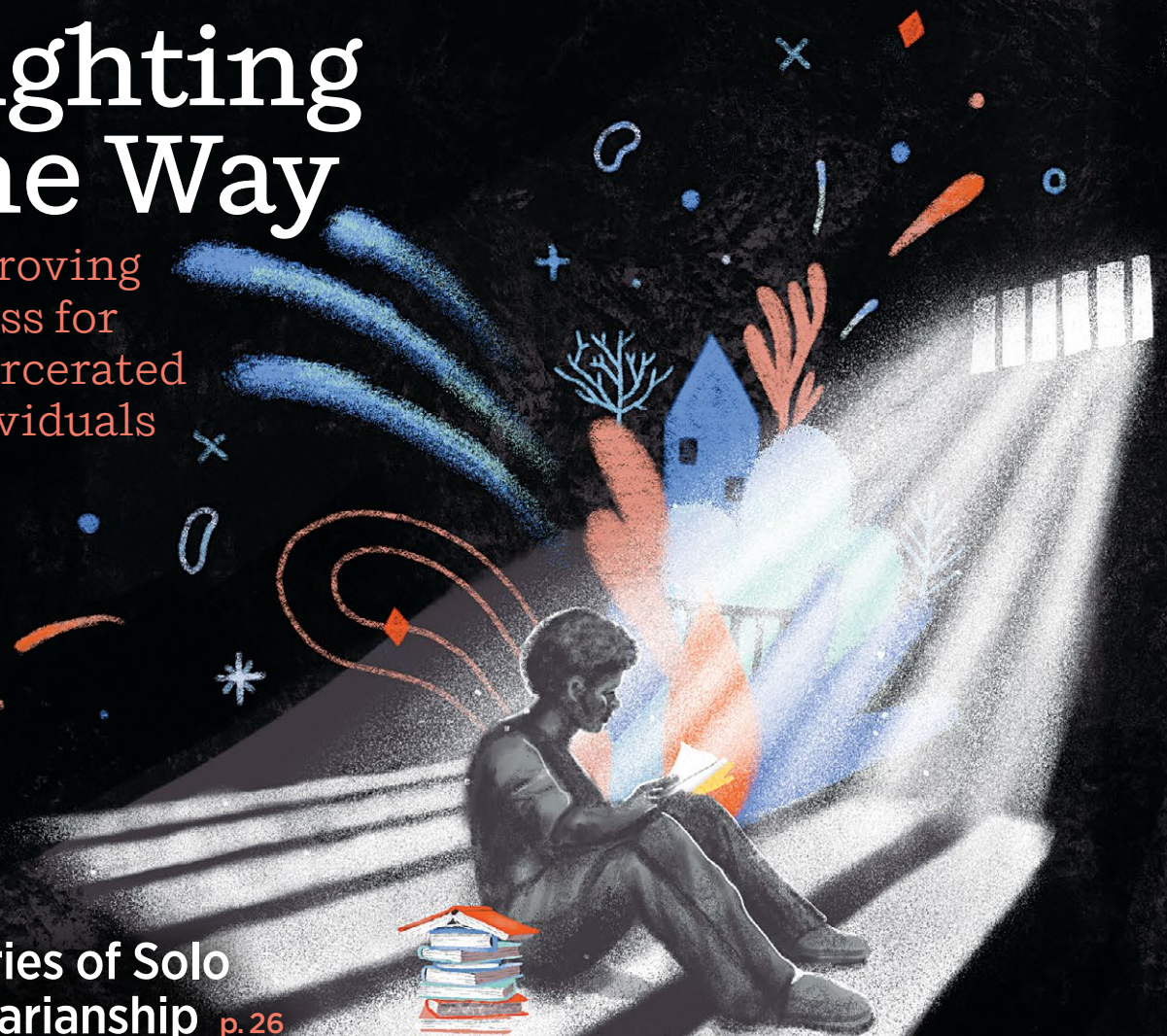
Improving
access for
incarcerated
individuals

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Stories of Solo
Librarianship p. 26

NEWSMAKER:
Tracy K. Smith p. 16

PLUS: Sound Baths, Copyright
Myths, Marine Band Librarian





PLA 2024 Conference

April 3–5 | Columbus



Dulcé Sloan (credit: Bronson Farr)



The premier public library conference returns April 3–5 in vibrant Columbus, Ohio! Join us for the chance to connect with library colleagues worldwide, discover groundbreaking ideas, explore the latest in services and tech, and be inspired by visionary speakers.

Together, let's shape the future of public libraries.

FEATURES

- 100+ education programs
- Half-day workshops
- 200+ exhibitors
- How-To Stage
- Book Buzz
- Career Center
- Networking opportunities
- Closing Session with Dulcé Sloan!
- Big Ideas Series
- Author events
- Library tours
- Pop-up shops
- PLA dog park & more!

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship applications are open through Nov. 12, 2023.

REGISTRATION

IN-PERSON (RECEIVED BY JAN. 12, 2024)

- PLA/OLC personal members: \$347
- ALA personal members: \$488
- Retired/Non-salaried ALA members: \$247
- ALA student member: \$200
- Nonmembers: \$641

VIRTUAL

Visit the conference website for virtual registration and programming details.

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A More Just Society



Sanhita SinhaRoy

When we asked ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall to interview prison reform advocates Reginald Dwayne Betts and Randall Horton for our cover story (“Lighting the Way,” p. 18), she was excited to accept. Betts and Horton spoke about their advocacy work, the importance of accessing literature in prison, and their hopes for ALA’s newly revised *Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated or Detained*. Sprinkled throughout the feature are three case studies from the standards that exemplify the impact and success of prison libraries.

Another success story is from academic librarian Jules LeFort (“Closing Access Gaps,” p. 42). Earlier this year, LeFort became the first representative from her library to serve her university’s education program for incarcerated students. The experience has been rewarding, she writes, reminding us that “it’s incredibly easy to take ease of access to information for granted.”

For community members who have served time in jail or prison, finding employment can be challenging. But an innovative entrepreneurship program at Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library is teaching the fundamentals of business education to formerly incarcerated individuals to help them start and sustain their own ventures (Spotlight, p. 14).

In “One of a Kind” (p. 26), Associate Editor Megan Bennett profiles five solo librarians at public, school, and community college libraries who have advocated for funding, promoted health and literacy in their communities, and championed their patrons’ right to read.

Lastly, our Newsmaker interview (p. 16) features former poet laureate Tracy K. Smith. She tells Managing Editor Terra Dankowski that she senses a “movement taking shape” to counter the current wave of book banning. (Smith’s words echo those of Hall, who writes her final executive director’s column, “Our History Is Our Protection,” p. 5.)

As we wind down the year, I hope these and other stories serve as a reminder that our nation’s libraries have always served as beacons for a more just society.

Sanhita

From examples of access to advocacy, this issue highlights the progress library workers are making in their pursuit of justice for all.



Favorite winter movie?

Our Shared Mission

While our work varies, our values remain steadfast



Emily Drabinski

The need for a clear and public articulation of the importance of ALA to library professionals and the communities we serve is as important as it has ever been.

What does ALA actually do?” As president of ALA during this critical moment in history, I get asked this question a lot. Libraries and library workers are both in the spotlight and under the microscope, and people want to know who we are and what we do. Maybe you’ve even asked this question yourself. One of the joys of this role is that I get to learn and share about what all of us do.

During a visit to Chicago last fall, I had breakfast with Benjamin Aldred, chair of ALA’s Government Documents Round Table (GODORT). Aldred discussed concerns he and his members grapple with each day, including maintaining access to and preservation of government information in an all-digital world. I also know from talking with public library workers across the country that connecting patrons to public services is a huge part of the job. Public Library Association members work together to develop model practices while GODORT members address the knotty structural problems that can come with digital government.

There are so many examples of this kind of work across ALA:

- Our Games and Gaming Round Table generates selection criteria for collection development.
- The Federated Authentication Committee from our Core division addresses user experience and privacy concerns in the single sign-on landscape.
- The Reference and User Services Association’s History Section annually develops a list of the best resources for historical research, which is invaluable for librarians working with these materials and the communities they serve.
- In partnership with the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, members of our Young Adult Library Services Association division implemented Transforming Teen Services: A Train-the-Trainer Approach. This brought state

library agency youth consultants and frontline library staff together to innovate and expand services to young people in five states.

Much of what we do can be difficult for people outside of our field to understand. How many times have I heard people describe interlibrary loan, a service that depends on the labor of thousands of library workers, as *magic*? My partner, a historian, regularly “discovers” documents in archival collections acquired, arranged, described, preserved, and made accessible by our colleagues in the Association of College and Research Libraries’ Rare Books and Manuscripts Section.

As we’ve seen troubling calls for membership withdrawals from some states, the need for a clear and public articulation of the importance of ALA to library professionals and the communities we serve is as important as it has ever been.

What I value most is the role ALA has played since its founding in 1876: convening library workers together in service of our shared 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.”

In 2022, ALA Council charged a task force with reviewing the Association’s core values to ensure they reflect our commitments in a changing world. This difficult and important member-led work generated five values—access, equity, intellectual freedom, public good, and sustainability—to be debated, discussed, and potentially adopted by our elected Council at our 2024 LibLearnX conference in Baltimore this January.

Our mission and values are my North Star as all of us navigate these challenging waters. **AL**

EMILY DRABINSKI is associate professor at Queens (N.Y.) College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies.

Our History Is Our Protection

Notes for the struggle ahead



Tracie D. Hall

Libraries are called to face this moment with an indefatigable commitment to information access and the unequivocal belief that right of access applies to everyone.

In February 1968, just two months before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. uttered these words: “We must accept finite disappointment but never lose infinite hope.” The not quite (and never to be) 40-year-old knew something about disappointment. Thrust into an activism he did not choose, King had been ridiculed, jailed, and stabbed. He was the victim of bomb threats and an actual bombing.

King knew the difference between being dejected and being disillusioned, drawing the distinction often in his writings and speeches. While being dejected is a natural reaction to opposition, the latter represents the capitulation of hope. King knew well that hope is needed for struggle.

That connection is important for those of us who work in or advocate for libraries. Over the last year, as efforts to silence historically marginalized voices and histories have intensified, we have seen increasingly alarming threats of violence against libraries: at least 10 verified bomb threats against urban, suburban, and rural public and school libraries; attacks against ALA for protecting the right to read; and the vilification of ALA’s elected president, all for exercising the First Amendment right of freedom of expression.

Attempts at suppression have often been followed by legislative efforts to displace library leadership and defund library services. As a result, we have seen state libraries compelled to withdraw their ALA memberships despite the often exponential return on investment these institutional memberships offer.

Though I have seen many things in my tenure that I could not have previously imagined, I could not have predicted that there would be threats to close and defund libraries because they defend the right to information at a time when libraries are widely acknowledged as essential.

In the midst of these attempts to delegitimize libraries, librarianship, and the work of the Association, my father had a major stroke.

Rushing to Los Angeles to be at his bedside, I found myself living for the moments when he opened his eyes.

One morning, between bouts of fitful sleep, he awakened to say, “I have something to tell you.” No sooner than he’d said those words, sleep returned to take him under. I stayed near, my laptop propped next to his feet, using his bed as my desk. I was deep at work when he woke again.

“Protection,” he said woozily.

“What protection, Dad?” I asked, surprised.

“For you,” he answered. “I have given you protection.” His eyes locked on mine. “Our history ... our history is your protection.”

Those are the last words my dad ever said to me. He fell asleep again and I left the hospital shortly after to return to my duties. The news of his death reached me at work in the middle of a meeting about increasing library funding.

He would have approved.

Before his own death, another civil rights crusader, US Rep. John Lewis, presciently asserted that in his estimation, access to the internet (and information more broadly) would be *the* civil rights issue of the 21st century.

Lewis’s words demonstrate uncanny foresight. In this moment where disinformation and information disparity have become normalized, many libraries are forced to fight defunding when they should rightfully be advocating for increased funding to provide the growing educational and social services they are being asked to take on.

We are indeed in the midst of a civil rights movement. Libraries are called to face this moment just as we have in times before, with an indefatigable commitment to information access and the unequivocal belief that right of access applies to everyone.

That legacy, that history, is our protection. **AL**

TRACIE D. HALL’s last day as executive director of the American Library Association was October 6.

Book Challenges in Libraries Surge to New Record

On September 19, the American Library Association (ALA) released new preliminary data showing that challenges to books and other library materials and services are on pace to set a record for the third straight year in 2023.

Between January 1 and August 31, ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) reported 695 attempts to censor library materials and services, which included 1,915 unique titles. This represents a 20% increase compared with the same reporting period in 2022, the year the highest number of book challenges was documented since ALA began compiling this data more than 20 years ago. The majority of challenges were against books written by or about a person of color or a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and a growing number of cases involve demands by a person or group to restrict or remove large numbers of titles, according to the data.

"These attacks on our freedom to read should trouble every person who values liberty and our constitutional rights," said OIF Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone in a September 19 statement. "To allow a group of people or any individual, however powerful or loud, to become the decision maker about what books we can read or whether libraries exist is to place all of our rights and liberties in jeopardy."

"What this dataset does not reveal are the people who want books that speak to their lived experience and librarians who want to make books accessible to people who find them relevant," said ALA President Emily Drabinski in the statement. "Both are under attack."

For more information, and to read the full statement, visit bit.ly/OIF0919. ●

Arkansas Book Challenge Law Granted Preliminary Injunction

On August 2, the Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) welcomed a preliminary injunction barring the implementation of two provisions of Arkansas Act 372. The law attempts to make "furnishing a harmful item to a minor" a Class A misdemeanor, allow a parent or legal guardian of a minor to access the minor's library records, and enable civil action against governmental agencies—such as libraries—that possess, sell, or distribute "obscene materials."

One of the temporarily blocked provisions would have subjected librarians and bookstore owners to criminal prosecution if they made materials deemed "harmful" available to minors.

The other provision would have mandated a library book challenge procedure in public libraries in which individuals could challenge books based on "appropriateness." In addition, review boards would have been permitted to

engage in viewpoint and content-based discrimination.

The ruling was in response to a lawsuit filed by a coalition of plaintiffs, including local Arkansas libraries, as well as authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians, readers, and the FTRF. The preliminary injunction was granted on July 29 by the US District Court for the Western District of Arkansas. The bill was originally slated to go into effect August 1.

For more information, visit bit.ly/FTRF-AA372.

ALA, AASL Address Decision to Eliminate Houston School Libraries

On August 1, ALA and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) sent a letter to the superintendent and school board members of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) and Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath requesting reconsideration

of their decision to eliminate school librarians and convert 28 school libraries into detention centers, which became effective for the 2023–2024 school year.

"We [share our] great concern about HISD's plan to remove school librarians and school libraries from many of the most disadvantaged schools in the district," the letter reads, in part. "Such action will create inequitable access for learners in the Houston community.... To consider using the library space in HISD campuses as a discipline center rather than as a site for learning and literacy demonstrates a concerning disregard for the education of HISD's children."

For more information, and to view the full letter, visit bit.ly/ALA-HoustonLetter.

Libraries Transforming Communities Grants Available

Applications for the second round of funding of the Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities grants are now open

FTRF, AASL Join Amicus Brief against Texas Censorship Law

On August 18, FTRF and AASL announced that they had joined an amicus curiae brief that supports the lawsuit to halt enforcement of the Texas law House Bill 900 on the grounds that it violates the First Amendment rights of booksellers, publishers, authors, and students. US District Judge Alan D. Albright for the Western District of Texas blocked the law from taking effect in a September 19 order.

Under H.B. 900, vendors who would have sold books to Texas school districts or charter schools would have been required to review and rate all books and materials for appropriateness before selling them to schools. The law also would have required vendors to rank materials previously sold to schools and issue a recall for those deemed “sexually explicit.” Booksellers, publishers, and authors who did not comply with the law’s requirements would be banned from selling any books to public K-12 schools in the state.

Additionally, the law would have prohibited elementary and high school students from reading or borrowing books that mention sex or relationships, regardless of the work’s literary, scientific, or artistic value, without parental approval.

“FTRF will always be on the front lines in the fight to protect the right of publishers, booksellers, and authors to publish without government interference,” said Caldwell-Stone, who serves as FTRF executive director, in an August 18 statement.

For more information, visit bit.ly/ALA-HB900. ●

until December 11. Up to \$3.6 million will be awarded to 300 libraries.

Selected libraries will receive \$10,000 or \$20,000 to help fund community engagement projects; provide virtual training to assist project directors in developing their community engagement, facilitation, and disability service skills; and equip recipients with a suite of online resources developed to support local programs. They will receive technical and project support from the ALA Public Programs Office throughout the grant term.

Applications are open to libraries serving small and rural communities in the US and US territories. To be eligible, a library must be located in an area with a population of 25,000 or less that is five or more miles from an urbanized area, in keeping with the Institute of Museum

and Library Services’ definition of small and rural libraries. Previous awardees are eligible to apply, although priority will be given to applicants not previously awarded.

For more information, including full guidelines and how to apply, visit bit.ly/ALA-LTC2.

Run for ALA President-Elect or Councilor-at-Large by Petition

ALA members who were not selected by the ALA Nominating Committee to run for ALA president-elect or ALA councilor-at-large may run for those positions by filing an electronic petition. The petition period for the 2024 election is open until December 31.

In addition to the petition itself, candidates must complete a biographical information form. The information

CALENDAR

NOV.

International Games Month
bit.ly/ALA-igm

NOV. 10-12

YALSA Young Adult Services Symposium | St. Louis
ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium

JAN. 19-22, 2024

2024 LibLearnX | Baltimore
alaliblearnx.org

MAR. 16, 2024

Freedom of Information Day
bit.ly/FOI-Day

APR. 2024

School Library Month
ala.org/aasl/advocacy/slm

APR. 3-5, 2024

PLA 2024 Conference
Columbus, Ohio
placonference.org

APR. 7-13, 2024

National Library Week
bit.ly/ALA-NLW

APR. 9, 2024

National Library Workers Day
ala-apa.org/nlwd

APR. 10, 2024

National Library Outreach Day
bit.ly/ALA-NLOD

APR. 28-MAY 4, 2024

Preservation Week
preservationweek.org

APR. 30, 2024

Día: Children’s Day/Book Day
dia.ala.org

JUNE 2024

Rainbow Book Month
bit.ly/RBMonth

JUNE 27-JULY 2, 2024

2024 Annual Conference
San Diego
alaannual.org

SEPT. 2024

Library Card Sign-Up Month
bit.ly/LibCardSU

OCT. 20-26, 2024

National Friends of Libraries Week
bit.ly/ALA-NFLW

UPDATE

submitted on this form will be used for the web ballot. Petition candidates and nominated candidates are not differentiated on the ballot.

Ballot mailing for the 2024 ALA election will be held March 11 to April 3, 2024. ALA members must renew their membership by January 31, 2024, to ensure that they receive their ballot for the 2024 election.

For more information, including full guidelines on how to petition, visit bit.ly/ALAElections.

Applications Open for Carnegie-Whitney Grant

The ALA Publishing Committee is seeking applications for its Carnegie-Whitney Grant.

The grant provides up to \$5,000 for the preparation of print or electronic reading lists, indexes, and other guides to library resources that promote reading

or the use of library resources at any type of library.

Previously awarded projects have ranged from a resource guide about disabilities, a bibliography for LGBTQIA+ teens, and an annotated list of graphic novels that discuss mental health.

Applications must be received by November 3. Recipients will be notified by February 2024.

For more information, visit bit.ly/ALA-CWG23.

Donate to Support Libraries Destroyed by Wildfire, Floods

The ALA Disaster Relief Fund, which provides funds to libraries in the US and around the world that have been damaged or destroyed by natural or human-made disasters, is seeking donations for Hawaii and Vermont libraries.

Lahaina (Hawaii) Public Library and King Kamehameha III Elementary School

Library were destroyed by a wildfire that began August 8. This was the deadliest wildfire in the US in more than a century, according to Honolulu Civil Beat. More than 20 libraries in Vermont were damaged by historic flooding in July.

Donations will support recovery efforts. For more information and instructions on how to contribute, visit the ALA Disaster Relief Fund page at bit.ly/ALA-DRFund.

New PLA Program to Boost Information Literacy Skills

On August 23, the Public Library Association (PLA) announced the launch of its new Super Searchers information literacy training program. The free program comprises a one-hour training session, available on multiple dates, that helps library workers gain skills and master tools to help patrons engage critically with online information.

The program, a collaboration with Google, addresses questions from a spring forum on tackling misinformation. It was launched at the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library Information Congress in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

For more information, including future training dates, visit bit.ly/PLA-Searchers.

ALA Awards 2023 Spectrum Scholarships

On August 16, ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services announced it had awarded scholarships to 70 students pursuing graduate degrees in library and information science as part of its 2023 Spectrum Scholarship Program.

The Spectrum program aims to increase diversity in the profession by providing scholarships to American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern and North African, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students. Recipients are selected based on their leadership potential and

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	Electronic copy circulation		
	Paid electronic copies	0	0
	Total paid print copies	44,888	44,129
	Total print distribution	45,993	46,057
	Percent paid	97.6%	95.81%


commitment to community and social justice. For more information, visit bit.ly/ALA-SpSc23.

Core Launches New Preservation Section

On September 6, Core announced a new Preservation Section for its members in celebration of its four-year anniversary.

The Preservation Section will work to address and improve all aspects of library preservation. The section will aim to create and develop standards for preservation of library content and share best practices related to preservation, with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion.


In 2024, the Preservation Section Leadership Team will launch two new interest groups, Digital Preservation and Library Binding.

Core members can join the Preservation Section for free at any time. For more information, visit bit.ly/CORE-Pres. 

ALA Announces Steps to Support LGBTQIA+ Workers

On August 8, the ALA Executive Board issued a statement in support of LGBTQIA+ library workers in response to recent concerns surrounding discriminatory practices they have faced at work. The statement announced a task force that will develop a strategy for addressing retaliatory employment cases against LGBTQIA+ library workers. The task force will also formulate a communications plan to highlight related resources and support available from ALA.

“Discrimination against library workers based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression violates their fundamental rights and contradicts the core principles of inclusivity and intellectual freedom that libraries cherish. LGBTQIA+ library workers play a vital role in promoting diverse perspectives and ensuring equitable access to information for all users,” the statement reads. “ALA vehemently condemns any form of discrimination against these valued members of the library workforce.”

For more information, and to read the full statement, visit bit.ly/ALA-LGBTQIA23. 

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TRENDS

True Colors

Libraries spark creativity with teen artist-in-residence programs

BY Stephi Smith

Celia Hamilton wanted to identify further with her Chinese heritage. Her adoptive parents are not Chinese, and she says this left her feeling like she missed out on some aspects of her cultural background.

To connect with that part of her identity, Hamilton crafted a traditional garment—inspired by the Chinese moon goddess Chang’e—as one of three teens selected for Carmel Clay (Ind.) Public Library (CCPL)’s teen artists-in-residence program. She used a silk-screen process to print emerald-colored clouds on the garment and accented the white outfit with sheer green sleeves and a crimson bow that ties together a vest at the center.

“I don’t necessarily need to be part of one [culture] or the other,” said Hamilton, then a senior in high school, in a video reflection of her

time as a teen artist-in-residence on CCPL’s YouTube channel. “I can just kind of live my life understanding both cultures or all cultures and applying that to my life.”

CCPL is one of a handful of libraries across the US that have created teen artist-in-residence programs with a goal of bolstering youth interest in the arts.

Depending on the program, these residencies can include stipends, exposure by displaying their art to the public, and opportunities to host workshops for patrons. In addition, libraries typically provide space and equipment.

Express yourself

Mike Cherry, teen services librarian and coordinator of CCPL’s teen artist-in-residence program, says the program opens a multitude of opportunities for young artists. “You’re connected now to creative people and [to] a sense of community support for your work and skill development,” he says.

CCPL acts as a hub for many local teens, Cherry says. The library sits across the street from Carmel High School, which has more than 5,000 students. About 150 teens serve on CCPL’s teen library

council. When Cherry launched the teen artist-in-residence program in October 2022, he received 30 applications for three spots.

“They’re a huge part of who we serve, and it’s part of their culture to come here,” Cherry says of the local teens. “They’re pretty much everywhere.”

Using CCPL’s art studio and



Teen artist-in-residence Celia Hamilton uses the studio at Carmel Clay (Ind.) Public Library (above) to plan and execute a photoshoot of herself wearing her fashion designs (right).



“[Art is] a very personal way of telling their story. That’s something I try to stress to them: ‘Just tell your story.’”

MIKE CHERRY, teen services librarian and teen artists-in-residence coordinator at Carmel Clay (Ind.) Public Library

funding from the Carmel Clay Public Library Foundation, the teen artists have hosted community classes on how to turn still drawings into motion graphics and how to make *alebrijes*, colorful Mexican sculptures of mythical creatures featuring elaborate patterns of stripes, dots, and flowers. The teen artists are unpaid, but CCPL covers all of their project materials and pays for the combined art show held at the end of their residency.

Cherry says this program has allowed students to realize how much they are interested in art. “It’s a very personal way of telling their story. That’s something I try to stress to them: ‘Just tell your story.’”

A vibrant community

Chester County (Pa.) Library System (CCLS) began its inaugural six-week teen artist-in-residence program in May, supported by the Friends of the Chester County Library. CCLS’s first artist-in-residence was Alayna Rodner, then a rising high school senior, who

focused on contemporary realism using watercolor and oil paints.

In addition to leading classes on figure drawing, Rodner held studio hours at the library three times per week where library patrons could drop in and learn about her work.

CCLS budgeted \$500 for its residency, which included art supplies for Rodner and refreshments for a culminating showcase of her artwork in September. The show included one final piece specially made during the program that could be permanently displayed in the building.

“This seemed like a nice way to provide opportunity to teens over the summer—teens who are creative and maybe thinking about going to art school as that next step,” says Mary Gazdik, director of CCLS.

Gazdik says she hopes to offer more residencies in the future. Library programs specifically geared toward teens are important, she adds, because they provide an outlet for their interests.

In an effort to liven up its teen spaces, Boston Public Library (BPL) selected LJ-Baptiste, a local professional comic book artist, as its artist-in-residence in March 2022. Baptiste organized 18 free programs for youth on how to draw cartoons throughout the year, including one on how to accurately draw Black characters for Juneteenth.

“We really wanted to have somebody that wasn’t just coming in and talking to teens but was working with them, and [Baptiste] was just excellent with them,” says Jess Snow, assistant manager of youth services at BPL.

BY THE NUMBERS

Toys

230,000

Number of volumes available at the Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play, located at Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, New York. The museum is also home to the National Toy Hall of Fame. The library houses books, catalogs, personal papers, design documents, oral history projects, and other research material relating to the study of toys and games.

200

Number of stuffed animals that showed up for Goleta Valley (Calif.) Library’s 2022 stuffed animal sleepover program. Many public libraries host similar sleepovers; children drop off their favorite stuffies and library workers document their stays with photos of the activities—and hijinks—they get into.

1935

Year the country’s oldest continually operating toy library, the Los Angeles County (Calif.) Toy Loan Program (LACTLP), was founded. Today, more than 400 toy libraries exist across the US. While some are part of public libraries, others—like LACTLP—are associated with local government or social service organizations.

4

Number of Black Barbie dolls that Meek-Eaton Black Archives Research Center and Museum at Florida A&M University (FAMU) in Tallahassee featured around campus ahead of the release of the *Barbie* movie this past summer. The dolls, whose photos were shared on FAMU’s social media, represented mathematician Katherine Johnson, jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald, poet Maya Angelou, and TV show character Julia Baker (played by Diahann Carroll). ●



Continued on page 13 ▶



Patrons at Mt. Lebanon Public Library (MLPL) in Pittsburgh play with a tongue drum, rain stick, and singing bowls—instruments used during MLPL's sound bath sessions.

Tranquil Tones

Libraries offer sound meditation classes

BY Rosie Newmark

After talking with students who were grappling with mental health challenges, Katie Donahoe wanted to do something to help.

Donahoe, teen librarian at Mt. Lebanon Public Library (MLPL) in Pittsburgh, says that many elementary, middle, and high school students who visited the library would express that they were dealing with stress and anxiety issues. She wanted a different way of introducing “mindfulness or stress relief for this age group that’s not something you can learn in health class,” she says. “Something that’s just really out there.”

In fall 2022, Donahoe began hosting sound bath sessions, advertised for grades 6 and up, twice a month. These sessions, also known as sound therapy or sound healing, typically involve participants lying down while an instructor uses musical instruments like singing

bowls and gongs to create sound waves that calm participants’ central nervous systems. Proponents say this leads to relaxation and healing throughout the body. Instructors are typically certified sound bath practitioners who have a background in alternative physical therapy or an interest in meditative practices.

Sound baths are now a growing service trend among public libraries across the US.

“It’s one of those practices that can be a personal spiritual experience, but you’re also in a room full of people,” says Gao Yang, community partnerships and programs coordinator at St. Paul (Minn.) Public Library (SPPL), who hosted a sound bath session earlier this year. “I think that is really special.”

‘Uplifted and refreshed’

Some scientific studies have made the connection between sound

meditation practices and positive outcomes for the mind and body. A 2016 study reported that participants felt decreased levels of stress and pain after a session (bit.ly/Sound-Bath-Study). “Those health benefits are wonderful,” says Sarah Greenberg, adult services coordinator at Buena Vista (Colo.) Public Library (BVPL), which hosted a session in spring. “But then it also [offers a] spirit of community and meeting new people and making new friendships.”

Licensed massage therapist Kearsty Bogenrief led BVPL’s sound bath session using *tuning forks*, metal instruments that produce different vibrational frequencies, which she says helps balance energy in and outside of the body.

The program attracted about 15 attendees, Greenberg says—and because of positive feedback, BVPL is considering offering it quarterly.

Bogenrief teaches other meditative classes at BVPL and says the library is an unthreatening setting to introduce patrons to these unique practices.

“People feel comfortable and safe in their local library, so it doesn’t feel scary or weird,” she says. “Yoga studios or fitness centers can be scary to some people.”

SPPL’s session in March was a part of the library’s annual Read Brave program. The community reading program includes five books, all focused on a single theme.

The theme for 2023’s program was mental health, and one featured title was *My Grandmother’s Hands* by Resmaa Menakem, which looks at how trauma and mental health

struggles can also affect physical health.

This message, Yang says, inspired her to contact singer Peggy Jiang and her sister Nancy Jiang, who specialize in *reiki*, a healing practice that uses gentle touch to help alleviate stress. The session garnered positive reviews, Yang notes.

“What I saw happen at the program was that it really reduced people’s anxiety,” Yang says. “They felt like they were uplifted and refreshed.”

Tapping into emotions

MLPL’s sound bath sessions take place in the afternoon following the end of the school day and last about 45 minutes. Donahoe says about 15–20 students attend each session. They work with Karen Romano, owner of Inner Light, a local wellness business that specializes in sound healing.

During one session, Donahoe recalls a 13-year-old patron was brought to tears within the first five minutes. Although the boy said he did not know what made him cry, Romano told Donahoe that people can get deeply in touch with their emotions during sound baths, causing different reactions.

The attendee’s response to the session was “really fascinating and definitely said something about what [Romano] is doing,” Donahoe says.

For library workers interested in providing similar programming, Donahoe encourages them to research local businesses or practitioners for potential partnerships. She didn’t know her community had these offerings until a colleague mentioned it to her.

“Any kind of economic access to health care in our current society—let alone to more alternative

“Any kind of economic access to health care in our current society—let alone to more alternative therapies—is so limited.”

KATIE DONAHOE, teen librarian at Mt. Lebanon Public Library in Pittsburgh

therapies—is so limited,” Donahoe says. “To have a library be an opportunity for someone to learn about some of this stuff and experience it for the first time and have it be free of charge, that’s very important to me from an economic and health justice standpoint.” **AL**

ROSIE NEWMARK studies journalism at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

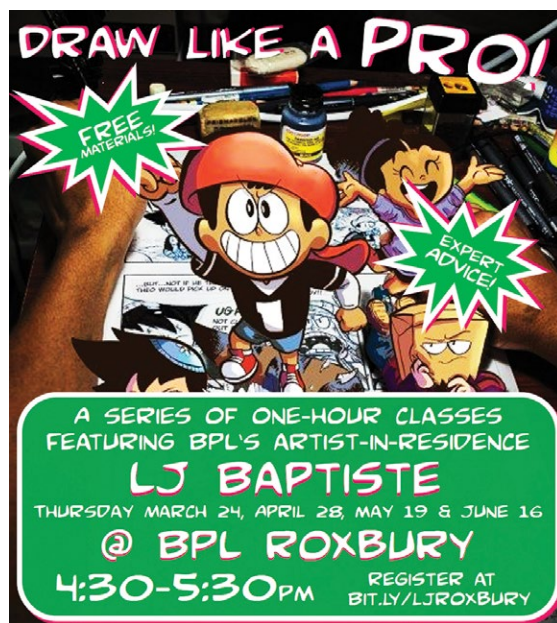
◀ Continued from page 11

BPL offered an \$8,000 stipend, funded through the Boston Public Library Fund, to Baptiste, as well as a \$7,000 budget for his art supplies. This budget also covered high-quality supplies for the teens, who could take them home once the workshops ended.

Snow says that the budget may seem steep for art supplies, but she wanted teens to leave their residencies with the tools necessary to pursue their art—either as a long-term passion or a budding interest—without having to spend their own money.

Thinking creatively

In organizing BPL’s program, Snow was inspired by a similar initiative at Madison (Wis.) Public



As part of his residency at Boston Public Library, comic book artist LJ-Baptiste organized free programs for youth on how to draw cartoons throughout the year.

Library that began in 2013. She advises librarians to talk to other librarians to brainstorm potential art-related events.

Another big challenge is advising students on their work. “You really have to exercise your brain,” Cherry says. “You just have to think creatively and be able to navigate different topics or different ideas that they’re working on.”

He recommends other librarians start an arts community within their own spaces. “Build a larger community and combine it with art and combine that with teens,” Cherry says. “Work with the school districts and possibly home-school communities. Form partnerships.” **AL**

STEPHI SMITH is a writer in Jefferson City, Missouri.



The spring 2023 cohort of Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library's entrepreneurship program celebrates after completing a six-month course to help members start their businesses.

A New Start

Formerly incarcerated individuals find opportunities with entrepreneurship incubator

More than 1.8 million people in the United States were incarcerated in a prison or jail at the end of 2021, according to a February 2023 Bureau of Justice Statistics report. Research shows that formerly incarcerated people have more difficulty finding employment than the rest of the population, resulting in lower long-term earnings and other lifelong challenges—in essence, a second sentence. Recognizing these statistics and community need, Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library (GCPL) created the New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator in 2021. This six-month course is designed to help community members who have served time in jail or prison to create and sustain their own businesses.

BY Duffie Dixon

Formerly incarcerated individuals are an overlooked population of aspiring entrepreneurs, often lacking the means, access, and support to launch a small business successfully.

Take, for example, Chartisia Griffin. Her mother was a housekeeper, and Griffin had the idea to follow in her footsteps—but on a much larger

scale. She started Diamond Shine Enterprises, a residential and commercial cleaning service, in 2021 after attending GCPL's New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator (NSEI).

GCPL created NSEI as a free program to provide the fundamentals of business education for formerly incarcerated individuals through in-person classes, online

coursework, and a network of mentors and community partners.

"Chartisia is a real success story of this program," says Adam Pitts, NSEI program manager. "She had a clear goal of what she wanted to create, and she's achieved it."

After 15 years of incarceration, Griffin said she wanted to make the most of her second chance. Initially she was surprised when she heard about the library program—and that it was free. "It seemed too good to be true," she says. "I was in a very traumatic place when I was incarcerated. Once I learned that I had options, I realized I could be whoever I wanted to be."

NSEI is coordinated by a team of five library staff members and drafts a yearly cohort of 15 to 20 students who attend monthly presentations by local business experts on topics such as finance, marketing, licensing, and writing a business plan. Following each meeting, participants complete assigned online coursework and receive one-on-one support from experienced small business mentors. The library lends laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots to those who need them while enrolled in the program.

NSEI originated as a grant project funded by Google in partnership with the American Library Association's national Libraries Build Business initiative. The library received \$128,000 in total over two years. As of January 2023, 29 entrepreneurs have graduated from the program. GCPL will begin reviewing applications for its next cohort soon.

Businesses started by program graduates include a catering

Formerly incarcerated individuals receive the fundamentals of business education via coursework and mentorships.

service, a hair and beauty boutique, and a facility providing assisted living for veterans and other individuals transitioning from homelessness. The biggest company that began out of this program is Griffin's, which now has 14 employees and nearly 40 contracts from Gwinnett and Fulton counties.

As an additional incentive, participants get an opportunity to pitch their business proposals to a *Shark Tank*-style panel of judges to receive feedback and potentially obtain start-up capital. Since 2023, this program—known as Launchpad—has awarded \$5,000 in total to three participants.

NSEI graduates have been the best marketing tool for finding new potential entrepreneurs. Griffin, for example, has referred several formerly incarcerated people to NSEI and has been a keynote speaker at its orientations.

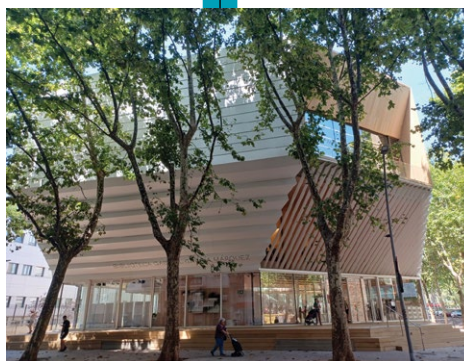
She tells new participants to envision a limitless future: “We all had dreams when we were kids. Don't give up on those dreams.” ^{AL}

DUFFIE DIXON is director of marketing and communications at Gwinnett County (Ga.) Public Library. Before that, she was an on-air television reporter for 27 years and most recently worked at WXIA-TV (Atlanta).

GLOBAL REACH

Local Interaction

SPAIN Biblioteca Gabriel García Márquez in Barcelona was named IFLA/Systematic Public Library of the Year 2023 at the 88th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Conference, which took place



Biblioteca Gabriel García Márquez in Barcelona

August 21–25 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The library was cited for its exceptional features and the contribution it has made to the community. Named after the renowned Nobel Prize laureate in literature, the library embodies the spirit of interaction with its surroundings and local culture.—IFLA, August 21

AUSTRALIA The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL), a conservative political organization, held a contest that encouraged its followers to check the children's sections of public and school libraries for “inappropriate”

materials, such as *My Shadow Is Purple* and *My Shadow Is Pink* (both by Scott Stuart). Followers were asked to submit pictures to ACL to allow the organization to investigate and challenge the library's collection development policies. Those who did had a chance to win a free children's book written by ACL National Political Director Wendy Francis.—Out in Perth, August 4; Australian Christian Lobby, July 27

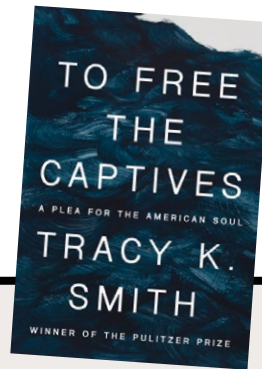
SWITZERLAND The Swiss National Library in Bern is building a permanent digital archive of Wikipedia content related to the country. The library will store frozen versions of articles that can no longer be edited in e-Helvetica, its publicly accessible digital archive. Since the project began this year, more than 125,000 articles have been archived in Switzerland's four national languages. About 5,000 articles will be added annually.—SwissInfo, July 18; Wikimedia CH, July 17

ISRAEL In late October, the National Library of Israel opened a new public campus in Jerusalem, valued at \$225 million US. The 495,000-square-foot building houses more than 4 million items and includes a 600-seat reading room, an education center for schools and families, a 480-seat auditorium, and permanent exhibitions of rare materials, like a 13th-century illustrated Passover Haggadah from Worms, Germany, that was discovered during Kristallnacht and hidden throughout World War II.—The Times of Israel, September 15

GHANA A new library opened September 14 in Osenase as part of First Lady Rebecca Akufo-Addo's “Learning to Read, Reading to Learn” initiative. The facility is one of 12 under construction with support from Akufo-Addo's Rebecca Foundation and the philanthropic organization ASR Africa.—Ghana News Agency, September 15 ●

Tracy K. Smith

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet returns to prose with new release



Author, professor, and librettist Tracy K. Smith is as prolific as she is distinguished. She has won a Pulitzer Prize for Poetry (for 2011's *Life on Mars*), earned a National Book Award nomination (for her 2015 memoir, *Ordinary Light*), and served as 2017–2019 US poet laureate. With *To Free the Captives: A Plea for the American Soul* (November, Knopf), Smith offers a stirring and spiritual collection of essays that channel the voices of her ancestors and confront the racial and social unrest of the present. *American Libraries* spoke to her about communing with loved ones through writing, the tenor of today's book bans, and making collections more accessible.

BY Terra Dankowski

To Free the Captives was written in response to assaults on Black life and the racial reckoning this country was experiencing in 2020, but the book is mostly set in the past. Were there challenges to weaving the historical aspects with more personal narratives? It was hard for me to pull the past away from the present. I kept thinking about the reality that my parents and grandparents and the generations that came before them had endured, and I wanted to try and tap into the sense of strength, beliefs, hope, and resilience that they built and claimed. The work veers from public to archival to psychic to familial—these are the spaces that we're turning to for clarity and a sense of possibility. It makes me more and more certain that our civic discourse is too limited. It cleaves to a language of logic, to the sense of hierarchy that institutions often default to. These are not the terms and values that will save us.

In your book, you comment on "the violence of the archive," how the historical record often erases marginalized people and is maintained for an "authorized few." What can libraries do to improve

access to everyone's stories? One of my favorite libraries, which I mention briefly in the book, is Rose Library at Emory University [in Atlanta]. It's a rare books and manuscripts library with a massive archive, but it's porous. There are classes of students handling materials, it's a lively hub, and there's this ethos that these materials belong to all. Imagine if we were willing as a nation to gather around all the voices that we can find. We're living in a moment where there are so many voices seeking to do quite the opposite.

What do you make of this current wave of book banning that is disproportionately targeting books by and about Black and LGBTQ authors and characters? What we're witnessing with book banning is a convulsion of fear that someone is going to be forced to give up something that they have held on to for a long time and benefited from. But we can trust that there are enough of us who are aware of the enormous liberating capacity that a clear-eyed and courageous

understanding of where we come from can offer.

I hate to see books taken away from young people whose lives can really be transformed by realizing there are other people who have experienced what they're going through. Every time a book is banned, there are more of us watching, more of us calling attention to the value of voices that are marginalized by systems of power. I feel a movement taking shape.

What role have libraries played in your life? I love the feeling of privacy and community that libraries foster, and I've loved that since I was a child, wandering around and choosing books to take home. It's a democratic space. We live in spaces marked by status, by levels of membership, by market-driven allegiance. But a library is about going someplace to be fed. All are hungry for what books and the community of literature offers. It feels restorative, and it's something that we need right now more than ever. **AL**



Photo: Andrew Kelly



“The last three years, in particular, have been difficult ones in librarianship, but they are also the ones in which I have felt most committed to the job. The work I’m doing now is possibly the most important of my life.”

Writer and librarian **LISA BUBERT**, “Librarians on the Front Lines: A Reading List for Library Lovers and Realists,” *Longreads*, September 19.

“Prisons don’t just censor material, they censor people. People’s voices are censored, people’s bodies are censored, people’s visits are censored, people’s ability to read things are censored.”

Activist and author **MARIAME KABA**, in “Incarcerated Artists and Authors Shed Light on Prison Censorship,” *Hyperallergic*, September 20.

“On Sunday morning, I read a rave review of Zadie Smith’s latest novel, *The Fraud*, and I thought, ‘I gotta read this book!’ Immediately, I picked up my phone and went to the library’s website to reserve a copy. Only to discover there were already 322 other readers ahead of me. I’m telling you, library patrons in Chicago don’t play.”

Journalist **BEN JORAVSKY**, “Decisions, Decisions, Decisions,” *Chicago Reader: The Daily Reader*, September 12.

“I would rather be fired for supporting the First Amendment than sued for violating it.”

Library director **PATTY HECTOR**, in “Amid Months-Long Fight over Censorship, Saline County Judge Wins the Power to Fire Librarians,” *Arkansas Times*, August 21.

“THIS COULD BE A SOLUTION THAT THE TECH SECTOR IS CONSIDERING: JUST PURCHASING CREATIVE WRITING TO FEED AI MODELS.”

Professor **JULIAN POSADA**, in “Why Silicon Valley’s Biggest AI Developers Are Hiring Poets,” *Rest of World*, September 20.

“I have never read a book that I was not supposed to. My parents didn’t place any restrictions on my reading, and I believe that the experience of not understanding something is just another kind of learning. If I believed that there were books that someone ‘wasn’t supposed to read,’ I would be a fundamentally different person.”

Children’s book author **KYLE LUKOFF**, in “Eight Authors on How It Feels to Have Their Books Banned,” *Harper’s Bazaar*, September 11.



Lighting the Way

Prison reform advocates discuss their efforts to ensure library access for incarcerated people

Poets Reginald Dwayne Betts and Randall Horton both discovered the transformative power of literature while incarcerated, and both have dedicated their lives since their release to bringing that power to others.

Betts founded Freedom Reads, an organization that installs 500-book Freedom Libraries in prisons and juvenile detention centers. Horton cofounded Radical Reversal, a program that creates performance and recording spaces in detention centers and correctional facilities, and conducts workshops that provide creative outlets for incarcerated people.

American Library Association (ALA) Executive Director Tracie D. Hall interviewed Betts and Horton about their work, censorship and access to literature in prisons, and their hopes for ALA's newly revised *Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated or Detained*, which Horton coedited.



Reginald Dwayne Betts



Randall Horton

1.8 million Number of people incarcerated in the United States as of December 2021.

Standards Updated

In 2021, a task force headed by ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services undertook a project to reimagine ALA's *Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions*. Those standards were originally published in 1992 and are now out of print. The task force included correctional library workers, formerly incarcerated people, and representatives of advocacy organizations.

After two years of hearings, discussions, and feedback, the group is preparing to release *Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated or Detained* (SLSID). SLSID replaces both the *Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions* and ALA's *Library Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities*, which was published in 1999. It expands the scope of the publications, in recognition of the full continuum of incarceration and the inequitable incarceration rates of people of color. It also explicitly addresses incarcerated or detained people's information needs, with particular attention given to the needs of women, youth, LGBTQIA+ individuals, older adults, people with dementia, people with disabilities and specific accessibility needs, foreign nationals, and individuals whose primary language is not English.

Other revisions in the SLSID edition include:

- The services section has been expanded to include library programs for incarcerated people.
- A new section addresses the assessment of prison library services.
- A new standard addresses censorship in carceral facilities, including policies, appeal processes, and notification requirements.
- Foundational documents, including "Prisoners' Right to Read: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*," "Resolution in Opposition to Charging Prisoners to Read," "Resolution on Library Service to Prisoners," and "Resolution in Support of Broadband as a Human Right," have been added as appendices.
- A new section provides professional and networking resources for prison librarians.
- Sixteen "Where It Worked" case studies (see p. 21–23), contributed by carceral library workers and advocates, provide examples of prison library successes from across the United States and Canada.
- The bibliography has been significantly expanded.

SLSID is one outcome of the Expanding Information Access for Incarcerated People Initiative funded by a Mellon Foundation grant. Thanks to that support, the entire first print run, available February 1, 2024, from ALA Editions, will be distributed free of charge. Request a copy via alastandards@gmail.com. ●

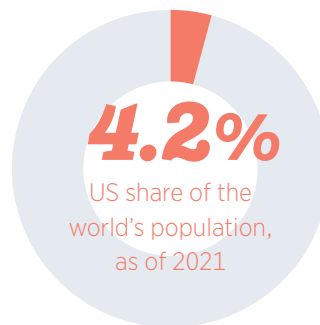
TRACIE D. HALL: Can you talk about the impact of incarceration on your development as writers, readers, and library users?

RANDALL HORTON: I was an average reader at best. However, when I was incarcerated, I had a lot of time on my hands, and my mother actually began to send me books. And that's kind of where it started: Carl Upchurch's *Convicted in the Womb*, Nathan McCall's *Makes Me Wanna Holler*. Then I began intersecting writing with that reading. I was in a program in Montgomery County [Maryland] called Jail Addiction Services, and one of the things we had to do was write a letter about our personal feelings, the things we had done to others, and the things that made us operate as human beings.

As I read more, I began to understand what it meant to write. At night, I would dream about passages I read. I could see where the commas and the periods were, and why they used a semicolon and colon—things that I never really understood. That really intrigued me, and that really developed my writing, and I began to explore it creatively.

REGINALD DWAYNE BETTS: I got in and I decided to be a writer because I had this time, and what else could I be? I ended up doing a lot of different things, but saying I would be a writer gave me a locus that I cared about. It's like the secret that you hold in your heart. But it also will ultimately give me a way to view something that was of value.

The other thing that the arts do is make you feel less like the thing that you don't want to name. I know I've been a few things that I don't want to tell you about. What the arts do is not necessarily give you a way to not think about it, but they give you a way to remember



Book Talks for Engagement

A decade-long relationship between Calcasieu Parish (La.) Public Library (CPPL) and the Calcasieu Parish Juvenile Detention Center (CPJDC) has built a thriving partnership that provides reading materials to boys and girls ages 12-17.

other things and process the world in different ways. It allows me to see the world as more than what I was seeing before I got into trouble, and to try to shape it into something that matters.

This year, the standards for library services for people who are incarcerated were revised for the first time in 30 years. What kind of access or change in the experience of incarceration are you hoping that these standards can make possible?

HORTON: Rethinking the idea of what it means to have access. We live in an ever-evolving digital media, multimedia world in which information shifts states and ways that it is accessible. For someone who uses a book but also uses other information, how do we have access to that within the carceral state? I think the revision is a great steppingstone to get up to speed to what's going on in today's society. And hopefully in the next 10 years, it's revisited again.

BETTS: What's significant about this is the ALA coming back and saying, "We were thinking about this for a long time. And now let us show you how prison is really a bellwether." We are able to remind ourselves that if you want to know how democracy is failing, then you look at what's going on in prison.

It's just a question of what matters. Does who I am matter today more to the country than the crime that I committed in 1996? If who I am today matters more, then the significance of this report is that it's a step toward the direction where we can have a conversation about the things that got me here and how to get other people to versions of here.

In the 30 years since the last iteration of the standards, we have

Written copy of a book talk for *House of Hollow* by Krystal Sutherland that Calcasieu Parish (La.) Public Library conducted at the Calcasieu Parish Juvenile Detention Center library.



55%

Reduction in recidivism among participants in Massachusetts' first Changing Lives through Literature alternative sentencing program, first held in 1991. The program sentences offenders to a literature discussion group instead of prison time.

seen not only the rise of mass or over-incarceration but also the normalization of the privatization of prisons. Privatization has materially shifted priorities away from library services. And literacy as a factor mitigating recidivism became less of a priority. Do you see how these two phenomena are connected?

BETTS: The book *What Works?* [by Robert Martinson] led to the backlash against rehabilitative programs and college courses in prisons and took us to a moment of austerity

CPPL brings discarded or donated children's and young adult books from all reading levels to CPJDC's library. Two CPPL staff members also visit the library monthly with a curated selection of 50-70 books, which stay at CPJDC for the month. During visits, staff members perform about 10 book talks. These are informal and often based on the books that young patrons have asked to hear about. CPPL also leaves written copies of book talks with CPJDC staff.

Initially, CPJDC staff allowed CPPL to provide books and book talks only to girls, out of concern that boys would destroy the books. The library recognized this as an equity issue, and eventually persuaded detention center staff to allow CPPL employees to provide book talks for both boys and girls.

The partnership provides library services to an underserved population of young people, and feedback has been positive. CPJDC staffers report seeing some teens reading enthusiastically, while others have picked up books for the first time in years. CPPL staffers have seen the effect their book talks have had on their young patrons; often, the books discussed get checked out immediately.

Adapted from a narrative by Jayme Champagne, outreach librarian at Calcasieu Parish (La.) Public Library.

where we have very little library access and a lot of spaces that don't have library systems at all.

I would argue that the factors that led to libraries disappearing probably were less about the privatization of prisons and more about the ways in which we decided that prisons are places where we put people who we don't care about, and we sustain [prisons] by creating more economic opportunities for the companies that provide the infrastructure to keep prisons working.

Making Friends

Many public libraries receive financial support from local Friends groups. The Friends of the San Quentin (Calif.) Prison Library, run by library workers who are incarcerated and outside volunteers, provides a similar service to the San Quentin State Prison library.

The organization raises money to add materials to the library's collection. San Quentin librarians also maintain wish lists at a local bookstore and on Amazon to accept donations based on patron requests and educational and legal needs.

Another program the Friends group carried out was the San Quentin Book Fair for Incarcerated Parents. After receiving a donation of new children's books before the holidays, people incarcerated at San Quentin were allowed to select books to send to the children in their lives. The book fair was largely run by the library's 14 incarcerated staff members.

The Friends group has in-person monthly meetings and occasional phone meetings. Despite this, communication is a challenge. Incarcerated library staffers are heavily involved in the group's work, but they are not allowed to participate in group emails. It can also be a challenge to engage would-be outside volunteers, as the group does not operate book sales like many Friends groups do.

Nevertheless, the group has ambitious goals, including expanding the book fair and adding a summer reading program-themed fair, providing library courses and technology help to incarcerated library staffers, and collaborating with public libraries to offer interlibrary loan, reference services, and reentry support after release.

Adapted from a narrative by Kristi Kenney, Friends of the San Quentin Prison Library cofounder; Gabriel Loiederman, San Quentin senior librarian; and Aaron Dahlstedt, San Quentin librarian. •

5 cents

Cost per minute for people incarcerated in 10 West Virginia prisons to read public domain books from Project Gutenberg on electronic tablets, under a 2019 contract between the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation and supplier Global Tel Link.

HORTON: You can also look at the Pell Grants and how they were eradicated [for prisoners in a 1994 crime bill; they were reinstated in July 2023]. There's a correlation there as well because you don't have as much activity. You see the decline with the way it says what's more important.

If passed, the Prison Libraries Act—introduced in Congress earlier this year—would grant \$60 million over six years to prisons to support library and educational services, with an emphasis on digital literacy for incarcerated people. Do you see any material benefit that might come from this type of legislation?

HORTON: It depends on who inside the carceral state takes on that mission. It can be a game changer, but each system within the carceral state is always different. You have to find pockets in which you can make that change, and then hopefully it begins to spread. That initiative is great, but who's going to get to experience that? I think we haven't been really cognizant of that.

BETTS: In 1997, the year I was locked up, California spent \$3.8 billion on incarceration; \$60 million for the whole nation is like a drop in the bucket. It's a start. It's announcing that we should address this problem, and the only way you address problems is with resources. This is really about valuing the work of librarians. And if the money gets to the librarians, it really will get to people on the ground. But ultimately it's just a start, and we have to remember that.

In many ways, people who are incarcerated have been experiencing censorship as an everyday, normalized experience. Did you ever experience censorship when you were incarcerated?

BETTS: The truth is, I didn't experience censorship. The first five years, there wasn't a library. If you have no library, you have no censorship.



San Quentin (Calif.) Prison residents select books to send to the children in their lives.

Photo: Vincent O'Bannor/San Quentin News

Art as Activation

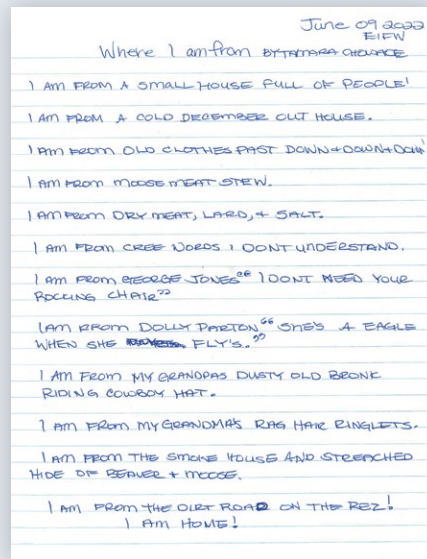
Every two weeks, participants in the Edmonton (Alberta) Institution for Women's (EIW) Correspondence Book Club receive a package of books, art, and writing and art prompts. Materials are selected by staff from University of Alberta (UA) Library in Edmonton, as well as the university's Humanities 101 lifelong learning program and its Indigenous Prison Arts and Education Project.

Half of women incarcerated in Canada are Indigenous. The books and artwork selected for the program therefore prioritize work by and about Indigenous people. In particular, the readings depict Indigenous people thriving, resisting colonial structures, reclaiming culture and language, and living joyfully. Also included are readings that correct common misconceptions about Indigenous sciences, laws, and histories.

The book club packages' themed writing and art-making prompts encourage participants to engage with the materials. One participant collaborated with her children over the phone to create and describe new superheroes and their worlds. Another shared writings and illustrations based on her experiences growing up in the bush with her Nêhiyaw (Cree) family. Participants were invited to include their work in a magazine distributed at EIW.

Program participation is high; 123 women took part during the 2022 calendar year. During weekly office hours for each of the three security levels, up to 15 women would attend and discuss the readings and artworks, and several women who were soon to be released asked if they could continue to receive the packages in the mail.

Adapted from a narrative by Allison Sivak, librarian at University of Alberta; Lisa Prins, UA Humanities 101 coordinator; Jessica Thorlakson, UA librarian; and Sarah Auger, project coordinator, Indigenous Prison Arts and Education Project.



EIW Correspondence Book Club participant Tamara Chowace wrote this based on the prompt to write a poem inspired by Appalachian poet George Ella Lyon's "Where I'm From."

I get frustrated by the conversation of censorship. The people who make decisions about books are often undereducated people who haven't read the book and don't have time to. When I mailed [my memoir] *A Question of Freedom* into Virginia prisons, they banned it because I had a chapter called "How to Make a Knife in Prison." An assistant attorney general in Virginia called us, and I said, "They banned that book because of this line, but I think they're completely misreading the passage." We mailed her a copy of the book, and then they were like, "Yeah, it was a mistake," and they gave all the books back.

Why don't we hear that story? I don't want to be upset over the failures because I'm trying to be obsessed over freedom. I want to talk about Freedom Reads and the fact that we put more than 100,000 books in prison.

What's next for Radical Reversal and Freedom Reads?

HORTON: We're expanding our installations and working with community and educational partners in California, Massachusetts, Florida, and Connecticut. We're working on a project inside the Suffolk County (Mass.) House of Corrections with Merrimack College [in North Andover]. We're getting ready to start college credit classes and a pathway to be on campus at Merrimack, where students can continue their education. Our goal is for these expansions to sort of create these senses of creative activity.

BETTS: My next phase is how to make anything that I'm doing or Randall is doing or anybody is doing so important that it has a broad national footprint that rivals the footprint that now exists in the public conversation around censorship. Because yes, we need to defeat that. But we defeat it only by getting the public to talk about what really matters, which is all the reasons we went to books in the first place. [AL](#)

\$4

Minimum per capita annual library materials budget advised by the new *Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated or Detained*. \$13 per capita is established as a "basic" standard, and \$28 per capita is considered "exceptional."

CALA

TURNS

50

A look back at the milestones
of the Chinese American
Librarians Association

The Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), an affiliate of the American Library Association (ALA), celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. In the five decades since its formation, the organization has become known for its scholarship, awards, and humanitarian efforts—and has grown to include nine chapters across North America and the Asia Pacific region.

CALA President Vincci Kwong attributes the group's longevity to the relationships members form with one another. "Sometimes you feel isolated at your library because you don't have a lot of people who are Asian American," she says. "[In CALA,] people serve on committees, and we form a bond and stay together and still network after years and years."

Kwong and Raymond Pun, CALA immediate past president, say the association's goals include creating more mentorship and leadership opportunities, advocating for the profession, and building stronger connections with colleagues in Asia.

"The Chinese diaspora is really huge and diverse," notes Pun. "We want to honor a space for all of us to come together and have that shared value and identity." **AL**

Sources: *Reaching Beyond Ourselves: Celebrating 40 Years of CALA, 1973-2013* (2014); *CALA Timeline with Photos and Stories, 2013-2023* (2023); *CALA Newsletter*; CALA website



1973 On March 31, CALA is formed by 38 librarians from across the country as the regional Mid-West Chinese American Librarians Association (MWCALA). These librarians meet at Dominican University in Lake Forest, Illinois, to adopt MWCALA's constitution, install a board of directors, and hold its first conference. In May, Tze-chung Li is elected as the association's first president.



1974 The Chinese Librarians Association (CLA) forms in California, unaware a similar group was forming in Chicago at the time.



1975 MWCALA begins publishing the *Journal of Library and Information Science* (圖書館學與資訊科學) in partnership with the National Central Library in Taiwan.

1976 MWCALA expands into a national association, adopts the CALA name, and becomes an affiliate of ALA and the Council of National Library and Information Associations.



1980 CALA establishes its Distinguished Service Award to recognize a library professional who, through their contributions, has advanced librarianship and Chinese American librarianship. The first recipient is scholar and instructor Ernst Wolff.



1981 David Liu, 1981-1982 CALA president, appoints the Committee on Books to China to help supply reading material to the country for library and classroom use. More than 90,000 volumes are shipped.



1983 CALA merges with the Chinese Librarians Association in California. The combined organization uses CALA as its English name and 華人圖書館員協會 as its Chinese name.



1985 The association establishes its scholarships and research grant awards program under then-CALA President Sally C. Tseng.



1987 The National Library of China invites a CALA delegation, led by 1987-1988 CALA President Irene Yeh, to attend a symposium and ceremony honoring its new building in Beijing.

1990 CALA's Greater Mid-Atlantic chapter publishes a book list to promote better understanding of China and Chinese culture among students in grades K-8. In 1993, a revised edition is issued with support from the ALA President's Committee on Cultural Diversity.

1996 The first joint China-US library conference on global information access is held in Beijing. The US organizing committee is cochaired by 1978-1979 CALA President Hwa-wei Lee and includes representatives from CALA, ALA, the Library of Congress, and the US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.



2005 The Books to China Fund is launched by librarian and professor John T. Ma, for which he wins the 2009 CALA Distinguished Service Award. In four years, the project ships more than 100,000 books overseas.



2006 CALA announces its Best New Book Awards, an initiative proposed by librarian and CALA member Cathy Lu, to promote outstanding works written by Chinese and Chinese American authors in North America that cover Chinese topics.



2008 CALA raises more than \$20,000 for libraries and library workers affected by an earthquake in Sichuan province that causes more than 69,000 casualties. The funds, distributed by the Library Society of China, go to victims' families and rebuilding collections.

2012 Ahead of CALA's 40th anniversary, a group of ALA Emerging Leaders conducts interviews with 40 CALA members across different generations on the topic of leadership (bit.ly/AL-CALA40-40).

2017 With 704 active members, CALA membership reaches a historic high.



2021 Patricia "Patty" M. Wong becomes the first Chinese American and first Asian American president of ALA. Wong is a CALA life member, 1993 president of CALA's California chapter, and 2015 recipient of the association's Distinguished Service Award.



2023 CALA celebrates its 50th anniversary at ALA's 2023 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Chicago with a panel that brings together National Associations of Librarians of Color leaders and a celebration featuring award-winning middle grade author and National Library Week Chair Kelly Yang.

One of a Kind

Libraries of all sizes across the US are more than just information access points: They're social hubs, technology centers, and can be safe havens for the marginalized. In rural areas and small towns in particular, libraries are often one of the few—or only—places to serve these functions in a way that's free and accessible to all.

At many of the country's 4,000 rural library systems, staffers are operating by themselves, or nearly so.

Solo librarianship can take a variety of forms. It can be a sole employee, a full-time employee managing part-timers or volunteers, or librarians working with small or spread-out teams. As libraries continue to recover from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, advocate for increased funding, and manage unprecedented push-back in the wake of record-breaking book challenges, solo library workers steadily confront national trends by doing more with less.

American Libraries spoke with five solo staffers from public, school, and community college libraries about the ways they have bridged gaps in services, weathered devastating budget losses, and stood up for their patrons' right to read. **AL**

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

Stories of solo
librarianship

by Megan Bennett



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It started with a pumpkin.

In 2020, Aaron LaFromboise, director of library services at Blackfeet Community College's (BCC) Medicine Spring Library (MSL), wanted to see if she could grow one on her own. Set in a large flowerpot, "that little pumpkin traveled back and forth to the library with me," she says.

"It would go home with me when we were on [COVID-19] lockdown."

The traveling pumpkin never matured, LaFromboise recalls.

But it planted the idea for MSL's experimental garden. Since

2021, the passion project has been a teaching and learning opportunity for both staffers and locals.

"A library in one word is *information*, but it doesn't have to be that

traditional, passive book information," LaFromboise says. "Our community does well with the oral, with the hands-on, and that's how we're going to pass on our information to the extent that we can."

BCC is located in Browning, Montana, headquarters of the Blackfeet Reservation. LaFromboise, MSL's sole librarian and past president of the American Indian Library Association, manages a small team of library technicians. After moving back to the reservation, she started as a technician at MSL in 2009 and went on to earn her MLIS. At the time, she had been struggling to decide on a career path—particularly one that could bring her back home to serve her community.

"I didn't envision it being in this way, but this has been a lifelong goal of mine," LaFromboise says. "I'm so proud and fulfilled to be doing it in the way that I am."

MSL serves BCC's 350 full-time students as well as the larger Blackfeet community. Because many tribal communities still have distrust of institutions, which LaFromboise connects to the longstanding racism and forced assimilation attempts through places like Native boarding schools, community

programs are key to building local relationships. MSL's programs range from computer courses for older adults to traditional, multigenerational beading classes.

Before starting the experimental garden, LaFromboise helped tend to BCC's separate USDA extension garden during the pandemic, when the school was closed to nonemployees. The USDA later provided MSL with its own raised beds. With those, LaFromboise and her team have successfully grown a wide range of crops, including corn, beans, and tomatoes—and a pumpkin. They have planted fruit trees and bushes like local bullberry and

AARON LAFROMBOISE

Blackfeet Community College's
Medicine Spring Library
in Browning, Montana



Photos: Mariah Gladstone

sarvisberry. She has also turned an old playhouse into a makeshift greenhouse, used in part to cultivate plants for traditional teas.

To protect plants from the elements, LaFromboise has experimented with building natural windbreaks and weaving old willow branches into a fence-like structure, and she hopes to soon install a cover above the garden using plexiglass barriers acquired during the pandemic. She eventually wants to create a larger teaching garden on BCC's campus.

“It’s extremely important to know how to feed ourselves, [how] to gather what’s wild, and how to reiterate the importance of the ethical harvesting of wild plants.”

The garden project has been a conversation starter with patrons, some of whom have mentioned building their own. It not only promotes food sovereignty, LaFromboise says, but it also enables locals to learn more about medicinal and traditional uses of local flora and fauna.

“In the world we live in,” she says, “it’s extremely important to know how to feed ourselves, [how] to gather what’s wild, and how to reiterate the importance of the ethical harvesting of wild plants.”

These efforts also fall into step with other recent, local projects related to sustainability and sovereignty. Blackfeet ranchers have adopted regenerative grazing practices, which improve soil health by closely managing where cattle forage. Earlier this year, Blackfeet Nation released a herd of buffalo to roam free on ancestral lands.

“It almost feels like an avalanche in our community,” LaFromboise says of these kinds of projects. “It keeps getting bigger the further along we go.” ●



Aaron LaFromboise picks a zucchini from the experimental garden at Blackfeet Community College's Medicine Spring Library.

STANDING UP FOR STUDENTS

School librarians are often the only librarians at their institutions. Amid record-breaking rates of book challenges and bans, this also makes them the primary line of defense in local fights for intellectual freedom—and more susceptible to personal attacks.

“You just feel like you have all eyes on you,” says Martha Hickson, media specialist at North Hunterdon High School (NHHS) in Annandale, New Jersey. “You can’t make a move without someone criticizing it.”

In 2022, Hickson—now in her 19th year at NHHS—made national headlines after a months-long battle to stop the removal of five LGBTQ-themed books from her library: *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison; *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe; *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel; *This Book Is Gay* by Juno Dawson; and *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson. When the challenges began in September 2021, Hickson was shocked to hear a parent at a North Hunterdon–Voorhees Board of Education meeting accuse her of grooming children and promoting pornography.

Right away, Hickson notified her union and groups like ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom and the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC). She also reactivated a network of community supporters that she built in 2015, when *Fun Home* was first challenged.

“It was very clear to me based on the books they were attacking, and the way they were attacking them, that the books were a proxy,” Hickson says. “They were really going after people, and people I care deeply about: my students.”

Throughout the fall and winter, she and allies wrote to school board members and showed up to

MARTHA HICKSON

North Hunterdon High School
in Annandale, New Jersey



Photo: Nick Romanenko/Rutgers University

their meetings. She also recruited local bestselling author David Levithan to send a statement of support. But the ongoing vitriol took a toll, Hickson says, and she had to leave work for more than a month following a stress-induced breakdown.

In January 2022, with Hickson watching via Zoom, the school board voted to retain all five books.

“They were really going after people, and people I care deeply about: my students.”

“I started crying like a baby,” she says. “It was five months of stress and tension that just fell off my shoulders with a huge thud.”

Hickson received national and state awards for her efforts, including the 2022 Lemony Snicket Prize for Noble Librarians Faced with Adversity and NCAC’s Judith Krug Outstanding Librarian Award. “It’s very humbling,” Hickson says of the accolades. “Especially because ... I am by no means the only person going through this.”

The battles at her school are not over, Hickson suspects, especially because one of the initial complainants won a spot on the school board last November. The tension of these events still lingers today, she says, and it’s not easy to stay motivated in the current local and national climate. But her drive comes from those who find respite and representation within her library’s walls.

“It makes me cry thinking about it—I’ve had kids pull me aside to say thank-you,” Hickson says. “I had one kid this past school year [say], ‘I’ve been watching you; I saw what you did, you’re a badass.’”

“I’ve gotten dozens of emails, cards, letters from former students who watched this play out,” she continues. “Almost every one of those told me they were not out in high school, but they’re so thankful they had a library where they felt represented, and the representation and knowledge they had a safe space enabled them to come out in their own time.” ●



SAVING A COMMUNITY 'LINCHPIN'

VICKI SELANDER

Castle Rock (Wash.)
Public Library

For the last 23 years, Vicki Selander has worked as director of Castle Rock (Wash.) Public Library (CRPL), serving the town of about 2,500 people in a former general store.

Most recently, she has kept CRPL afloat after residents began voting against funding the library in 2019. The last few elections have cut the library's budget "to the bone," she says. In its last budget prior to the 2019 vote, CRPL received \$86,000 from the city; now it operates on \$15,000 in city funds as well as additional donations, just enough to keep the lights on and doors open.

Selander started working at CRPL in 1995, taking a library assistant job after returning to her hometown following the death of her parents. She became director in 2000, while also holding down other part-time jobs, such as motel desk clerk and writing for her local newspaper. For most of her tenure, Castle Rock residents voted in favor of a tax levy to fund the

library. Four years ago, however, voters shot down the levy twice. It hasn't been approved in an election since.

"We've just barely failed each time," Selander says. In August 2022, the measure fell short by just 25 votes (bit.ly/Referenda-Roundup-22).

"At first it was just terror and despair," Selander remembers of her first reactions to losing the levy. She

still isn't sure what tipped voters in the other direction. It had happened before—voters had voted no in 2000 and 2008—but the votes swung back in the library's favor in the following election cycles. That didn't happen after the 2019 losses, with six levy attempts failing to reach the 60% supermajority needed to pass. The levy didn't appear on the August primary election ballot this year, the first time it was missing since the library had been defunded. As of late September, the levy was not slated for the November election either.

The city has since allocated just enough funding to pay CRPL's utility bills. But beyond that, the library relies on both book and monetary donations to stay functional. The levy loss meant cutting library hours from 36 to 16 per week and doing away with both the part-time library assistant and janitor positions. Notably, Selander retired in 2020 to take her part-time salary and benefits off the city's books. She continues to run CRPL, with the occasional help of other volunteers.

"There's nobody to pass the torch to, especially for no pay," she says, noting that retirement was her idea. "It's worked to keep the library from dying."

Selander and CRPL supporters continue to fund-raise and advocate for the library's value with hopes to secure more funding and eventually ramp up community programs.

"I wouldn't be putting myself through it if it didn't mean a lot to me," Selander says. "I love this library and this little town, and I don't want to see it lose it. We don't have a community center or a youth center, so the library has been a linchpin." ●

"I wouldn't be putting myself through it if it didn't mean a lot to me. I love this library and this little town, and I don't want to see it lose it."

THE POWER OF PROGRAMMING

The town of Meservey, Iowa, covers 1.5 square miles. With a population of about 220, it doesn't have a grocery store, school, or gas station. The closest movie theater is more than 11 miles away.

"The library serves as the only source of free entertainment in the area," says Chelsea Price, director of Meservey Public Library (MPL). And for local families who can't or don't want to leave town, the library serves an important role.

Price has been MPL's director since 2015, following in the footsteps of her mom, who was the library director in nearby Thornton, Iowa, and her grandmother, a school librarian. With Price and her library assistant on opposite schedules, she usually oversees the library solo—a challenging task on only 20 hours a week, she notes.

"I'm not only the library director. I'm the children's librarian, teen librarian. [I] do all the cleaning, the accounting, the marketing, social media, outreach, babysitting, IT," Price says. "We are expected to do the same things that larger libraries do."

MPL's circulation numbers sharply declined during the COVID-19 pandemic and have not yet returned to prepandemic levels. While building attendance back up is slow-moving, programming has long been—and remains—MPL's "bread and butter," she says. "Our programming is more important right now than the materials we provide."

CHELSEA PRICE

Meservey (Iowa)
Public Library



Most of MPL's events these days revolve around children and families, with programs like movie nights and animal visits in partnership with the local nature center averaging 20–30 kids. In the summer, the library hosts a carnival that attracts hundreds to the town.

Price quite literally wrote the book on small library programs, publishing *209 Big Programming Ideas for Small Budgets* (ALA Editions) in 2020. Her programming peak, she says, was in 2017, when she secured an appearance and book signing with bestselling author Elizabeth Berg simply by emailing her publicist and requesting a stop on Berg's next book tour. Five minutes later, Berg's team called Price, and plans were put in motion. The event brought in more than 80 people.



Chelsea Price (right) with bestselling author Elizabeth Berg (center) during her appearance and book signing at Meservey (Iowa) Public Library.

“I don’t think our library could have held more people,” she remembers. “That was something I didn’t even expect to get a response to.”

A lifelong resident of the area, Price says she does what she does because she wants “people to see small towns aren’t dying.... Small towns are still here.”

“The library serves as the only source of free entertainment in the area.”

Though passionate, Price resists the *vocational awe* narrative that can often be associated with solo librarianship. The term, coined by library scholar Fobazi M. Ettarh, describes the belief that a profession traditionally viewed as a noble one, like librarianship, is beyond critique or improvement. It’s one that she says promotes the idea that library workers can single-handedly keep their communities thriving, which can lead to burnout.

“We didn’t sign up for that,” Price says. “We aren’t superheroes.... We’re just people—people who deserve good working conditions and a livable wage.” ●

KEEPING A COMMUNITY HEALTHY

Marilynn Lance-Robb, a library manager and cosmetologist, has helped hundreds of patrons and salon clients improve their health literacy and information access.

Lance-Robb is the only full-time employee at Georgetown County (S.C.) Library’s (GCL) Carvers Bay branch.

MARILYNN LANCE-ROBB

Georgetown County (S.C.) Library, Carvers Bay branch

The branch—located in Hemingway, a town of about 450 people that is 50 miles from Myrtle Beach—serves both the western, rural areas of Georgetown County and part of adjacent Williamsburg County.

In 2006, the same year she became manager at Carvers Bay, she received a grant to put a computer in her hair salon, MaFlo’s (named after her mother, Florine), so clients could access reliable health information on their own through MedlinePlus, the National Library of Medicine’s (NLM) online information service. Lance-Robb consistently received funding for 15 years to provide educational resources and programming through both her salon and the library, including courses at the branch that taught patrons computer basics and how to find answers to health-related questions.

“Most of my clients were elderly, and they suffered from hypertension, heart disease, cancer, lupus, those types of things,” she recalls about what prompted her to start seeking funding. “When they’d come in, we’d have conversation about what’s ailing them or a health scare that’s going on. I’d always try and bring information to them.”

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Lance-Robb’s NLM funding went toward helping locals navigate their new normal. In addition to Zoom sessions detailing how to find information about the pandemic, she and her library team distributed fliers detailing when and where they could get vaccinated.



“People were very appreciative of it,” Lance-Robb says. “Even though some said they weren’t going to take the vaccine, when COVID started hitting close to home, it was a totally different story for most people.”

Though she hasn’t applied for an NLM grant since 2021, she continues to use the skills she has gained over the years to help those who come through the library’s doors. “Now, it’s incorporated as part of the job,” she explains.

These kinds of services are particularly important in communities like hers, Lance-Robb notes. “A lot of people in this rural area don’t have access to internet or Wi-Fi,” she says. “Some don’t have access to phones or computers that they can tap into this information.”

Lance-Robb started working for GCL in 1998 as a circulation clerk, a part-time gig while managing MaFlo’s. She still operates the salon part-time.

Lance-Robb never expected to make a career out of library work. But serving her community is her passion, she says—something she’s able to do in both of her jobs.

“God put me on this road, and I’m just going to follow it,” she says.

Her work with NLM isn’t the only program Lance-Robb is proud of from her tenure with GCL. Each year, her branch hosts a day camp as part of its summer reading program, serving families who otherwise wouldn’t be able to afford similar programs, she says. From 2010 to 2018, she helped manage a bread ministry, collecting bread donations and bringing them to patrons and other community members in need. She still brings groceries from her local church’s food pantry to the library when possible.

“That’s what we do here,” Lance-Robb says. “We do our best to help those in our community who need a hand up.” ●

“A lot of people in this rural area don’t have access to internet or Wi-Fi. Some don’t have access to phones or computers that they can tap into this information.”

Figuring Out FAIR USE

Debunking copyright myths
and misconceptions

by Carrie Russell



Why do librarians and teachers—the very professionals who specialize in information literacy, equitable access to information, and the advancement of learning—have so many anxieties and misconceptions about copyright?

Many of us harbor an unfounded fear of copyright litigation. “Better safe than sorry” is a frequent assertion. But that attitude can keep users and creators of copyright-protected content from engaging in personal and educational activities that are unlikely to infringe copyright law. That excess caution is, consequently, contrary to the values of librarianship, teaching, and the goals of copyright.

School librarians and teachers are not to blame for these uncertainties and fears. Copyright is barely mentioned in library school. Many copyright education materials targeted to K–12 librarians are wrong or woefully incomplete. And copyright law is complicated.

Part of librarians’ hesitancy to assert users’ rights to information comes from the school environment itself. Staffers are dedicated but spread thin, already overburdened with work, assignments, lesson plans, grading, and staff meetings. Moreover, school librarians are usually the sole librarian for their school, without other librarians around on a day-to-day basis to talk to about matters that come up such as copyright.

Digital formats add a layer of complexity. Copying and distributing digital content without authorization is easy and occurs all the time. It’s hard to understand when this is lawful and when it is not. Digital resources are generally governed by contracts or private agreements between parties that sidestep public policy considerations that Congress has included in copyright law.

One can argue that copyright no longer matters because rights holders now set the terms of use for digital content. (This can also apply to print materials, although it’s not typical.) But not talking about it would be an incredible disservice to the school community and the public at large. When licenses subvert key aspects of the law that support learning, education, and new creativity and scholarship, it’s up to us to do something about it.

To manage copyright effectively in your school, begin by understanding the purpose of the law. Learn basic concepts—exclusive rights, public domain, requirements

for protection—and apply all available exceptions to the advantage of your school community. Make informed decisions but accept ambiguity and clear your mind of misinformation. Below I have outlined the top five copyright misconceptions to get you started.

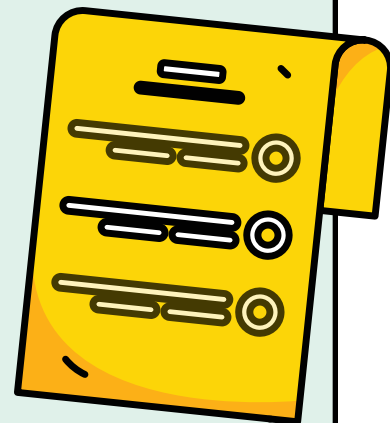
MISCONCEPTION ONE

Copyright law exists to ensure that authors and other creators are compensated monetarily for the works they create.

The US Constitution says that copyright law is created “to promote the progress of science and useful arts.” Its intent is, first and foremost, to encourage the creation and dissemination of original, creative works that benefit the public. These policies are also designed to advance public welfare by making works available that promote learning, inspire the creation of new works, produce well-informed citizens, and foster the pursuit of happiness.

To encourage the production of new works, Congress allows authors, creators, and other rights holders the legal right to a monopoly over the use of their works, with some limitations. This is realized by awarding a set of economic rights exclusively to the author or other rights holder. In the simplest of terms, rights holders have sole authority to market their work.

This is the bargain struck between members of the public, who require and enjoy access to information, and the author or rights holder, who seeks compensation for creating and disseminating protected creative works.



The notion that copyright law serves the public interest may sound quaint when much of the public discussion, and certainly much of political debate, is about copyright's monetary value. While copyright does have an important economic value in the global information economy, the fundamental purpose of these laws is public welfare. Therefore, the values that underlie copyright law are completely consistent with the professional values of teachers and librarians.

MISCONCEPTION TWO

Rights holders sue libraries, teachers, and schools all the time.

Rest easy. Actual court cases involving libraries and schools are rare. People tend to believe that libraries and schools are frequently in legal trouble because they occasionally hear about schools that have been threatened with a lawsuit. Most of the time, the threat of a lawsuit is enough to make a school terminate an alleged infringement. A cease-and-desist letter and payment of a license fee do not mean copyright was infringed. Only a court can determine if a claim is indeed infringement.

Still, you may be worried about breaking the law and being held responsible for your actions or the actions of teachers or students. There are several reasons why these fears may be unwarranted.

First, because copyright law ultimately seeks to benefit the public, using protected works for teaching, research and scholarship, and learning is favored under the law. These socially beneficial uses are often reflected in the law as exceptions—limitations on the rights of the copyright holder that allow the public or certain entities the right to use a work in ways that would otherwise be infringement. These limitations are necessary because they aid in containing the copyright monopoly that Congress created. If that monopoly was all-encompassing, the purpose of the law—to advance learning and culture for the public's welfare—could not be achieved.

Socially beneficial uses tend to occur more frequently in libraries, schools, and institutions of higher education because these are places where learners gather and knowledge is shared. These entities (occasionally along with



This is an excerpt from *Complete Copyright for K-12 Librarians and Educators, 2nd edition*, by Carrie Russell (ALA Editions, May).

archives, museums, historical societies, and other cultural institutions) hold special status under the law in that more limitations are created by Congress to address their unique need to serve the public, provide equitable access to information, and preserve the cultural record.

Second, in the unlikely event that a school or library is taken to court for alleged infringement, the rights holder cannot expect to win a large monetary award. Congress has set up special limits on penalties that are set at trial if a school or library is found to have infringed copyright.

Finally, public educational institutions and libraries are protected by the Eleventh Amendment to

the US Constitution, which protects a state entity from being sued in a federal court without its consent. Again, this places a limit on the amount that rights holders could expect to collect if they sue schools or libraries.

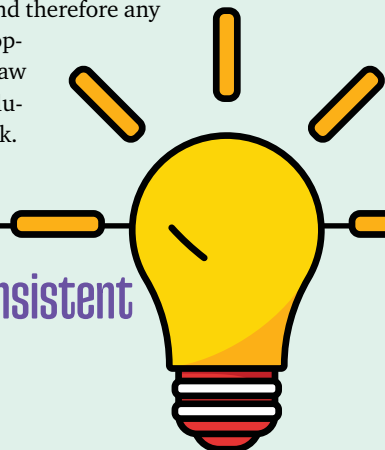
MISCONCEPTION THREE

Copyright-protected works are the property of their creators or rights holders.

People are often confused or are led to believe that copyright law is the same as property law. This confusion is compounded by terms such as *intellectual property*, which is a misnomer. Instead, copyright law resembles government regulation in that Congress creates the law to intervene in the market by granting rights holders a monopoly—via exclusive rights of copyright—to achieve a public purpose.

Assuming that copyright is a form of property law can lead to the misconception that creative works are owned by rights holders and therefore any unauthorized use of their “property” is forbidden. Copyright law instead says creators have exclusive rights to market their work. Only by distributing this work

The values that underlie copyright law are completely consistent with the professional values of teachers and librarians.



to others does it have any value, which is economic value for the rights holder.

This in turn leads to the use of words like *stealing* and *piracy* when the correct term for violating the copyright law is *infringement*. This distinction is important because we immediately understand that stealing is immoral and wrong, while some kinds of uses of works without the authority of the rights holder are lawful and indeed necessary to promote the progress of science and useful arts.

Creative works are also distinctive in that they cannot be depleted. If one person uses them, others can continue to use them. The term used to describe this is *nonrivalrous*, because there is no economic rivalry between would-be users. Moreover, it is difficult to exclude others from the use of a work after its first use. The public will continue to benefit from the work so long as there is still an original to use.

Economists say that these traits—nonrivalry and nonexclusivity—are characteristics of public goods. When I listen to music, I do not consume music in the same way that I consume an apple. The music is still available to anyone else to listen to, while the apple has been eaten up.

Another trait of creative works is that they gain value the more they are used. The more information is shared and used, the more knowledgeable people become, and the more new knowledge is created. These distinctions are not just mere curiosities. They help us better understand the benefit of creative works to the public.

MISCONCEPTION FOUR

There is a set of legal rules that offer definitive answers to copyright questions.

Many librarians and teachers find it vexing that there are no clear-cut rules. Often the answer to a specific copyright query requires analyzing the situation at hand to make a determination of fair use. Vexing, perhaps—but it is in our best interests to have ambiguity in the law. To set copyright rules in stone would be to freeze the law. The law must be malleable to serve our society now and in the future—a future that we can only speculate about. Fair use will serve us well because it is open to new technologies.

Some legal exceptions—like Section 108 (library reproductions) or Section 110 (public performances for educational and other purposes) in the federal Copyright Act of 1976—are more definite than fair use. If your use falls within these exceptions, it is almost always permitted. However, these exceptions are relatively rigid and don't necessarily address all situations that may confront a librarian or teacher.

Section 108 addresses preservation, replacement, interlibrary loan, and copies of works for library users—but it doesn't address when you can reproduce an image from the internet for your library homepage. It doesn't address whether you can make a reproduction for a student who is learning English as a second language. It doesn't address whether you can make a copy of a page from a book to replace a missing page in your damaged copy. You get the idea.

To be an effective librarian or teacher dealing with copyright requires that you bite the bullet, learn and apply the factors of fair use, and accept (and maybe appreciate) the law's gaps. It is a strength of our copyright law that it has both clear and flexible exceptions.

MISCONCEPTION FIVE

Fair use is too difficult to understand and apply.

Not so. Once you learn the four factors of fair use (purpose of the use, nature of the publication, amount used, and effect on the market for the work), making a fair use determination comes more naturally, although it is never definitive.

A court of law makes the final call on whether a use is fair or not, but because we aren't in litigation over every case of use, we must learn to make our own decisions, even when we cannot be absolutely certain that we are correct. It is our professional responsibility to understand fair use because our role is to facilitate access to and the use of information.

As previously mentioned, librarians are not to blame for having misconceptions about copyright. Information distributed over the years has been wrong or incomplete, and often conflicting. Even the American Library Association's educational materials produced in the 1980s and 1990s misdirected librarians to focus on guidelines rather than a full understanding of the law.

But you do not have to have a law degree to conclude that a use is fair. Your underlying commitment to the public is to ensure that its rights are fully explored. Fair use is the best way to balance user rights with the interests of rights holders. [AL](#)



CARRIE RUSSELL is former copyright specialist and director of public access to information at ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office in Washington, D.C., and former academic librarian at University of Arizona in Tucson. She is author of *Complete Copyright: An Everyday Guide for Librarians* and *Complete Copyright for K-12 Librarians and Educators*, 1st edition.

Community Creation

Diversifying knowledge production through open digital scholarship

BY Willa Liburd Tavernier



WILLA LIBURD TAVERNIER is research impact and open scholarship librarian at Indiana University Bloomington Libraries.

With the advent of digital information and concerns over barriers to reading and using research, libraries are increasingly focused on facilitating open access to research publications. This allows libraries to position themselves as key providers of knowledge to anyone with an internet connection.

In a diverse local and global information ecosystem, maintaining community and trust is paramount, but increasingly difficult. Participatory processes and collective action can help address concerns and empower groups. Public open digital scholarship holds promise to achieve these ends. Below I highlight three of the Indiana University (IU) projects I have been involved in that have done so.

First, IU Libraries' Land, Wealth, Liberation (LWL): The Making and Unmaking of Black Wealth in the United States digital resource collection (bit.ly/IULandWealth) tells stories of how formerly enslaved Africans and their descendants in the US generated individual and collective wealth. It also explores how events and institutions encouraged or limited progress.

Producing this resource was a collaborative effort among librarians and student library workers. My colleagues and I sought to counteract the historical marginalization of people of color in library collections, academia, and digital scholarship by prioritizing diversity in recruitment with targeted outreach and then offering training to perform the work.

Libraries often require extensive prior qualifications of student workers, which can be both extractive—meaning the worker is viewed as only a resource with little regard for their needs or growth—and exclusionary. We found that adopting a training mindset, using a minimal computing approach that requires limited equipment and experience, and giving students agency in selecting areas of focus within the research helped us successfully complete the project. It also made the experience more beneficial for students. They learned skills and expanded their concept of, and relationship with, libraries. One student said it enabled them to envision a future in librarianship as a member of a marginalized community.

Moreover, local Black women farmers have engaged with LWL content and attended a launch event in March 2022. There they asked questions of Valerie Grim, a professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies at IU, about how these resources are pertinent to their livelihood.

Secondly, the Water Epistles (bit.ly/IUWater) is the final project for the “Contemporary Social Issues in the African American Community” class. It is an open pedagogy collaboration funded by ALA’s Civic Imagination Stations program. Learners used the LWL resource as they

co-constructed and shared knowledge about the sociopolitical economy surrounding access to water in Black communities locally and across the US with people beyond the classroom. Students gained confidence in using digital tools as creators, recognizing social issues, using digital technology to address these issues, and thinking critically about information access.

Finally, a collaboration with Oscar Patrón, IU assistant professor of higher education and student affairs, created an open access reader, *Critical Race Theory in Education* (bit.ly/IUcrtreader). Students selected articles, crafted reviews, and formulated discussion questions for inclusion in the reader. Students appreciated that their work had value beyond the classroom and their own learning,

becoming part of a broader scholarly conversation.

These projects demonstrate that public open digital scholarship can promote participatory knowledge production by centering issues important to marginalized groups and using digital

methodologies. As such, they can serve as models for inclusive, community-driven scholarly communication. The foundations of change lie not solely in technology and tools but also in fostering a strong sense of togetherness and shared purpose. Libraries should continue to embrace these values and more deeply engage with a co-creative community. ^{AL}

Public open digital scholarship can promote participatory knowledge production.

Cultivating Creativity

How librarians can implement imagination in their spaces

BY Ann Medaille



ANN MEDAILLE is director of research and instructional services at University of Nevada, Reno, Libraries, and serves as editor in chief of *Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice*.

Playing a game. Constructing with blocks. Designing a dress. What do these activities have in common? All involve the imagination. A person’s capacity to imagine not only improves their happiness and well-being, but it can also help them learn better, according to a 2015 study in *Scientific Reports* (bit.ly/AL-imagination).

Acts of imagination include both play and creative endeavors. While play may appear to be merely a pleasurable activity, it serves an important role in human development. Creative endeavors, such as projects or everyday forms of problem-solving, give purpose and meaning to human existence.

While libraries can be places for quiet contemplation and intense concentration, they are also places of fun, exploration, and imagination. Librarians can support imaginative learning for those of all ages by providing opportunities for play and creative expression. For instance, they can provide access to videogames or digital experiences, such as virtual field trips, that support learning.

Librarians can also provide environments, materials, and tools that encourage and support creative thinking and play, like makerspaces, media labs, and virtual reality studios.

When facilitating creativity, librarians should support the expression of different ideas, encouraging learners to show respect for their peers’ ideas and avoid being overly critical of them.

When facilitating play, librarians can provide periods of free play followed by more directed learning activities. Introduce materials and allow learners to explore with them before asking questions or providing suggestions focused on a learning outcome. Too much intervention could undermine the playfulness of the situation and change it from being a learner-driven activity to something less enjoyable.

What’s more, the practice of being creative involves cognitive processes, such as memory and attention, that are beneficial for learning. Creativity involves *divergent thinking*, or the production of many, varied, and possibly original responses to a situation or problem. In contrast, *convergent thinking* uses logic to arrive at a single, best solution to a problem.

Most iterations of the creative process consist of four major steps: (1) *preparation*, or thinking about a problem and gathering information about it; (2) *incubation*, or reflecting—often unconsciously—about the problem; (3) *illumination*, or discovering a solution, often in a moment of inspiration; and (4) *verification*, or judging the solution for effectiveness.

The creative process also focuses on the role of problem-solving. Creative problem-solving combines both divergent and convergent thinking skills to arrive at solutions to ill-defined problems. For instance, to implement creative problem-solving, try asking learners open-ended questions that encourage them to generate ideas or see things from alternative points of view.

Here are a few more strategies to integrate imagination and creativity into library activities:

- Host game events for individuals or families. Provide games and puzzles for checkout.
- Host design challenges.
- Provide makerspaces, labs, and studios. Lead workshops teaching creative or scientific skills in these spaces.
- Invite speakers who model creative processes, have solved unique problems, or can stimulate curiosity about a variety of topics.
- Exhibit creative products made by other learners, community members, artists, scientists, and others.

Librarians should establish a supportive social environment to give learners a safe space where they can try new things. You can foster learners’ intrinsic motivation and encourage pursuing areas of interest. Finally, consider integrating music, theater, and other creative arts into lessons and activities.

Adapted from The Librarian’s Guide to Learning Theory by Ann Medaille (ALA Editions, 2023). AL

Being creative involves cognitive processes that are also beneficial for learning.

A Real Game-Changer

Using gamification for teachers' professional development

BY Karina Quilantan-Garza



KARINA QUILANTAN-GARZA is an international presenter, winner of the Texas Library Association's 2022 Librarian of the Year Award, and library media specialist in South Texas. Contact her @cuethelibrarian on Instagram and X, formerly known as Twitter.

Gamification has gained traction over the last decade for its potential to facilitate learning, foster motivation, and empower individuals to lead their own professional development. The integration of digital badging, microcredentials, and other game elements in training and upskilling programs has been shown to hold learners' attention and motivation more effectively than traditional methods (bit.ly/AL-MacroMicro). Yet when we talk about the practice in school libraries, it's often associated with students rather than teachers.

In fall 2022, I used gamification to design a six-week professional development series for staff members at my middle school in South Texas, where I work as a library media specialist. Our campus had just adopted a laptop initiative for students, so my goal was to ensure that teachers would retain the skills they learned during the pandemic to help students with their tech needs. The series, Tech Yourself, covers the latest trends, techniques, and updates for Adobe, Canva, Google, and Microsoft products. By incorporating immersive and interactive elements in instruction, I looked to transform what teachers typically see as mundane tasks into engaging experiences.

Tech Yourself is self-paced and meant to accommodate individual learning preferences by providing multimodal content like videos, podcasts, websites, simulations, and hands-on exercises. Each week, teachers choose a different topic based on their interests and set their own pace for completing a module. Each module consists of a short video embedded with reflection questions. Following the video, teachers are asked to develop an artifact—such as a vision board, lesson plan template, presentation, or worksheets—that showcases how they would apply a specific tech tool in their classroom. Teachers have flexibility to choose and personalize the format of their artifacts.

Teachers submit completed artifacts through Google Classroom, our learning management system. Digital badges are then awarded to participants via Badge List, a free digital badge distribution site. Teachers can use these badges to display their skills and competencies in professional learning portfolios.

In addition to badges, our series incorporates weekly leaderboards, incentives, and rewards, such as backpacks, stickers, water bottles, and free or discounted software subscriptions. Teachers who accumulate a certain number of badges throughout the series become eligible for bigger prizes like books and gift cards from Amazon, Starbucks, and local restaurants. This creates a sense of progression, accomplishment,

and healthy competition among colleagues.

Teachers have commented that the series has increased their efficacy and confidence in adapting to new technology trends. Many presented their artifacts to earn higher distinctions on the technology component of their year-end evaluations. They have also said they appreciate how Tech Yourself gives them control over their learning by allowing them to make choices, explore different paths, and set personal deadlines. This autonomy fosters a sense of ownership in professional development and has motivated our teachers to continue learning

about new applications in and outside the classroom.

School libraries looking to train and upskill staff members should consider creating a program like Tech Yourself. I would recommend first conducting a needs assessment to gauge staff members' skill and interest levels. Ask

Ask teachers what barriers they encounter with technology integration and their preferred learning options.

what barriers they encounter with technology integration and their preferred learning options. Then consider running a pilot program with a small group of teachers using tools that your district has already adopted and refining the modules before releasing them to a larger audience.

With gamification, we have a unique opportunity to unlock our teachers' potential as technology leaders and create a school culture where professional development is prioritized. **AL**



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

Closing Access Gaps

Lessons from providing reference services to incarcerated students

BY Jules LeFort



JULES LEFORT is reference librarian at Beaman Library at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee.

My university, like many other institutions across the US, offers an education program for incarcerated people in our state. In spring 2023, the program included—for the first time—a library representative, a role I have happily stepped into.

In addition to having the option to take one college course per semester, incarcerated students can come to a computer lab once a week at their correctional facility. That’s where a student success specialist, a writing tutor, and I provide them with research assistance.

My job is to answer questions and help students brainstorm search terms. I also take notes about the research they want but can’t access. The next day I do that research in my usual office, print out appropriate articles and webpages, and send them along with another faculty member on class nights.

I came into this role blindly, uncertain how I could effectively communicate and connect with nontraditional students in a setting that was unfamiliar to me. Through trial and error—and despite limited resources—I have found these processes help me provide the best reference help for incarcerated students.

Work the whitelist. Most prisons with internet access have a *whitelist*, a list of preapproved websites that people incarcerated at a specific facility are allowed to access. These lists might be just a mess of random URLs with no direction, website names, or descriptions, including some nonworking links and sites that aren’t useful for most inmates. But there may also be hidden gems.

After visiting each URL, I updated the whitelist to explain each site’s value and possible uses. I found many features that can serve students well: introductory Spanish lessons for a student who desperately wanted to learn the language, a legal dictionary, word games, and more. Even sites on the list that provide premium services that are typically cost-prohibitive to students, like McGraw Hill and ACT, often also have free blog articles whose subject areas might intrigue students.

Maintain your methods. When I first started working with incarcerated students, I noticed that some of my colleagues and I were skirting around academic phrases we use in our traditional classrooms. Instead of peer-reviewed, for example, I would say reliable. But a prison classroom is still a classroom, and students should never be underestimated.

When I teach information literacy to college freshmen, I presume they do not know these terms, but I define them as I’m speaking. I’ve

learned to do the same in this setting, creating a more authentic experience and building up students’ research vocabulary. There is no reason to alter one’s teaching strategies, except to accommodate individual students as necessary or avoid potential triggers.

Support educational and personal interests. I meet with each student one-on-one for five to 10 minutes weekly. Discussing their personal interests, in addition to the educational materials they need, has helped me develop positive relationships—and be a better reference librarian. I once had a student who felt stuck when trying to write an analysis of a book character but had an affinity for personality tests. I was able to leverage this knowledge to aid them in their writing and research, and when I found new personality tests online, I could bring them in and discuss with them. These interactions can help students feel understood and remembered.

It’s incredibly easy to take ease of access to information for granted. I didn’t realize that until stepping into this new work setting, but it has been worth the

challenge. I occasionally receive notes from students expressing their gratitude for my guidance. More importantly, I have built trust, enabling students to feel safe expressing their needs. I look forward to many

more semesters of striving to bridge the access gap. **AL**

A prison classroom is still a classroom, and students should never be underestimated.



INTRODUCING

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Supporting Marginalized Patrons

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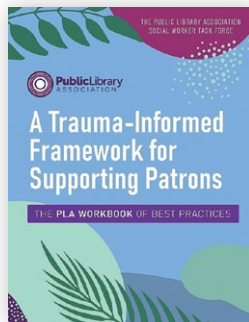
ALLISON ESCOTO is head librarian at the Center for Fiction in Brooklyn, New York.



Libraries and Homelessness: An Action Guide

By Julie Ann Winkelstein

As many communities face increasing houseless populations, public library workers are often on the front lines, offering services that may not exist elsewhere. From strategies to implementation, the chapters in this enlightening guide offer hands-on tools and real-world examples of successful programming, as well as tips for forming local partnerships, fundraising, and assessing program effectiveness. This book offers a holistic approach to a prevalent concern for public libraries across the country. Libraries Unlimited, 2021. 282 p. \$54. PBK. 978-1-4408-6278-6. (Also available as an ebook.)

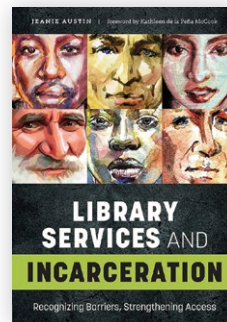


A Trauma-Informed Framework for Supporting Patrons: The PLA Workbook of Best Practices

By the Public Library Association Social Worker Task Force

As its introduction states, “In striving to learn more about challenging behaviors, we can come to see that people are complex and not simply ‘problems.’” The guidance offered in this workbook fully supports that notion. Offering up contextual information on different types of trauma, exercises based on real situations, and ideas for bettering communication skills and self-care, this informative read also includes assessment tools and worksheets useful for library professionals at any stage of their careers.

ALA Editions, 2022. 112 p. \$34.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-4956-6.



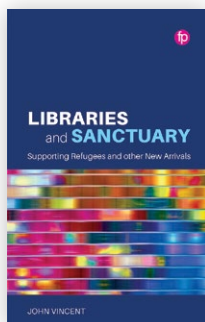
Library Services and Incarceration: Recognizing Barriers, Strengthening Access

By Jeanie Austin

Austin examines how critical library services are in responding to the needs of incarcerated people and their families, reentering citizens, and similar populations. Aimed at public and academic libraries, it walks readers through different types of carceral institutions and their various informational needs. It also provides case studies from current, successful programs. The collection development suggestions are especially helpful, as is the information on garnering internal support for expanding services to these populations and bridging relationships with community partners. This is a must-read for library workers tasked with offering services to any justice-impacted groups.

ALA Neal-Schulman, 2021. 208 p. \$54.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-4945-0.

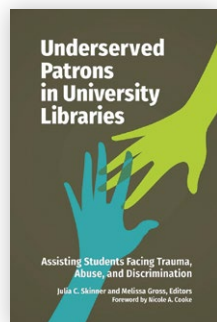
BY Allison Escoto



Libraries and Sanctuary: Supporting Refugees and Other New Arrivals

By John Vincent

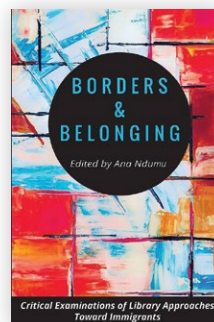
Libraries and Sanctuary tackles the challenges of serving refugees and others who have recently arrived in the country. Though written from a European perspective, this book can resonate with library workers everywhere. In addition to providing detailed background information about the immigrant and refugee experience, it also touches on issues universal to these populations—including one chapter about understanding barriers that can prevent libraries from reaching newly arrived refugees. These range from distrust of institutions based on past experiences to not knowing how to find the library or access information. The author includes case studies of US and Canadian programs that further illustrate effective outreach strategies. Facet Publishing, 2022. 222 p. \$42.95. PBK. 978-1-7833-0-500-1. (Also available as an ebook.)



Underserved Patrons in University Libraries: Assisting Students Facing Trauma, Abuse, and Discrimination

Edited by Julia C. Skinner and
Melissa Gross

Through exhaustive research and case studies, this book's authors provide a wealth of knowledge for academic librarians serving diverse student bodies. There is a focus on working with students—both traditional and older populations—recovering from trauma and abuse. This section addresses a wide range of issues they may face, including anxiety, depression, homelessness, communication disorders, and more. Libraries Unlimited, 2021. 222 p. \$72. 978-1-4408-7041-5. (Also available as an ebook.)



Borders and Belonging: Critical Examinations of Library Approaches Toward Immigrants

Edited by Ana Ndumu

This eye-opening read, part of Litwin Books' Critical Race Studies and Multiculturalism in LIS series, examines American libraries' roles in the lives of immigrants. Positing that there is a degree of discrimination to current approaches in services and programs, Ndumu centers the discussion on changing the narrative that paints immigrants as people who need to be rescued and ignores their strengths. Included is a discussion of the contribution of immigrants to the profession of librarianship.

Library Juice Press, 2021. 318 p. \$33.99.

PBK. 978-1-63400-082-6. [AL](#)

PEOPLE

Announcements

ON THE MOVE

Heather Barron has been named director of Warsaw (Ind.) Community Public Library effective October 2.

Tulane University Libraries in New Orleans named **Lindsay Cronk** dean effective August 1.



July 2 **Kelly Delaney** became head of the youth services department for Orange County (Fla.) Library System.

August 21 **Jennifer Donner** started as director of Lydia M. Olson Library at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

Nancy Henke became textbook affordability librarian and assistant professor at University of Northern Colorado Libraries in Greeley August 9.

Alessandra Hollowell became research and instruction librarian at Midwestern University's Glendale, Arizona, campus July 31.



August 9 **Matthew Johnson** became reference librarian at St. Charles (Ill.) Public Library.

Brian Keith became dean of library services at Eastern Illinois University's Booth Library in Charleston July 1.



University of Cincinnati Libraries appointed **Elizabeth Kiscaden** dean and university librarian effective August 14.

The city of Paso Robles, California, named **Eric P. Lashley** city librarian effective May.

Meg Placke became state librarian of Louisiana September 7.

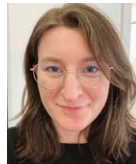
C. L. Quillen became director of Churchill County (Nev.) Library April 24.

Kudos

Lesley Farmer, professor of library media at California State University, Long Beach, and **Valerie Perry**, director of University of Kentucky's Science and Engineering Library in Lexington, received the Special Libraries Association's 2023 Rose L. Vormelker Award, which recognizes mid-career members for teaching and mentorship. ●

Kara Sabbagh became children's and teen services librarian at Weston (Conn.) Public Library May 1.

August 28 **Nicole Vollum** became reference, instruction, and outreach librarian at University of Western States Library in Portland, Oregon.



Abigail Walzer became children's librarian at Bedford (Mass.) Free Public Library in March.

Miranda Wisor became director for Eastern Shore Public Library in Accomac, Virginia, June 1.

PROMOTIONS

Jess Aylor was promoted to executive director of library development at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries July 3.



Kari Besancon was promoted to district director of Iosco-Arenac District Library in East Tawas, Michigan, in August.

July 10 **Anna Bognolo** became director of Greenfield (Mass.) Public Library.

Emily Glenn was promoted to dean of McGoogan Health Sciences Library at University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha July 1.

Jennifer Liss was promoted to head of cataloging at Indiana University Bloomington July 1.

Liz Teoli-Thomason was promoted to library director at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon, July 1.

Brandon Thomas became manager of Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library's Karl Road branch August 6.

Heather West was promoted to manager of Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library's Parsons branch August 6.

RETIREMENTS

Sharon Anderson, youth services coordinator at Cape Girardeau (Mo.) Public Library, retired in May.

April 4 **Tess Beck** retired as youth services librarian at Stratford (Conn.) Library.

Ellen Boyer retired as director of Greenfield (Mass.) Public Library June 30.

Patricia Flatley Brennan retired as director of the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland, September 30.



Sherie Brown retired as director of Massillon (Ohio) Public Library May 31.

June 1 **Stephanie Brown** retired as director of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Hussman School of Journalism and Media's Park Library.

In May **Dixie DeBord** retired as director of technical services from Yorkville (Ill.) Public Library.

Paula Fawcett retired as adult department manager from Dover (Ohio) Public Library March 31.

May 3 **Cathy Gray** retired as associate professor and librarian from Idaho State University's Idaho Falls campus.

Carey Hartmann retired as county librarian and executive director of Laramie County (Wyo.) Library System July 1.

Sue Marshall retired as director of Rumford (Maine) Public Library May 19.

Chicago History Museum Reference Librarian **Lesley Martin** retired in October.

Marsha Stender retired as librarian and manager of Free Library of Philadelphia's Lovett Memorial branch in April.

Leslie Wilson retired as youth services librarian from Anacortes (Wash.) Public Library in August.

September 15 **Ann Zydek** retired as director of Warsaw (Ind.) Community Public Library.

AT ALA

Irina Devora was promoted to associate controller August 1.

August 7 **Emily Durkin** was promoted to public policy manager for ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office.

April 3 **David Free** was promoted to senior communications and membership strategist at the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). He remains editor in chief of *College and Research Libraries News*.

Brian Lim became program coordinator for ACRL August 21.

Associate Executive Director for Publishing and Interim Senior Associate Executive Director **Mary Mackay** retired September 1.

Gena Parsons-Diamond was promoted to program manager of data and research for ACRL April 3. [AL](#)

In Memory

Robert Britt, who worked in the East Asian Law Department of the University of Washington's Gallagher Law Library in Seattle from 1987 to 2019, died June 23. He handled all aspects of Japanese legal materials at the library, and eventually did so for Chinese and Korean legal materials as well. He was active in the Council on East Asian Libraries. His publications included *Japanese Laws in English: An Index to the EHS Law Bulletin Series*, an index that greatly improved access to Japanese laws in English translation.



Veronica T. Chiang, 87, librarian and exhibits director for 45 years at Pollak Library at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), died June 1. In collaboration with her second husband, artist Scott FitzGerald, she mounted more than 100 library exhibits. Together, they designed CSUF's Atrium Gallery.



Theresa LaNell Dickson, 76, retired librarian and administrator at Pioneer Library System in central Oklahoma, died April 8.

Brittney Leigh Goodman, 56, director of the Faculty and Professional Learning Center at Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), died March 8. She joined the university as a librarian in 1997 and held many roles there, including professor, dean of instructional resources, and executive director of MSUM's Livingston Lord Library. She was also active in ACRL.

J. Randall Rosensteel, 84, a longtime member of ALA, the Catholic Library Association, and the Pennsylvania Library Association, died May 23. He spent his career working in various positions in the Parkway Central Library of the Free Library of Philadelphia, retiring in 2001.

Phoebe Jane Smith, 91, who worked for many years in both the art and children's departments of Seattle Public Library, died June 13.

Peter Spyers-Duran, 91, professor and dean of the library and MLIS program at Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit from 1983 until his 1995 retirement, died July 2. In his career, he held library management roles at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB); Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton; Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo; University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; University of Wichita in Kansas; and ALA. Spyers-Duran authored numerous articles and wrote or edited 10 books, including *Austerity Management in Academic Libraries* (1984) and *Issues in Academic Librarianship* (1985). He served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Library Administration* from 1989 to 1995 and, along with his wife, Jane, created endowments and scholarships for the benefit of students at WSU and CSULB. ●



Marching Full Circle

All signs pointed to Philip Espe joining the Marines. The 34-year-old comes from a long line of military family members. But he also had a calling in music. Espe studied clarinet performance, earned a master's of music in orchestral conducting, and directed community and youth orchestras. He used those skills when serving as a youth services associate at D.C. Public Library, gaining a reputation as the "Storytime Guy," playing instruments and singing lively, multilingual songs.

Then, in 2022, shortly after receiving his MLIS, Espe's career came full circle when he joined the United States Marine Band as a librarian and historian.

This year, the band celebrates its 225th anniversary. As part of the library's seven-member team, Espe works to preserve that history through its archives, which includes an extensive collection of sheet music and arrangements—more than 80,000 titles—for the hundreds of public and official performances the band has annually.

Espe's favorite item in the collection? Original, handwritten sheet music from John Philip Sousa's "Semper Fidelis" march, written in 1888 while Sousa was the band's director. "Pulling that score tends to be a lightbulb moment for the Marines who come through to tour our collection," Espe says.

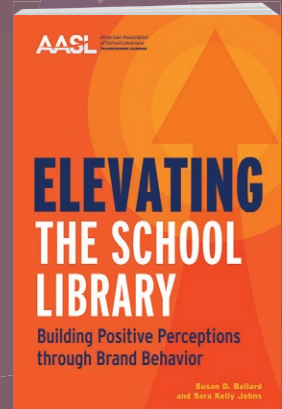
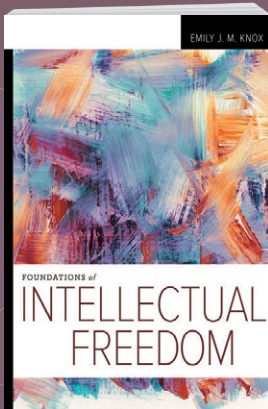
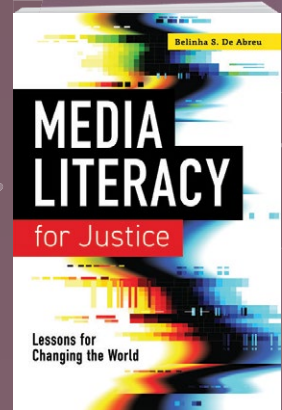
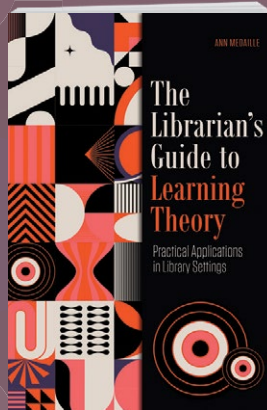
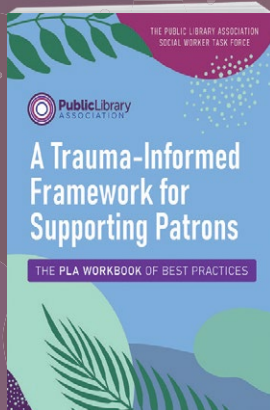
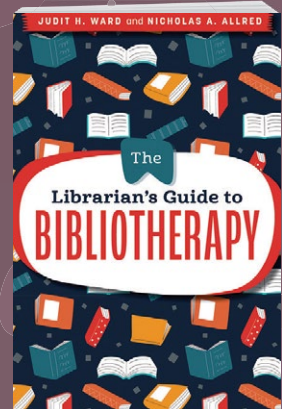
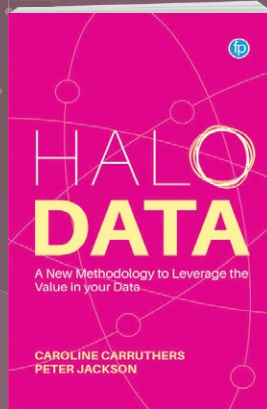
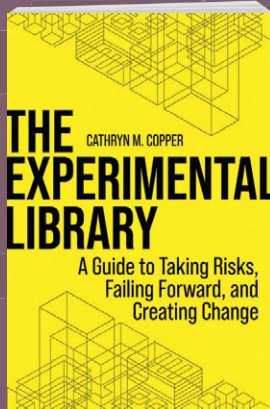
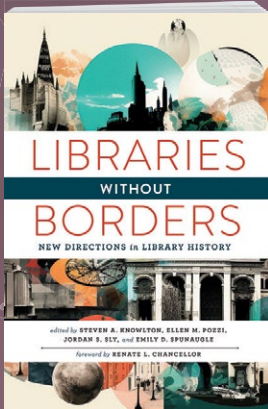
He says he's fortunate to continue working with children at outreach events in his new role. He also gets to share his expertise with library workers by leading workshops on improving storytimes with music performance and selecting songs that integrate cultural and historical elements.

Espe reminds library workers that you don't need musical ability to perform: "Perfection isn't necessary when you create music and art." **AL**

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