

# american libraries

July/August 2024

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

NEWSMAKER:  
Connie Chung

p. 16

Exhibit Hall  
Highlights

p. 18

2024

# ANNUAL

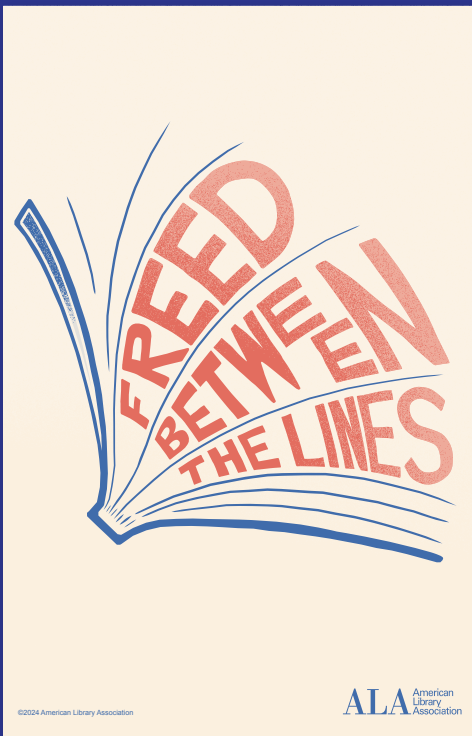
## Conference Wrap-Up

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# BANNED BOOKS WEEK

Sept. 22–28, 2024

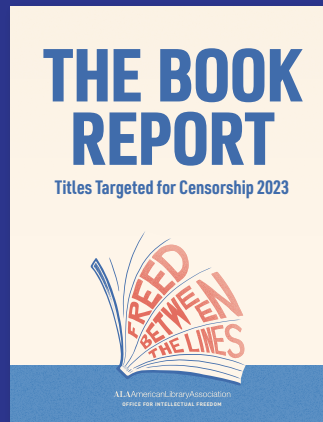
We can find freedom in the pages of a book. But censorship threatens that freedom, along with our libraries. Let's honor our freedom to read—let's be **Freed Between the Lines!**



Freed Between the Lines Poster



Freed Between the Lines Bookmark



The Book Report:  
Titles Targeted for  
Censorship 2023



Most Challenged  
Books of 2023  
Bookmark



Freed Between the  
Lines Multilingual  
Bookmark



Freed Between the Lines Buttons



Freed Between the  
Lines Stickers



Freed Between the  
Lines Library Card Art



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# Making Waves



Sanhita SinhaRoy

San Diego's abundant sunshine seemed to fuel good vibes and high energy at ALA's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition, which ended earlier this month. If you missed any of the speakers, programs, or events, no worries—flip to our cover story ("2024 Annual Wrap-Up," p. 8) for a recap. To catch up on all our coverage, visit [bit.ly/AL-ALAAC24](https://bit.ly/AL-ALAAC24).

Among the headliners was legendary broadcast journalist Connie Chung. Managing Editor Terra Dankowski caught up with her after her United for Libraries President's Program talk (Newsmaker, p. 16). The two discussed the state of television news, the movement to ban books, and the critical role libraries played in Chung's childhood. (Fun fact: Chung asked to wear a cap with READ BANNED BOOKS written on it for her photo before the interview. See the image at [bit.ly/AL-ChungPhoto](https://bit.ly/AL-ChungPhoto).)

On the show floor, the Library Marketplace bustled with hundreds of exhibitors, and library consultant Marshall Breeding was there to meet many of them ("Solutions in San Diego," p. 18). In his article, Breeding reports on new and upcoming industry products and services, a significant number of which are incorporating artificial intelligence (AI). "The Library Marketplace provided a venue for ongoing conversations between customers and vendors on this topic," he writes. "Hopefully these insights will inform how AI can be harnessed and applied in bringing meaningful benefits to the library community."

New ALA President Cindy Hohl also shares ideas to help benefit the community in her inaugural column ("A Good Way for ALA," p. 3). There are "some big goals ahead," she writes, with the hiring of a new ALA executive director, planning for the Association's 150th anniversary in 2026, increasing diversity in the field, and combating attempts to censor books and deny access to information.

Finally, in our Bookend ("Say Cheese!," p. 26), convention-goers' selfies provide another happy reminder of San Diego sunshine.

Have a nice summer!

Sanhita

San Diego's abundant sunshine fueled good vibes and high energy at ALA's Annual Conference and Exhibition.

# american libraries

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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San Diego highlight?

Exploring Embarcadero Marina

Enjoying the warm sun, cool breeze

Interacting with members and staff in a beautiful setting

The ocean

Visiting Petco Park

Kayaking with dolphins in La Jolla

Eating delicious fish tacos

Taking surfing lessons

The Schneider Family Book Award 20th anniversary celebration



# A Good Way for ALA

It's time to reaffirm our core values



**Cindy Hohl**

**W**hat an amazing Annual Conference experience in San Diego! It was great to see strong attendance numbers of nearly 13,600, reflecting a continued desire for learning and engagement.

As we look ahead to meet the information needs of our membership, it is important that we stand united to remember why we work in this trusted profession. We have some big goals ahead with the hiring of the next ALA executive director, celebrating the Association's 150th anniversary, creating a strategic plan to elevate the role of ALA throughout the field, and ensuring that we have strong member leadership to offer guidance and support. The Unite Against Book Bans rally was one of Annual's many highlights and reflected all five focus areas of our core values: access, equity, intellectual freedom and privacy, the public good, and sustainability. With all the thoughtful work being shared, it is clear that we are poised to serve our communities in a valuable way.

In my Dakota community, I was raised with the understanding that we are all related, and that means making sustainable decisions for the good of every living being. Before a leader takes action, they are trusted to consider the effects of those decisions for our elders, the unborn, and everyone in between. Working together across generations—in a good way, as my presidential theme states—provides us with a framework based in protocols of respect to ensure positive outcomes for the good of the community, including the land, animals, waterways, and plant life.

Achieving a balance between these responsibilities requires a thoughtful approach, and that is where trust is earned and a sense of belonging is formed. So what does that look like for everyone working in libraries as we share these responsibilities? As the first Dakota president and Spectrum Scholar representing the 1% of Indigenous librarians, I will reaffirm that diversifying

the field remains overdue. We need to focus on creating opportunities for our colleagues to be represented across every library type in this field. When leaders come together to support the entire community, that act of selfless service elevates collective goodwill among us. The same is true for work life. When we remember what our ancestors taught us and use those teachings to make informed decisions, we can avoid pitfalls along the path toward equitable service.

We also must have the goal of eliminating acts of censorship. On June 2, 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act was passed, granting us dual citizenship. Also known as the Snyder Act, it provided Native Americans with new identities in a step toward equality. While voting credentials were provided to some, several states decided to withhold the same rights from Native American women. Even as the remaining states finally provided voting privileges by 1975, barriers remain today in rural areas where polling locations are out of reach or tribally issued identification cards are not considered an acceptable form of identification by states.

Access to libraries can also be a challenge in these rural areas. We have the ability to accept tribal IDs for library access and create sustainable employment opportunities to ensure success without barriers. That way no one is left behind when acts of censorship are creating a division among us. If we work together in this way, everyone can see themselves written in stories, their voices can be heard, and no one is silenced.

Our core values help us see that what one holds sacred is a touchstone in advancing this work as we strive to serve everyone in #AGoodWay together. **ALA**

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**CINDY HOHL** is Dakota of the Santee Sioux Nation and works in Missouri on the ancestral homelands of the Kaw/Kansa, Kickapoo, Očeti Šakówin, Osage, Otoe-Missouria, Shawnee, and Wyandot.

If we work together, everyone can see themselves written in stories, their voices can be heard, and no one is silenced.

**f** One of my family's favorite dinners lately came from spice club! (Cincinnati chili recipe using allspice.) Love the spice club!

**KRISSY VOGEL,**  
in response to  
"The Spice of Life"  
(May, p. 8)

## Banning Book Bans

Illinois is leading the way in the fight against censorship in libraries. While sometimes simply called "a ban on book bans," the state's new law, Illinois Public Act 103-0100, puts a new twist on the threats of censorship in our profession today.

The law, effective since January, requires libraries to adopt as policy the American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights, one of the strongest ethical documents in our profession, or similar language so materials are not "proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." If not the Library Bill of Rights, libraries must develop their own statement "prohibiting the practice of banning specific books and resources" if they wish to remain eligible for state grant money. While the law spells out many fundamental rights, it is its provisions against censorship that will provide the most tangible assistance to Illinois libraries.

Most Illinois public libraries receive funds through the annual Public Library Per Capita Grant. School libraries have the School District Library Grant Program, and academic libraries can apply for a variety of state grant programs. Until this law, there were no obvious legal consequences for school or library leadership who choose to bow to censors. This legislation provides financial incentives to stand up, lest institutions risk these important funds.



**Talking Points**  
Swordcraft programming brings history, hands-on excitement to patrons

**W**hen Courtney Waters was young, people taking an interest in history and medieval history also decided to learn sword fighting. Waters, now a sword fighting instructor at the River Regional Library in Jefferson City, Missouri, has been teaching sword fighting for over 10 years. Waters, who is also a sword fighting instructor at the River Regional Library in Jefferson City, Missouri, has been teaching sword fighting for over 10 years. Waters, who is also a sword fighting instructor at the River Regional Library in Jefferson City, Missouri, has been teaching sword fighting for over 10 years.

Our profession has seen unprecedented attacks in recent years on LGBTQ+ and BIPOC books because of personal disapproval. It is vital to fight for the ability of our patrons and students to read and think for themselves. We must provide materials that support, educate, challenge, and enrich the entire community without giving in to loud, well-connected, or aggressive censors. This legislation is a blow to those who believe their personal politics and preferences should dictate what an entire group of users is able to access in their libraries. It's not just a win for librarians but for entire communities.

I hope that this legislation will be a model for other states, counties, and cities to follow as the profession continues this crucial fight.

**Sarah Stumpf**  
Rockford, Illinois

## Safety First

In the March/April 2024 issue of *American Libraries* ("Talking Points," p. 14), a picture of the swordcraft program at Missouri River Regional Library in Jefferson City shows individuals learning fencing moves. The photograph seems to show that instruction is taking place with an épée in the hands of Courtney Waters and the instructor. While it appears that Waters may be wearing a protective vest (not the traditional jacket worn during fencing instruction and competition), neither individual is wearing the protective mask that should be worn during this exercise.

Fencing is a beautiful sport, and proper training is essential for participants. The mask is needed to protect the fencers from a potential injury if the point of the sword were to strike the face, especially an eye.

I learned fencing as a college student and note that wearing a protective jacket and mask is not burdensome.

**Arthur Friedman**  
Rego Park, New York

## From Liar to Learner

"Is ChatGPT a Liar?" (The Scoop, Jan. 20) offers valuable insights into the challenges posed by generative artificial intelligence (AI). However, a more comprehensive exploration of AI's benefits, ongoing improvements to it, and the role of librarians in shaping responsible AI use would

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

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provide a more balanced perspective for individuals navigating its evolving landscape.

ChatGPT's limitations are being addressed by developers. The issues mentioned, such as bias, misuse, hallucinations, and privacy concerns, are challenges faced by many AI models. Highlighting these concerns is crucial for fostering a responsible use of AI, but it is equally important to recognize efforts to enhance model fairness, transparency, and privacy.

The emphasis on ChatGPT being a liar oversimplifies AI's nuanced nature. ChatGPT operates based on the data it is trained on and may reflect biases

present in that data. Educators and librarians can play a crucial role in mitigating these biases by guiding users on critically assessing AI-generated content, promoting media literacy, and reporting incorrect data and biases to OpenAI.

While the post focuses on information literacy and academic productivity, it fails to acknowledge the potential of ChatGPT in technical services. Using training data from OCLC's WorldCat, ChatGPT can produce MARC fields and records. It can explain complex cataloging practices, generate code to manipulate metadata, and help users with library

services platform processes. Combined with human review, these and other opportunities provided by ChatGPT offer a solution to labor-intensive, time-consuming processes.

It is essential to recognize that ChatGPT's capabilities complement human expertise rather than replace it. The irreplaceable qualities of human expertise, including contextual understanding, creativity, ethical decision making, and emotional intelligence, ensure that AI remains a complementary force rather than a substitute for the diverse skills professionals bring to the table.

**Dom Bortruex**  
New Haven, Connecticut

**f** Congratulations, Andrew Evans! A true pioneer in the sport, always taking it to new places! 🏆🔥

**JOHN PETTY**, in response to "Holding Court" (May, p. 40)



## APPLY FOR A PLA DIGITAL LITERACY WORKSHOP INCENTIVE, SUPPORTED BY AT&T

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN  
JULY 26—OCTOBER 4

The Public Library Association (PLA), in partnership with AT&T, is helping public libraries close the digital divide by providing financial support and resources to teach basic digital literacy skills. This year, PLA is awarding \$10,000 to large libraries and \$5,000 to small libraries to conduct workshops using PLA's **DigitalLearn** courses and training materials.

Scan the QR code or visit [pla.org](https://pla.org) to learn more and apply.



### Pun to Step Away from ALA Presidency

The American Library Association (ALA) announced June 14 that Raymond Pun will not assume the role of ALA president in 2025–2026 because of health reasons. Pun, an academic and research librarian at Alder Graduate School of Education in Redwood City, California, was elected in early April with 67% of the vote.

“We are devastated that Ray will be unable to serve as ALA’s member-elected president,” said then-ALA President Emily Drabinski in a June 14 statement. “The most important

thing right now is that he takes care of himself and that we respect his privacy. We are grateful for his service to ALA and the entire profession.”

Drabinski convened a working group comprising incoming and outgoing Executive Board members to select candidates for recommendation. Per the ALA Bylaws, the Executive Board will select a final candidate from the working group’s recommendations, who will go before ALA Council for approval in July.

To view the full statement, visit [bit.ly/ALA-Pun25](https://bit.ly/ALA-Pun25). ●

#### ALA Seeks Nominees for Spring 2025 Ballot

ALA’s Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for the offices of 2026–2027 ALA president, 2025–2028 treasurer, and 2025–2028 councilors-at-large. Nominees will appear on the spring 2025 ballot.

The committee will select no fewer than 18 candidates for the 12 at-large ALA Council seats. The 2026–2027 president will also serve as 2025–2026 president-elect.

Nominations and forms must be received by September 16. Candidates will be notified of their application status after the nomination period closes. Members who do not complete a nomination form or do not get selected may petition to run for office starting October 1.

For more information, visit [ala.org/election](https://ala.org/election).

#### Nominations Open for I Love My Librarian Award

ALA will be accepting nominations for the 2025 I Love My Librarian Award until September 30. The award recognizes the outstanding public service contributions of librarians working in college, community college, university, public, and school libraries.

Ten librarians will each receive \$5,000 and be honored at the I Love My Librarian Award ceremony at the 2025 LibLearnX conference in Phoenix. Winners will also receive free full conference registration.

For more information, including instructions for nominations and eligibility criteria, visit [bit.ly/ILMLAwards](https://bit.ly/ILMLAwards).

#### AASL’s 2024 Best Digital Tools List Released

On May 21, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) released its annual list of Best Digital Tools for Teaching and Learning, honoring innovation and exploration in instruction.

Among the tools featured are EarSketch, which teaches coding through music; KidLitTV, a free platform offering author interviews, storytimes, and other resources to promote children’s literacy; and Parlay Ideas, an AI-powered instructional platform that helps teachers facilitate meaningful, measurable, and inclusive class discussions. For the complete list, visit [bit.ly/AASL-BDT24](https://bit.ly/AASL-BDT24).

#### ALSC Reveals 2024 Summer Reading Lists

On June 11, the Association for Library Service to Children released its 2024 Summer Reading Lists, which include

books and digital media recommendations to keep children reading all summer. New this year is a Gardening and Flora book list in honor of the American Horticultural Society’s 32nd annual National Children and Youth Garden Symposium.

Selected books include *Mexikid* by Pedro Martín, *Patterns in the Garden* by Genevieve Nilsen, and *Between Monsters and Marvels* by Alysa Wishingrad.

To view the lists, visit [bit.ly/ALSCLists](https://bit.ly/ALSCLists).

#### Book of Essays to Help Fund OIF

On May 7, Rivertowns Books published *Why Books Still Matter*, a collection of essays from 16 contributors, with all proceeds going to ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF). The collection honors the late bookseller and First Amendment advocate Joyce Meskis.

Essayists include activist Chris Finan, who wrote about censorship and how books and booksellers help defend liberty; US Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-Colo.) on how bookselling helps communities and their economies flourish; and Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library librarians Nick Higgins and Amy Mikel on making banned books available to young people across the US.

ALA saw a record 4,241 unique book titles targeted for censorship in 2023, a 65% increase from 2022. In 2023, OIF



# ALA Awards Building Library Capacity Grants

On May 29, ALA announced it had awarded 16 libraries \$10,000 Building Library Capacity Grants. The funds are provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and help libraries bolster programming, staffing, outreach, and other operations and services.

Each year, the program focuses on different segments of the library. This year the grants went to libraries supporting those who are incarcerated or reentering society.

Among the grant recipients are Itawamba (Miss.) County Sheriff's Department, whose librarian will update its collection, host more activities, and facilitate a GED completion program and other courses with partnering community colleges; Griswold Memorial Library in Colrain, Massachusetts, which will create a small resource library for nearby Franklin County Jail's reentry resource center and launch a program to help caregivers who are incarcerated read to their children; and the Friends of San Quentin (Calif.) Prison Library, which will boost existing adult literacy and education for those at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center.

"ALA is committed to library success for everyone, especially for those whose access is too often unfairly restricted," said then-ALA President Drabinski in a May 29 statement. "ALA truly appreciates the generous support and longstanding commitment of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to assist underresourced libraries serving underserved or marginalized communities."

For more information and to view the full list of grant recipients, visit [bit.ly/ALA-BLC24](https://bit.ly/ALA-BLC24). ●

tracked 1,249 demands to censor library books, materials, and resources.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/OIF-Essays24](https://bit.ly/OIF-Essays24).

## New PLA Telehealth Training Now Available

The Public Library Association (PLA) has launched Getting Started with Telehealth, a free training module on [digitallearn.org](https://digitallearn.org) that covers the basics of accessing telehealth, such as navigating patient portals and meeting technical requirements.

The module, available in English and Spanish, includes presentation slides, guides, handouts, and other

materials necessary for trainers to lead an in-person class.

PLA developed the module in partnership with Heartland Forward, an organization dedicated to advancing economic success by fostering healthy communities.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/PLA-Telehealth](https://bit.ly/PLA-Telehealth).

## ALA Launches Voter Readiness Campaign

On April 10, ALA launched its "Reader. Voter. Ready." campaign, inviting librarians, library workers, and library advocates to sign a pledge to be ready to vote in local, state, and federal elections in 2024. The campaign aims to ensure

## CALENDAR

SEPT.

**Library Card Sign-Up Month**

[bit.ly/LibCardSU](https://bit.ly/LibCardSU)

SEPT. 19-21

**ALSC National Institute** | Denver

[bit.ly/ALSCNIn](https://bit.ly/ALSCNIn)

SEPT. 22-28

**Banned Books Week**

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

SEPT. 25

**Banned Websites Awareness Day**

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

OCT.

**TeenTober**

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

OCT. 20-26

**National Friends of Libraries Week**

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

OCT. 21-27

**Open Access Week**

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

NOV.

**International Games Month**

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

NOV. 14-16

**Core Forum** | Minneapolis

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

library workers are prepared for this year's elections and are equipped with tools to educate their communities.

ALA is also partnering with organizations such as the League of Women Voters, Nonprofit Vote, and Democracy Class to provide librarians with resources, including webinars, in-person workshops, and program ideas.

Digital materials, including a voter engagement guide, an information sheet highlighting the ways libraries support voter participation, and a *Voters Count on Libraries* report are now available for download.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/ALA-RVRC24](https://bit.ly/ALA-RVRC24). **AL**

2024

# ANNUAL

## Wrap-Up | Celebrating libraries in the City in Motion

BY Anne Ford

**S**an Diego's dreamy weather and landscape were no match for the sunny disposition of library workers and advocates reuniting under a shared mission at the American Library Association's (ALA) 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition. A total of 13,532 people registered for the event, which was held in the city's convention center June 27–July 2.

Opened by comedian, author, and former *Daily Show* host **TREVOR NOAH**, the conference showcased themes of activism, diversity and inclusivity, and bridgebuilding. Participants celebrated successful programs and initiatives while engaging in important discussions on protecting intellectual freedom, mental and physical well-being, and other critical topics in the profession.







Ali Velshi

## Fighting the good fight

At the United for Libraries President's Program, **CONNIE CHUNG** (see Newsmaker, p. 16) recalled starting her broadcast news career in the late 1960s, when the medium was almost exclusively white and male. "The men ... couldn't get used to the idea I was their equal," said Chung, whose reflections on breaking barriers in journalism—as the first woman to coanchor *CBS Evening News* and the first Asian American to anchor any news program in the US—are at the center of her forthcoming memoir, *Connie* (Grand Central Publishing, September).

"I know I wasn't the best and I wasn't the smartest. I realize that the first one through the door gets the heaviest gunfire," she said. "[My husband, Maury Povich, says,] 'You were the Jackie Robinson of television news.'"

**ALI VELSHI**, chief correspondent for MSNBC and host of the TV segment *Velshi Across America*, spoke about his book *Small Acts of Courage: A Legacy of Endurance and the Fight for Democracy* (St. Martin's Press, 2024), highlighting key moments in his vast family history, sharing his thoughts on book banning, and emphasizing the importance of fostering immigrants in society. Describing his

inspiration for the book, Velshi said he turned to a through-line in his family history: the struggle for a better life. His family lived in South Africa, where they faced racism.

"My family has lived this for 125 years," Velshi said. "They have been in search, like many other people's families have, of betterment, more fairness, of greater social justice." He noted that he chose the title of his book to "emphasize that we can save democracy in small ways, with each of us doing it, but they require a little courage."

"I only exist because other people before me took up small acts of courage that said, 'My responsibility is not to do my job and earn a paycheck. It is to leave the place better than I found it.'" Velshi continued, "And that should always be your responsibility." He added that librarians likely didn't choose to become librarians to fight book banning but became dedicated to advocating for intellectual freedom as a necessity: "The courage is in deciding to do that."

**KWAME ALEXANDER**—author of the Newbery Medal-winning title *The Cross-over* (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2014) and Caldecott Medal-winning



Kwame Alexander



*The Undeclared* (Versify, 2019)—discussed the importance of representation. His latest title, *Black Star* (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, September), features Charley Cuffey, a 12-year-old Black girl in a “quest for freedom to be who she wants to be,” he said, which is the first female pitcher to play professional baseball.

Alexander also emphasized the necessity of fighting censorship and book bans. For public and school librarians looking to “protect the sanctity of the written word,” he pointed to historic figures such as the pioneering Black librarians of the 1920s and the librarians of the Pack Horse Library Project, who delivered books on horseback to remote regions of the Appalachian Mountains between 1935 and 1943.

“They believed words and books could offer hope,” he said. “They believed books could help folks reimagine what’s possible, and that is the kind of freedom books are a portal for.”

Of course, it’s not only celebrities—or adults—who fight for intellectual freedom.

Teen **GIANNA GOODMAN-BHYAT**, copresident of anti-book ban organization Golden State Readers and a high school student from Manhattan Beach, California, was one of six youth activists at the Young Adult Library Services Association’s President’s Program. Speakers shared their experiences fighting book bans and discussed what librarians can do to support the work of young activists.

Goodman-Bhyat said she realized that if she wanted to get her peers’ attention about book bans in their community, she needed to do something drastic. She recruited a group of classmates to wrap caution tape around their backpacks and wear them to school as a symbol for the censorship that was occurring locally and nationwide.

When people asked about the caution tape, activists had a flier handy with

information about their cause. “By the end of the week, there were at least 100 kids at my school who had participated in the caution tape campaign,” she shared. “That’s what allowed us to expand.”

Another young activist, **MEGHANA NAKKANTI**—cofounder of Nixa Students Against Book Restrictions and now a student at Davidson (N.C.) College—recounted how she and her student group attended public meetings where they witnessed the behavior of book challengers, who were calling them names and displaying aggression. “We knew we couldn’t force these parents to be quieter, so we forced them to be more civil,” she said. Instead of engaging, the students remained polite. “Anybody who took any videos there saw a bunch of [teens] being infinitely more mature.”

“That’s one of the biggest things that you can do,” Nakkanti added, “is delegitimize the power that these movements have.”

At “Multitudes: The Power of Authentic and Diverse Representation in Muslim Stories,” a multiethnic panel of Muslim authors and educators discussed ways in which their works are

often underrepresented, misrepresented, censored, or silenced.

“As authors, many of our organizations have not stood up for us the way they have for Ukraine and other topics and other groups in the past,” noted **RHONDA ROUMANI**, whose book *Tagging Freedom* (Union Square Kids, 2023) explains the origins of the current civil war in Syria and centers on protest and revolution. She added that Arab representation in kid lit is scant. The Cooperative Children’s Book Center at University of Wisconsin–Madison’s School of Education reports that, in 2023, only 1.2% of the books it received were by an Arab author and only .9% included representation of the culture.

To support the Muslim community, librarians can expand their collections and personal knowledge. Don’t limit Muslim stories to diversity units, suggested **M. O. YUKSEL**, author of *One Wish* (HarperCollins, 2022), a picture book about Fatima Al-Fihri, the woman who founded the world’s oldest university in 859 AD, which is still operating in Fez, Morocco. Including Muslim women in Women’s History Month observations, for example, is particularly important to counter harmful stereotypes.

“As Muslims, we don’t all speak the same language or share the same culture or even eat the same foods,” Yuksel said. “What we don’t understand, we fear, and what we fear turns into online bullying and harassment and other dehumanizing acts.”

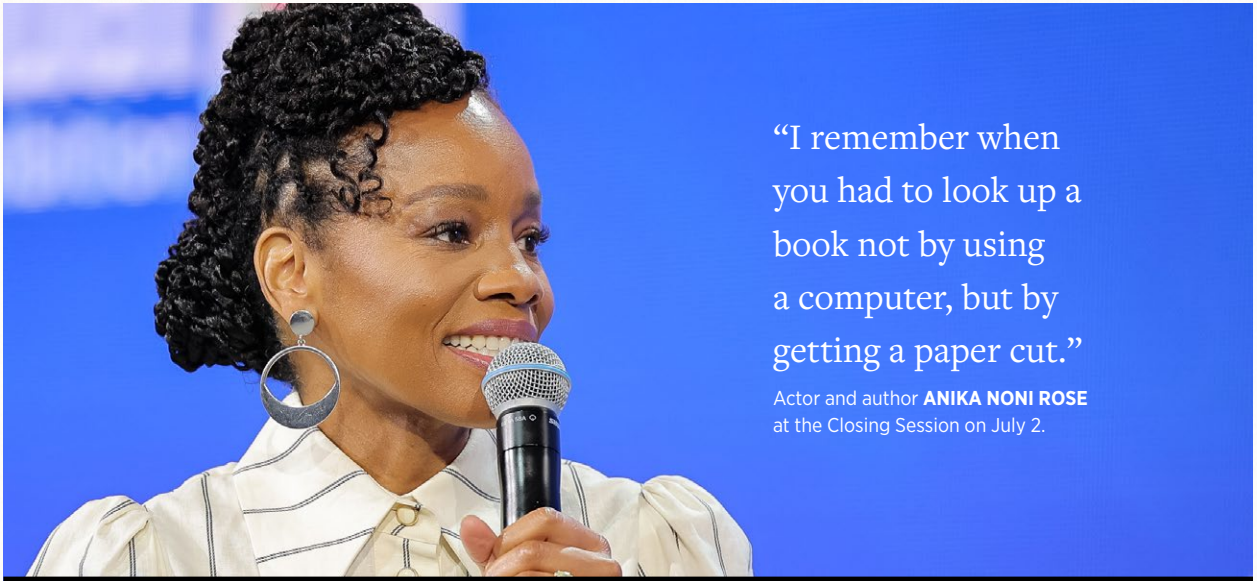
As many librarians know, battling book bans, unjust systems, and other forms of oppression can come at a large personal cost. At the ALA President’s Program, panelists discussed proud career moments that have helped them stay motivated on the job even when times are tough.

**CHRISTINA GAVIN**, librarian at Midwood High School in Brooklyn, New York,



Christina Gavin, librarian at Midwood High School in Brooklyn, New York





“I remember when you had to look up a book not by using a computer, but by getting a paper cut.”

Actor and author **ANIKA NONI ROSE** at the Closing Session on July 2.

**“Schools and universities do a lot of work on teaching people how to debate and how to persuade. We don’t always do a great job of teaching them how to listen.”**

**WENDY DEGROAT**, librarian at Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School in Richmond, Virginia, at “Fostering Conversation and Connection among Community Members with Contrasting Political Views” on June 29.

“For every complaint that we get, we get five to six emails from families saying, ‘Oh my goodness, we’re so appreciative you’re doing this. We’re so glad this can be a safe space for our child who is exploring their gender or already knows they’re trans or nonbinary.”

**SARA DESABATO**, teacher at Friends Select School in Philadelphia, at “Let’s Talk about Sex: Gender and Sexuality Education in Elementary School Using Age-Congruent Literature” on June 29.

**“LIBRARIES ARE NOT JUST THE REFUGE IN THE STORM, MY FRIEND. LIBRARIES ARE THE RAINBOW.”**

Author **KWAME ALEXANDER** at his Main Stage Speaker session on June 29.

“We need people to understand what we do. We need people to understand the necessity of libraries. They need to understand the library is a place where you can hit the reset button and start all over again, and there’s no judgment.”

**GERALD MOORE**, manager of Charleston County (S.C.) Public Library’s Dorchester Road branch, at the ALA President’s Program on June 30.

**“As a mother, all I want for my children is for them to see themselves in a joyful way. My kid, like every kid, is obsessed with Santa Claus and Christmas. And I wanted him to be excited about our own heritage and culture.”**

**NATASHA KHAN KAZI**, author of the picture book *Moon’s Ramadan*, at “Multitudes: The Power of Authentic and Diverse Representation in Muslim Stories” on June 30.



discussed her efforts to organize school librarians in New York City. An elected union delegate for her chapter of the United Federation of Teachers, she helped form a subcommittee of school librarians on the contract negotiations committee.

“A saying I really like is, ‘Solidarity is a verb,’” Gavin said. “In libraries, that extends to your patrons but also your internal supporters.... Whoever your people are, find them, don’t be afraid to ask them for help, and don’t be afraid to help them. We’re all in this work together.”

## Talking across the aisle

Several programs focused on connecting people who don’t normally interact with each other, or who hold differing political opinions. During “Bridgebuilding: Fostering Community Engagement, Dialogue, and Interactions in Libraries,” speakers pointed out that the US is enduring a period marked by division, social isolation, and segregation, making it difficult to relate to those who are different from us.

“We have a role, and even a responsibility, to create a space where we can ... bring democracy back to our country,” said **JENNIE GARNER**, director of North Liberty (Iowa) Community Library (NLCL) and past president of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries.

At NLCL, bridgebuilding has manifested in different ways. The library has hosted *Pizza and Politicians*, a series in which politicians talk to teens about the importance of their work over a slice; an entrepreneurship program for immigrants; a Good Neighbor Book Club, which selects titles with civic and political themes; and Living Room Conversations that tackle tough topics, such as “Can we get along when we’re voting?”

“We’re hearing that people want more of [these tough conversations],” Garner said.



Clockwise from above: Jennie Garner, director of North Liberty (Iowa) Community Library; Nicole T. Bryan, manager at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library's (BPL) Macon branch, and LaMeane C. Isaac, BPL regional director; Wendy DeGroat, librarian at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School in Richmond, Virginia

At “Fostering Conversation and Connection among Community Members with Contrasting Political Views,” **WENDY DEGROAT**, librarian at Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School in Richmond, Virginia, told the audience about overhearing students in her library debating topics like gun rights. Their conversations devolved into shouting matches, with no one really hearing the other side.

So, in 2021, when the national storytelling nonprofit StoryCorps launched One Small Step (OSS)—a program that encourages those on opposite sides of political issues to understand each other as people—DeGroat leapt at the chance to adapt it for her students.

“It is so easy to silo and just listen to people who think like us, who have the

same viewpoints as us,” DeGroat said. Part of her school’s strategic plan is to foster a sense of belonging, an aim that aligns with OSS. While the original program format includes a facilitator, DeGroat instead decided to lead students in a series of workshops on active listening and mindfulness before pairing them for conversations.

In 2024, more than a quarter of the school’s graduating class had participated in OSS. While some were primarily interested in the community service credit, others came with a sense of curiosity. Among the reasons from the participants: “I don’t really believe that other people exist that have these different opinions that would like to talk to me in a civil way.” To some, the idea “seems like a fairy tale.”



# Council Matters

**R**esolutions passed to increase services and support for the American Association of School Librarians' school library and Association of College and Research Libraries' academic library chapters (CD#51); reaffirm ALA's commitment to intellectual freedom (CD#52); urge library workers and supporters to participate in the 2024 elections and future ones ([bit.ly/ALAC-elect](https://bit.ly/ALAC-elect)); and direct the Executive Board to form a working group to develop Societal Statement Guidelines for ALA (CD#53). Several memorial and tribute resolutions also passed, including one to honor the International Relations Round Table's 75th anniversary (T#3) and one to honor Raymond Pun, who will not assume the role of ALA president in 2025–2026 because of health reasons (T#4).

Committees shared the following updates and action items:

Committee on Organization Chair Andrew K. Pace gave a report on the committee's activities (CD#27.1) and presented several action items. Council voted to table discussion of a proposal to establish a new Makerspace Round Table until ALA's 2025 LibLearnX conference in Phoenix. A proposal to change the name and charge of the Training, Orientation, and Leadership Development Committee to the ALA Leadership Development Committee passed, as did proposals to establish a new Affiliates Committee and dissolve the Committee on Research and Statistics.

Brian E. C. Schottlaender, chair of the Bylaws Committee, reported on the committee's activities (CD#25.1) and

put forth a proposal to amend Article XIII, Section 1 of the ALA Bylaws to exclude annual estimates of income as part of the budget process. The proposal passed.

Heather Campbell, chair of the Publishing Committee, reported on recent accomplishments (CD#32.1) and successfully proposed the creation of an ALA journal publication ethics policy (CD#32.2) based on guidelines developed by the Committee on Publication Ethics.

LGBTQIA+ Library Workers Taskforce Chair Kate Alderete presented the group's plan (CD#49) to address the increasing threat of discrimination against queer library workers by providing resources and gathering data to better understand the nuances of such incidents.

ALA Treasurer Peter Hepburn presented his budget update, financial details from the first seven months of fiscal year 2024, and the ALA Treasurer's Report (CD#13.1–4), which covers fiscal year 2025.

Head Teller Dorcas Hand announced the results of the elections for the Committee on Committees and Planning and Budget Assembly (CD#12.2).

Intellectual Freedom Committee Chair Lesliediana Jones presented her group's report (CD#19.3–19.5), as did Chair Ed Garcia on behalf of the Committee on Legislation (CD#20.1).

Julius C. Jefferson, chair of the International Relations Committee (IRC), presented the IRC report (CD#18.1), and Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF) Trustee Sophia Sotilleo presented FTRF's updates from the past year (CD#22.1). •

At “When to Tap-In and Tap-Out: Nurturing Resilience and Renewing Bonds in Library Teams,” library workers from Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library (BPL) discussed Branch Tap-Ins, an initiative that allows frontline staff and administrators to better understand each other's roles by swapping places for a day.

**NICOLE T. BRYAN**, manager at BPL's Macon branch, said tap-ins are designed to enhance library staffers' productivity, foster team dynamics, and promote

resilience. They're an opportunity, she said, “to really recharge and connect with each other.” Administrators can also gain a better understanding and appreciation of daily operations.

These tap-ins gave frontline staffers the opportunity to visit a museum or find other ways to connect with colleagues in a nonstressful environment. In exchange, administrators filled in at the circulation desk or provided storytimes, for example. The

initiative eventually spread to all 60-plus BPL branches.

“It was our way of saying, ‘We hear you, we see you, we feel you, and we've got your back,’” said **LAMEANE C. ISAAC**, BPL regional director.

## Helping kids with hard emotions

For young ones, managing feelings like anxiety or impulses like perfectionism



isn't always easy. Three different celebrity authors, each with their own new book, spoke about how they hope their works will help children navigate the often tricky world of emotions.

**MAX GREENFIELD**, best known for his roles in sitcoms *New Girl* and *The Neighborhood*, has written *Good Night Thoughts* (G. P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, September), a children's book about calming anxiety before bedtime. In it, the main character reflects on the fears preventing him from sleeping (such as robot sharks, a toilet overflowing with tarantulas, and the dentist).

"What I love so much about the book is, it's not taking those fears, thoughts, and anxieties a child may face before they go to bed and dismissing them, or saying they're not real, or saying, 'Oh, don't worry about this,'" he said. "It's trying to find a way to surrender to them, accept them, or build a different relationship to them."

Academy Award-nominated actor, producer, author, and mental health advocate **TARAJI P. HENSON** discussed her debut picture book, *You Can Be a Good Friend (No Matter What!)*, published by Zonderkidz in June. Illustrated by Paul Kellam, the book follows Lil TJ on her first day of school as she navigates making friends, handling bullies, and staying true to herself. Henson noted that telling this story and addressing its theme of mental health was part of her healing process as an adult.

"This is little me, this is my little TJ, my little girl inside of me that I'm finally giving a voice to," she said. "You have to let that little child on the inside of you thrive."

Conversations around mental health are new to many marginalized and under-represented groups, particularly Black communities, Henson said: "[The book] is an icebreaker for parents and children to have these different conversations." She added that she included mental health resources in the book for readers to



Actor, producer, author, and mental-health advocate Taraji P. Henson (right); author and actor Max Greenfield (below)

refer to as needed. "When our children hurt, we hurt, and we go into fix-it mode," she said. "Well, you can't fix something if you don't have the tools."

**ANIKA NONI ROSE** wants us all to be nicer to ourselves. The Tony Award-winning actor, singer, and storytime series host—perhaps best known for voicing Princess Tiana in Disney's *The Princess and the Frog*—has written *Tiana's Perfect Plan* (Disney Hyperion, October), a picture book that teaches kids the importance of self-forgiveness. Illustrated by Olivia Duchess, it follows the adventures of Princess Tiana in preparing a New Orleans Mardi Gras celebration for her royal in-laws.

"Things don't always go the way you want them to go, and yet they still turn out right, they turn out okay," Rose told attendees at the conference's Closing Session July 2. "I want [children] to be able

to experiment and experience without shackling them to the word *perfection*."

What does Rose hope readers take away from her book? "Give ourselves some grace—we all make mistakes," she said. "We have to give ourselves some room to be something other than perfect, and just be."

## Sexuality, abuse, harassment

*Sexuality education* and *sex education* are not the same. It's a common misconception among parents, said 1st-grade teacher **SARA DESABATO**—one that she often debunks in her work cultivating gender and sexuality curricula for elementary-age students.

"When they think sex education, they think of themselves in middle school where all the girls go into one room, all



the boys go into another, and then they learn about completely different things and never talk about it again,” she says. “We want to make it really, really clear that is not what we’re doing.”

DeSabato—who teaches at Friends Select School (FSS), a private, Quaker pre-K–12 school in Philadelphia—and **ALLISON FRICK**, FSS lower school STEAM librarian, talked about their years-long efforts to implement age-appropriate, inclusive lessons on these subjects for kids ages 4–10.

Topics include gender expression, knowledge of the body, sexuality and family forming, personal safety, and—for the oldest students—puberty. Associated classroom activities have included a pre-K class that drew themselves as mermaids after reading Jessica Love’s *Julián Is a Mermaid* and 3rd-graders making information charts about consent and how it presents itself in various situations. In the library, Frick has helped students make informational posters about



Allison Frick (left), lower school STEAM librarian, and Sara DeSabato, 1st-grade teacher, both from Friends Select School in Philadelphia

the words in the LGBTQIA+ acronym and conducted a Keith Haring–inspired art project with students after they read a book about the famed artist.

Other Annual sessions focused on unwanted sexual contact or abuse. Eight-time NCAA champion gymnast **MAGGIE NICHOLS** talked about her experience reporting sexual abuse in USA Gymnastics (USAG) under physiatrist Larry Nassar. As “Athlete A,” Nichols was the first to report Nassar’s abuse to the organization and the first to join the civil suit against him. (Nassar is currently serving the first of three prison sentences for his crimes.) “Speaking up and using my voice and reporting the abuse when I did was exactly the right thing to do,” she said. “I hope I helped a lot of people along the way doing that [and] made it a safer environment for athletes.”

Nichols’s recent memoir *Unstoppable!* (Roaring Book Press) provides a look at the world of elite gymnastics—both positive and negative. “We put our bodies through the craziest skills,” she said. “To become an elite gymnast, it took hours and hours in the gym ... but the sacrifice is totally worth it.”

# Imagine a Different Future

Join the Washington State Library in expanding prison library services in Washington.

[tinyurl.com/BranchLibrarianILS](https://tinyurl.com/BranchLibrarianILS)  
[tinyurl.com/ILSLibraryAssociate](https://tinyurl.com/ILSLibraryAssociate)



**WASHINGTON**  
 Secretary of State  
 Washington State Library



# Connie Chung

Barrier-breaking news anchor looks back on her career

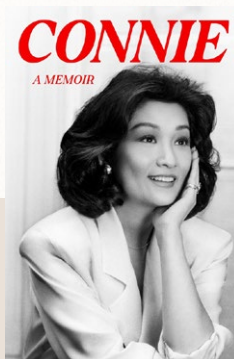
Connie Chung has been bringing you the headlines since the late 1960s. As the first Asian American to anchor any news program in the US and the first woman to coanchor the *CBS Evening News*, she has made an indelible mark on broadcast journalism—and even inspired a younger generation of Connies ([bit.ly/AL-GenConnie](https://bit.ly/AL-GenConnie)).

Now she reflects on her life with her memoir, *Connie* (Grand Central Publishing, September), which traces her family's immigration to the US, the stories she broke, and the legacy she hopes to leave behind. *American Libraries* talked with Chung after her appearance at the American Library Association's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Diego about her forthcoming book, the state of journalism, and her childhood library.

BY Terra Dankowski

**Your memoir, *Connie*, dives right into the sexism and racism of the white male-dominated world of broadcast news, showing the many ways in which women were pitted against each other or assigned to less serious stories. Do you think the industry has improved for women?**

Television news has improved in terms of racism and sexism, but we haven't reached any level of parity, truly. I see minorities relegated to the weekend news, and the C-suite is still pretty much dominated by men. Not completely—and I'm very proud and happy to see women in those executive positions—but we do have a ways



to go, [especially at] corporations, the White House, Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, and the State Department. Women run the country, so why isn't a woman running the country?

**Your book describes many career-making headlines, from**

**George McGovern's presidential campaign to Watergate to the Oklahoma City bombing. Is there a story or beat that stands out to you?**

My favorite beat was covering Vice President Nelson Rockefeller [in the 1970s]. Prior to that, I had to be the second or third banana. When I covered Rockefeller, he was all mine, which I relished, because I knew everything about him, what he had said, what he hadn't said.

There were some outrageous moments during his vice presidency—one time he gave a crowd the finger, and I thought I was going to have a coronary—but he was my favorite because he understood the relationship between the press and a politician. He did not hold it against me that I asked pointed questions, because he always knew that he could come back with an aggressive answer. He respected the fourth estate.

**What role have libraries played in your life?** My father worked in the diplomatic service in China, so when he came to the United States, he had to find a new





profession. Libraries were critical to me throughout my childhood because we didn't have a lot of money.

My sister and I never had wheels to go to the library, so the two of us would beg anyone who came to see my parents to take us. I really believe that getting a library card was better than getting a driver's license. When we became old enough, my sister and I would walk there—it was the Petworth Neighborhood Library [a branch of DC Public Library]—and that's where I was able to read *Little Women*. I was crazy about Nancy Drew and the Bobbsey Twins. Without libraries, my sister and I would not have been able to do our homework.

**What do you make of this wave of book bans that is currently sweeping the nation? Having covered different cultural movements in our country's history, do you think this moment will pass?**

I'm horrified with the banning of books. My husband [TV host Maury Povich] started a newspaper in Montana, where we have had a home for more than 25 years. And that newspaper, [the *Flathead Beacon*, based in Kalispell], told of the anguish that the community was going through, particularly for the librarians and those who worked at the library. I shudder to think that this surreptitious effort will succeed in any way.

Libraries should not be attacked the way they have been. Books should not be burned. It's just a terrible trend that must reverse. ●



Above: eight-time NCAA champion gymnast Maggie Nichols; left: Candice Benjes-Small, head of research at William & Mary Libraries in Williamsburg, Virginia

As far as the current state of USAG, Nichols said she has “seen so many incredible steps in the right direction. A lot of the girls seem happier and healthier.” She added: “I think it’s important to continue to talk about everything that happened.”

At “‘It’s Not Okay. It’s Not Normal’: Sexual Harassment of Librarians and Implications for the Field,” **CANDICE BENJES-SMALL**, head of research at William & Mary Libraries in Williamsburg, Virginia, said, “We know that our

profession has had issues going back to the days of Melvil Dewey.”

Spurred by the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, Benjes-Small and Jennifer Resor-Whicker, university librarian at Radford (Va.) University, along with several other researchers, surveyed public and academic librarians in 2018 and again in 2022 to assess the issue of sexual harassment in libraries. Results revealed that 75% of respondents had experienced this type of harassment from coworkers, patrons, or both. Among public librarians, 89.3% reported experiencing sexual harassment in the past five years of their career. For academic librarians, it was 77%. Those who have public-facing roles or are under the age of 40 were more likely to report being harassed.

Many respondents described numerous occasions of being asked out, given unwanted gifts, followed to their cars, asked for their phone numbers, and subjected to sexual innuendo, advances, or aggression, among other things. The following themes emerged from those narratives: administrative response (or lack thereof), persistence, disengagement, power imbalances, patrons being prioritized over staff, fear, bearing witness, and normalization.

Benjes-Small suggested that libraries adopt policies or codes of conduct around the issue if they haven’t already. The psychological and physical safety of employees is critical, she said. “It is the responsibility of an organization to build a climate that is intolerant of sexual harassment.” [AL](#)

**ANNE FORD** is *American Libraries* editor-at-large. Megan Bennett, Terra Dankowski, Diana Panuncial, Sallyann Price, Sanhita SinhaRoy, and Carrie Smith provided reporting for this article.



# Solutions

## IN SAN DIEGO

Annual's Library Marketplace  
brings digital lending,  
patron-facing platforms, and  
efficient workflows into focus

by Marshall Breeding

**T**he American Library Association's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition (June 27–July 2) brought 13,532 registrants to sunny San Diego for educational programs, featured speakers, business meetings, and celebrations. Though attendance was slightly down from the past two years, the conference attracted more than 550 vendors to the Library Marketplace, the largest commercial exhibition aimed at the global library community.



Vendors displayed a near-comprehensive range of products and services available to libraries, both physical and digital. Representatives were on hand to demonstrate solutions for use in the library, as well as services that can be offered virtually to patrons or deployed beyond building walls.

## Books and authors

Much of the activity in the exhibit hall focused on publishers' packed menus of titles. Vendors included the **BIG FIVE** (Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin Random House, and Simon & Schuster) and hundreds of mid-sized and independent organizations spanning an incredible array of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and graphic novels. Periodical literature included the major scholarly publishers, specialized journals, and zines.

As always, library workers queued in long lines for a photo or quick word with authors on hand for book signings. Advance reading copies remain the most coveted items on the exhibit floor.

The publishing industry is an important aspect of the library community. In an interesting parallel to the conference, oral arguments were heard June 28 in the appeal of the *Hachette v. Internet Archive* lawsuit ([bit.ly/IA-appeal](https://bit.ly/IA-appeal)), which concerns the ongoing battle over digitized books and controlled digital lending. The outcome of this lawsuit has important implications for libraries and was a hot topic in the hallways of the convention center.

The **INTERNET ARCHIVE**, defendant in the lawsuit, promoted its vision of digital lending at a booth it shared with



Amanda Jones (center) signs copies of her new book, *That Librarian: The Fight against Book Banning in America*.

subsidiary **BETTER WORLD BOOKS**, an online platform that helps libraries dispose of materials weeded from their collections.

Libraries generally rely on specialized distributors to select and purchase new items for their collections, including the vast number of new titles featured in the exhibit hall. **BAKER & TAYLOR** showcased its many services to distribute print and digital materials, as well as its services to facilitate processing and cataloging. Its collectionHQ system provides analytics tools to help libraries optimize collection development and fulfillment. **INGRAM LIBRARY SERVICES**, another major distributor, highlighted its metadata and shelf-ready processing solutions.

## Digital, audio, and streaming

Ebooks, audiobooks, and streaming video services have become mainstays for libraries. **OVERDRIVE** has established itself as the leading distributor for digital lending, with more than 3 million titles from 30,000 publishers available to libraries. As of April, patrons have checked out more than 4 billion titles through the platform—including the Libby and Sora apps—since the first checkout in 2003. OverDrive also offers Kanopy, a video-streaming service.

**HOOPLA** demonstrated its broad selection of digital content, including audiobooks, ebooks, movies, TV shows, music, magazines, and comics. Other digital content lending services that exhibited at Annual included Boundless from Baker &



Taylor and cloudLibrary, which OCLC recently acquired from Bibliotheca.

## Scholarly content and primary sources

Most of the big names involved in scholarly publishing exhibited at Annual. **ELSEVIER**, one of the largest global businesses that publishes scholarly journals, offers discovery and analytics tools such as SciVal, Science Direct, and Scopus. The company showed their wares in a modest booth this year. Other scholarly publishers represented on the floor included **OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**, **SAGE**, **SPRINGER NATURE**, **TAYLOR & FRANCIS**, and **WILEY**.

**GALE**, part of Cengage Group, featured many of its primary source collections, including the Gale Literature Resource Center database. In addition to the industry powerhouses, smaller organizations were in attendance. This included **COHERENT DIGITAL**, which has assembled research reports and other content from more than 1,200 organizations, including think tanks, nongovernmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations.

## Patron-facing technologies

Public libraries demand elegant interfaces and compelling digital services that can capture the attention of their community members while also giving equal attention to mobile and desktop presentations.

**COMMUNICO** displayed its full suite of products for website management, digital signage, event management, scheduling, and equipment reservation. **LIBRARY MARKET** helps libraries

The outcome of *Hachette v. Internet Archive* has important implications for libraries and was a hot topic in the hallways of the convention center.



Matt Barinholtz (right), CEO of FutureMakers, displays options for maker experiences and open-ended play.

deploy customized websites and calendars using modern, mobile-enhanced designs. **SOLUS** demonstrated its new-generation Library App, which combines discovery and self-checkout capabilities with event management, room bookings, and other features.

**STACKMAP** provides a service that enables libraries to include visual maps in their catalogs that guide patrons to the locations of collection materials. **LOCALHOP** highlighted its low-cost event management and calendar package. **SPRINGSHARE**, known for its LibGuides suite of applications widely implemented in academic libraries, is building a growing presence among public libraries, thanks to its recent acquisition of the **PATRON POINT** marketing platform.

## Delivering efficiency

Even with digital options, libraries still see physical materials being circulated at high volumes, driving an interest in products and services that can capably handle large-scale print collections. Offerings based on RFID and other technologies address different aspects of managing materials for loan.

**BIBLIOTHECA** offers a wide range of products for self-service, automated materials handling, theft detection, digital signage, and inventory management. Its Open+ system enables libraries to maintain unattended facilities, including the ability for extended hours in specific areas of a building. Similarly, **ENVISIONWARE** provides solutions for delivering services via unstaffed locations, such as through its 24-Hour

Library. The company also offers self-service kiosks, sorters, automated materials handling equipment, tablet management and checkout kiosks, and payment solutions, as well as analytics tools for measuring the use and impact of services.

Likewise, **MK SOLUTIONS** demonstrated its Open Library products for unstaffed facilities. In addition, the company promoted its mk LibLocker (which provides secure access to patron-requested materials), LibDispenser (which provides self-service access to items outside of library facilities), and other RFID products for self-service and anti-theft.

**COMPRISE TECHNOLOGIES** offers many solutions for materials, room and equipment bookings, payments, and print management. **D-TECH INTERNATIONAL** displayed its self-service and sorting products, pickup lockers, security solutions, and laptop-lending kiosks. **FE TECHNOLOGIES** provides a wide range of products for self-service, sorting, collection security, and unattended access. And **NEXBIB** is a European company that recently entered the North American market with its line of self-service and automated materials handling products, lockers, and solutions for unstaffed libraries.

**LYNGSOE SYSTEMS** specializes in automated materials handling, including high-capacity sorting systems and self-service equipment. Its Intelligent Material Management System helps libraries optimize the flow of their items among multiple branches and storage locations. **MEESCAN** provides a variety of cloud-based solutions for mobile- and kiosk-based self-service, fee collection, curbside pickup, and patron authentication.

## Management and discovery

Almost all the major providers of library management systems and collection discovery services exhibited at this year's Library Marketplace.

**OCLC**'s broad range of services and initiatives are too numerous to fully itemize. At conference, the nonprofit demonstrated its Tipasa, WorldCat Discovery Service, WorldShare Interlibrary Loan, WorldShare License Manager, and WorldShare Management Services platforms. The organization continues to expand its linked-data services with its new data-editing tool, Meridian, as

well as ongoing enhancement of WorldCat records with linked-data entities.

**LYRASIS**, another nonprofit organization, provides services that promote and support open source software initiatives, such as ArchivesSpace, CollectionSpace, DSpace, and Islandora. In partnership with the Digital Public Library of America, Lyrasis manages the Palace Project, a digital-lending platform based on open source software.

The **CLARIVATE** booth reflected its current state of business integration, with less emphasis on the unique brands that Clarivate has acquired in recent years. Its library software business incorporates the products of **EX LIBRIS**, including its flagship Alma library services platform (LSP), Primo discovery service, Leganto course list management system, and a number of resource-sharing solutions. **INNOVATIVE**'s featured products included the Polaris integrated library system (ILS) and Vega suite of patron-facing interfaces and services, both geared to public libraries. Innovative also highlighted new versions of the Sierra ILS used by many public and academic libraries.

**EBSCO INFORMATION SERVICES** promoted EBSCO FOLIO, an LSP based on open source software that includes EBSCO's own components for discovery and catalog interfaces, analytics, electronic resource management, and linked-data services. Other featured products included the company's broad assortment of EBSCOhost databases and other content offerings.

**BYWATER SOLUTIONS** also featured services for open source library software, including the

An LG CLOi GuideBot plays a video promoting San José (Calif.) State University.

Aspen Discovery interface, which is interoperable with both proprietary and open source ILS products; Koha ILS, which is being adopted by

increasingly larger and more complex library systems; Libki print management solution; and Metabase analytics platform.

**THE LIBRARY CORPORATION (TLC)**, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in business, demoed its CARL•Solution, Library•Solution, and Library•Solution for Schools ILS products. Its sister company, **TECH LOGIC**, brought an example configuration of its automated materials handling equipment for sorting and movement of library materials.





**SIRSIDYNIX** promoted its Cloud-Source OA discovery service, which streamlines access to open content, in addition to its Symphony ILS and BLUEcloud suite of web-based applications with optimized workflows. The BLUEcloud suite includes the new BLUEcloud Mobile2 discovery app for patrons.

Also specializing in technologies for public libraries is **BIBLIOCOMMONS**, which presented its BiblioCore discovery interface, BiblioWeb website builder, BiblioApps mobile interface, and BiblioEmail platform for marketing and automated messaging.

**MEDIAFLEX** demonstrated its open source OPALS ILS used by schools and other types of smaller libraries. **BOOK SYSTEMS** showed its Atrium ILS for public and school libraries, while **LIBLIME** demonstrated its Bibliovation platform. Other ILS products featured at Annual included those from **INFOVISION SOFTWARE**, **INSIGNIA SOFTWARE**, and **LIBIB**.

**LIBRARYTHING** demonstrated its flagship service for cataloging small and personal collections, as well as TinyCat, an online catalog for these collections. The company also highlighted Syndetics Unbound, a collaborative service with **PROQUEST** that enriches library catalogs through recommendations and bonus content.

For libraries interested in outsourcing their cataloging or record-enrichment services, both **BACKSTAGE LIBRARY WORKS** and **MARCIVE** presented a variety of interesting options. **BAKER & TAYLOR** offers its BTCat service as a utility for libraries to obtain MARC records to support their



Barrett Evans (left) talks to attendees about Craft & Hobby, an online platform that provides patrons with access to creative educational resources.

cataloging operations. Additionally, **WT COX** provides services to help libraries to manage their print and electronic resource subscriptions.

## Large-scale storage

Libraries of all types continue to value their physical collections and often make great investments to retain and manage them—even when they exceed the capacity of their regular shelving. Large-scale offsite storage helps libraries dedicate more space in their buildings for core collections and patron services while preserving lesser-used materials and providing them upon request.

Two companies, **CLANCEY RELOCATION AND LOGISTICS** and **IRON MOUNTAIN**, presented their physical storage options as alternatives to libraries allocating their own dedicated facilities. **AURORA STORAGE PRODUCTS** displayed shelving and storage cabinets for libraries creating new or additional capacity for physical materials in their facilities.

## Collection analytics

Several products and services help libraries understand and optimize their collections and offerings through enhanced data and analytics.

**RECOLLECT** has collection management and community engagement tools to help libraries refine collection development strategies. Attendees who visited the **COUNTING OPINIONS**, **LIBRARYIQ**, and **SIMPLYANALYTICS** booths learned

The Library Marketplace provided a venue for ongoing conversations between customers and vendors on artificial intelligence.



about the distinctive approaches of each company's products, which in turn help libraries optimize their operations based on internal data and external sources.

## Digital transformation

There was no shortage of companies ready to assist libraries with digitization projects. Those offering scanning equipment and software included **THE CROWLEY COMPANY**, **DIGITAL TRANSITIONS**, **DLSG** (Digital Library Systems Group, a division of Image Access), and **SCANNX**.

**LUNA IMAGING** provides a sophisticated web-based environment for the management of image collections. In addition to its well-known collections of backfiles and journal articles, **JSTOR** also offers JSTOR Forum, enabling libraries to take advantage of a mature and scalable platform to manage local digital collections.

## Global tech

It's always interesting to see which of the global tech giants opt to exhibit at Annual. **AMAZON BUSINESS** came to show how its e-commerce and procurement services can be used to support library processes.

**GOOGLE**, which has presented at recent conferences, was noticeably absent this year.

## Waiting for AI?

One of the key topics discussed at many sessions was artificial intelligence (AI), particularly the fast-moving world of generative AI. Many speakers expressed both optimism and concern about this new set of technologies, and its potential to disrupt many aspects of library services.

Yet the tone toward AI seemed much more tentative and subdued in the exhibit hall. Some companies are beginning to articulate strategies and even implement enhanced services based on AI. Perhaps more importantly, the Library Marketplace provided a venue for ongoing conversations between customers and vendors on this topic. Hopefully these insights will inform how AI can be harnessed and applied in bringing meaningful benefits to the library community, as they accelerate into full-fledged products and services. **AL**



**MARSHALL BREEDING** is an independent consultant, speaker, and author. He writes and edits the website Library Technology Guides.

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# PEOPLE

## Announcements

### ON THE MOVE

**Karey Blanchard** became director of Wilson County (N.C.) Public Library March 1.

**Lizzy Borges** joined Boise (Idaho) State University as teaching and learning librarian in January.

May 20 **Yuqiao “Brigitte” Cao** became Asian studies librarian at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Vikki Cervantes** became director of Kings County (Calif.) Library April 16.

**Shannon Delaney** became social sciences and research engagement librarian at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill June 17.



July 1 **Laurie Feistamm** became assistant director of Library of the Chathams in Chatham, New Jersey.

**Maria Grzybowski** became director of West Pittston (Pa.) Library in January.

**Jennifer Gum-Fowler** became director of Fort Scott (Kans.) Public Library January 18.

In April **Emmalyn Latigay** became director of Jake Epp Public Library in Steinbach, Manitoba.

**Sandy Longo** became executive director of Lackawanna (Pa.) County Library System January 3.

In January **Jenny Marr** became executive director of Capital Area District Libraries in Lansing, Michigan.

In March **Gracie Marsden** became teen librarian at Marshall Public Library in Pocatello, Idaho.

### Kudos

**Margaret Foster**, an evidence synthesis and scholarly dissemination librarian at Texas A&M University Medical Sciences Library in College Station, received the Lucretia W. McClure Excellence in Education Award from the Medical Library Association in April.

In April, Seneca (S.C.) Middle School librarian **Cassandra “Cassie” Owens Moore** was presented with a South Carolina House of Representatives resolution by State Rep. Bill Sandifer (R-Seneca). The resolution recognized the efforts that led to her school library being named the 2024 South Carolina Outstanding Library of the Year. ●

**Alexandra Odom** became African American studies librarian at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill June 17.



**Carson Schafer** became children and youth services librarian at Manchester (Vt.) Community Library May 2.

In April **Margaret F. Stanton** became director of West Chester (Pa.) Public Library.

**Amber Thornton** was named director of Cullman County (Ala.) Public Library System in February.

July 1 **Suzanne Wones** became university librarian at University of California, Berkeley.



### PROMOTIONS

April 23 **Sally Gomez** was promoted to Fresno County (Calif.) librarian.

**Rachel Hertzberg** was promoted to children’s librarian at Bedford (Mass.) Free Public Library in May.

In March **Meredith Layton** was promoted to city librarian at Helen Hall Library in League City, Texas.

May 1 **Nicole Nolan** was promoted to university librarian at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario.



**Jordan Wright** was promoted to director of Ferndale (Mich.) Area District Library January 27.

### RETIREMENTS

In May **Karen Ault** retired as school library media specialist at Brownstown (Ind.) Central Middle School.

**Emily Bergman** retired July 25, 2023, as Southern California campus librarian for The Chicago School in Los Angeles after a 48-year career in libraries.

May 3 **Victoria E. Dow** retired as director of West Chester (Pa.) Public Library.

**Mary Garm** retired as executive director of Lackawanna (Pa.) County Library System in January.

**Carlotta Goldade** retired in spring as librarian of Lewis and Clark Elementary School in Minot, North Dakota, after 47 years with Minot Public Schools.

In June **Jeffrey MacKie-Mason** retired as university librarian at University of California, Berkeley.



## In Memory

**Mohammed M. Aman**, 84, professor emeritus and former dean of the School of Information Studies (SOIS) at University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, died May 25. Aman previously served as dean and professor at the School of Library and Information Science at Long Island University's C. W. Post campus in Greenvale, New York. At SOIS, he was instrumental in spurring the development of a bachelor's program in information science and the school's pioneering online MLIS. He also directed the Information Technology and Career Development Program, which taught Milwaukee high school students information technology and interpersonal skills. Aman authored dozens of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and book chapters on library education, information and communication technology, library management, international librarianship, and Middle East and policy studies. He was previously editor in chief of the *Digest of Middle East Studies* and edited the international column of the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*. Aman was the Wisconsin Library Association's Librarian of the Year in 1998 and a recipient of the Service to the Association for Library and Information Science Education Award and the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Egyptian Library Association.



**Charles A. Gardner**, 94, who formerly served as director of libraries at Hastings (Neb.) College, died April 20. Gardner had previously been a librarian at the United States Air Force Academy (then located in Denver), University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, and Washington State University in

Pullman. He served as 1976–1977 president of the Nebraska Library Association and an ALA councilor-at-large, and he was a charter member of the Freedom to Read Foundation. Gardner served on public library boards, academic library boards, and the Nebraska Library Commission's State Advisory Council on Libraries.

**Barbara M. Preschel**, 95, former instructor at Pratt Institute's Graduate School of Library and Information Science in New York City and the CUNY Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at Queens (N.Y.) College, died February 24. Preschel served as executive director of PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service) from 1984 to 1997. She authored numerous publications in the field of indexing and served as index manager and supervisor for two encyclopedias. Preschel was also past chair of the New York chapter of the American Society for Information Science, past president of the American Society of Indexers, and a past board member of the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Sciences.

**Robert Swisher**, 80, who formerly served as director and assistant provost for University of Oklahoma's School of Library and Information Studies in Norman, died March 30. Swisher was previously a reference librarian and assistant professor at University of Iowa's School of Library and Information Science in Iowa City. He served as 1994–1995 president of the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) and received OLA's Special Meritorious Service Award and Distinguished Service Award. In 2007, for its centennial year, OLA honored him as one of its 100 Oklahoma Library Legends. ●

**Sherri Randall** retired as manager of Weston County (Wyo.) Library's Upton branch May 1.

March 1 **Ramiro S. Salazar** retired as director of San Antonio Public Library.

In July **Lois Langer Thompson** retired as executive director of Sno-Isle Libraries in Marysville, Washington.

**Laura Toland** retired as director of Dorcas Carey (Ohio) Public Library May 31.

In December **Molly Westmoreland** retired as director of Wilson County (N.C.) Public Library.

April 11 **Donna Wiedenmann** retired as children's librarian at Atwater Memorial Library in North Branford, Connecticut.

### AT ALA

**Amelia Newcomer Aldred** joined the Public Policy and Advocacy Office as deputy director of state and local advocacy April 15.

In May **Aubrey Huff** joined the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services as assistant director for literacy and continuing education.

**Maggie Reagan** left *Booklist* and joined the Young Adult Library Services Association as program manager of awards and projects in May.

**Kyria Redd** retired as customer service representative in Member Relations and Services May 31. AL





## Say Cheese!

The weather report at the American Library Association's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition, held June 27–July 2 in San Diego, was all smiles. Here are some of the week's picture-perfect moments.

Clockwise from top: Haley White, reference department manager at Springfield-Greene County (Mo.) Library District, takes a selfie with actor and author Max Greenfield during a book signing for his upcoming children's title, *Good Night Thoughts*; Newbery Medal-winning author Jerry Craft captures a photo of the crowd during fellow Newbery winner Kwame Alexander's talk on June 29; Hayley Park, PhD student at University of Maryland's College of Information in College Park, snaps a group shot during the Spectrum Leadership Institute; conference-goers gather with *I Am Gravity* author Henry Herz at the Library Marketplace; Mia Gittlen, school librarian at Milpitas (Calif.) High School, poses with 2023–2024 ALA President Emily Drabinski. **AL**







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