

# american libraries

September/October 2024

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Censorship  
throughout the  
Centuries p. 28

NEWSMAKER:  
Ada Limón p. 16

PLUS: ALA Awards,  
Ghost-Hunting Kits,  
AR in Academia

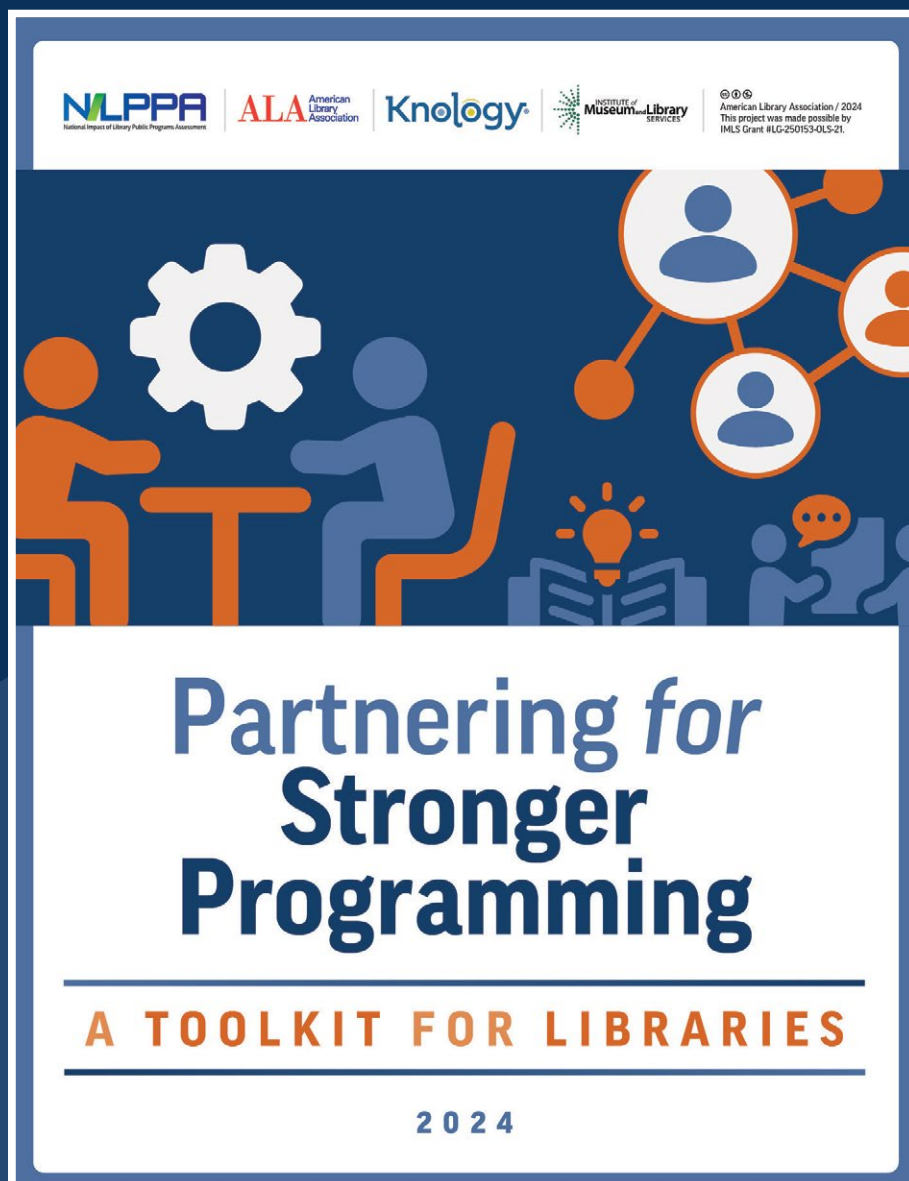
2024

LIBRARY  
DESIGN  
SHOWCASE

p. 18



# 5 user-friendly tools to help make your partnerships stronger.



## NILPPA.org

**NLPPA**  
National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment

**ALA** American Library Association

**Knology**

**INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES**

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September/October 2024

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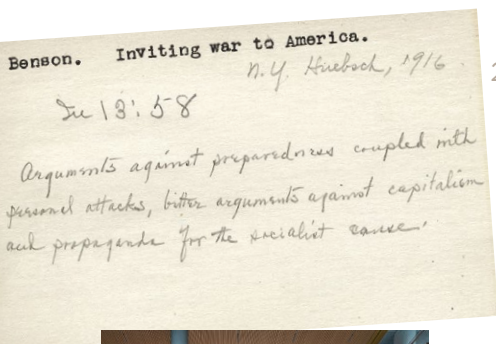


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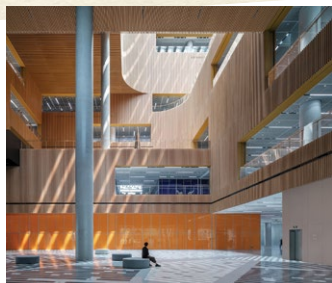
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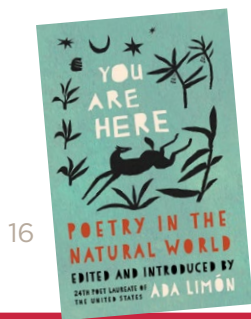


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from the  
EDITOR

## Wondrous Space



Sanhita SinhaRoy

Welcome to our annual Library Design Showcase issue. The dozen buildings featured in our cover story (p. 18) and the nine on display in the ALA/IIDA

Library Interior Design Awards feature (p. 24) show how architectural innovation, functionality, and the evolving needs of our communities intersect. Those considerations include providing opportunities for immersive play (check out the cool fire engine on p. 21). If you're looking for more practical stories on design, we have those too.

In his On My Mind column (p. 43), library director Dan Groberg recounts starting his job mere days before a major flood devastated his library and community. While still serving as a pillar, the library and its staffers pivoted amid the flood's aftermath, including speeding up the timeline for a planned capital campaign for renovations. As he writes, "In the face of adversity, our community rallied, proving that even the greatest challenges can be opportunities."

In her Dispatches column (p. 41), Toni Lombardozzi shares key considerations before undertaking a library building design or construction project. Hint: A big component of success has to do with predesign.

If that's not enough design content, then journey to the Jurassic-esque scene in our Bookend (p. 48). You'll find philodendrons, spotted begonias, monstera, and other interior landscaping on full display at Downtown Reno (Nev.) Library.

It's a verdant sight completely unlike the surface of Jupiter's moon Europa, where NASA will send its Europa Clipper spacecraft in October. Engraved on the craft's side is US poet laureate Ada Limón's poem "In Praise of Mystery," which comments on the climate crisis. Read Associate Editor Diana Panuncial's interview with Limón, our Newsmaker (p. 16).

And speaking of Diana, with this issue we say a fond farewell as she embarks on the next chapter of her career. Many of you know Diana as the host of *Call Number with American Libraries*, but you may not realize that she began at *American Libraries* as an intern. We wish her well in all her endeavors.

Sanhita

With our annual Library Design Showcase, we explore how architectural innovation, functionality, and the evolving needs of our communities intersect.

# We All Belong

A change in season brings inspiration and action



Cindy Hohl

Welcoming the autumnal equinox is my favorite time of the year: seeing nature's beauty in quiet repose as the air turns brisk, landscape colors change, and leaves blow in the wind. Fall can also be a busy time, with students and faculty returning to school, farmers harvesting crops, and organizations ramping up for a strong third-quarter push. People are also planning for more time indoors and celebrating holidays with family and friends.

September is an exciting time to welcome people into the library as we celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month and observe Banned Books Week, this year scheduled September 22–28. Since 1982, Banned Books Week has been a critical national program aimed at helping everyone see that all stories belong in libraries.

October brings TeenTober literacy and technology events, and the month closes with National Friends of Libraries Week (October 20–26) commemorating the strength of library volunteers in communities everywhere. Truly, everyone belongs in libraries and deserves equal access to information to help them live their best lives.

This is why I created my “We All Belong” library tour—a virtual and in-person tour to visit public, academic, school, special, and tribal libraries in urban and rural areas—to highlight the work of library workers in these communities and create bridges within the Association.

While planning the tour, I knew I wanted to start my journey at the largest public library in North America, the award-winning Toronto Public Library in Ontario, led by the fearless Vickery Bowles, a warrior for intellectual freedom. On my visit, I saw the magnificent Toronto Reference Library, with its 6 million holdings—a writer's and researcher's dream. The interior was designed by architect Raymond

Moriyama, who constructed a five-floor atrium to reflect his vision of creating a “cup of knowledge.” During my visit, the makerspace was packed with learners and inventors, and the computer lab was buzzing with activity.

As I moved through the spaces, I saw meaningful collections with thoughtful displays. I was especially touched to see an “Every Child Matters” tabletop display recognizing September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which honors the Indigenous children of Canada and brings awareness to the trauma they and their families experienced.

Another amazing display was the book sanctuary collection, which includes titles that have been challenged, censored, or removed from public and school libraries in North America. The display reaffirms intellectual freedom as a tenet worth defending, with slogans like “Ignite minds, not books,” “Freedom to read 'em,” and “The best ideas are free.”

Truly, it is humbling to see a library live its values with such conviction and dedication. Every community deserves a world-class library experience, and I am grateful to modest giants like Vickery for leading the way.

Witnessing fearless leadership in action is an honor, and I am grateful for the inspiration. I look forward to spending time with everyone on the tour, which will take me across the continent.

But civic pride is nothing without fulfilling our civic duties as well. Please register to vote ahead of the November 5 US elections, and please encourage your community members to do the same. Cast your ballot and make your voice heard. It takes all of us to tell our stories in a good way. **AL**

---

**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.

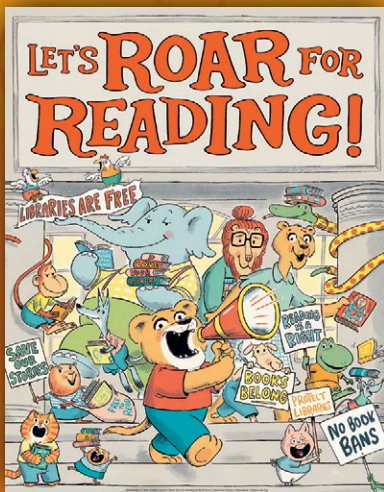
Everyone belongs in libraries and deserves equal access to information to help them live their best lives.

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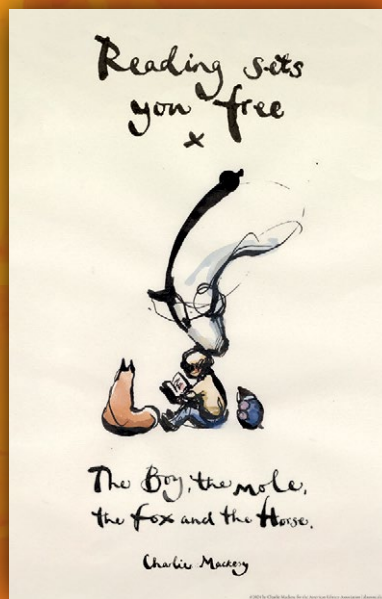
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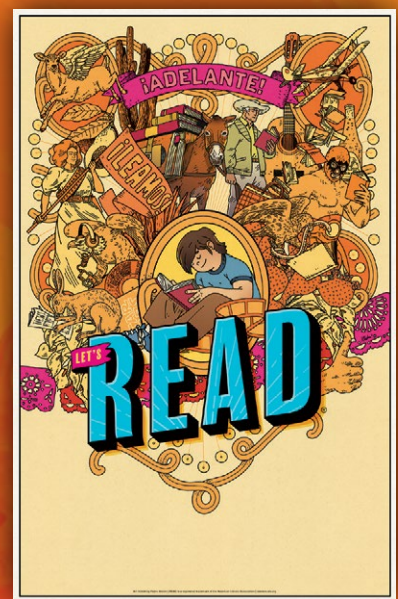
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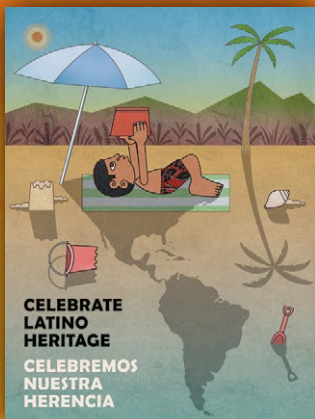
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### Sam Helmick Selected as ALA President-Elect

The American Library Association (ALA) announced on July 25 that Sam Helmick, community and access services coordinator at Iowa City Public Library, will be the 2024–2025 president-elect, effective immediately. They will serve as ALA president for the 2025–2026 term.

Helmick is replacing Raymond Pun, academic and research librarian at Alder Graduate School of Education in Redwood City, California, who stepped down from the member-elected position in June because of health reasons. The ALA Executive Board recommended Helmick, and they received ALA Council's confirmation on July 23, following a process outlined in the ALA Bylaws.

"I am honored to be appointed as president-elect of the American Library Association," Helmick said in the July 25 statement. "Together, we will continue to elevate the essential work of ensuring informational access for all and upholding intellectual freedom. The collective efforts of ALA members and library workers around the globe empower communities, enrich lives, and safeguard the principles of open knowledge and free expression."



Sam Helmick

Helmick was an ALA Executive Board member until their term concluded in early July. They are immediate past president of the Iowa Library Association, former chair-elect of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table, and former chair of the Iowa Governor's Commission of Libraries.

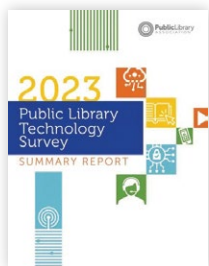
They have served on the ALA Policy Monitoring Committee as well as committees for the Network of the National Library of Medicine, the Stonewall Book Awards, the Young Adult Library Services Association's Michael L. Printz Award, the Reference and User Services Association's Sophie Brody Medal, and others. Helmick is a 2016 Emerging Leader and an author, consultant, and instructor for social media marketing and graphic design.

Helmick holds an MLIS from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a bachelor's in human services from Iowa Wesleyan University in Mount Pleasant.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/ALA-Helmick24](https://bit.ly/ALA-Helmick24). ●

#### Public Library Technology Survey Report Released

On July 9, the Public Library Association published the *2023 Public Library Technology Survey*, which explores technology capacity and infrastructure, resources for patrons, digital literacy, staffing, and other key trends in US public libraries.



The report found that 95% of public libraries offer ebooks or e-audiobooks, and the same percentage offer some form of digital literacy training (with 30% offering a digital navigator program to assist patrons). It also found that 58% offer streaming and downloadable media, and 47% of public libraries

offer hotspots for checkout, an increase of 14% from 2020.

In total, 1,511 libraries responded to the survey, which was conducted in late 2023. The survey was first administered in 2020 and is part of a series of three rotating national surveys exploring the role of public libraries nationwide.

For more information, including key findings, visit [bit.ly/PLA-Tech23](https://bit.ly/PLA-Tech23).

#### ALA Calls on Libraries to Promote Civic Engagement

ALA is urging US libraries to participate in this year's National Voter Registration Day and Constitution Day, both of which fall on September 17.

Each year, hundreds of libraries join ALA to host events around National Voter Registration Day, helping ensure voters are informed and ready to vote. Libraries can sign up as community

partners of National Voter Registration Day at [bit.ly/NVRD-SignUp2024](https://bit.ly/NVRD-SignUp2024).

This initiative is part of ALA's "Reader. Voter. Ready." voter engagement campaign, which launched in April.

ALA is also calling on libraries to participate in Voter Education Week (October 7–11) and Vote Early Day on October 29. For more information, visit [bit.ly/ALACivicHolidays24](https://bit.ly/ALACivicHolidays24).

#### Register to Attend Core Forum 2024

Registration and housing are now open for Core Forum 2024, to be held November 14–16 in Minneapolis.

The event features more than 45 educational programs, as well as several receptions, keynote speakers, tabletop exhibits, and poster sessions. Programs will cover six key topics: access and equity, buildings and operations,



# ALA Condemns Threats to Intellectual Freedom

On June 30, during ALA's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Diego, ALA Council passed a resolution reaffirming the Association's commitment to protecting intellectual freedom.

The resolution states that ALA strongly condemns efforts to remove materials from libraries, efforts to prevent minors from accessing library materials, and threats to the safety of library workers. The resolution also states that ALA condemns "the removal and undermining of professional standards by state and local governments, and efforts to restrict membership in a legally established professional trade association."

"In this climate where library workers face thousands of book challenges every year and even threats to our safety, we want to speak loudly with one voice," said then-ALA President Emily Drabinski in a June 30 statement. "Let people read what they want to read."

To read the full resolution, visit [bit.ly/ALA-CD52](https://bit.ly/ALA-CD52). ●

leadership and management, metadata and collections, preservation, and technology.

Core members and members of the Minnesota Library Association can save \$150 with early-bird rates, open through October 18. Advance registration ends November 14.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/Core24-Reg](https://bit.ly/Core24-Reg).

## New ALA Toolkit for Community Partnerships

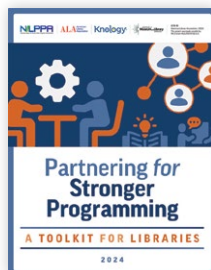
On June 17, ALA published *Partnering for Stronger Programming: A Toolkit for Libraries*. This free resource aims to help library workers consider broader goals of library programming and determine ways to begin and sustain partnerships with other organizations.

The toolkit covers five subject areas that can be used individually or in combination to plan programming: goals, partnership focus areas, contributions, partner interactions, and strengths and weaknesses. It also includes a section

to explore an institution's impact fostering joy, connectedness, economic development, and other metrics.

These materials were developed by ALA and the social science research organization Knology as part of the National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment, which works to document US library programs and their value, outcomes, and other characteristics.

ALA's Public Programs Office is collecting stories from libraries that have used the toolkit. For more information, including how to access the toolkit and submit a testimony, visit [bit.ly/ALA-PartnersToolkit](https://bit.ly/ALA-PartnersToolkit).



## RUSA Updates Model Interlibrary Loan License Clause

On May 31, the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) released its

## CALENDAR

SEPT.

**Library Card Sign-Up Month**  
[bit.ly/LibCardSU](https://bit.ly/LibCardSU)

SEPT. 19-21

**ALSC National Institute** | Denver  
[bit.ly/ALSCNI](https://bit.ly/ALSCNI)

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)

JAN. 24-27, 2025

**2025 LibLearnX** | Phoenix  
[alaliblearnx.org](https://alaliblearnx.org)

APR. 2025

**School Library Month**  
[ala.org/aasl/advocacy/slm](https://ala.org/aasl/advocacy/slm)

APR. 2-5, 2025

**ACRL 2025 Conference**  
Minneapolis  
[bit.ly/ACRL2025Con](https://bit.ly/ACRL2025Con)

APR. 6-12, 2025

**National Library Week**  
[bit.ly/ALA-NLW](https://bit.ly/ALA-NLW)

APR. 30, 2025

**Día: Children's Day/Book Day**  
[dia.ala.org](https://dia.ala.org)

JUNE 2025

**Rainbow Book Month**  
[bit.ly/RBMonth](https://bit.ly/RBMonth)

## UPDATE

revised *Model Interlibrary Loan License Clause*, a document outlining the legal rights of US libraries to share copyrighted materials.

Created in 2016, the goal of the clause is to advocate for more standardized and modernized license language. It was updated to include a new section on the role of an interlibrary loan practitioner in the negotiation process. RUSA recommends that all libraries use the clause while negotiating interlibrary loan license terms with electronic resource vendors.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/RUSA-ILLClause24](https://bit.ly/RUSA-ILLClause24).

### Submissions Open for Coretta Scott King Book Awards

The Coretta Scott King Book Awards Round Table is accepting submissions for the 2025 Coretta Scott King Book Awards for Authors and Illustrators.

The awards, which commemorate the legacy of Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King Jr., are annually given to an African American author and illustrator for outstanding works that portray an aspect of the Black experience.

The deadline for submissions is December 1. For more information about submissions and eligibility requirements, visit [bit.ly/CSK25-submit](https://bit.ly/CSK25-submit).

### AASL Appoints 2025 National Conference Committee

On May 28, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) announced it appointed 15 of its member leaders to the 2025 AASL National Conference Committee, which will plan the event taking place October 16–18, 2025, in St. Louis.

Members will identify current educational needs, select dynamic professional development opportunities, and provide

attendees with ways to network. The members will be made cochairs in the following groups: author, conference, local arrangements, program, research, and social media.

For more information and to view the full list of committee members, visit [bit.ly/AASL25-Committee](https://bit.ly/AASL25-Committee).

### ACRL 2025 Conference Opening Speaker Announced

On May 21, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) announced that Ruha Benjamin will be the opening speaker for its 2025 conference, to be held April 2–5, 2025, in Minneapolis and online.



Ruha Benjamin

Benjamin is a professor of African American studies at Princeton (N.J.) University, founding director of the



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## National Climate Action Strategy Released

On July 1, ALA, in partnership with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI), unveiled the National Climate Action Strategy for Libraries and the *National Climate Action Plan for Libraries Implementation Guide*.

The strategy and the implementation guide, created by a working group comprising sustainability leaders across ALA, are available on the SLI website. The guide includes ideas for climate change mitigation, simple sustainability practices for libraries, and other resources. With these materials, the organizations state that the aim is to raise

awareness of, and increase efforts toward, climate justice and community resilience.

The resources were developed to uphold ALA's core value of sustainability, which was reaffirmed in January.

"One of my presidential initiatives has explored how libraries can continue to tackle climate change," said then-ALA President Drabinski in a July 1 statement. "I want to give a huge shoutout to the working group that created [the resources] to help library workers do all they can in the face of this profound threat to our planet."

To access the free resources, visit [bit.ly/ALASLI-climate](https://bit.ly/ALASLI-climate). ●

Ida B. Wells Just Data Lab, and author of the 2019 award-winning book *Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*. Her work explores science, medicine, and technology through a social lens, as well as the relationships between

innovation and inequity, health and justice, and knowledge and power.

The theme for ACRL 2025 is "Democratizing Knowledge, Access, and Opportunities." Registration opens in September. The deadline for lightning

talk, poster session, round table discussion, and virtual presentation proposals is October 18. The deadline to apply for travel scholarships is October 11.

For more information, visit [bit.ly/ACRL2025Con](https://bit.ly/ACRL2025Con). AL



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# TRENDS



## Spirit in the Stacks

Libraries help patrons hunt down apparitions

BY Anne Ford

**S**onya Knisley, head of children’s services at Clark County (Ohio) Public Library (CCPL), has seen it happen over and over again. Someone walks into her location and applies for a library card—with one obvious aim.

“As soon as they get their card, they immediately place a hold on a ghost-hunting kit,” Knisley says.

Like many libraries, CCPL has begun loaning out collections of specialized electronic items said to help seekers of the supernatural track down spirits. These kits

usually consist of a backpack or carrying case filled with items such as a “spirit box,” which scans radio frequencies in hopes of encountering ghostly voices; an electromagnetic field (EMF) meter, on the theory that ghosts can manipulate EMFs; and a recorder for capturing electronic voice phenomena (EVP), aka messages from beyond the veil.

### If you’ve got it, haunt it

Public belief in the supernatural has surged over the last two decades. In 1990, a Gallup

poll found that 25% of respondents believed in ghosts; in 2019, a poll by global market research company Ipsos found that number had risen to 46%. Meanwhile, dozens of television and YouTube shows like *Ghost Hunters*, *Ghost Files*, and *Living for the Dead* have made ghost hunting a popular pastime among the public.

Knisley was inspired to start offering ghost-hunting kits at CCPL after seeing one on display at the Ohio Library Council Convention and Expo in 2022. As it happened, she was already familiar with the kits’ technology, thanks to her 23-year-old daughter, who had introduced her to *Ghost Files* and similar shows.

“I got very excited, so excited that I emailed my boss immediately and said, ‘Hey, what do you think?’” Knisley recalls. “Turns out he has a daughter around the same age, so he was familiar with them as well. He’s like, ‘I’m all for it. Get me a quote.’”

CCPL debuted three of the kits in January 2023 and was promptly spooked by their popularity. In a year and a half, the kits have circulated more than 90 times. “We’ve never not had holds on them,” Knisley says. She soon added two more kits to meet demand.

To make them available to as many patrons as possible, the kits are available for one-week, nonrenewable checkouts only. And because each kit costs the library about \$250 (not including replacement batteries), they are checked out only to adult patrons, who must sign a waiver and return the kit to the CCPL circulation desk,

“The EMF meter was going off a lot in our videogame section, so we did find it’s possible that that section is haunted.”

**LAUREN WALKER**, director, Coventry (R.I.) Public Library

rather than leaving it in the library’s dropbox.

Two of the kits, however, have recently gone missing. “They didn’t make it back to us once checked out,” Knisley says. “I’m not certain if ghosts took them.”

### Ghouls just want to have fun

In September 2023, Wilsonville (Ore.) Public Library (WPL) added a ghost-hunting kit to its Library of Things and watched as it joined the list of most popular items for checkout. “It’s almost never on the shelf,” says Angelika Heidelberger, WPL support services coordinator for technical services.

Like WPL’s other high-demand items, such as a pressure washer and a metal detector, the ghost-hunting kit represents “specialized equipment that’s not always affordable for someone who wants to try it,” Heidelberger says. “That’s the purpose of our Library of Things.”

That said, she worried at first about potential pushback to the

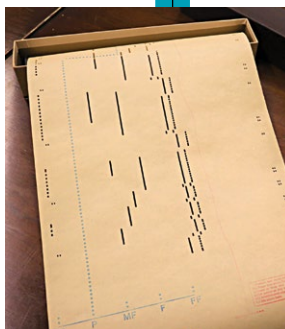
kit’s availability—either from patrons with religious concerns, or from those who might object to a public library offering equipment for a pseudoscientific activity.

“We put a disclaimer on all our items anyway, that the library has no liability in the consequences of using them,” Heidelberger says. Regarding the ghost-hunting kit in particular, “this is recreational. The burden of deciding what proper use is lies with the person who checks it out.”

A year later, however, WPL hasn’t received any complaints regarding the kit. Neither has Coventry (R.I.) Public Library (CPL), which introduced its version in 2018. “For the most part, people just think it’s a fun thing to do,” says CPL Director Lauren Walker.

In addition to an EMF meter and EVP recorder, CPL’s kit includes an infrared motion sensor, a thermometer (for shifts in ambient temperature), and a geophone, a device that measures vibrations and seismic activity, “but in the context of ghost hunting can be used to listen for footsteps and moving objects,” Walker explains.

Unlike CCPL and WPL, CPL didn’t see its ghost-hunting kit achieve instant patron popularity. “I don’t think it circulated much when I started in 2019. I don’t think a lot of people knew



Continued on page 13 ▶

## BY THE NUMBERS

# Music Libraries and Collections

1,000

Number of event fliers in the Hip-Hop Collection at Cornell University Library (CUL) in Ithaca, New York. These handmade fliers, made between 1976 and 1984, advertise early live performances by genre trailblazers like Grandmaster Flash and the Cold Crush Brothers. To date, CUL has digitized about half of these fliers.



1,900

Number of items of stagewear housed at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum’s Frist Library and Archive in Nashville. Among these accessories are costumes, Stetson hats, and cowboy boots worn by the likes of Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, Charley Pride, and Hank Williams Jr.

1,500

Number of player piano rolls in the Music and Performing Arts Library at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). A *player piano* is a self-playing mechanical instrument invented in the late 19th century. UIUC’s collection of perforated paper and metallic rolls is one of the largest of its kind in the country.

21

Pieces of furniture from Leonard Bernstein’s studio on display at Indiana University Bloomington’s Cook Music Library. The items include several desks, a conductor’s stool, a sofa, and a rocking chair from the famed conductor and composer’s former home in Fairfield, Connecticut. ●

# Optimizing Reality

Bringing AR to academia

BY Leigh Kunkel

With Gen Z in its higher-education years and Gen Alpha fast approaching, academic libraries are seeking ways to reach tech-savvy students.

“College students, being digital natives, are more inclined to engage with technology-driven learning tools,” says Yingqi Tang, distance education and electronic resources manager at Jacksonville (Ala.) State University’s (JSU) Houston Cole Library.

That’s a major reason many institutions are using augmented

reality (AR) to connect with students. Unlike virtual reality, which immerses the user in a computer-generated world, AR integrates digital elements into the physical world in real time through images and sounds. With AR, users can, for example, see a new nail polish color on their actual fingernails, preview a piece of furniture as it would look in their living room, or choose concert tickets by checking out each seat’s perspective in a virtual model of the venue. QR codes often function as a gateway to AR experiences, meaning that just about anyone with a smartphone can easily access them.

Through both student- and library-led initiatives, academic libraries are meeting digital natives on their own turf with AR treasure hunts that double

as orientations, opportunities to create room-reservation systems, and other helpful tools.

## A digital path

At the Paul Robeson Library (PRL) at Rutgers University–Camden in New Jersey, Samantha Kannegiser, student success librarian, says her main priority is reaching students who aren’t using the library to its full potential. To do this, she looks to emerging technology such as AR.

In 2019, Kannegiser was new to PRL and thought that AR, with which she was already somewhat familiar, would be a good way to get students excited about using the library. She used Zappar, a paid platform that cost \$247 for a one-year educator license, to create an AR library orientation. To learn how to do things like find books in the stacks or access online resources, students pointed their phones at QR codes across the library, revealing images and videos “like in Harry Potter,” she says.

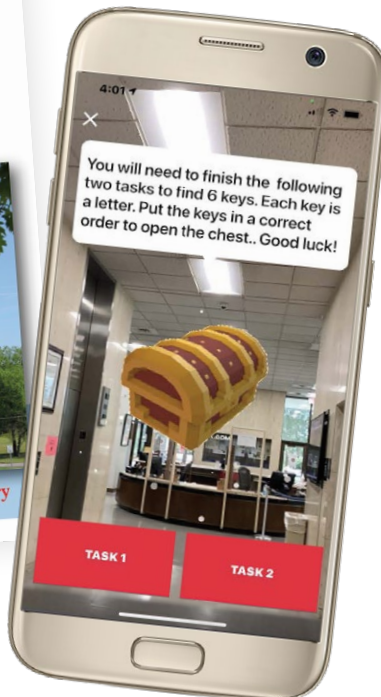
Kannegiser spent more than a month learning the program and experimenting before she felt confident bringing her vision to life. “It was definitely a learning curve,” she says. Online tutorials helped her along the way.

But the positive effects of the AR program far outweighed any technical challenges, she adds. Kannegiser says that students who completed the digital orientation displayed a level of interest in the library that isn’t always present in traditional orientations.

Kannegiser did a pre- and post-test with students to gauge how the orientation affected learning outcomes and their comfort in the library. She found it made them “much more confident in navigating the library.” While the program shut down during the pandemic, the library is looking to incorporate AR



At Jacksonville (Ala.) State University’s Houston Cole Library, students used augmented reality to complete a treasure hunt-themed orientation.



into programming and orientations in other ways. “I think an exciting next step would be to hold workshops for students to learn how to create AR experiences in the library themselves,” she says.

That same year, at JSU, Tang used a free AR platform called Metaverse to design and implement a library treasure hunt. Students used their phones to scan a QR code, then followed AR puzzles and riddles throughout the library to become familiar with its areas, resources, and subject librarians.

More than 500 students completed the hunt before the Metaverse platform shut down earlier this year. Tang plans to explore other applications for the project. In the meantime, AR “shifted students’ view of the library from a traditional, perhaps intimidating, space to an engaging and welcoming environment,” she says.

### Student-led initiatives

At New York University (NYU) Tandon School of Engineering, the Bern Dibner Library of Science and Technology (BDLST) is approaching AR from a different direction: by letting students lead. Through NYU’s Vertically Integrated Projects initiative, students take part in long-term, large-scale multidisciplinary projects—in this case, AR deployments that help other students access library resources.

Matthew Frenkel, NYU engineering librarian, launched the project in 2019. He was inspired by the idea of digitally replicating the “serendipitous discovery” of standing at a bookshelf and finding additional resources related to the one sought. AR, for instance, could make it possible for a user to point their phone at a physical bookshelf and pull up related items that are available only online or that are in storage.

So far, students have used AR to create initiatives such as an iOS app called 3Dibner, which allows library users to view, interact with, and reserve BDLST rooms; an optical-recognition tool that identifies books through images of their covers and spines; and an AR replica of an oversized chess set. “The chess game mimicked a large chess set that we often put out during finals to allow students a study break,” Frenkel explains. “The students decided to try and simulate that through AR so that people could play anytime they want.”

“College students, being digital natives, are more inclined to engage with technology-driven learning tools.”

**YINGQI TANG**, distance education and electronic resources manager at Jacksonville (Ala.) State University’s Houston Cole Library

Student turnover from semester to semester means that not all of the students’ AR projects come to fruition. Still, Frenkel notes, the participants gain valuable abilities along the way: “Depending on how the students are involved with the team, they may be learning a large variety of skills ranging from project management and teamwork to user design and user research to a wide variety of front-end and back-end coding skills such as building AR objects, database design, and building user interfaces.” **AL**

**LEIGH KUNKEL** is a Chicago-based writer who has been published in *Oprah Daily*, *The New York Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, and more.



Wilsonville (Ore.) Public Library added a ghost-hunting kit to its Library of Things in 2023, and it is now one of the most popular items for checkout.

◀ Continued from page 11

that we had it,” Walker says. So in 2022, just for fun, she—along with CPL Teen Librarian Kylie Woodmansee and CPL Head of Adult Services Kiki Butler—made a short video promoting the kit ([bit.ly/CPL-Ghost](https://bit.ly/CPL-Ghost)) in the style of a ghost-hunting TV show. (Butler plays the ghost.)

Since then, the kit “gets checked out all the time, not just around Halloween,” Walker says. In addition, CPL has used the kit to conduct a teen program in which participants undertook a ghost hunt in the library itself.

“The EMF meter was going off a lot in our videogame section,” Walker recalls, “so we did find it’s possible that that section is haunted. The teens named the ghost Barry, I believe. That’s our joke now sometimes when we can’t find something—maybe Barry took it.” **AL**

**ANNE FORD** is editor-at-large of *American Libraries*.



Ted Quiballo (right), instructional technologies librarian at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, shows interns for World Relief Chicagoland's youth summer program how to use a 3D printer.

# Makerspace and Sense of Place

Academic library hosts summer program for asylum-seeking and refugee youth

For nearly a decade, Northwestern University (NU) in Evanston, Illinois, and the Chicago office of the national nonprofit World Relief have worked together to offer free summer programming for families who are refugees or seeking asylum. In 2021, after the US military withdrew its final troops from Afghanistan, tens of thousands of Afghan families fled to the US. That's when NU's Seeley G. Mudd Library (ML), its science and engineering library, joined the partnership, hosting dozens of these families' children in its makerspace each summer. The student-named Fun Summer Program encourages participants to gain new academic skills, leadership experience, and build connections in their new community. The partnership's success helped earn ML librarian Ted Quiballo a 2024 I Love My Librarian Award.

BY Ted Quiballo and Sarah P. Lee

In 2021, after the US government removed its last troops from Afghanistan, approximately 2,500 Afghan evacuees resettled in Illinois, largely in and near Chicago. Many received placement assistance from World Relief Chicagoland (WRC), a nonprofit that provides social services

for refugees and asylum seekers. Some families found new beginnings alongside others from Myanmar, Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine on the city's north side.

Following resettlement, families can sign their children up for WRC's free afterschool and summer programs. The summer

program, open to students ages 5–19, runs for four weeks in July and August. Since 2017, WRC and the Technological Innovations for Inclusive Learning and Teaching (TIILT) Lab at Northwestern University (NU) in Evanston, Illinois, have partnered to offer hands-on activities and STEM education opportunities. In May 2022, WRC and TIILT Lab extended the partnership to NU's Seeley G. Mudd Library (ML). ML Instructional Technologies Librarian Ted Quiballo has cultivated an inclusive, accessible, community-driven makerspace that aligns with the goals of WRC's program.

Each summer, nearly 70 students join us on NU's campus. On a typical day, students build mini robots and program their movements with block-based coding, create 3D prints, laser-cut name tags, or learn about the intersection between sports and technology through tools like the HomeCourt app, which uses artificial intelligence to record reaction times and helps users practice hand-eye coordination.

The program is facilitated by interns recruited from across Chicago who often share similar cultural, religious, or language backgrounds with the students. The interns are trained in ML's technologies as well as pedagogical practices that are culturally responsive and support social-emotional learning. For example, after a lesson, students teach what they just learned to one another rather than instructors



taking charge. Students and interns engage in joyful moments of play and connect by conversing in Arabic or Dari and discussing their family traditions during Muslim holidays.

Student participants flex leadership skills to facilitate activities and advocate for their interests. Younger kids enthusiastic about making slime have helped measure and distribute ingredients and troubleshoot batches to reach optimal texture. Older ones requested time for midday prayers, which is now a regular part of the program.

Our efforts center on community, both building it and supporting it. Increasing STEM access and equity is important, but we know powerful learning happens when personal relationships take root and students feel connected to one another and facilitators. Going forward, we plan to continue building local partnerships to sustain the program long term.

Powerful learning happens when personal relationships take root.

Kids in the program tell their parents how excited they are to go each day. We hope the students also notice how we center their interests and value their knowledge, skills, and experiences as a form of expertise. We know there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to this work, but we lead successfully when we prioritize authentic connections and care. **AL**

**TED QUIBALLO** is instructional technologies librarian at the Seeley G. Mudd Library at Northwestern University (NU) in Evanston, Illinois.

**SARAH P. LEE** is a graduate researcher in NU's Learning Sciences program.

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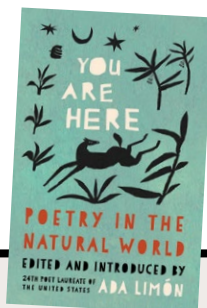
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# Ada Limón

US poet laureate on sending a poem to outer space



This October, NASA will launch its *Europa Clipper* spacecraft on a mission to Jupiter's moon Europa. Engraved into the craft's side is the poem "In Praise of Mystery" by Ada Limón.

As US poet laureate, Limón has created *You Are Here*, an anthology (Milkweed Editions, April) and installation project in partnership with the National Park Service that explores the connection between poetry and nature.

Limón, a MacArthur fellow and one of *Time* magazine's Women of the Year for 2024, spoke with *American Libraries* about her signature project, the role libraries have played in her life, and how she feels about sending a poem into the solar system.

BY Diana Panuncial

**What was your reaction when you learned that one of your poems would be going to space?** I have always loved space; I grew up on *Star Wars*. That was a big part of my childhood.

One of the biggest things that struck me was the idea of it being such a human endeavor—not only space exploration, but poetry, and then combining the two.

When I found out the poem was going to be in my own handwriting, it made me panic a little bit. Even though I had done 20 drafts of the poem, trying to write it in my own handwriting was hard. But I just recently saw the plate, and it's beautiful. It's a huge honor.

**What was the process of writing the poem?** [NASA] gave me three things that I needed to consider: It had to be under 200 words, it had to be able to be read at the 4th-grade level, and it needed to include water. The biggest thing that I knew in my bones was that as much as it is a poem that is going out into the expansiveness of space, it really is a poem that points back to Earth. It needed to point back to this incredible planet as the climate crisis worsens and we approach a new type of reality.

**One part of your signature project as poet laureate was editing *You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World*, a collection by some of the world's leading poets. What surprised you as you read everyone's contributions?** One of the things that really shocked me was

that these 52 different individuals came up with 50 original contemporary poems, all of them really speaking to one another. Even though some of them were in urban landscapes, some were personal, some were more public, the core message was that there is a beauty and wonder that Earth possesses, and that we feel really drawn to it. At the same time, we're at this moment where we do have anxiety about our relationship with the planet. Each poem really spoke to this particular moment.

**What spurred your own close relationship with nature?** I grew up in a rural area—Glen Ellen in Sonoma [County], California. It's quite beautiful. Almost all my family members could name and identify plants and animals, and that was essential to my growing up. We did visit many of the national parks, particularly the Redwoods because those are in California. My little brother was a park ranger at Mount Rainier [in Washington]. Nature has been where I've always gone to breathe, to really get myself straight again after I feel untethered.

**What role have libraries played in your life?** I'm such a huge fan of libraries. My library growing up was Sonoma Valley Regional Library, and it's incredible. I was really into biographies when I was in high school, and I remember a librarian would just point out all the different kinds that I could check out. I think libraries really allowed me to peek into the world of different people.

Sometimes I visit libraries, and they have a small poetry collection. Being able to have a librarian who knows how to expand what's on the shelves is essential to bringing people into poetry, so they have more access. **AL**



“A story that is unfinished is still a beautiful story. I decided to write this book so that the next person that looks like me who gets asked to write a book doesn’t hesitate.”

Marine biologist and memoirist **JASMIN GRAHAM**, in “Sharks Don’t Sink. And Neither Does She,” *The New York Times*, July 19.



“I EMAILED ANN PATCHETT TO TELL HER I WAS STARTING UP A BOOKSTORE, AND SHE EMAILED BACK, ‘YOU FOOL. I’M SO PROUD OF YOU.’”

Author **LAUREN GROFF**, in “Lauren Groff on What It’s Like to Launch a Bookstore in the Land of Book Bans,” *Marie Claire*, May 22.

“These women, that are amazing educators and librarians, have been terrified for over two years now that they’re going to get arrested, hauled off to jail on a felony charge of providing pornography to minors. We lost a great librarian.”

Attorney **PAUL HYDE**, in “Inside the Two-Year Fight to Bring Charges against School Librarians in Granbury, Texas,” *NBC News*, July 23.

“How do we teach media literacy in a post-literate society where social media clout is more rewarded than critical thinking skills?”

Author and activist **JOSE ANTONIO VARGAS**, @joseiswriting on X, July 14.

“They’re trying to spread this message that it’s about parental rights, but really, it’s not about parental rights. Because I don’t have as much of a say about what goes on with my kids’ education as the mom next to me who shares the [conservative] politics of the legislature.”

**LISSETTE FERNANDEZ**, cofounder of advocacy organization Moms for Libros, in “How They Defend the Freedom to Learn: Stories and a Blueprint from Florida,” *Human Rights Watch*, July 18.

“There’s a history of thinking of rare books and manuscripts as delicate, living things that need to be protected. We know how to protect rare books and manuscripts, but we don’t have to repel people, including members of the public.”

**MICHAEL WITMORE**, director of Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., in “The World’s Largest Shakespeare Collection Finally Has the Home It Deserves,” *The Washington Post*, June 21.

# 2024 LIBRARY DESIGN SHOWCASE

BY Phil Morehart

Welcome to the 2024 Library Design Showcase, *American Libraries'* annual celebration of new and renovated libraries throughout North America. Like the profession itself, library facilities are in a constant state of rebirth and reimagination. Libraries have evolved from places devoted strictly to scholarship and materials collection to true *third spaces*, where diverse communities come together to congregate, learn, and grow while also honoring local history and the environment. This year's showcase selections deserve to be celebrated as prime examples of this progress. **AL**

**PHIL MOREHART** is a communications manager at the American Library Association.

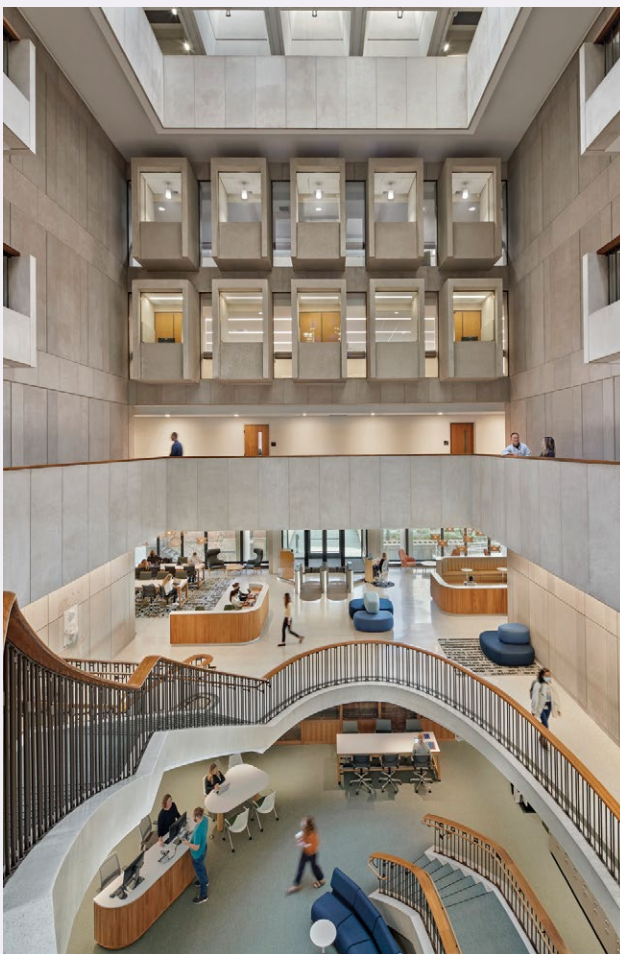




## FROM BRUTAL TO BEAUTIFUL

### ◀ Toronto Public Library, York Woods branch

The York Woods renovation and addition retains the original 1970 brutalist library and connected theater while enhancing them with a new 2,000-square-foot glass entrance pavilion, topped with a timber roof to create a welcoming entryway. The interior retains the original structure but now incorporates exposed concrete beams softened with wood and vibrant acoustic panels. A new two-story transparent atrium and amphitheater staircase opens the space, improves orientation, and creates a safe, accessible environment for users. For local youth, the library also has an updated early literacy center, a teen section with a kitchenette and adaptable furniture, and—in anticipation of plans to establish a music school on the property—a new instrument-lending library. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation and expansion **ARCHITECT:** Diamond Schmitt **SIZE:** 41,000 square feet **COST:** \$11 million Canadian (\$8 million US) **PHOTO:** Lisa Logan Photography



### ◀ Harvard Medical School, The Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine in Boston

This reinvigoration of interiors and services transformed an insular, unwelcoming brutalist limestone building from 1965 into a dynamic learning facility. The final phase of this project was completed in July 2023, with work done in phases starting in 2019 while the library remained open. The first floor now serves as the center of library activity, with collaborative seating areas, a café, a campus store, and a versatile event space. Circulation relocated to the lower level, while quiet study zones were moved to the upper level to enhance focus. The interior design, now configured to optimize access to natural light, introduces curved forms, organic and reflective textures, and biophilic motifs that infuse the library with warmth. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation **ARCHITECT:** Shepley Bulfinch **SIZE:** 42,407 square feet **COST:** \$17 million **PHOTO:** Robert Benson

## RESTORATION RENOVATION

### ◀ Brown County (Wis.) Library, East branch

The East Branch Project was an ingenious renovation project that transformed an old health club—complete with a swimming pool that had to be filled in—into a modern, attractive library. The design included adding a drive-up window, multiple study rooms, a divisible meeting room, a wellness and calming room, seating next to an enclosed fireplace, and the

conversion of an adjacent empty lot into an enclosed garden space. Historic maps and images from the library's archives have been used as murals throughout the building, enhancing its connection to the community. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation **ARCHITECT:** Somerville Architects and Engineers **SIZE:** 16,400 square feet **COST:** \$6.3 million **PHOTO:** Gary Parker Photography

## FUTURISTIC VISIONS

### ► Lexington (Ky.) Public Library, Marksbury Family branch

The new facility addresses critical needs in one of Lexington's most diverse communities by offering spots for gathering and creative expression. Maximizing limited outdoor space, the branch's exterior entryway includes seating designed into the hardscape that extends into the interior, creating a fluid transition between inside and outside. The cornerstone of the facility is its first-floor paseo: a spacious, multifunctional area that encourages meetups and civic activity. Extending off the paseo are meeting spaces and makerspaces. Natural light floods the central atrium, enhancing the vibrant atmosphere. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** EOP Architects/Group 4 Architecture, Research + Planning **SIZE:** 30,000 square feet **COST:** \$17.4 million **PHOTO:** JL Jordan Photography

### ▼ Grimes (Iowa) Public Library

An airy, two-story lobby with open stairs beneath a prairie-inspired sculpture greets visitors as they step inside the new Grimes Public Library. The rest of the first floor includes a children's collection and play area, youth program room, sensory room, coffee bar, community meeting rooms, public art gallery, and staff spaces. A mezzanine for teens overlooks the children's section, providing young patrons with spaces, collections, and technology to call their own. The second floor houses the adult collection, which includes a lounge and homey fireplace. The exterior palette of brick, split-face limestone, black-metal panels, and wooden soffits carry into the interior to add warmth and texture. All textures and joint patterns throughout the building were oriented vertically and at a



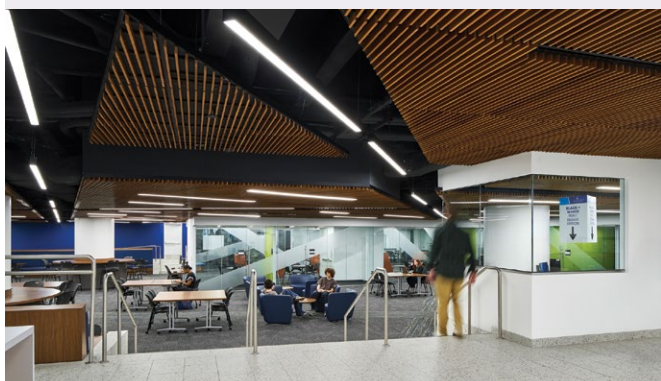
random pattern to emulate books sitting on shelves. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** INVISION **SIZE:** 22,300 square feet **COST:** \$11.8 million **PHOTO:** Cameron Campbell/Integrated Studio



## ADVANCEMENTS IN ACADEMICS

### ▼ Georgia State University, North Library Study Commons in Atlanta

For this innovative renovation and expansion project, Georgia State University converted a parking area beneath one of its main library buildings into a 19,000-square-foot, student-focused Study Commons. The Study Commons, which added more than 200 seats to the library, includes four gender-neutral, single-user restrooms; a wellness room for nursing mothers; group study and meeting rooms of various sizes; a quiet study room; and a student-operated café. Open until 2 a.m. most days of the week, the Study Commons provides an ideal location for late-night learning after the rest of the facility closes. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation and expansion **ARCHITECT:** PRAXIS3 **SIZE:** 19,000 square feet **COST:** \$8.2 million **PHOTO:** McGinn Photography



### ▲ Indiana University Bloomington, Education Library

Serving Indiana University's School of Education, this once-in-a-generation renovation breathed new life into a space that hadn't been updated since it opened over three decades ago. Once, the facility mostly comprised rows of tall bookshelves holding legacy microfiche and print collections, including bound journals and dissertations, that no longer reflect the needs of today's students. The library is now a more open, comfortable setting for them to gather and learn. The transformation introduced WORKshop, a simulated classroom that offers teachers-in-training a more realistic setting in which to practice their skills. It also added dozens of new study spaces, including several private rooms and a book discussion area with a long U-shaped sofa that encourages collaboration. Future educators can also take advantage of expanded access to the library's children's literature collections, including a Social Justice Book Gallery. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation **ARCHITECT:** Fanning Howey **SIZE:** 19,000 square feet **COST:** \$2.1 million **PHOTO:** Natalie Norton

## RED-HOT KIDS ZONE

### ► Calgary (Alberta) Public Library, Fish Creek branch

As part of an extensive building-wide renovation, this branch revamped its second-floor children's area with the addition of Engine 23, a donated, decommissioned fire engine. Previously installed in the former Central Library, the 20-ton engine moved to storage when that building closed in 2018. Now at Fish Creek, it's the cornerstone of an immersive playing and learning experience for children and families, providing a hands-on approach to literacy skill-building and safety education. Young patrons can get behind the wheel, fiddle with switches and levers, dress up in fire gear, play with an interactive map, and enjoy storytimes with local firefighters. An accessible cab gives children and parents who can't access the



fire engine a way to engage in the experience. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation **ARCHITECT:** BRZ Partnership Architecture Inc., Carswell Consulting Engineers, and F&D Scene Changes **SIZE:** 50,231 square feet **COST:** \$4 million Canadian (\$2.9 million US) **PHOTO:** Calgary Public Library



## CREATING SPACE FOR EVERYONE

### ▲ Meridian (Idaho) Library District, Orchard Park branch

Using community input and data gathered from focus groups, MSR Design created a library focused on removing barriers to access and expanding all-inclusive services and programs, especially for neurodivergent patrons. The Orchard Park branch's layout goes beyond merely providing a dedicated sensory space. Rather, it creates a holistic experience that's

mindful of sound, durability, lighting, and an extension of tactile surfaces, especially in the children's sections. While there, young patrons can play with touch-sensitive light panels, run their hands through illuminated strands of light, and build their own play area using large blocks, tubes, and other shapes. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECTS:** MSR Design (interior)/CSHQA Inc. (exterior) **SIZE:** 16,218 square feet **COST:** \$3.8 million **PHOTO:** Farm Kid Studios



## AT ONE WITH NATURE

### ◀ Oregon (Wis.) Public Library

In order to expand, the library of this quaint, southern Wisconsin village moved out of downtown and now sits adjacent to the Keller Alpine Meadows and Lerner Conservation parks. The design embraces these natural surroundings, with windows on every floor that provide sweeping views of the parks and flood the library with light, creating a peaceful, bright ambience. Indoor and outdoor learning spaces support the community and integrate the facility into the landscape. A path between the library and conservation park connects to a walking and bike trail and serves as a StoryWalk featuring picture books. Native plants, grasses, and trees are part of prairie restoration plans for the site. Additionally, the library is equipped with solar panels, efficient windows and lighting, water-conserving plumbing fixtures, and a geothermal system. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction **ARCHITECT:** OPN Architects **SIZE:** 31,257 square feet **COST:** \$12.4 million **PHOTO:** Alex Michl/OPN Architects



## FORM AND FUNCTION BEHIND THE SCENES

### ▼ Multnomah County (Ore.) Library Operations Center in Portland

The new Operations Center is the beating heart of Multnomah County Library. It's where new books and collections come into the system and hold items are sorted and transferred. There's space for 500,000 library materials and more than 60,000 linear feet of specialized outreach materials, with which the system supports patrons in new immigrant communities, schools, retirement communities, shelters, and other settings. It also uses automated materials handling technology that gets library items to patrons efficiently while making library staffers available for public-facing customer service. The renovated former Safeway building also has more than 600 photovoltaic roof panels and is designed to achieve net-zero energy use. Most of the building is not open to the public, except for Rose City Reads, a storefront operated by the Friends of Multnomah County Library that sells weeded library books, donated books, and other merchandise. **PROJECT TYPE:** New construction/renovation **ARCHITECT:** Hennebery Eddy Architects **SIZE:** 73,000 square feet **COST:** \$56.6 million **PHOTO:** Bob Kerns Photography



## HISTORIC FACELIFT

### ▲ Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, Connecticut

Built in 1893, Hotchkiss Library was a gift to the town of Sharon by educator, philanthropist, and heiress Maria Bissell Hotchkiss in memory of her late husband; it lies within the Sharon Historical District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The library's restoration and expansion honor its rich history while bringing it into the 21st century with updated spaces, technology, accessibility, and energy efficiency. The architects chose complementary materials and forms—such as the masonry arch over the new entrance, the new roof pitch, and the fascia and soffit—to echo the existing architecture. Custom wall sconces were installed around the mezzanine to replicate fixtures that appear in an antique photograph of the library. Great care was taken to not over-restore; to create a lived-in patina, the woodwork was cleaned and oiled but not stripped and refinished. **PROJECT TYPE:** Renovation and expansion **ARCHITECT:** QA+M Architecture **SIZE:** 6,600 square feet **COST:** \$2.8 million **PHOTO:** Jake Snyder, Red Skies Photography



# 2024 ALA/IIDA LIBRARY INTERIOR DESIGN AWARDS

The American Library Association (ALA) and the International Interior Design Association are pleased to present the winners of the 2024 Library Interior Design Awards. Submissions, open to any library worldwide, are judged by industry professionals based on aesthetics, design, creativity, and function. Of the selected projects, one is named Best of Competition. The winners were recognized in June at ALA's Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Diego. [AL](#)





## ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

*More than 30,000 square feet*

### ▲ Main Library at Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico City

**DESIGN FIRM:** The Beck Group

**PHOTO:** Mauricio Milenko Rodriguez Panić

### ◀ D. B. Weldon Library at Western University in London, Ontario

**DESIGN FIRM:** Perkins&Will

**PHOTO:** Scott Norsworthy

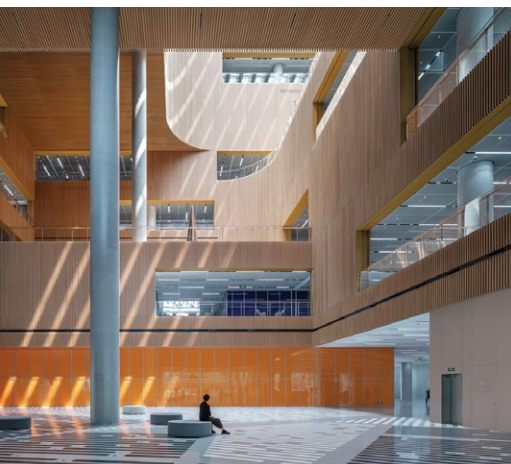
*30,000 square feet and under*

### ▶ North Study Commons at Georgia State University in Atlanta

**DESIGN FIRM:** PRAXIS3

**PHOTO:** McGinn Photography





## PUBLIC LIBRARIES

*More than 30,000 square feet*

### ▲ Missoula (Mont.) Public Library, Main Library

**DESIGN FIRM:** MSR Design

**PHOTO:** Lara Swimmer

*30,000 square feet and under*

### ▲ Indianapolis Public Library, West Perry branch

**DESIGN FIRM:** HBM Architecture

**PHOTO:** Megan Ratts Photography

### ◀ Shanghai Library East in China

**DESIGN FIRM:** Schmidt Hammer

Lassen Architects

**PHOTO:** RAWVISION Studio

### ▼ Contra Costa County (Calif.) Library, Pleasant Hill branch

**DESIGN FIRM:** Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

**PHOTO:** Matthew Millman Photography





**BEST IN  
COMPETITION**

## OUTSTANDING HISTORIC RENOVATION PROJECT

### ▲ The Commons at Helm Library, Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green

**DESIGN FIRM:** Gensler, Lockett & Farley

**PHOTO:** McGinn Photography

## SINGLE SPACE

### ► Reading Room in Robarts Common at University of Toronto Libraries in Ontario

**DESIGN FIRM:** Superkül

**PHOTO:** doublespace photography

## ON THE BOARDS

### Mesa (Ariz.) Public Library, Gateway branch

**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION:** March 2025

**DESIGN FIRM:** Richard | Kennedy Architects,  
White Baux Studio

### Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library, Marion–Franklin branch

**ANTICIPATED COMPLETION:** August 2025

**DESIGN FIRM:** EVOKE Studio, Schooley Caldwell



# Censorship throughout the Centuries

## A timeline of US book bans and the fight for intellectual freedom

by Cara S. Bertram

**T**he year 2023 was another record-breaker for book bans. The American Library Association’s (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) documented 1,247 attempts to censor library books and other materials—most of which were works by or about people of color, members of the LGBTQ community, or both. Since these attempts often target multiple items, OIF recorded 4,240 unique titles at risk, a 65% increase from the previous year.

OIF, which began collecting data about censorship attempts in US libraries in 1990—and started observing Banned Books Week in 1982—was formed in 1967 to provide tangible support to library workers as they sought to uphold the intellectual freedom tenets of the Library

Bill of Rights and ALA’s Freedom to Read Statement.

As high-profile battles with lawmakers and courts over allegedly obscene materials took over the first half of the decade, OIF arose at a turning point for the profession as well as the country at large. President

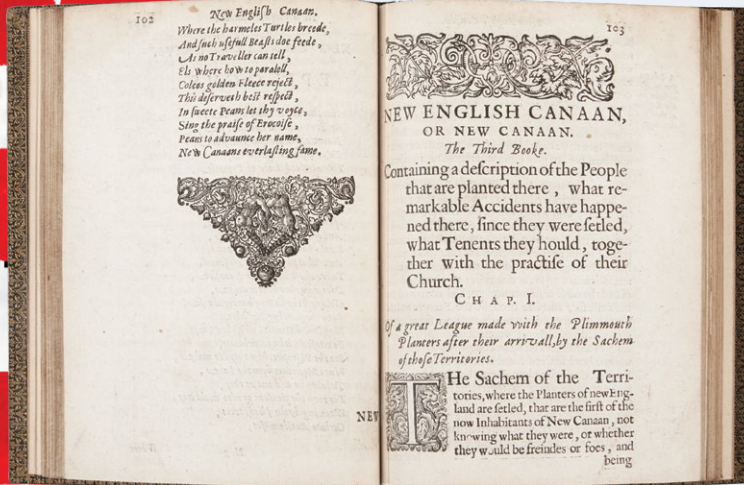
Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration brought support for the civil rights movement, the War on Poverty, and funding for libraries and higher education, representing a society-wide “change in moral standards” that spread to publishing, writes Louise S. Robbins in *Censorship and the American Library: The American Library Association’s Response to Threats to Intellectual Freedom, 1939–1969* (Greenwood Press, 1996).

Robbins writes of the turbulent events of this period:

“These were but some of the tremors in the earthquake of the 1960s. By 1967, the escalating war in Vietnam was devouring funding for domestic priorities and bringing a more urgent and strident tone to antiwar protests. McCarthy-era elders, reared on a fear of communism, ran the

Illustration: 92ashrafsoomro/Adobe Stock (background)

## 1600s



**1637** Thomas Morton, an Anglican lawyer and early colonist, published the *New English Canaan*, the first book banned in what is now the US. Morton's work mostly described the Massachusetts area, its resources, and the Native Americans who lived there. He also wrote critically about Puritans, their government, and their treatment of Native Americans. The Puritan government, which did not take kindly to the criticism, outlawed the book in its New England colonies.

## 1700s



**1740** The colony of South Carolina passed the first antiliteracy law, which prohibited teaching enslaved people to write or using them as scribes. The punishment was a £100 fine for each offense. Other states introduced similar laws, with punishments such as fines, imprisonment, and flogging. These laws were designed to hobble access to information, limit the circulation of anti-slavery materials, and silence the voices of enslaved people and abolitionists.

**1775** To avoid prosecution, American printer Isaiah Thomas smuggled his printing press out of Boston to Worcester, Massachusetts. Thomas—publisher of *The Massachusetts Spy*, a political newspaper critical of British rule—absconded just days before the Battle of Concord, and the property he left behind in Boston was ransacked and destroyed by the British in his absence.



insidious terrors of the early Cold War. The much-heralded 'generation gap' spelled trouble for librarians.... As 'an institution of education for democratic living,' the library had to find ways to carry out its chosen social role in a new and different and, very tumultuous, world."

But even then, threats to intellectual freedom were far from new. Attempts to limit access to literature in the US are as old as our nation itself.

*American Libraries* travels through time to outline our country's history of censorship—and the library workers, authors, and advocates who have defended the right to read. **AL**

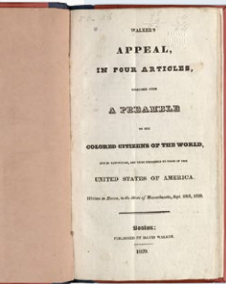
**CARA S. BERTRAM** is archives program officer at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she oversees the ALA Archives.

## 1800s

**1829** While living in Boston, abolitionist and freeman David Walker published *Walker's Appeal*, a pamphlet that openly encouraged enslaved people to rebel against their oppressors. Frightened Southern states moved to repress the pamphlet, even as smuggled copies reached the region. In 1830, Virginia

Gov. William Giles wrote to Boston Mayor Harrison Gray Otis, saying that Walker should be punished. Otis spoke against Walker's writings but declined to take action, admitting that he had done nothing illegal in Massachusetts.

**1873** Congress passed the Comstock laws, which prohibited using the US Post Office to send "obscene, lewd, or lascivious, and filthy book[s] ... or other mail matter containing any filthy, vile, or indecent thing." Under the laws, women's rights activist Mary Ware Dennett was charged for distributing a sex education booklet, while birth control advocate Margaret Sanger left the country to avoid charges related to writing and disseminating *The Woman Rebel*, a newsletter that focused on contraception. While portions of the Comstock laws were gutted through legal challenges, they remain on the books—with present-day consequences because of their potential ability to criminalize abortion providers' supply chains.



## 1900s

**1918** During World War I, ALA's Library War Service sent banned-book lists to military camp libraries on behalf of the War Department. The list included books that were considered too pacifist, pro-German, or pro-socialist, such as *England or Germany* by Frank Harris, *The Bolsheviki and World Peace* by Leon Trotsky, and *The Last Weapon* by Theodora Wilson Wilson. Camp librarians, many of them ALA volunteers, received orders to remove and destroy such books. One letter from ALA directed librarians to keep vigilant against objectionable materials, including publications from faith groups promoting pacifism and "so-called philanthropic societies." It also warned that such publications might be placed on library shelves without camp librarians' knowledge, making "constant watch necessary."

**1950** In February, two Black women, Mary Ellen Street and Clara Cooke, sat down with a friend—white librarian Ruth Brown of the Bartlesville (Okla.) Public Library (BPL)—at a drugstore counter in the segregated city. The group was refused

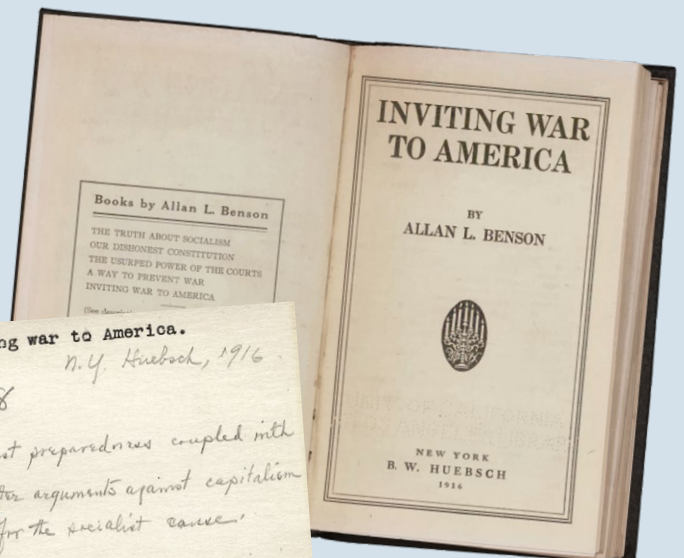


Ruth Brown

service. Later that month, local citizens accused Brown, a longtime proponent of civil rights, of stocking "subversive" magazines such as *The Nation*, *New Republic*, and *Soviet Russia Today* at BPL. Brown's library board stood by her, but city commissioners dismissed and replaced the entire board before firing Brown herself. Regarding her detractors' sudden interest in BPL's offerings, Brown commented, "Everyone knows what they are really fighting."

**1952** Consumer advocacy publication *Consumer Reports* appeared on the US House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee's list of subversive organizations. In response, a patron of the Carnegie Public Library in Bryan, Texas, confronted a librarian after finding *Consumer Reports* on the library's shelves. The patron claimed that the magazine was a communist front and that its subscription revenue was being turned over to the Communist

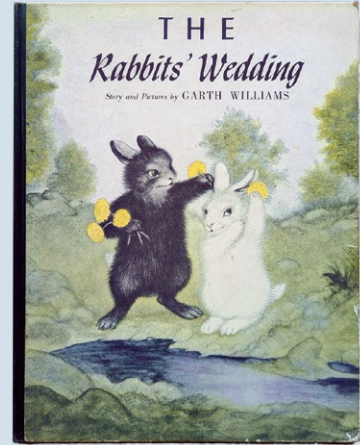
A 1916 note from the Library War Service during World War I states its reasons for removing Allan L. Benson's *Inviting War to America* from camp libraries, accusing it of being "propaganda for the socialist cause."







features the marriage of two bunnies—one white and one black. Emily Wheelock Reed, director of Alabama’s Public Library Service Division, removed the book from general circulation but allowed librarians to access



considered an emblem of reincarnation. Despite arguing for the books’ removal, one parent said, “We’re not rabble-rousers or censors.”

Party. The librarian wrote to ALA, “Nothing could have astonished me more.... In fact, I felt that [the magazine] was doing a great service to the American public.”

**1953** Disturbed by a “trend toward the restriction of the free trade in ideas,” ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee and the American Book Publishers Council held a conference in Westchester, New York. The conference produced the landmark Freedom to Read Statement. Separately, before the statement was finalized and published, President Dwight D. Eisenhower said in a commencement speech, “Don’t join the book burners.... Don’t be afraid to go in your library and read every book.”



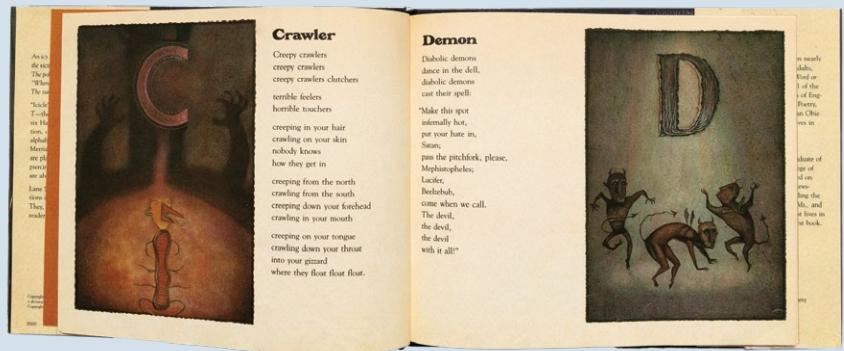
for their institutions by request. In 2015, playwright Kenneth Jones published *Alabama Story*, a stage drama based on the controversy.

**1986** Citing concerns about satanism and witchcraft, a few students and their parents challenged two dozen books at the El Camino (Calif.) High School library. Among the targeted titles: Roald Dahl’s 1983 children’s book *The Witches*.

Complainants stated that the book contained information that “can be easily used to form a coven.” Another complaint took aim at the book *The Game of Wizards* (1975), which contained a yin-yang symbol that protesters

**1988–1989** Progressive advocacy group People for the American Way reported that during this period, nearly half of 172 challenges to ban or restrict educational materials succeeded. One of the most frequent objections was to content thought to be related to satanism, witchcraft, and the occult. One example: the 1987 picture book *Halloween ABC* by Eve Merriam and Lane Smith. It was removed from the young children’s section of a school library in Lawrence, Kansas, in response to parent objections.

**1959** Alabama Sen. Edward Oswald Eddins (D-Demopolis) attacked children’s book *The Rabbits’ Wedding* as “integration propaganda.” Written and illustrated by Garth Williams, who would go on to illustrate classics such as *Charlotte’s Web* and *Stuart Little*, the book



*Halloween ABC*

Illustration: Alex/Adobe Stock (yin-yang)

# 2000s

**2001** The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)—which requires schools to install internet-filtering technology on their computers as a condition of receiving certain funding and discounts—took effect. This law applies to computers used by adult patrons and library staff. ALA challenged the law, arguing that it violated the First Amendment rights of library patrons. The case went to the US Supreme Court, which upheld CIPA.



**2006** The children's book *And Tango Makes Three*, which features two male penguins who form a family, earned the title of ALA's most banned book of the year. Based on a true story from New York's Central Park Zoo and written by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell, the book was moved from the fiction to the nonfiction children's section at both branches of the Rolling Hills Consolidated Library in St. Joseph, Missouri, following complaints from parents.

**AUTHOR VISIT WITH JERRY CRAFT**

Award winning author Jerry Craft is joining us on Zoom on October 4, 2021. He will discuss his journey from a reluctant reader to published author and illustrator. Jerry Craft is the author of the 2021 Texas Bluebonnet Award nominee "New Kid" and the sequel "Class Act". "New Kid" is the first graphic novel to win the Newbery Award. A graphic novel tells a complete story through illustrations.

Students will be able to submit questions prior to the visit for Mr. Craft to answer.

Parents in Katy ISD may elect to opt out their child(ren) from a guest speaker by completing this form <https://forms.office.com/r/Tgq0M1houq>

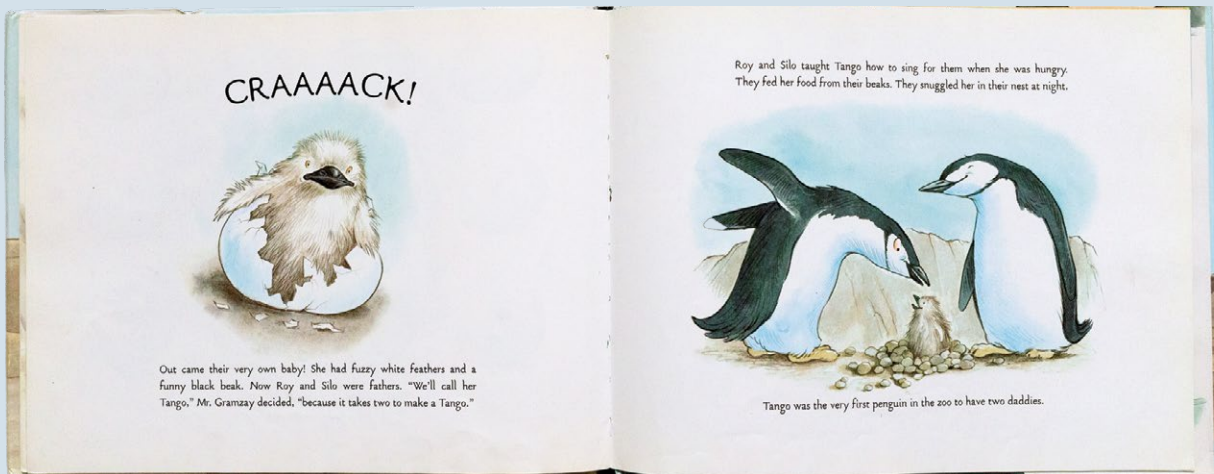
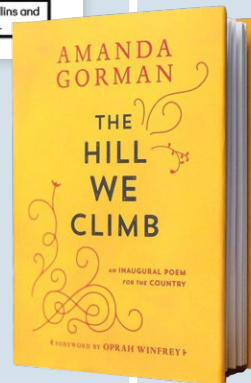
Jerry Craft's books are published by HarperCollins and are available at your favorite bookstore.

The book went on to appear on ALA's list of Top 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books for 2000–2009 and 2010–2019.

**2021** An event with award-winning author Jerry Craft at Roosevelt Alexander Elementary School in Katy, Texas, was canceled because of parent objections to his Newbery Medal-winning graphic novel, *New Kid*. Critics claimed the book taught critical race theory.

One white parent claimed that Craft's book, which tells the story of a Black 7th-grader attending a predominantly white private school, was inappropriate for instruction and that white children who read it would end up feeling like "oppressors."

**2023** At Bob Graham Education Center, a K–8 school in Miami Lakes, Florida, a single parental complaint resulted in the restriction of *The Hill We Climb*, a book by National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman. The book comprised the eponymous poem read by Gorman at President Joe Biden's inauguration; the complaint argued that it is "not educational," contains "hate messages," and seeks to "cause confusion and indoctrinate students." The school retained the book but moved it from shelves for younger readers to those for middle school students. ●



*And Tango Makes Three*



from **Collection Development**  
to **Readers' Advisory**

**Booklist + Booklist Reader**  
help you **match patrons**  
to their **next favorite book**



- Print issues of *Booklist Reader* are available in bulk quantities of 25, 50, 100, or more per month
- Add *Booklist* and save \$100+ (if you're not already a current subscriber)
- Share digital issues of *Booklist Reader* with patrons and utilize Booklist Online, which includes 30+ years' worth of *Booklist* archives
- Subscribing to *Booklist* supports ALA's mission and library workers

# 2024 ALA Award Winners

Honoring excellence  
and leadership in  
the profession

Every year, the American Library Association (ALA) recognizes the achievements of more than 200 individuals and institutions with an array of awards honoring their service to librarians and librarianship. Winners are chosen by juries of their colleagues and peers and embody the best of the profession's leadership, vision, and service as well as a continued commitment to outreach and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Award recipients were honored at a June 30 ceremony and reception during ALA's 2024 Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Diego.

This selection represents only some of those recognized in 2024. For a complete list of winners, visit [ala.org/awards](https://ala.org/awards). **AL**

## Ernest A. DiMattia Award for Innovation and Service to Community and Profession

### Jennie Pu

**P**u, director of Hoboken (N.J.) Public Library (HPL), has transformed the library into a community hub with robust programming, pop-up libraries in schools, and partnerships with more than 50 local organizations. As part of a multimillion-dollar historic restoration of the main library, she built the first makerspace in Hoboken. She also led a successful citywide readathon of banned books. Through her efforts, HPL and the City of Hoboken were declared the first book sanctuaries in New Jersey. More than 20 other libraries in the state have followed suit.

"Libraries embody democracy," says Pu. "Few of us imagined we would be front and center in the fight to protect intellectual freedom, but we are taking it on, and we have the American public on our side." Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-DiMattia24](https://bit.ly/ALA-DiMattia24).

This \$5,000 award recognizes a public librarian or librarians who demonstrate leadership in anticipating emerging trends in services, products, and technologies that will enhance the library's position in its community.

**DONOR:** The DiMattia Family





## Danielle Maurici-Pollock

**M**aurici-Pollock, assistant professor and research data specialist at University of New Mexico Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center in Albuquerque, has made exemplary efforts to promote sustainable practices and raise awareness around inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility. She has served as a faculty advisor for Spectra, the LGBTQIA+ student group at Simmons School of Library and Information Science in Boston, and worked directly with first-generation students.

Through her leadership and innovative initiatives, Maurici-Pollock has inspired the next generation of librarians to consider the needs of research, the bias of data, and the possibilities of ethical information use. Students praise her use of virtual learning environments, view her classroom environment as a safe space for engagement, and see her as a mentor, advocate, and resource for navigating a new career. Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-Beta24](https://bit.ly/ALA-Beta24).

This award of \$1,000 recognizes the achievement of a library school faculty member or another individual for distinguished service to education in librarianship.

**DONOR:** Beta Phi Mu International Library Science Honor Society

## Felton Thomas Jr.

**T**hroughout his 40-year library career, Cleveland Public Library Executive Director and CEO Felton Thomas Jr. has demonstrated commitment to community needs. As president of the Public Library Association (PLA), he created the Task Force on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, which focused on dismantling structural racism in libraries and librarianship and ensuring pathways for advancement among library workers of color. That task force transitioned to a permanent, standing committee of PLA in 2020. Thomas also championed the Inclusive Internship Initiative ([bit.ly/AL-Inclusive](https://bit.ly/AL-Inclusive)), designed to provide high school students from diverse backgrounds with paid, mentored internships in local public libraries. Between 2017 and 2021, 198 students from 119 libraries in 44 states participated.

Thomas is also chair of the board of directors for the Digital Public Library of America, where he has overseen the implementation of a program that connects the nation's cultural heritage to Wikimedia Commons and Wikipedia. He has given dozens of presentations and interviews on the importance of EDI and social justice in libraries, including an interview for the documentary film *Are You a Librarian?: The Untold Story of Black Librarians*, scheduled for release in 2025. Read more at [bit.ly/AL-Equality24](https://bit.ly/AL-Equality24).

This \$1,000 award recognizes an outstanding contribution toward promoting equality in the library profession. The award may be given for an activist or scholarly contribution in such areas as pay equity, affirmative action, legislative work, and nonsexist education.

**SPONSOR:**  
Rowman & Littlefield



## Joseph W. Lippincott Award

### Nicole A. Cooke

Cooke has enhanced and improved diversity in the field of library and information science, particularly among individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Chair and professor at University of South Carolina's School of Information Science in Columbia, she is the editor or author of several books, including *Foundations of Social Justice* (ALA Neal-Schuman, November) and *Information Services to Diverse Populations, 2nd edition* (ALA Neal-Schuman, 2025). Her research and teaching interests include human information behavior, fake news consumption and resistance, critical cultural information studies, and diversity and social justice in librarianship. Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-Lippincott24](https://bit.ly/ALA-Lippincott24).

This \$1,500 award recognizes distinguished service in the profession of librarianship.

**DONOR:** Joseph W. Lippincott III



## ALA Medal of Excellence

### Loida Garcia-Febo



Garcia-Febo, international library consultant, has made many contributions to global and US librarianship. She has held elected positions in ALA, Reforma, and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions; advocated for diversity, equity, and inclusion; sat on the board of the Freedom to Read Foundation; developed and delivered professional development programs for library workers all over the world; advocated for health and wellness; worked on programs for new library professionals; and taken actions to support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Each of these areas of professional leadership includes a strong record of publications, conference and web presentations, and service on numerous library boards, task forces, and committees. Read more at [bit.ly/AL-Medal24](https://bit.ly/AL-Medal24).

This \$2,000 award annually recognizes creative leadership, particularly in the fields of library management, library training, cataloging and classification, and the tools and techniques of librarianship.

**SPONSOR:** OCLC

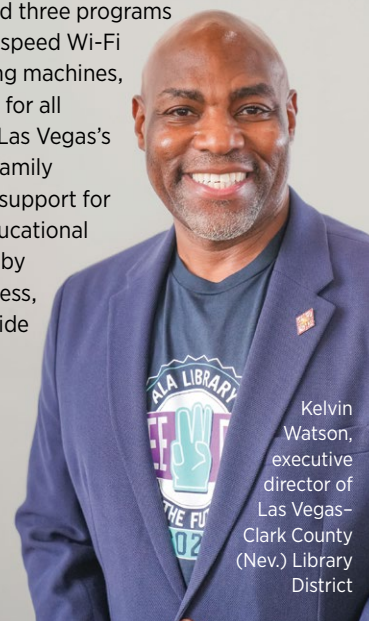
## ALA/Information Today Library of the Future Award

### Las Vegas–Clark County (Nev.) Library District

Free to Be Connected, an initiative of the Las Vegas–Clark County (Nev.) Library District (LVCCLD), incorporated three programs to support underserved communities: free high-speed Wi-Fi for households in southern Nevada; book vending machines, which provide 235 books in English and Spanish for all ages and reading levels to bilingual speakers of Las Vegas's Hispanic communities; and Hope for Prisoners Family Libraries, a program that facilitates educational support for the formerly incarcerated reentering society. Educational resources for the latter include laptops donated by LVCCLD, books donated by the Library of Congress, and a wall-sized vinyl wrap with QR codes to guide participants toward free library resources, social services, and personalized opportunities.

This \$1,500 award annually recognizes a library, library consortium, group of librarians, or support organization for innovative planning, application, or development of patron-focused support relating to information technology in libraries.

**DONOR:** Information Today



Kelvin Watson, executive director of Las Vegas–Clark County (Nev.) Library District



## Rose Brock

**B**rock served as a public school librarian for 20 years before becoming associate professor in the Department of Library Science and Technology at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. She has used her research and expertise to publish a textbook, *Young Adult Literature in Action: A Librarian's Guide* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019). Brock is also the editor of two short-story anthologies from Philomel Books, *Hope Nation* (2018) and *Hope Wins* (2022), both of which provide inspirational stories for young people.

Brock is cofounder of the North Texas Teen Book Festival. The free annual festival, which promotes reading and literacy, has provided the opportunity for more than 50,000 young people to attend since it began in 2015. Brock's advocacy for audiobooks as a tool for literacy led her to partner with author Jon Scieszka to establish the national literacy initiative Guys Listen.

Brock has continually provided notable contributions to the library profession through her numerous publications and presentations, gaining recognition with awards such as the Siddie Joe Johnson Award for Outstanding Service to Youth from the Texas Library Association (TLA) in 2014. In addition to her many years of active service to TLA, she has sat on a number of national committees and award juries that serve young readers. Read more at [bit.ly/AL-Scholastic24](http://bit.ly/AL-Scholastic24).

This \$1,000 award honors a librarian whose unusual contribution to promoting access to books and encouraging a love of reading for lifelong learning exemplifies outstanding achievement in the profession.

**DONOR:** Scholastic Library Publishing

## Sullivan Award for Public Library Administrators Supporting Services to Children

## Susan Spicer

**S**picer, early learning program manager for Salt Lake County (Utah) Library, was selected for her success in building popular and engaging evidence-based programming models and education experiences for young patrons. Among her initiatives are programs for new parents to ensure their infant has a book before leaving the hospital or birth center; in-person and take-home experiences that teach reading and math concepts for toddlers; and storytime-to-go backpacks in English and Spanish to support at-home learning.

Spicer is also the creator of an annual daylong retreat called the Storytime Summit, at which youth librarians spend time connecting, sharing programming ideas, and participating in presentations from community partners. She also mentors and supports library staff throughout Utah and across the country. Read more at [bit.ly/AL-Sullivan24](http://bit.ly/AL-Sullivan24).

This award includes a commemorative gift and recognizes an individual who has shown exceptional understanding and support of public library service to children while maintaining administrative responsibilities.

**DONOR:** Peggy Sullivan





Maureen Hall Squier, director of School Library System, Arts in Education, and Odyssey of the Mind

## School Library Systems Association of New York State

The School Library Systems Association of New York State is a professional organization comprising the directors of the state's school library systems and boards of cooperative educational services. The systems serve public and nonpublic school librarians and teachers with a union catalog, professional learning, grants, shared resources, mentoring, and school-based support with curriculum and instruction, collection development, and programming. Their award-winning project is to host a virtual statewide professional workshop to empower school librarians to join the School Library Certification Program. The certification process encourages reflective practice, leadership development, peer mentoring, networking, community building, and, most importantly, sustainable school library programs across the state.

Their proposal addresses two needs: increasing the impact of school librarians on student achievement by increasing the number of sustainable school library programs. Helping school library programs become sustainable will strengthen community support for libraries despite retirements or staff changes. Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-EBSCO24](http://bit.ly/ALA-EBSCO24).

This \$3,500 award goes to a library organization that demonstrates merit in a staff development program that furthers the goals and objectives of the organization.

**DONOR:** EBSCO Information Services

## Lemony Snicket Prize for Noble Librarians Faced with Adversity

### Patty Hector

Despite pressure and harassment from local politically conservative groups, including a billboard campaign and social media attacks, Patty Hector, former director of Saline County (Ark.) Library, has stood firm in her belief that libraries should be places where individuals have access to a wide range of perspectives and ideas.

The controversy surrounding Hector arose when she refused to comply with a resolution demanding the removal or relocation of certain books containing content about racism, LGBTQIA+ subjects, and sexual activity. She faced personal attacks—including being labeled a pedophile—yet remained steadfast in her commitment to providing a library environment that serves all members of the community.

When the library board refused to terminate her, a quorum court amended the ordinance establishing the library, replacing the library board's exclusive right of "full and complete authority" to "subject to oversight by the Saline County Judge." Hector made the ultimate professional sacrifice for her beliefs, standing firm throughout the process that resulted in her termination as library director. Read more at [bit.ly/AL-Snicket24](http://bit.ly/AL-Snicket24).

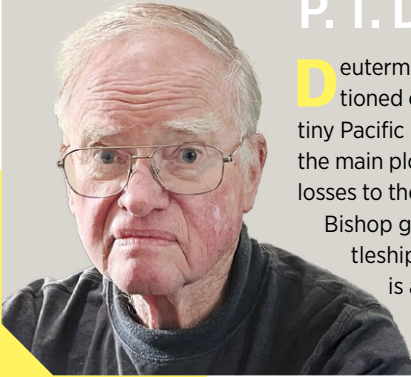
This award annually recognizes a librarian who has faced adversity with integrity and dignity intact. The honoree receives \$10,000 and an object from author Daniel Handler's private collection.

**DONOR:** Daniel Handler (Lemony Snicket)





## P. T. Deutermann



**D**eutermann's novel *Iwo, 26 Charlie* follows a young Navy gunnery officer stationed on the battleship *USS Nevada* from the beginning of the battle for the tiny Pacific Island of Iwo Jima to its decisive end. Lieutenant Lee Bishop serves in the main plotting room aboard the *Nevada*. After the Marines suffer devastating losses to the Japanese, Bishop volunteers to serve onshore as a replacement.

Bishop goes from the safe, air-conditioned gunnery control spaces of a battleship to the mud, blood, and sheer terror of night fighting. *Iwo, 26 Charlie* is a frighteningly dramatic, utterly authentic novel by an award-winning writer and Navy veteran. Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-Boyd24](https://bit.ly/ALA-Boyd24).

This \$5,000 award honors the best fiction set in a period when the United States was at war.

**DONOR:** William Young Boyd II

## Schneider Family Book Awards

### YOUNG READERS

## Jenn Bailey and Mika Song

**H**enry, *Like Always* was written by Jenn Bailey and illustrated by Mika Song. Henry, who is autistic, starts to unravel when Share Time, which usually takes place on Fridays, changes to make way for a special parade. With the gentle and understanding support of his teachers and classmates, Henry works with the change to find his own way.

The committee selected two young children's honor books: *Dancing Hands: A Story of Friendship in Filipino Sign Language*, written by Joanna Que and Charina Marquez, illustrated by Fran Alvarez, and translated by Karen Llagas; and *What Happened to You?*, written by James Catchpole and illustrated by Karen George.

### MIDDLE READERS

## Sally J. Pla

**T**he *Fire, the Water, and Maudie McGinn*, written by Sally J. Pla, tells the story of Maudie, who is autistic. Maudie loves spending summers with her dad in California. When a wildfire forces an evacuation, they move to a trailer on the beach. Burdened by secrets and her mother's expectations, Maudie seeks affirmation by learning to surf. Her bravery broadens and transforms her sense of self-worth.

The committee selected two middle grades honor books: *Good Different* by Meg Eden Kuyatt and *Simon Sort of Says* by Erin Bow.

From left: Sally J. Pla, Mariama J. Lockington, Jenn Bailey, and Mika Song

### TEEN READERS

## Mariama J. Lockington

**F**orever *Is Now*, by Mariama J. Lockington, tells the story of Sadie, an activist from Oakland, California, who shares her passion for social justice online. After witnessing a violent incident of police brutality, her chronic anxiety deepens into agoraphobia. Distinctive poetry and lyrical narrative convey Sadie's emotional journey of self-advocacy that inspires the change she imagines for her world.

The committee selected two teen honor books: *Where You See Yourself* by Claire Forrest and *Tilly in Technicolor* by Mazey Eddings. Read more at [bit.ly/ALA-Schneider24](https://bit.ly/ALA-Schneider24).

This award of \$5,000 is given to authors or illustrators for a book that embodies an artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences. Honor titles receive a plaque. Recipients are selected in three categories: young readers (birth to age 8), middle readers (ages 9-13), and teen readers (ages 14-18).

**DONOR:** Katherine Schneider



# Busy Intersections

Mentorship can—and should—  
be more than a two-way street

BY Jasmine Shumaker  
and Joe Lee



**JASMINE SHUMAKER** is reference and instruction librarian at University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



**JOE LEE** is pursuing her MLIS at University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where she hopes to specialize in legal research.

Imagine this: You're a staffer at a bustling public library that provides critical services for its patrons. Or you're a library associate learning how an academic library functions within a university. Whether you are just starting out in the profession or are a mid-careerist with years of experience under your belt, mentorship is a vital component of librarianship, just as it is in other fields.

For library workers who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color, creating successful mentorship relationships is more than a boon: It's a necessity. This is especially true in a career where it's difficult for women of color to see themselves among peers or draw inspiration and encouragement from leaders who share their identity, culture, and lived experiences. Creating a safe space where we can be vulnerable, support one another, celebrate our achievements, and simply be ourselves is critical to succeeding in our library, department, or work environment.

Though we, the authors, are engaged in the traditional one-on-one model, other library workers have found success in group mentoring, peer mentorship, and online mentorship through regional organizations and interest groups. We drew much of our inspiration from Jasmine's relationship with her mentor, who is also a faculty librarian, and from Emily Joan Sartorius and Julia Maxwell's "Mentee 501: How Mentorship Fits into the LIS Graduate Student Experience," published as a chapter in *Academic Library Mentoring: Fostering Growth and Renewal* (ACRL, 2022).

The thought of implementing cross-status, cross-departmental mentorships may seem daunting, especially if they have never been tried at your institution before, but it doesn't have to be complicated. First and foremost, identify like-minded individuals with common interests and similar aspirations for the profession's future. This will allow an easier exchange of questions and ideas. Then cultivate safe spaces for mentees to be open with mentors. This includes creating options to meet virtually or in-person, perhaps even outside the library.

It can be challenging to contend with student-staff member workloads when introducing them to opportunities such as writing articles and columns (like this one!), poster presentations, and committee work. Regular check-ins with a mentee's supervisor can help with transparency and allow the supervisor to give feedback and express concerns. The right strategies and support make this type of mentorship feasible and can lead to rewarding outcomes.

Although a one-on-one model has worked best for us, people should find a mentoring style that best suits their needs and career goals.

A great example is the mentorship program that University of Michigan librarians initiated in 2017. In their chapter of *Academic Library Mentoring*, librarians Sheila García Mazari, Naomi Binnie, Jesus Espinoza, Denise Leyton, and Rachel Woodbrook were part of an omnidirectional mentoring initiative that focused on building a network of mentors and mentees not just among librarians but also among library staff and MLIS students. Their program connected library professionals in various sectors with others who provided valuable insights from their own experiences.

Over the past year and a half of our mentorship, we have recognized the importance of cross-status, cross-departmental mentorship opportunities for

MLIS students. We hope to hear about more mentorships among librarians and staff, but we would also like to see MLIS students initiate them. Students may feel intimidated by the idea of contacting faculty with their research interests or inquiring

about shadowing opportunities. But such mentorships can illuminate new opportunities, including scholarship collaboration, coteaching experience, and committee work.

Ultimately, mentorship can and should be mutually beneficial, keeping mentors up to date on the needs of aspiring librarians and providing mentees adequate guidance and support. **AL**

Implementing  
cross-status,  
cross-departmental  
mentorships  
doesn't have to  
be complicated.

# Gearing Up for a Great Build

How predesign can set libraries up for success

BY Toni Lombardozzi



**TONI LOMBARDOZZI** is project manager at Charleston County (S.C.) Public Library, where she is currently working on a \$108.5 million capital improvements project.

There are a lot of moving parts and milestones to consider before starting a construction project. It may be difficult to determine where to begin. *Predesign* is all the preparation and planning that needs to happen before you even start thinking about design and construction implementation.

A mantra I like to keep in mind: “Prep work creates a solid foundation.” Predesign may be the most difficult stage for staff because the project is still abstract, but the project will progress more smoothly if you can articulate your wants and needs. Predesign is split into four areas: needs assessment, program development, budget development, and project delivery preparation.

If everything was perfect in your existing spaces, you wouldn’t be considering an improvement project. During the needs assessment stage, ask: What is driving the necessity of the changes you want to make? Has there been a significant change in the demographics or population you serve? Perhaps your service area is experiencing a lot of growth, or you have a consistent number of patrons requesting technology that your library doesn’t have space for, or your building is just plain old. Identify a main objective and possibly a few supporting objectives. From there, collect and analyze data to determine the *why* of your project. When you meet with your design team, that data will be their starting point.

How do you identify the project itself and how to structure your space? You can assemble a *program document*—a physical outline of your work that includes all your ideas, plans, and details—to guide you. These documents come in different lengths and formats, and there is no specific template to follow. Depending on the project size, your program document could be one page or more than 100. Most importantly, the document should be organized and present information in a clear, easy-to-follow format. Some examples of elements you may want to include are designated staff spaces, size requirements, and furniture and fixtures.

The budget development stage is straightforward: How much money do you have, and where will it come from? If you’re unsure where to start, look at other library projects in similar areas or visit architecture websites to get rough cost estimates. Do you have a designated capital improvements fund? Are you part of a larger organization that could help with funding? How long might it take for you to receive funding? Also account for inflation. How early in the planning stages are you? What if you won’t be able to start construction for five years?

Unfortunately, the money you have now may not go as far in the future.

Finally, during construction, your design team will prepare the official documents and set of drawings that will be used for your build. This step includes making final selections for furniture, establishing another round of cost considerations before putting your project out to bid, and starting construction once you have your contractor

on board. Library staff involvement may end at this time, only to pick up again when it’s time to open or reopen. You don’t have as many things like electrical or audiovisual equipment to coordinate,

but you will still need to make selections for colors, finishes, and any custom orders; ensure that vendors are protecting the space while they’re working and following proper procedures; and check the quality of their work at the end of the job.

My best piece of advice is to have fun. These projects are chaos, no matter the scale. They have ups and downs. Just remember to breathe, and most importantly, remember to enjoy it all and keep in mind why you’re doing it. When patrons meet the improvements with wide eyes, you’ll know it was all worth it.

*Adapted from “Build Better: Effective Library Project Management,” Core On-Demand Webinars (Aug. 2023).* AL

The project will progress more smoothly if you can articulate your wants and needs.

# Designing for Equity

Steps for an effective and inclusive codesign process

by Linda W. Braun



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

**M**y previous column, “Committing to Equity” (Jan./Feb., p. 58), discussed how library staffers should approach centering equity authentically when creating programs and services for youth and families. In this column, I’d like to highlight some foundational principles of codesign and how they can make our offerings more accessible to the audiences we wish to reach.

Unlike traditional collaborations, *codesign* involves library staffers, community members, and youth working together as equals to design programs and services that meet the varying needs of young people and their families. It has emerged as a powerful strategy for making public library youth services more equitable. This approach not only fosters innovation but also strengthens community ties and considers a group’s strengths and challenges.

Through years of codesign work and conversations, I’ve identified a few foundational principles for the process that I find especially helpful.

**Trust and relationships are required.** Successful codesign requires openness and communication among all participants. This means creating an environment in which everyone feels welcome to exchange ideas and speak up without fear of judgment. Facilitators should encourage an “oops and ouch” approach, one in which codesigners take it upon themselves to correct issues (“oops, I said something that could be harmful, I apologize”) or point them out (“ouch, that statement is problematic to me, and here’s why”).

**Everyone is an active and equal partner.** In codesign, every voice needs to be valued, whether it’s that of a community partner, a library staffer, or a young person. This principle ensures that diverse perspectives are heard and considered and that the final outcomes reflect the collective wisdom of the entire group.

**Facilitation is fluid.** Codesign is dynamic, and meeting agendas should be seen as plans, not promises. This flexibility is crucial when developing a shared understanding of, and language around, the concept of equity. Meetings will require unexpected discussions. This approach also helps each vested partner learn to be open-minded in decision making.

**Design happens by doing.** Iteration takes center stage in codesign. Sessions should be hands-on and allow participants to brainstorm together. For instance, when designing equitable summer services, library staffers and youth participants might explore challenges and opportunities by building on one another’s ideas for creating culturally responsive programs and services. A staffer might share that they have

limited time to connect with marginalized groups in the community, while a teen codesigner might respond by talking about the existing relationships they have with community members and offering to broker connections.

**Trust the process.** Codesign can be unpredictable and ambiguous, but the process is key to plotting your course. Iterative discussions and activities help participants uncover new and innovative strategies. One time, when codesigning with a group in an urban public library, we asked participants: What is required to center equity in teen services? We did not know what answers we would get. Responses ranged from “power-sharing with teens” to “create a culture of learning.” With an array of answers, we were able to help codesigners take their next steps.

**Embrace the joy.** Beyond its outcomes, codesign brings joy to the process. It celebrates the collective creativity, relationships, and learning that come from working together and lays a foundation for ongoing engagement.

Codesign involves more than just adopting a new set of techniques—it requires a shift in mindset. Library staffers must embrace the uncertainty that codesign conversations foster. By taking the leap, they can transform their offerings in a meaningful way and better serve their communities. **AL**

Codesign celebrates the collective creativity, relationships, and learning that come from working together.

# Picking Up the Pieces

Lessons learned from a natural disaster

BY Dan Groberg



**DAN GROBERG** is executive director of Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier, Vermont.

In July 2023, on my 12th day as executive director of Kellogg-Hubbard Library (KHL) in Montpelier, Vermont, there was a massive flood. I had barely learned where to hang my coat, let alone how to process payroll, before I was dealt an unforeseeable crisis.

In just 48 hours, the Winooski River overflowed its banks and inundated the capital city. The river crested overnight on July 11, at more than three feet above major flood stage, the second highest reading on record. The basement of KHL, in the heart of downtown, filled with seven and a half feet of water.

When we were finally able to reach the building 24 hours later, we discovered overturned oil tanks, book-sale books soaking in contaminated waters, and every system that makes our building function—electrical, phone and internet, heating, the elevator, and others—damaged or destroyed. The estimated total cost to rebuild: \$1.5 million. Our flood insurance policy, generous donors, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency are covering the cost. But beyond the financial strain, staffers at KHL and I still had much to do to pick up the pieces. The past year has taught us how to balance recovering from disaster while remaining a pillar for the community in a time of need.

At first we attempted to secure an alternate facility for the resulting three-month closure, but we decided instead to pivot to curbside pickup—a familiar system from the pandemic—which lasted until we reopened KHL with temporary systems in early October 2023. Armed with headlamps and two working power outlets, we circulated 32,000 items during that time, about two-thirds of our normal volume. We managed to power our outdoor Wi-Fi nodes and set up a computer for patron use on our front steps. We moved all our normal programming to nearby parks and local schools. Throughout this time, we had the heartwarming support of our community. One 8-year-old patron collected donations in lieu of presents for her birthday and wrote to us, “I hope you can reopen soon,” signing the letter “your biggest fan.”

The flood served as a wake-up call. While we had emergency procedures in place, they proved insufficient for the actual situation. We are rewriting them to include specific action steps for different scenarios, including the possibility of the river cresting above certain levels again. We’re also outlining short- and medium-term plans rather than just an immediate response, and we are maintaining a

relationship with a disaster recovery contractor, so we aren’t left scrambling next time.

We’ve witnessed the power of fostering local relationships. A connection at the state helped us clear a regulatory logjam that had prevented us from pumping water out of the basement. Montpelier’s downtown association sent 150 volunteers to clean up. Former US Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), a lifelong library patron, participated in a fundraising video. Our former executive director stepped in to take care of day-to-day finances while I attended to disaster-related issues.

A surprising silver lining is that the flood accelerated the timeline for a planned capital campaign for renovations. If the building has been ripped apart anyway, why not add those new meeting room spaces? But recovery takes time. Nearly a year later, only a fraction of the reconstruction work has been completed. Yet KHL has kept locals

updated through email, social media, frequent press coverage, and a dedicated section on our website.

More than anything, the flood demonstrated the value of the library to the community. Our reopening on October 7, 2023, was glorious, with hundreds coming to celebrate. In the face of adversity, our community rallied, proving that even the greatest challenges can be opportunities for growth, resilience, and unity. **AL**

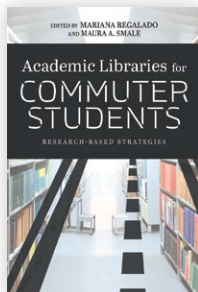
The past year has taught us how to balance recovering from disaster while remaining a pillar for the community.

# Beyond the Bookshelves

Expanding access through outreach services



**ARACELI MÉNDEZ HINTERMEISTER** is knowledge manager at Uplift Education in Dallas.



## Academic Libraries for Commuter Students: Research-Based Strategies

Edited by Mariana Regalado and Maura A. Smale

With commuter students making up most of the country's undergraduate population, academic librarians need creative solutions to meet their diverse needs. This book, produced by a multidisciplinary team from City University of New York, provides examples of services specifically for nonresidential students and ways to develop these resources. Whether through textbook and tablet loaning programs or enhanced web services, libraries featured in this title demonstrate how to connect with off-campus students, many of whom require remote access or may have limited time to visit libraries.

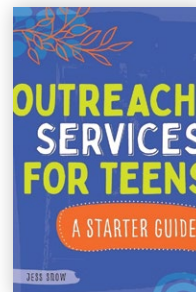
ALA Editions, 2018. 168 p. \$53.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-1701-5. (Also available as an ebook.)



## Loaners: The Making of a Street Library

By Ben Hodgson and Laura Moulton

Told through alternating recollections, Hodgson's and Moulton's tales are a poignant account of friendship, the lived experience of homelessness, and creating a street library. Moulton is founder of Street Books in Portland, Oregon, offering library services from her bike to people facing homelessness. Hodgson became a devoted borrower, but he and Moulton lost touch for two years before they later reconnected. *Loaners* is a reminder of the profound impact library services can have beyond their physical spaces. Perfect Day Publishing, 2021. 276 p. \$15. PBK. 978-0-9836-3279-5.



## Outreach Services for Teens: A Starter Guide

By Jess Snow

Perfect for library professionals at any stage of their career, Snow uses a systematic approach to provide guidance on forming enduring relationships with other community institutions that may need youth library services, such as foster homes, detention centers, and alternative schools. The latter part of the book offers tips to leverage technology, including creating digital collections for teens that further enhance a program's reach.

ALA Editions, 2020. 104 p. \$44.99. PBK. 978-0-8389-4815-6.

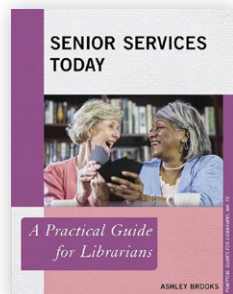
by Araceli Méndez Hintermeister



### Designing Adult Services: Strategies for Better Serving Your Community

By Ann Roberts

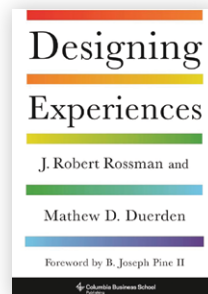
*Designing Adult Services* offers practical tips to build successful library programming for multiple generations. Chapters 8 and 9 are especially valuable for those interested in implementing new outreach services. Chapter 8 examines in-home library services like mail and personal delivery programs for homebound patrons. Chapter 9 explores offsite visits and pop-up locations as ways of bringing library services to other audiences. With numerous examples within these two chapters alone, this title inspires libraries to innovate and meet people where they are. Libraries Unlimited, 2017. 194 p. \$45. PBK. 978-1-4408-5254-1. (Also available as an ebook.)



### Senior Services Today: A Practical Guide for Librarians

By Ashley Brooks

For readers seeking to grow their knowledge of outreach services, chapter 6 of this comprehensive title illustrates how fostering community partnerships can not only increase library engagement but also help staffers successfully bring programming to secondary locations—especially for a population that may struggle with traveling to a branch. As the book underscores, outreach can bring enjoyable experiences and practical information to older adults. Rowman & Littlefield, 2021. 126 p. \$69. PBK. 978-1-5381-4882-2. (Also available as an ebook.)



### Designing Experiences

By J. Robert Rossman and Mathew D. Duerden

Rossman and Duerden look at the growing trend of *experience design*, a business approach in which companies seek to deliver exceptional experiences to draw customers and connect them to their services. Those in our profession can apply the lessons from this book, which details, step by step, how to effectively devise memorable user experiences. This aligns perfectly with outreach activities, which rely on patron engagement and repeat visits. Columbia University Press, 2019. 224 p. \$30. 978-0-2311-9168-5. (Also available as an ebook.) **AL**

# PEOPLE

## Announcements

### ON THE MOVE

**Anna Chen** was appointed associate university librarian for special collections and director of Wilson Library at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill effective September 9.

In April **Beth Crooker** became director of George H. Bixby Memorial Library in Franconia, New Hampshire.

**Eric Hanson** became dean of Pollak Library at California State University, Fullerton, January 2.

In July **Brianna Hoffman** left as executive director of the Washington Library Association to start as a training coordinator and consultant for Washington State Library in Olympia.

June 4 **Kyrra Howard** started as library director of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library in Arlington, Vermont.

July 22 **Geoffrey Little** became vice provost and chief librarian of Western University in London, Ontario.

**Lytic Nicolini** started as supervising librarian at Goleta (Calif.) Valley Library in June.

June 1 **Amanda Seim** became genealogy librarian at Herman Brown Free Library in Burnet, Texas.

July 1 **Matthew Shaw** became dean of university libraries at University of Dayton in Ohio.

**Heather Slania** joined the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., as chief librarian in June.



In December **Monica M. Smith** became chief of the Informal Learning Office at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.



### Kudos

On May 31, retired librarian **Joseph Crotts** became the first librarian to be inducted into the Hall of Honor at California State University, Chico. Crotts was recognized for his leadership, scholarship, and 44 years of service to the community.

**Anna M. Ferris**, associate professor and special collections and archives cataloging librarian at University of Colorado Boulder, won the James F. Williams II Lifetime Achievement Award May 1 for contributions to the university and her field.

In May **Daniel Jones** was named 2024 Outstanding New Librarian by the Florida Library Association. ●

July 1 **Joshua Vossler** became dean of university libraries at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

**Molly Wallner** started as librarian at Brookline (Mass.) High School in March.

In August **Amanda Watson** became assistant dean for library and information services at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

July 1 **Katy Webb** started as Betty Drees Johnson Dean of duPont-Ball Library and Learning Technologies at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida.

**Sheila Yeh** became dean of university libraries at University of Northern Colorado in Greeley July 1.

### PROMOTIONS

July 1 **Michelle Cawley** was promoted to associate university librarian for health sciences and director of the Health

Sciences Library at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Danielle Chouinard** was promoted to access and user experience librarian at Athens (Ala.) State University's Kares Library in April.

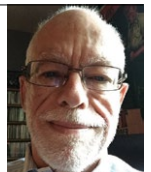
In December **Larissa Schneidewind** was promoted to director of Elk Township Library in Peck, Michigan.

### RETIREMENTS

In May **Teri Alexander** retired as director of learning environments for Clemson (S.C.) University Libraries after 37 years of service.

**Douglas Alvarez** retired as senior library assistant from Edison (N.J.) Public Library in April.

February 29 **Robert L. Cunningham** retired as music cataloger at Boston Public Library.



August 1 **Laura Fuhro** retired as children's librarian from Berkeley Heights (N.J.) Public Library after 49 years in the role.

**Enrico "Rick" LaBella** retired as library assistant from Edison (N.J.) Public Library in April.

**Shelley Peters** retired as library assistant from Edison (N.J.) Public Library in May.

In June **Phyllis Skidmore** retired as executive director and head librarian of Martha Canfield Memorial Free Library in Arlington, Vermont.

**Cheri Tomboc-Brownlie** retired as teacher-librarian at Westview High School in San Diego in July.

June 1 **Anita Vassallo** retired as director of Montgomery County (Md.) Public Libraries after 50 years with the system.



## In Memory

**Carolyn Anderson**, 85, who worked 24 years at Goodnow Library in Sudbury, Massachusetts, died April 18. Anderson retired from the library as head of circulation in 2001.

**Jennifer Jung Gallant**, 72, former assistant director of Elyria (Ohio) Public Library until her 2012 retirement, died March 14. Jung Gallant also served as children's librarian at Cleveland Public Library; medical librarian at St. John West Shore Hospital in Westlake, Ohio; and young adult librarian at Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library. She was a member of ALA Council and several ALA committees, and served as 1994–1995 president of the Young Adult Library Services Association. She received the 2013 Norman Horrocks Award from the Retired Members Round Table and authored the 1990 book *Best Videos for Children and Young Adults: A Core Collection for Libraries*.

**Satia Marshall Orange**, 82, a former director of what is now the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services (ODLOS) at ALA and a lifelong advocate for underserved populations, died April 23. Orange began her career as a teacher in Atlanta, Milwaukee, and Syracuse, New York, before becoming head of children's services at Forsyth County (N.C.) Public Library. There she established a pioneering toy library for low-income families. In 1993, she became founding director of the Arthur R. Ashe Jr. Foreign Policy Library in Washington, D.C., where she developed educational programs for the community. From 1997 until her 2009 retirement, Orange served as director of ODLOS. At ALA, she also coestablished the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Sunrise Celebration and helped the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Task Force (today the Rainbow Round Table) become a fully recognized round table. She was a champion for ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program,



created in 1997 to expand the recruitment of racially and ethnically diverse librarians. Orange was also dedicated to the work of the Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT) and Coretta Scott King (CSK) Book Awards, supporting the formation of a standalone CSK round table in 2022. She helped create the Joint Council of Librarians of Color in 2015. In 2017, Orange was awarded EMIERT's Distinguished Librarian Award, and in 2022 she was honored with the establishment of the Satia Marshall Orange Spectrum Scholarship Endowment Fund.

**Kent Palmer**, 68, who worked as a business librarian for Naperville (Ill.) Public Library until his 2021 retirement, died December 23.

**Alison Ricker**, 70, who served as head of Oberlin (Ohio) College Science Library from 1983 to 2023, died May 14. Ricker previously worked as a librarian for University of Georgia's Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in Savannah. In 2001, she was honored with the Academic Library Association of Ohio's Jay Ladd Distinguished Service Award.

**David Smith**, 89, former associate director of Hennepin County (Minn.) Library and supervisor of its Hopkins branch, died December 25. He also worked nationally as a library building consultant.

**Patricia M. Thomas**, 93, retired head of cataloging at Stockton–San Joaquin County (Calif.) Public Library, died April 22. Thomas was active in the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, was a founding member of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging, served on the Editorial Policy Committee for the Dewey Decimal Classification, and received the Margaret Mann Citation in 2000. She was also a member of the Public Library Association and California Library Association. ●

**Pam Wood** retired as director of library services at University of Mount Olive in North Carolina June 30.

### AT ALA


**Earla Jones**, conference services director, left ALA July 3.

In July **George Kendall** was promoted to senior director of Publishing and Media.

**Sarah Lamdan** became deputy director of the Office for Intellectual Freedom June 3.

August 1 **Diana Panuncial** left ALA as *American Libraries* associate editor.

**Abeje Schnake**, editorial assistant for the adult and audio sections at *Booklist*, left ALA July 12.

June 3 **Ari Zickau** joined the Association of College and Research Libraries as program manager for consulting and professional development. 



## Lushness in the Library

From outside, Downtown Reno Library of Washoe County (Nev.) Library System looks like a big square brown box. “There’s no pizzazz out front,” says Kristen Ryan, branch manager. So when people walk inside and find a lush central atrium with an abundance of philodendrons, spotted begonias, and other greenery; several towering trees; and a reflection pool, they tend to gasp the same thing: “Oh my god, look at all the plants!”

Hewitt C. Wells, the library’s architect, wanted to build it in a park. When that plan fell through, he decided to build “a park in the library,” Ryan says. Completed in 1966, it won the 1968 Industrial Landscape Award (presented by Lady Bird Johnson) and was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.

But it’s the soothing effect of all these plants that visitors value most. One case in point: the community municipal court held at the library every Wednesday in partnership with the city. After going before the judge, defendants connect with onsite service providers who assist them with substance-use disorders, mental health, housing, legal services, and other issues. “It’s an inviting atmosphere versus the regular courthouse down the street,” says Ryan. “The plants are just calming.”

The only person who might not agree? Gardener Leon Lewis, who—since all this foliage has no drip or sprinkler system—has watered every single plant by hand once a week for more than 20 years. **AL**

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

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STEM  
LIBRARIANSHIP**  
ALEXANDER J. CARROLL and JOSHUA BOBYCZ  
p. 4

**Person-Centered  
Management  
IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES**  
EDITED BY  
DANI BRICHER COOK, MADIRA J. KIKER, & DIANN SMOTHERS  
p. 8

**THE  
KIND  
LIBRARIAN**  
Cultivating a Culture of  
Kindness and Wellbeing  
in Libraries  
Helen Rimmer  
p. 12

**STRENGTHENING  
LIBRARY  
ECOSYSTEMS**  
DEBRA S. HANI, SARA KELLY JOHNS,  
MICHELLE ROBERTSON, & ERYN DUFFEE  
Collaborate for Advocacy and  
p. 13

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