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FEATURE ARTICLES

Spring SLRC Conference: All Things Circ!

28 ◆

On Tuesday, February 25, and Wednesday, February 26, 2025, the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Maryland State Library Resource Center hosted their Public Services Conference, focused on circulation topics, customer service, and mental health and well-being.

All Things Circ! A New Library Worker's Perspective on the Public Services Conference

31

This year's Conference celebrated the contributions made by Circulation staff and supported them by providing two days full of keynote speakers, resources, Q&A panels, fellowship, and activities for relaxation and creative fun.

Perks Partners

33

St. Mary's County launched a new business partnership in February 2025 to spread the word about local businesses through social media, in-library messaging, and email messaging. In return, the partner business offers a 10 percent discount to library card holders.


Mock Trial Camp

34 ◆

Carroll County Public Library's Mock Trial Camp is designed for Carroll County Public Schools students entering grades six through nine. During this two-day competition, students learn about Mock Trial by taking on a legal case, either criminal or civil in nature, that challenges them to think critically about timely issues.



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Editor's Note

The anticipation is building! The 2025 MLA/DLA Annual Conference: The Beach Edition will take place May 7-9, 2025, at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center in Ocean City, Maryland. Per the conference website, attendees can “explore the latest trends in library technology, discover best practices in information literacy, and engage with innovative ideas in community outreach and services. The conference also features an exhibit hall showcasing the latest and greatest library products and services, offering participants the chance to learn about new tools and resources that can enhance their work.”

MLA Conference Director Chelsea Shockley shares some timely information about conference keynotes and what you can expect when you get there. Based on what you'll read in some of our regular contributors' columns, groups from the Support Staff Division to the Intellectual Freedom Panel to the Materials Interest Group and more have some amazing sessions planned, and the Conference committee has scheduled many of the rewarding social activities that participants have come to know and love year after year, including Pub Quiz and Karaoke. There's even a special Wednesday evening screening of the documentary *Free for All: The Public Library*. If you're attending, enjoy every moment; if you're not able to go this year, *the Crab* will bring you the news! Check this space in July for highlights, recaps, and photos of our favorite moments.

We continue to share highlights from the State Library Resource Center's conferences. In this issue, Paul Chasen ably describes all the exciting things that happened at All Things Circ!, the 2025 Circulation Conference, which took place in February. We're also thrilled to share Brittany Macon's perspective on the Circulation Conference as a new library worker, MLIS student, and first-time attendee. Her summary is a great reminder for new staff statewide: take advantage of these opportunities, dive in, and learn all that you can from presenters and peers. These conferences are a



great way to forge new connections, share knowledge and information, and build our Maryland library community.

As always, please consider contributing your own success stories to *the Crab*. What you do every day in your libraries and communities is essential, and we want to share and celebrate all your good news with our readers – programming, outreach, future plans, and awards and special recognition.

Speaking of awards and good news - congratulations to all of this year's MLA Award winners! You can read about them in this issue, and they will receive their awards at the MLA/DLA Conference. Special thanks to Catherine Hollerbach, Amy Miller Meyers, and the Awards and Marketing committees for all of the planning and hard work that goes into the awards each year.

Wishing all of you a lovely spring!

Julie Fitzpatrick, MLA Crab Editor
Howard County Library System

President's Message

*Teonja Jung, MLA President
Baltimore County Public Library*



SPRING HAS SPRUNG! Birds are chirping! Flowers are blooming! And Maryland Library Association is shining. So many things are happening. MLA launched a new website and information hub which includes a new space for MLA Connect. If you haven't already, visit mdlib.org and check it out. While you're there, remember elections are open and voting has begun for new leaders to helm MLA into the future. Soon there will be a new President, Vice President and group leaders joining the Executive Board. So cast your vote — winners will be announced at the annual conference. Speaking of the "Big Show," the MLA/DLA Conference 2025: The Beach Edition is fast approaching and will take place May 7-9 at the Ocean City Convention Center. A different venue but the same great program of events. Everyone is bustling with anticipation!

I know change can be difficult and even though we have seen a lot of that in the world in the past several months, remember that not all change is bad. I want you to know that one thing that will not change is MLA supporting libraries and library staff around the state. We continue to educate, advocate and collaborate.

Exciting things are coming to MLA membership. As we look to combat the very real presence of censorship and book banning, MLA received a grant from ALA which will allow us to create an Intellectual Freedom Helpline which you will be hearing more about over the next few months. We are also stepping up our commitment to DEI by exploring the creation of an EDI division. Voting is open now and will be open through the annual conference. If you agree that this is a division needed in MLA, please cast your ballot promptly. Additionally, the EDI panel is beginning conversations about Affinity Groups and the important space they can provide within the organization.

We are working on more ways to engage with and support you. I have talked to a lot

of staff over the last several months by attending staff days, participating in conferences, and taking part in panels, discussions and community events. In speaking to people, I have found an overwhelming majority who support libraries and appreciate what we do and what we stand for.

I encourage all of you to go out into the community and bring the library to them in all the ways you can. Be a library ambassador and talk to people you meet about how great libraries are and what wonderful things we have to offer. ■

Vice President's Message

David Dahl

*MLA Vice President/President Elect
University of Maryland Libraries*



SPRING IS HERE! Meteorological spring has been slowly making itself felt for the past several weeks, and by the time you're reading this the calendar will determine that it is astronomical spring - no matter what the local forecast might say. I'll spare you a long essay on the favorable qualities of spring; suffice it to say that it's my favorite season, primarily for the symbolism of renewal that it carries. Of course, the renewal that we see in nature when spring comes is the visible result of an incredible ability to endure through seasons of hardship and scarcity. No doubt, we now find ourselves in a period of time requiring such perseverance.

In early February, I had the good fortune to attend a three-day online workshop - along with other MLA leaders - on natural foresight (a.k.a. "futures thinking"). Apropos of nothing, it seems worthwhile to mention that our participation was made possible through the Connecticut State Library's "Transformation for Libraries: The Futures School (TFSX)" IMLS grant (<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/FuturesSchool/Home>). Three days is a lot of time to dedicate away from daily work (and life) responsibilities, and it's a long time to spend interacting in Zoom, but, in the middle of a challenging period, it provided new capabilities and ways of thinking to help MLA and libraries persevere. A few things resonated deeply with me. First, futures thinking is a mechanism for us to step beyond the day-to-day and find hope and opportunity in the future. Second, values drive trends. And third, the best future is one that we create together, even if your group is tasked with developing a dystopian "fortress" scenario! Thanks to President Teonja Jung for her foresight in pursuing this opportunity and herding enough of us to qualify to participate.

While futures thinking can help us prepare for and shape the future, it can't help us

escape our present realities. I've heard a couple sailing analogies recently to help grapple with the federal actions and financial constraints that challenge us at present. As someone who gets seasick, I'll likely butcher this, but here goes: In the best of times, the wind is at our backs and it's easy to reach our destination. When the wind isn't blowing us directly to our destination, we may have to change course and find a different route, or, we may even have to pull down the sail and let the wind pass before resuming progress. We may even resort to a sailing technique called "kedging", which involves physically pulling a vessel toward its destination.

In the early (metaphorically blustery) days of 2025, I've witnessed several examples of the less visible, enduring effort that makes Maryland libraries thrive. Library Legislative Day showcased the advocacy required to ensure that legislators remember the transformative power of libraries. Later, I had the good fortune to attend a poster session featuring the work of University of Maryland College of Information students and the new perspectives and ideas that they are bringing to the profession. And, soon, the MLA/DLA Conference will be here - a more visible sign of our renewal. I look forward to seeing you there! ■

Report from MLA's ALA Chapter Councilor

Joseph Thompson, Carroll County Public Library

THIS REPORT FOLLOWS MY PARTICIPATION in the ALA Council meetings which took place at the American Library Association's LibLearnX Conference in Phoenix, Arizona over Jan. 25–26, 2025.

To start things off on Saturday, Jan. 25, there was a brief meeting of the ALA-APA (ALA Allied Professional Association) and two action items related to new certification programs. On the recommendation of the ALA-APA Executive Board, the ALA Council was asked to approve the establishment of a new Library Management Staff Certification Program and a new Library Support Staff Certification Program. I voted yes on both items and these motions passed.

The ALA Council I meeting was then called to order by ALA President Cindy Hohl. If you are an ALA member, you can see the documents I'm referring to at <https://www.ala.org/virtual-llx-and-annual-conference-council-meetings>. The reports from many ALA committees can be found here as part of the Consent Agenda.

The first vote at ALA Council was to approve revisions of the ALA Corporate Sponsorship Guidelines, which would then be inserted into ALA's Policy Manual, Section A. The stated purpose was to "further define and provide guidelines for a common, ALA-wide approach to sponsorships that all units can draw upon as they pursue opportunities." I found these reasonable and voted yes. The motion carried.

A resolution was then considered regarding the ALA Executive Board Composition. The movers and seconders of this resolution motioned that the ALA Bylaws, Executive Board Composition, be revised to return to its previous language, specifically, "The Executive Board of the American Library Association shall consist of thirteen (13) members including: the four (4) officers of the Association, the immediate past president, and eight (8) councilors elected by Council to three-year (3-year) terms." This would mean following-through on recommendations that had been made by the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness, Forward Together Working Groups, and Transforming ALA Governance, which had been active over the past several years in working to recommend efficiencies in the structure of ALA. There ended up being motions from the floor of Council on this resolution, to first

close debate, then to postpone a vote until the following day. I voted to postpone the vote to the following day, but it was approved to resume debate. Though I felt that the motion was valid, I was concerned that stakeholder groups had not had enough time to truly consider this change, so I voted no on the main resolution. In the end the motion did pass, so this change is now going forward to be considered by the full ALA membership as an amendment to the ALA Bylaws. After some announcements, this concluded ALA Council I.

The ALA Council II meeting began the next day, on Sunday, Jan. 26. Several memorial resolutions were read honoring individuals who had recently passed, and tribute resolutions were offered for living individuals who had made important contributions to libraries. One of these was a tribute for Alan Inouye upon his retirement. Alan worked for ALA for 18 years, with the past several years as Senior Director of Public Policy and Government Relations in the Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA) office. Since 2022, Alan has been serving in the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy office as Interim Associate Executive Director. I had the privilege to work closely with Alan when I was chair of ALA's Committee on Legislation, and I witnessed his dedication to the profession firsthand. I served as a seconder on this tribute resolution.

A series of action items were then associated with reports from ALA Committees. The Intellectual Freedom Committee presented a motion to approve a revision of the Prisoners' Right to Read: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. I voted yes and the motion carried. The next report was from the Committee on Legislation, which presented a tribute resolution in honor of FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel for (1) her commitment to broadband access for all communities and closing the digital divide and (2) as an expression of gratitude for her leadership, contributions, and public service, as well as her support and friendship to libraries. I voted yes and the tribute resolution carried. The Policy Monitoring Committee then presented its report, with an action item requesting approval to merge one section into another in the ALA Policy Manual. I voted yes and the motion carried. Finally, the Bylaws Committee presented a motion to clean up a minor clarifier on Council Succession in the earlier general revision of the ALA Bylaws. I voted yes and the motion carried.

Peter Hepburn then presented the Treasurer's Report. ALA's financial situation is at "an inflection point" according to Peter. Expenses are outpacing revenues, which is resulting in a deficit this current year that is worse than last year. My own analysis as a councilor is that ALA urgently needs to have a permanent Executive Director hired who can begin making the changes that are needed to balance the budget.

The Committee on Organization then presented an action item regarding the creation of a Library Makerspace Roundtable. While I believe there is a broad consensus on the

need for library makerspace professionals to connect and share resources within ALA, debate centered mostly on whether this would duplicate the existence of a makerspace committee within the ALA division, Core. I voted no on the main resolution to create an ALA-level Library Makerspace Roundtable, and the motion was defeated. A second action item was presented by the Committee on Organization to discontinue the Council Tellers Committee. In a pre-digital era, the Tellers counted votes, but in more recent years the role of the Tellers Committee has changed from counting votes to certifying election results, which, in essence, is now performing the same duties as the Election Committee. I voted yes and the motion to discontinue the Council Tellers Committee carried.

Under new business, there was a Resolution on Elections to Executive Board. The movers and seconders noted that due to recent bylaws changes, the ALA Council has shrunk substantially, from 180 to 100 members (by the year 2026). They argued that the smaller Council significantly decreases the opportunity for participation in ALA governance and those members standing for election to the Executive Board are drawn from this smaller, restructured Council. It was also noted that there are well-qualified member leaders who are unable to serve on the ALA Executive Board due to not currently holding a Council position. The resolution called for “the Executive Board to form an Ad-Hoc Committee to explore the possibility of those standing for election to the Executive Board not [to] be limited to Council members. The Ad-Hoc Committee will report to the Executive Board with recommendations by October 2025.” The resolution received some minor amendments. I voted yes and the motion carried. More recently, in March 2025, I have been asked by the ALA Executive Board to chair this ad-hoc committee and have agreed to do so.

It was announced that there were 1212 paid and 1634 total attendees at LibLearnX. 73% of ALA’s budget goal for this LibLearnX had been reached. It is worth noting here again that this is the last scheduled LibLearnX/Midwinter Conference. An update was also provided regarding the ALA Executive Director search. First presentations by applicants took place on Jan. 14 and second presentations were scheduled for March 4. All-day interviews are planned for March 20-21 with finalist interviews planned for April 28-30 in Chicago. The intention is to have the new ALA Executive Director in place before the ALA Annual Conference 2025 in June.

Council then went into closed session to consider the 2025 Honorary Membership nomination of Skip Dye. Skip is the Senior Vice President for Library Sales & Digital Strategy at Penguin Random House. He has been a steadfast supporter of libraries and intellectual freedom for many years and has presented on multiple occasions at the MLA/DLA Conference and at the Trustees/Citizens for Maryland Libraries annual meeting. He is greatly deserving of this recognition, and I voted yes on the resolution, which passed

unanimously. The award was announced shortly after the conclusion of the conference.

During the conference, councilors also voted online in the ALA Executive Board Election. The results were announced on Jan. 30. The following candidates were elected to serve three-year terms beginning at the conclusion of the 2025 Annual Conference: Tatanisha “Tiki” Love (At-Large), Janice Moore Newsum (Round Table), K.C. Boyd (AASL), and Ziba Pérez (Chapter). Of note: Tiki Love is a school librarian from Maryland and very active in the Maryland library community!

Since returning from Phoenix, I have also been asked by ALA President-Elect Sam Helmick to serve as a member of ALA’s Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) as a Chapter representative. I have accepted the appointment, and this term will begin at the conclusion of the ALA Annual Conference in June.

The next scheduled ALA Council meetings will take place during the ALA Annual Conference in Philadelphia, PA in June 2025. I will provide a report following those meetings in a future issue of *the Crab*. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Maryland representative to ALA Council. As always, if you have any questions about the work of ALA Council, please don’t hesitate to reach out. ■





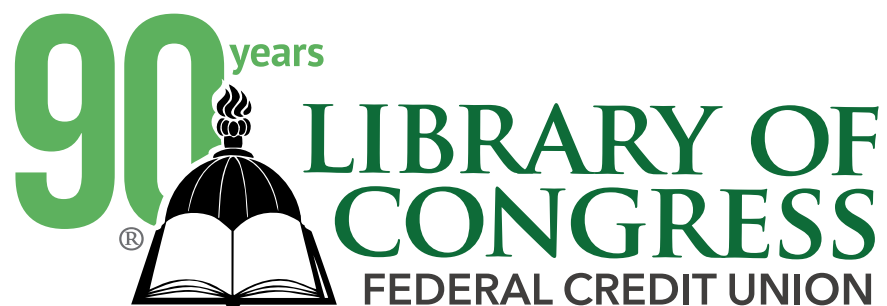
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The 2025 Nettie B. Taylor Maryland Library Leadership Institute

Joshua Stone, Executive Director

Maryland Library Association

Photos courtesy of Joshua Stone.

There is a lot of uncertainty and negativity surrounding our profession these days, and sometimes it can be hard to find any bright spots. Despite this bleakness, or maybe because of it, I recently found some hope in the 2025 cohort of the Nettie B. Taylor Maryland Library Leadership Institute (MLLI). It was my privilege to spend a week working with and learning from our next crop of library leaders, and I am incredibly proud of all the work the MLLI Planning Committee did to relaunch this program. When I came on board with MLA back in 2022, one of the first projects on the table was bringing back MLLI; after three years of dedication and passion, the Planning Committee didn't just bring it back, they created one of the most profoundly impactful and immersive leadership development programs I have ever seen.

It was pretty early in the process when the Planning Committee and I realized that the best approach was to put the program on hold and rebuild it from the ground up. With leadership from Joe Thompson and Ashley Teagle, the committee spent the next three years creating a leadership program that would better reflect our current landscape and better prepare future library leaders for the turbulent times ahead. The next step was finding the right facilitators for this ambitious project, and there again the committee far exceeded their goal. Our facilitators, Liz Gabbitas and Chaundra Johnson, shared the same values,

energy, and passion as the committee and in turn crafted an incredibly insightful and powerful curriculum and learning environment.

There were many challenges along the way, but selecting the participants was by far the hardest task the committee faced. The selection committee took this responsibility seriously and helped put together a diverse and impressive cohort of library workers from all aspects of our profession. With Liz and Chaundra's dynamic curriculum, and the cohort's earnestness and energy, a version of MLLI formed that was better than any of us could have hoped for.

For the week of March 16 to March 21, the 2025 MLLI cohort stayed at the Maritime Conference Center and immersed themselves in a truly unique library leadership program. I should go ahead and say it: if you ask any of the graduates today what they remember most from the week, every single one of them will say "the food." I assure you, they did learn things too, but the food really was that good. From that very first evening, though, you could tell this cohort was special and that we were all in for a transformational week.

Over the week that followed, the cohort pushed themselves to be open, to be vulnerable, to be their authentic selves and, as I've said many times, my Grinch heart grew three times larger being around their enthusiasm and their pragmatic and tangible hope. I watched as they worked with the on-site mentors to tackle real-life issues with candid openness and honesty, and I can tell you that, without a doubt, the profession is in good hands. I saw firsthand how unflinching our future library leaders are; I saw exactly why Maryland is "Library Heaven." I saw what makes MLA so strong: participants and mentors who care so deeply about our profession that they spent an entire week working to help each other grow, leaders who drove in on a stormy Thursday evening to give their time and their

knowledge to help lift others.

I want to sincerely thank our partners at the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) and our supporters at the Cecil County Public Library and Harford County Public Library for helping to fund this important program. I'd also like to thank our facilitators for creating an incredible program, and our on-site mentors who wholly gave themselves for the development of others. I also cannot thank our mentors who came in for the Thursday "speed mentor" program enough. You all helped energize and empower the cohort despite the awful weather. Finally, I want to congratulate and thank our 2025 Maryland Library Leadership Institute graduates. Through your dedication, earnestness, energy, and honesty, you helped form a new vision for MLLI. You were all truly inspiring.

However, even with all this optimism, we cannot lose sight of the reality facing our profession right now. Because here's the thing: transformational programs like this couldn't happen without funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). These are funds that MSLA distributes to libraries, not only to help pay for professional development like MLLI, but also to fund the essential services that you provide to our communities. Funds from LSTA make it possible for libraries to be there for our neighbors. So, whether you're a library worker or a library supporter, I urge you to contact your Congressional Representatives and demand that they continue to fully fund IMLS, because without it, people we care about, people we love, will be hurt.

ALA's Show Up for Our Libraries campaign makes it easy for you to find and contact your representatives. Use this link to share your stories: <https://app.oneclickpolitics.com/campaign-page?cid=2CzAyJUB9sorxFLO5KSZ&lang=en>

Congratulations to the 2025 MLLI Cohort:

- 🏠 Alyssia Gilmore, Harford County Public Library
- 🏠 Amy Dickinson, St. Mary's County Library
- 🏠 Amy Miller Meyers, Carroll County Public Library
- 🏠 Anneliese Trainer, Calvert Library
- 🏠 Annie Sageng, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Brittany Cornish, St. Mary's County Library
- 🏠 David Bauer, Towson University, Albert S. Cook Library
- 🏠 Emily Levine, Enoch Pratt Free Library
- 🏠 Erica Owusu, University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions
- 🏠 Etienne Nadeau, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Genive Purchase, Enoch Pratt Free Library
- 🏠 Gray Dickerson, Montgomery County Public Libraries
- 🏠 Hayden Muse, Queen Anne's County Library
- 🏠 Jayne Walters, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- 🏠 Jessica Cordova, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Kaitlyn Ennis, Cecil County Public Library
- 🏠 Katie Marley, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association
- 🏠 Marlyn Norton, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Michael Jackson, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Patrick Gorirossi, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- 🏠 Precious Abujana, Prince George's County Memorial Library System
- 🏠 Stevia Morales, Howard County Public Library
- 🏠 Tim Pratt, Maryland State Library Agency

2025 MLLI On-Site Mentors:

- 🏠 Allison Jennings-Roche – Associate Director of Digital Initiatives & Collections, University of Baltimore, Robert L. Bogomolny Library
- 🏠 Ashley Teagle - CEO, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association

- 🏠 Dan Ramirez - Branch Manager, Prince George's County Memorial Library System
- 🏠 Daria Parry – Retired, Harford County Public Library
- 🏠 Jenny Bakos – Executive Director, Washington County Free Library
- 🏠 Tif Sutherland - Reference Supervisor, Calvert Library

2025 MLLI Speed Mentors:

- 🏠 Sonia Alcántara-Antoine – CEO, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Sara Arnold – Training & Staff Development Manager, Carroll County Public Library
- 🏠 Sarah Jane Brunson – Library Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Paul Chasen – Virtual Reference Services Coordinator, Enoch Pratt Free Library
- 🏠 David Dahl – MLA President-Elect, Associate Dean of Libraries, University of Maryland Libraries, McKeldin Library
- 🏠 Jessica Faulkner – Branch Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Darnice Jasper - Branch Manager, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- 🏠 Teonja Jung – MLA President, Circulation Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Shirley Mason – Circulation Services Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Cassandra Miller – Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Jessica Mundy, Head of Collection Management, Thurgood Marshall State Law Library
- 🏠 Michael Shochet - Interim Dean, University of Baltimore, Robert L. Bogomolny Library
- 🏠 Bria Sinnott – Associate Dean of Academic Engagement, Towson University, Albert S. Cook Library
- 🏠 Conni Strittmatter – Youth and Family Engagement

- Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Joe Thompson – Director of Public Services, Carroll County Public Library
- 🏠 Zeke White – Regional Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Anna White – Branch Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Tyler Wolfe – Regional Manager, Baltimore County Public Library

2025 MLLI Planning Committee:

- 🏠 Joe Thompson – Co-Chair, Director of Public Services, Carroll County Public Library
- 🏠 Ashley Teagle – Co-Chair, CEO, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association
- 🏠 Sonia Alcántara-Antoine – CEO, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Kalyn Au – Branch Manager, Enoch Pratt Free Library
- 🏠 Nini Beegan - Organizational Learning & Innovation Coordinator, Maryland State Library Agency
- 🏠 Carol Cason – Regional Manager, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- 🏠 Darnice Jasper – Branch Manager, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- 🏠 Teonja Jung – MLA President, Circulation Manager, Baltimore County Public Library
- 🏠 Dan Ramirez – Branch Manager, Prince George's County Memorial Library System
- 🏠 Michael Shochet – Interim Dean, University of Baltimore, Robert L. Bogomolny Library
- 🏠 Bria Sinnott – Associate Dean of Academic Engagement, Towson University, Albert S. Cook Library
- 🏠 Tif Sutherland – MLA Past President, Reference Supervisor, Calvert Library













MLA/DLA Conference News: The Beach Edition

Chelsea Shockley, 2025 MLA Conference

Director

Enoch Pratt Free Library

Greetings! I hope everyone is getting excited to take a trip to the beach this spring for the conference. We have an exciting lineup for our keynotes and conference sessions.

I wanted to highlight our keynotes and a few sessions in case you're not sure what to pick. (Just a friendly reminder that all keynotes are free to attend, so even if you haven't purchased a meal ticket, you are encouraged to join us and our amazing speakers.)

Lady Brion has many titles, but she is best known for her spoken word poetry. She has won many slams, and last year she was appointed as the Poet Laureate of Maryland (the youngest and only spoken word artist to hold this position). We are thankful to have her on our roster this year, and we hope you all enjoy her opening keynote on Wednesday evening.

Our Maryland Author Award winner this year is Roseanne A. Brown. In addition to her keynote at the author luncheon on Thursday, she'll also have a session later in the afternoon where she'll dive into further discussion on how to use mythology and folklore to engage young readers. I'm looking forward to hearing how she tackles balancing optimism and tough times in her work.

We also welcome Kristen Arnett (author, essayist, and former librarian) to talk to us about her experiences and perspectives. I've dived into her Substack ("Dad Lessons") and I'm deeply enjoying her advice column on Lit Hub, "Am I the Literary Asshole?" I'm positive it will be an entertaining keynote, so be sure to join us on Thursday evening.


And last but not least, writer Temim Fruchter will be our keynote on Friday morning. Her work that explores identity, community, and the complexities of human relationships will surely lend itself to an insightful closing session. Fun fact: Temim makes MLA/DLA Conference history as the first keynote speaker to be a former drummer from an indie pop punk band.


No matter your position, there will be plenty of sessions to fill up your day. Thank you in advance to all of our presenters who make the conference possible!


Just a few offerings that caught my attention:


Riding the K-pop Wave: Creating Engaging Fandom Programming at Your Library (as a long-time k-pop enjoyer I am super biased, so I'm hoping to make time for this one!)

 From Baby Boss, to Boss, Baby


 Diversifying Librarianship: Fellowships and Residencies are Not Enough

 Beyond Books: Introducing DEI Programs in Library Spaces

 Serving Our LGBTQIA+ Communities with Name Change Clinics

 Sea-ing the Future: Innovation for Every Team

 Banned Books Week at an Academic Library: Collaboration and Promoting Student Engagement

 Community First: Making The Library Accessible to Neurodivergent Families

If there's still space available and you're able to make it early on Wednesday, be sure to sign up for the BCMLA

Conference Cultural Tour. The group will be taking a trip over to Berlin to visit the Taylor House Museum, tour the Germantown School Community Heritage Center, and have lunch at the New Bethel United Methodist Church. This will be a fantastic opportunity, especially if you are interested in history.

As always, I am also looking forward to connecting with fellow attendees at events like division and interest group meetups, the all-conference reception, karaoke, and the break with pets! The location might be a bit distracting this time around, but the convention center has a great bayside view for you to enjoy throughout each day. There will be a lot to do, so make sure to also build in time for beach breaks before, during, or after the conference.

For those unable to attend this year, we hope to see you next time!

*Lady Brion.
Photo by Marvin Shots.*



*Roseanne A. Brown.
Photo by Ashley Hirasuna.*



*Kristen Arnett.
Photo by Maria
Rada.*



*Temim Fruchter.
Photo by Leah James.*



Maryland Libraries Represented in Leadership Maryland Class of 2025

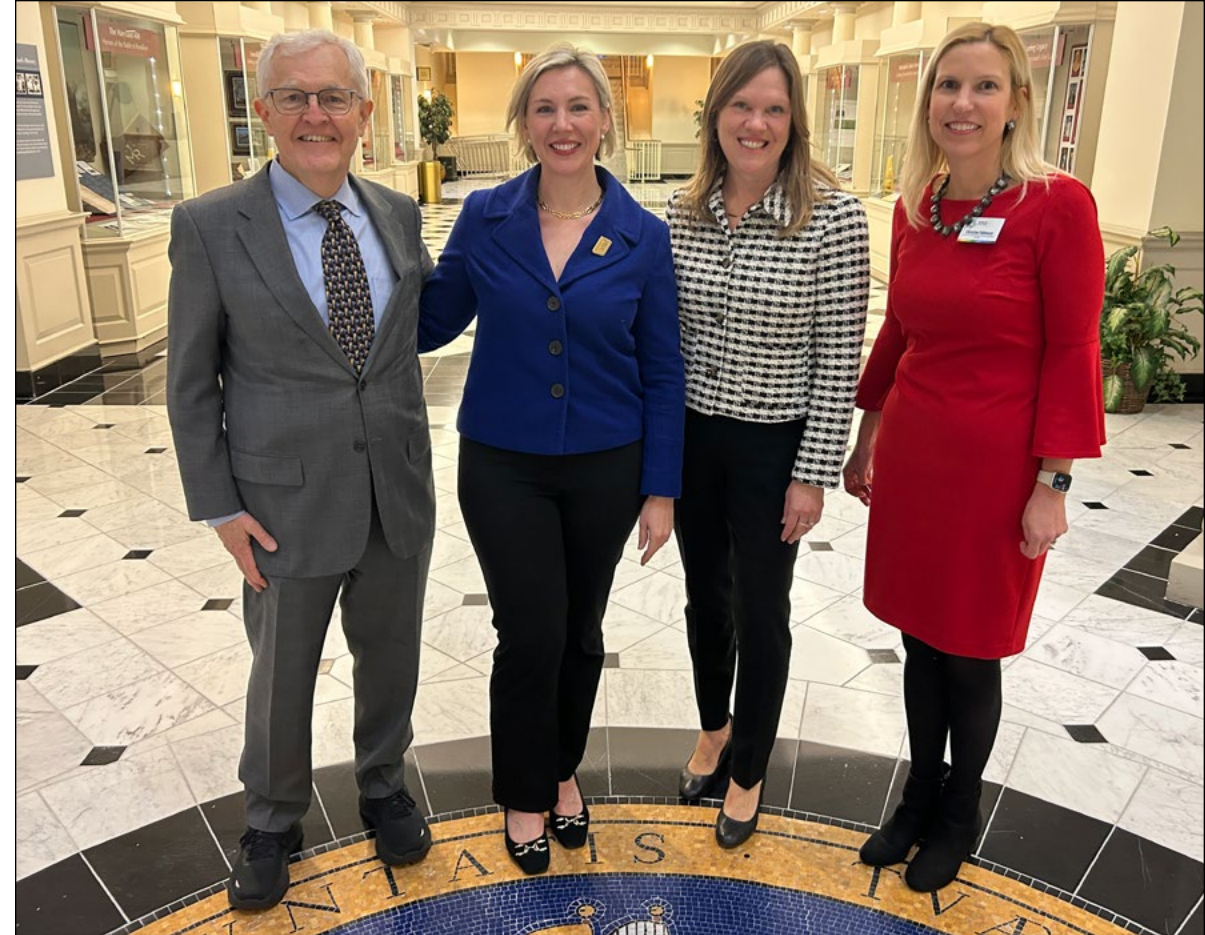
*Timothy Pratt, Maryland State Library Agency
Photo by Timothy Pratt courtesy of the
Maryland State Library Agency.*

The Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) is pleased to announce that Maryland State Librarian Morgan Lehr Miller and State Library Board Chair Kristen Pironis have been selected for the Leadership Maryland Class of 2025. The pair joins more than 50 other business and community leaders from across the state who will begin the eight-month Leadership Maryland Executive Program this spring. The Class of 2025—the Executive Program’s 32nd class—reflects a diverse cross-section of Marylanders, including geographic location, profession, ethnicity and gender.

“Maryland’s libraries are deeply centered in their communities, offering solutions and support for some of the state’s toughest challenges,” Miller said. “I’m honored to be a part of the Leadership Maryland Class of 2025 and to bring the powerful potential of our libraries into the discussion as we explore new and innovative ways to create a greater Maryland.”

Miller’s selection comes as she marks two decades of service to Maryland public libraries, much of which was spent leading the Cecil County Public Library system, where she served as Executive Director before becoming Maryland State Librarian in June 2024. She was officially confirmed by the Maryland Senate earlier this month. Pironis, who has served on the Maryland State Library

*Left to right: Anne Arundel County
Public Library CEO Skip Auld,
Maryland State Librarian Morgan
Lehr Miller, Maryland State Library
Board Chair Kristen Pironis and
Anne Arundel County Public
Library Director of Marketing
and Communications Christine
Feldmann pose for a photo after
Miller’s Senate confirmation hearing
in February.*



Board since 2022, is Executive Director of the nonprofit Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County.

“I am thrilled to be part of the Leadership Maryland Class of 2025 alongside so many remarkable leaders, including our State Librarian Morgan Lehr Miller,” Pironis said. “Congratulations to all my fellow classmates—I look forward to the opportunities this program will provide for growth, collaboration, and the shared commitment to strengthening Maryland.”

Leadership Maryland’s flagship Executive Program is open to senior-level executives with significant achievements in either their careers and/or their communities. Ideal Leadership Maryland members have a desire to learn more about Maryland’s most critical issues and make a personal commitment to be a force for positive change in their organizations, communities and the state.

The program will run from April to December and include five two-day sessions focused on Maryland’s five main geographic regions and the most vital issues

affecting economic development, education, health and human services, criminal justice, the environment, and multi-culturalism/diversity. More than 100 experts representing Maryland’s business, government, education and nonprofit communities will serve as panelists and guest speakers for the program.

“We are excited to announce our next class and welcome these accomplished and motivated individuals to the Executive Program,” said David Fike, President and CEO of Leadership Maryland and a graduate of the Class of 2016. “After a careful review and interview process, I am confident that the 53 members of the Class of 2025 represent a powerful cross-section of leaders who have a strong desire to make a broader impact within our state. I look forward to watching them grow as they build their knowledge, experience, and connections through our premier leadership program.” ■

Maryland Library Helpline

*Teonja Jung, MLA President
Baltimore County Public Library*

Libraries have historically served as institutions for trusted and reliable information. However, they have not always been free nor accessible to all. As times evolved so have libraries. They have become so much more than a source of materials and information; however, providing access to information has remained fundamental. Now more than ever, there is a rising threat to citizens' ability to enter a public library and check out materials that are of interest to them, whether it's for entertainment, for education, for personal development, or any of the multitude of reasons people rely on their public library.

Despite what some have claimed, challenges and threats to materials held in library collections are very real. They have grown exponentially over the last few years, and they threaten the freedoms guaranteed to all Americans under the First Amendment. As the professional association for all library staff in the state of Maryland, the Maryland Library Association (MLA) is a strong and vocal advocate helping staff to rise above and combat censorship and book banning attempts. Through efforts like working with library and community partners and supportive legislators to pass the Freedom to Read Act, MLA has long fought to protect libraries while upholding values from the ALA Bill of Rights.

MLA is proud to further its commitment to supporting library workers by creating the Maryland Library Helpline. This helpline is designed to be your one-stop resource for help, providing an accessible and immediate means for library workers to report challenges from all types of libraries anywhere in Maryland. Association leadership

hears you—library staff across the state are navigating increasingly challenging situations, and it can often feel as if you are facing personal attacks. We recognize that these moments can be overwhelming and finding the right way to respond or knowing where to turn for support can be difficult. Our dedicated volunteers will listen carefully to your concerns, gather the necessary information, and offer thoughtful guidance and practical tips to help you navigate these challenges effectively. At MLA, we are deeply committed to equipping our members with the tools and support they need to succeed—because we believe that when you succeed, our libraries and communities thrive.

MLA remains committed to our library members. We are here to support you. We are here to help you. We are here to guide you. We are here to work for you. You are and We are MLA!

Learn more about the Maryland Library Helpline [here](#).



2025 One Maryland One Book Announced

Aditya Desai, Maryland Humanities

Maryland Humanities is pleased to announce that the selection for the 2025 One Maryland One Book (OMOB) is *Kin: Rooted in Hope* by Carole Boston Weatherford with art by Jeffery Boston Weatherford.

As “Maryland’s biggest book club,” OMOB partners with libraries across Maryland each year to distribute free paperback copies of the book and host discussions, programs, and events during the fall around the selection’s themes and topics. Readers will also get a chance to see Carole and Jeffery Boston Weatherford during the official One Maryland One Book Author Tour in October.

Released in 2024, *Kin* is a work of art, history, and personal genealogy—Carole’s search into her family tree led her to ancestors who were among the founders of Maryland. She opens with a truth that most African Americans face when researching their own histories...

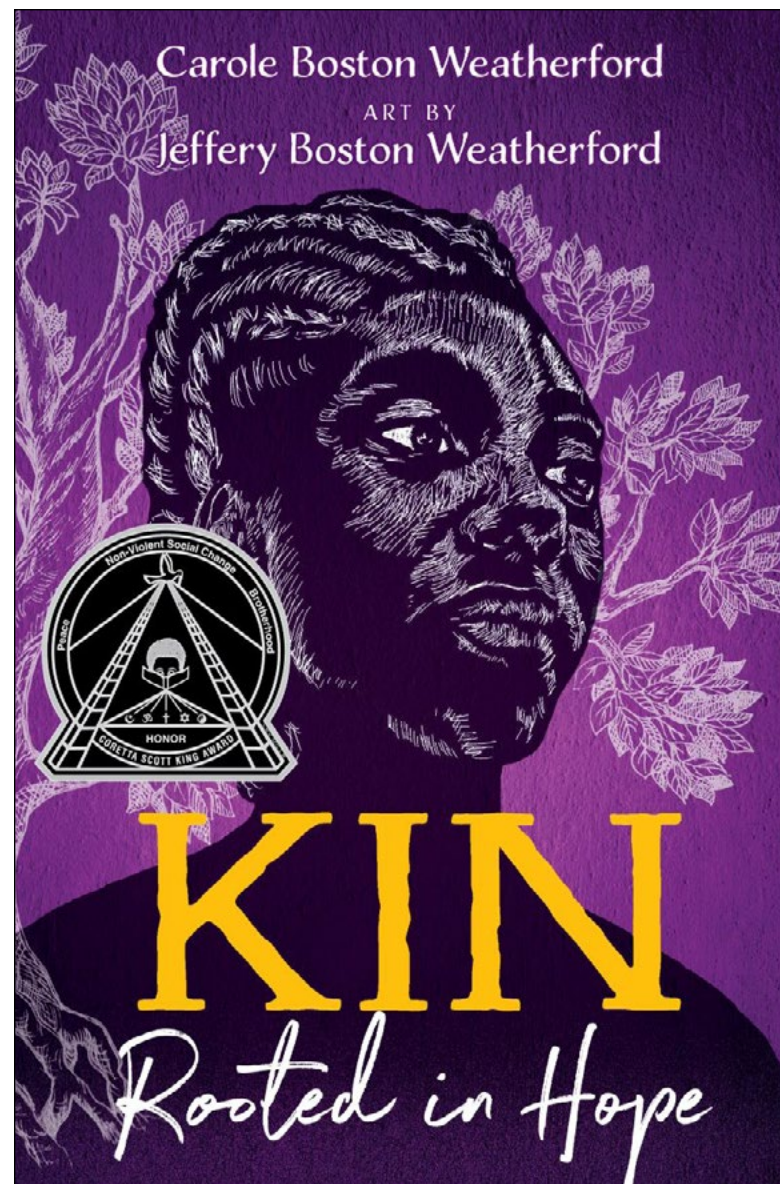
“I could not pinpoint my ancestral origins.”

“I did not know how many generations I would or could go back.”

“I did not know what I might never know. But I knew the truth would be hard to come by”

Through poetic voice, Weatherford is able to impart her family’s lives, and along with that a view into Maryland’s African American history. The collection weaves the personas of the Weatherfords’ ancestors, from experiences on the plantation throughout the Civil War and into the 20th century. Each poem is accompanied by an illustration by Carole’s son, Jeffery.

“*Kin: Rooted in Hope* is a family affair,” says Carole, “a mother-son collaboration on a family saga dating back to



colonial Maryland. Our genealogical quest led us to 1770, to Frederick Douglass, to villages founded by freedmen. With poetry and art, *Kin* conjures the past, reclaims lost ancestral narratives and brings us to the realization that knowing your history is generational wealth.”

Kin: Rooted in Hope is a Coretta Scott King Honor Book and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Poetry Award Winner. Weatherford is the winner of the 2025 Children’s Literature Legacy Award from the American Library Association for books that have made a significant and lasting contribution to literature for children.



Carole Boston Weatherford.

Photo by Gerald Young.

Kin was selected under the 2025 theme of “What We Collect / What We Tell,” an exploration of what and how we preserve and how we tell stories across generations through objects material and immaterial. As such, OMOB programming delivers opportunities for libraries to stage programming that explores the histories of African Americans in Maryland, and also the histories carried by each individual.

Jaelon Moaney, a member of the Selection Committee, says the Weatherfords have “invited all Marylanders along a challenging journey of personal and shared growth

anchored in nuanced truth...an inspiring example of liberated futures brought into being, through authentic creation and the gravity of reclamation.”

Maryland locations also feature prominently in the book, many the subject of their own poems, including the Chesapeake Bay, the port of Oxford, Fort McHenry, and the Wye River in Talbot County, on which sits the former Wye House plantation.

Libraries are encouraged to consider not only their own catalogs, but partnering with organizations in their area who

also foster, collect, and preserve stories in their own communities. The use of eloquent and accessible short poems along with the art also provides ways of thinking about how we remember history. Creative events such as writing workshops, art making, and oral storytelling also engage with *Kin* and its themes.

“This book does exactly what our theme asks of us,” said Maryland Humanities CEO Lindsey Baker. “It pieces together history, memory, and loss to reclaim stories that deserve to be told. Carole Boston Weatherford and Jeffery Boston Weatherford don’t just bring the past to life; they remind us why it matters today.”

Partner sign-ups are now open on the Maryland Humanities website. Branch librarians are encouraged to spread the word to local organizations to sign up as a partner or co-host an event. Maryland Humanities will also host virtual community sessions and post resources such as reading guides, a partner toolkit, and more.

For more information, please visit [OneMarylandOneBook.org](https://www.MarylandOneBook.org).



Jeffery Weatherford, illustrator.

Photo by Gerald Young.



2025 Maryland Library Association Award Winners

Catherine Hollerbach, MLA Awards Committee Chair, Anne Arundel County Public Library

Please join me in congratulating the winners of the 2025 Maryland Library Association Awards!

These talented library workers have made outstanding contributions to library systems across the state, impacting the lives of countless community members with their creativity and commitment to excellence.

Margaret Carty Emerging Leader Award

The winner of the award is Alice Spencer-Knell. Alice is a Library Associate II at Anne Arundel County Public Library. Since starting work at the Busch Annapolis Library in 2021, Alice has demonstrated strong leadership skills and a positivity and compassion that resonates with both her colleagues and the people she supervises. As the co-page supervisor, she mentors page staff, leads team meetings and ensures that pages feel safe and have the resources they need to succeed. Alice advocated for changes that improved measures for ensuring that pages are supported and visible during their shifts and are equipped with the tools necessary to extract themselves from uncomfortable situations. Alice is patient and kind in all her interactions with staff. Alice recently mentored a colleague on the circulation staff, giving them opportunities to interact with children during storytimes, which gave them the confidence to apply for and receive a promotion. Alice demonstrates compassionate leadership that builds trust and brings out the best in everyone she helps.

The Honorary Membership Award

This recognizes a lifetime of significant contributions to libraries and librarianship. We have two winners this year.

The first is Debby Bennett, who retired in June 2024 as Caroline County Public Library's Executive Director after 41 years of service. Debby was an active member of Maryland Library Association (MLA), the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA), and many Maryland State Library Agency committees and teams including the staff development team and the Trustee Manual revision committee. In MAPLA, she was the treasurer and unofficial MAPLA historian. She also served on the State Library Resource Center Oversight Commission in 2015. During her career at Caroline County Public Library, she opened Teen Zone, which received national recognition for its innovative design. She served as the President of the Eastern Shore Regional Library Board in 2022 and mentored and advised many new Directors. She truly believes in the power of libraries and sharing knowledge. As an MLA member, Debby led and served on the Awards Committee for many years. Now it is her turn to be recognized!

The second winner is Kerry O'Donnell of Wicomico Public Library. For nearly two decades, Kerry has been the driving force behind the success of the Pittsville and Centre branches in Wicomico County. Her accomplishments embody what it takes to be a rural librarian. Kerry represents the heart of rural librarianship, where resourcefulness, creativity and perseverance are essential. Her ability to transform small satellite libraries into vibrant community centers is a testament to her exceptional leadership and dedication. From personally moving collections during branch expansions to fostering a welcoming, inclusive environment for patrons, Kerry has consistently gone above and beyond. She has advocated

for expanded collections, innovative programming, and improved access to technology in areas that often lack needed resources. Kerry's deep understanding of her customers and her ability to connect on a personal level creates a sense of belonging and loyalty. Kerry's dedication to MLA's mission, values and ethics is evident in her work. She consistently strives to provide equitable access to information and services, promote literacy, and foster a love of learning in her community.

The Libraries Change Communities Award

This recognizes a "collaborative effort to promote innovative library-based initiatives involving the community." We have two team winners for this award this year.

The first award winners are Sarah Mullen, Michele Noble, and Vilma Sandoval-Sall of Anne Arundel County Public Library for their work with [Seeds4Success](#), a non-profit organization committed to "working together as a community to provide children from low-income communities with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life." The Seeds4Success tutors and mentors work with underprivileged students from Pre-K through high school. About half of these students are Spanish speakers. Since Spring of 2022, Seeds4Success middle school students have gathered at the Eastport Annapolis Neck Library each Tuesday at 4 p.m. during the academic year for two hours of tutoring and sessions on social skills and college/career preparation. They have library cards, borrow materials, use public computers, interact with staff, and feel comfortable in the library. Vilma provides regular lessons about the wealth of resources available to them at the library from books and online tutoring to career assessment and test preparation. This partnership is now in its fourth year and has been so successful that Seeds4Success awarded the branch their first ever "Caring Community Award" in honor of their "unwavering

commitment to ensure that Annapolis residents have resources and partnerships to educate, enrich and inspire the lives of all people.”

The second 2025 Libraries Change Communities Award goes to Nay Keppler of Baltimore County Public Library for the Community Reading Festival. This year, the Woodlawn branch hosted its second annual Community Reading Festival. During the first year when Nay, the branch’s library manager, created the program, 175 attendees came to Gwynn Oak Park to celebrate the library and all things literacy. For the second year, the event moved inside the library and attendance more than doubled to 450 visitors. The festival included a parachute storytime, the Double Dutch Lady and Hooplove hula hooping performances and classes, facepainting, a visit with a fire truck and firefighter, a food truck, and outreach from community groups such as BGE, Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups, the Judy Center, WIC Port Discovery and several small businesses that were graduates of BCPL’s Entrepreneur Academy. The event started with a simple idea to celebrate books and reading and turned into a celebration of Woodlawn that provided neighbors with the opportunity to share their love for their community.

The MLA President’s Customer Service Award

This award recognizes outstanding achievement in offering customer service and providing community leadership. This year’s winner is Sierra Walker and the staff of Project ENCORE (Encouraging New Community Opportunities through Re-entry and Empowerment) at the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Sierra is the program coordinator for Project ENCORE, a restorative justice initiative working to break down “institutional obstacles and societal reintegration hurdles that contribute to reoffending.” Sierra manages multiple aspects to acquire resources and tools for her customers. She

and her team work with other services within Pratt Library and with community partners such as the Compassion Closet, ReCOUP Business Accelerator and the Career Connection Program. Sierra and her team dedicate their time and energy to these programs which results in a positive impact on their community.

The Outstanding Member Award

This year’s award goes to Tif Sutherland of Calvert Library. The Outstanding Member Award recognizes a member of MLA who has effectively provided sustained service to MLA and significantly enhanced its mission and goals. Tif is the immediate Past President of MLA as well as the current Chair of the Library Advocacy Interest Group and former Chair of MLA’s Conference Committee. During their presidency, Tif championed passage of the Freedom to Read bill by representing Maryland Libraries on national interviews as well as supporting Carroll County Public Library at their Board of Education meetings. Tif was the recipient of the Freedom to Read Foundation’s 2024 Conable Conference Scholarship to attend the ALA Annual Conference. Tif continues to work on Intellectual Freedom with MLA as they move forward the Intellectual Freedom Helpline program, of which MLA is one of 10 pilot sites nationwide. In addition, Tif is committed to advocating for soft skills and encouraging customer service-focused library workers. Tif is dedicated to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion within all libraries.

The Outstanding Support Staff Award

This year’s award goes to Shirley Mason of Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL). The award recognizes a library paraprofessional or support staff member who made a significant contribution to libraries in Maryland. Shirley works as a Circulation Service Manager at BPCL.

She works toward ensuring that her branch is a safe space for a diverse community of customers. She lives and works in the community, so she understands the needs of the customers, how to reach out, and how to provide support where the needs are the greatest. Shirley is also on the Steering Committee of BCPL’s Black Library Workers Affinity Group. Shirley is a member of MLA’s Support Staff Division and has served as the secretary of the Black Caucus of MLA. Shirley’s unending commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion has led her to provide programs such as Safety and Security in Libraries, Microaggressions, and The Impact of AI on the Black Community. Shirley is a leader who imparts her knowledge and experience to new and seasoned library employees on many levels.

The Outstanding Volunteer Award

This year’s award goes to Lois Findlay, a volunteer at Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL). Lois has made an exceptional impact on the Busch Annapolis Library through her dedicated efforts to expand the sewing programs for the community. Lois initially approached library staff with a well-conceived proposal to enhance these programs. She diligently researched the goals of AACPL’s makerspace to ensure that her proposal aligned perfectly with the library’s mission and objectives. The programs that Lois leads have flourished, benefiting a diverse range of participants from elementary-aged children to adults. Lois has led 45 classes with a total of 200 participants over the past year. Her contributions have enriched the lives of the participants, fostering creativity, skill development, and community pride through the art of sewing.

The Project of the Year Award

This award honors a project completed by a group of people, exemplifying the highest level of achievement and professional standards and providing inspiration

to other libraries. There are two winners this year.

The first is Thomas Vose of the Ruth Enlow Library of Garrett County for the [Classic Buttons Program](#). ♦

Thomas, Director at Ruth Enlow Library, created the program which involved a list of classic books that customers could check out and read and then return to receive a corresponding customized button. Readers win prizes based on the number of buttons they collect. The program resulted in an average increase in circulation of 108% for the 12 months following the addition of the title to the “Buttons” list. The initiative caused a significant spike in interest in the classic literature included in the program. More than 1000 buttons have been given away since the program’s inception and entire classes have started collecting buttons based on the literature they have read. The program has expanded several times since it began and has led people to rediscover great literature for all ages and in all genres.

The second winner is Andrea Berstler of Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) for the Mock Trial Camp. As the Executive Director of CCPL, Andrea led the Mock Trial Camp, a two-day competition where students learn about the legal system by taking on a case that challenges them to think critically about timely issues. Acting as attorneys and witnesses, students portray the defense or plaintiff/prosecution and are scored on their performances by judges. During the 2023 camp 39 students participated and in 2024 there were 55 students with a full wait list only days after registration opened. The program is a partnership between Carroll County Public Schools and Carroll County Public Library, a collaboration that strengthens educational outcomes, enhances educational opportunities, fosters community ties, supports the development of well-rounded, informed citizens, and builds a more informed, connected community.



For more information about the MLA Awards, please visit the [awards page](#) on the MLA website. The honorees will receive their awards at the Maryland Library Association Conference in May 2025.

Thank you to my fellow Awards Committee members: Amy Miller Meyers, Cindy Steinhoff, Mary Anne Bowman, and Janet Salazar. Thanks also to everyone who took the time to submit nominations for these important awards. ■

Want to get more involved with MLA? Check out some of our Caucuses, Divisions, Committees, and Interest Groups!

CAUCUS

Black Caucus of the Maryland Library Association (BCMLA)

DIVISIONS

Adult Services and Reference Division
Association of College and Research Libraries, MD
Leadership Development Division
Support Staff Division
Youth Services Division

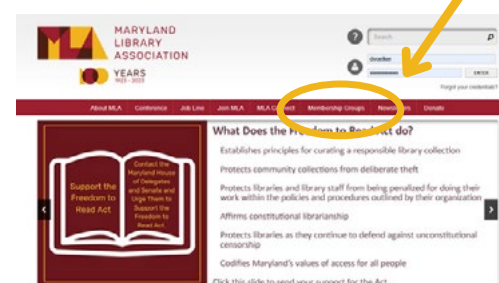
COMMITTEES & PANELS

Awards Committee
Intellectual Freedom Panel
Legislative Panel
Marketing Committee
Maryland Author Award Committee
Professional Development Panel

INTEREST GROUPS

Emerging Adults Interest Group
Future of Libraries Interest Group
LGBTQ+ Interest Group
Library Advocacy Interest Group
Maryland Adult Programming Interest Group
Materials Interest Group
Outreach Services Interest Group
Readers' Advisory Interest Group
Sustainability Interest Group
Technical Services Interest Group
Teen Interest Group

With your MLA membership, you can join our groups at any time on the MLA website or by emailing mla@mdlib.org.



Highlights from the Maryland Statewide Public Services Conference

All Things Circ!

Paul Chasen, Enoch Pratt Free Library/Maryland State Library Resource Center

All photographs courtesy of John Cassini, Enoch Pratt Free Library.

ON TUESDAY, FEB. 25, AND WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26, 2025, the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Maryland State Library Resource Center hosted their Public Services Conference, focusing on circulation topics, customer service, and mental health and well-being. Virtually, attendees had opportunities to learn from special guest speakers outside of libraries, and one from within Maryland libraries who specializes in Library of Things. In-person attendees had opportunities to participate in informative and interactive sessions, panel discussions, and hands-on activities.

Tuesday, February 25, 2025: The Virtual Day

The virtual conference day had between 120-130 people in attendance at each Zoom session. Our keynote speaker, Josh Levinson, Founder and CEO of Charm City Run, answered questions on how small business practices could be applied to libraries. Josh helped us better understand that, even if his store locations are making profits, they operate similarly to libraries by doing more with less and focusing on building relationships within their communities to gain interest in their products and services. Danielle Meister, Assistant Secretary of Homeless Solutions at the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, gave us insight into the populations that libraries serve who experience homelessness and shared how public service staff can be prepared to introduce them to resources that meet their everyday needs. Karen Earp, Youth Services Manager at the Paul S. Sarbanes Branch, Wicomico Public Library, discussed how her library's Library of Little Things positively impacts families and engages kids with the "more than books" side of what libraries have to offer.

The attendees reacted positively to the entire day:

- 👤 I found it very insightful and interactive. There were a lot of interesting Q&As. Thank you for a worthwhile experience!
- 👤 I liked the whole event and plan to attend next year.
- 👤 Well worth my time!

Wednesday, February 26, 2025: The In-Person Day

The conference day inside the Central Library/SLRC included some of the best weather

that Maryland can get at the end of February, plenty of carpools arriving for a full day of learning experiences, and presenters ready to provide library staff with something different connected to their roles, responsibilities, and well-being. Our day started off with Chad Helton, the new President and CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, in conversation with Liz Sundermann-Zinger, Chief of the Central Library and Maryland State Library Resource Center, about how his career and life's journey developed in libraries and how others can benefit from his lessons learned.

Another big highlight of the day was attendees learning more about the Central Library and SLRC through guided tours. Besides the opportunity to tour most of the building, there were specialized tours of the Central Circulation Department and the special collections departments in the building's western annex. Our conference team learned that we may need to offer these types of tours more than once during the day!

We offered two panel discussions, "Career Pathways: Oh, The Places We Will Go!" and "Past, Present, and Future of Circulation." Attendees immersed themselves in what the panelists had to share and asked as many questions as possible before time was up.

"How-to" types of public service sessions were provided by Pratt/SLRC staff and guest speakers from other library systems. Chris Cannon's "Contaminated Materials Review" went into the nitty-gritty of containment and cleanup. Tif Sutherland of Calvert Library facilitated a Customer Service/Privacy session which resonated with staff who witness different types of behaviors during any given workday.

For those in attendance who needed time to collect their thoughts, the day also offered chair yoga, collage-making, and Reiki energy activities.

Feedback from attendees included:

- 👤 Always a great opportunity to see other library systems, learn how staff came up through the ranks, hear stories of their personal experiences and advice, and interact and network with staff who perform the same type of work.
- 👤 Excellent use of a day. The conference was validating and energizing. Food was great. Timing was perfect. Thank you!!
- 👤 This conference was very beneficial to me, as someone who is newer to library systems.

Please be on the lookout for more opportunities to attend SLRC conferences and webinars in the [Professional Development menu of our website](#). ■



Liz Sundermann-Zinger, Chief of SLRC, and Chad Helton, President and CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, are at the center of everyone's attention at the start of the in-person conference day.

Conference attendees filled the Wheeler Auditorium as they focused on the Keynote session with Chad Helton, President and CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, and Liz Sundermann-Zinger, Chief of SLRC.





Danette Frederique, Licensed Therapist/Certified Yoga Teacher, gets everyone prepared for Chair Yoga in the Children's Department's Day Room.

An aerial view of conference attendees beginning to gather in the Central Hall for tours.



All Things Circ: A Participant's Perspective

Brittany Macon, Howard County Library System

CIRCULATION IS VITAL TO THE FLOW OF INFORMATION in and out of a library. The front desk is usually the first place customers stop to ask questions, get directions, and inquire about materials, classes, and services.

This year's Maryland Statewide Public Services Conference celebrated the contributions made by Circulation staff and supported them by providing two days full of keynote speakers, resources, Q&A panels, fellowship, and activities for relaxation and creative fun. Here are some of the highlights from my two-day experience.

Day One - Virtual

Phone Clock Alarm Sounds

I roll over and see that it is almost time to get up and prepare for the conference. Even though the first day is virtual, I'm a consummate prepper. Pen and paper? Check. Beverage? Check. Strong internet connection? Check.

After connecting to the Zoom meeting, I waited to be admitted. Once in, I was among attendees from all over the state, tuned in for an inspiring and informative presentation from local businessman, Josh Levinson, the Founder & CEO of Charm City Run.

The topic, "Customer Service & Community Through a Specialty Retail Lens" highlighted concepts such as giving back to the community you work in, being authentic in your customer interactions, and starting conversations that involve active listening— as opposed to pushing what you think is the customer's primary need.

Next, Danielle Meister, Assistant Secretary of Homeless Solutions, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, emphasized the importance of equipping library staff with knowledge about resources available for unhoused patrons. While library workers are not social workers, understanding where to direct individuals for assistance is essential, as libraries often serve as sanctuaries for the homeless population.

The last session of the virtual day, Library of Little Things, was my favorite because it got me thinking outside of the box, in terms of what nontraditional items can be added to a library collection. Fun examples at the Paul S. Sarbanes Branch of Wicomico Public Library, such as a Nintendo Switch or take-and-go arts & crafts kits, not only enhance the patron experience, but add variety to library collections.

While day one was informative, I looked forward to attending the in-person session on day two.

Day Two – In Person

"I'll get out here!" I said to my Uber driver as I jumped out of the car and headed towards the entrance of the stately Enoch Pratt Free Library. Traffic in downtown Baltimore was brutal, and we had just turned the corner to arrive near the entrance of the library. Even though I had no idea where I was going, I was comforted by seeing many sweater- and sneaker-wearing individuals who looked like fellow library folk enter the building, so I filed in right behind them.

After passing the security checkpoint, I entered the lobby, gasped on the inside and tried not to look like an obvious newbie as I stood in wonder and took in my new surroundings. Enoch Pratt is one of those libraries that looks like what a library feels like. An impressive yet cozy structure, you can smell the old books on wooden shelves, hear the hushed tones bounce off the marble floors, and marvel at the impressive collection categorized by subject matter, each sequestered in its own wing, and attended by a specialized librarian.

Resisting the urge to stare up at the gorgeous decorative ceiling and spin around, I jetted to hear the Welcome and Keynote speech from Chad Helton, President and CEO of Enoch Pratt Free Library. Hosted in the Wheeler Auditorium, the charming, vintage theater-style room was packed as library workers learned life-lessons and received encouragement from Helton's knowledgeable yet down-to-earth personality.

After the session was over, I went down to the lobby for the Circulation Department tour. I love seeing how other Circulation Departments operate. And I could feel the staff's sense of pride as they explained their responsibilities and see the joy they experience doing their jobs. Their attitude was infectious as those of us in Circulation asked inquisitively about their processes and took note of the various services offered.

One of the unique service offerings at Enoch Pratt is passport applications and photos. To efficiently accommodate customers, one side of the Circulation Department is set up to accept those applications and the other side is where the more traditional circulation services occur, such as holds, customer accounts and new library card applications.



MARYLAND STATE
LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER
ENOCH PRATT *free* LIBRARY

Since this was my first year attending the conference, I wanted to go on the second tour too, which was of the State Library Resource Center. We got to take peeks into the African American Library and the Maryland Department, both of which do an outstanding job of maintaining records and archives that preserve and honor history.

Next, we visited the Best & Next Department which won me over immediately as soon as I arrived. Albums and VHS tapes, alongside DVDs and CDs, filled the shelves, flooding me with memories of nostalgia, while dim lights set a mellow mood as jazz music softly wafted from hidden speakers.

The next session I attended was a panel discussion titled Career Pathways: Oh, The Places We Will Go! The panel had a diverse group of people who shared their love for circulation with the audience. It was life-affirming to hear stories of decades-long professionals still loving their jobs. And it was rewarding to hear that while some of them may have gone on to other careers, they plan on making their way back to circulation at some point because they love the work that much. They also talked about their previous work experience, the careers they have had since then, what they liked the best about their jobs and how the job impacted their life. For anyone on the fence about what side of the library they want to work in or anyone in need of a career refresher, this panel was the perfect one to choose.

The next session I attended was Past, Present and Future of Circulation where Circulation staffers and managers discussed how things work in their respective branches while also fielding questions from the audience. It was interesting to find out how different libraries work as they shared anecdotes and commiserated with each other about experiences unique to Circulation staff.

I wrapped up the day at a networking activity. Here I enjoyed some more snacks, made a neat and memorable souvenir of a bookmark, and made some new library friends.

I left the conference feeling even more confident that I'm on the right path. I love my job, enjoy working with my colleagues, and treasure interacting with customers at the desk.

If you have never attended this conference, I can't say enough good things about it, and I highly recommend it. Also, if you have gone before, you should go again. Get a fresh perspective, bond with your peers, and learn something new. I'll be at the next one and hope to see you there too. ■



The “stately” Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Photo courtesy Carol M. Highsmith Archive at the Library of Congress.

“The Enoch Pratt Free Library, located in Baltimore, Maryland, is one of the oldest free public libraries in the United States. Established in 1882 after a grant from philanthropist Enoch Pratt.”

Perks Partners: A New Business Collaboration

Laura Boonchaisri, St. Mary's County Library

ST. MARY'S COUNTY LIBRARY launched a new business partnership in February 2025 called Perks Partners. Through our Perks Partners program, the library spreads the word about local businesses through our network, including social media, in-library messaging, and email messaging. In return, the partner business offers a 10 percent discount to library card holders.

This collaboration will enhance the reach of local businesses and offer another avenue for advertising services, while also raising awareness of library offerings and attracting new library card holders. In one month, 13 local businesses including restaurants, museums, auto repair, and even a real estate broker have signed up to be Perks Partners! It's already a very popular new perk for our cardholders. ■



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OFF**

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www.stmalib.org

Mock Trial Camp at Carroll County Public Library

Kati Townsley and Joseph Thompson,
Carroll County Public Library
Photos courtesy of CCPL staff.

Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) is tremendously grateful to the Maryland Library Association in having our Mock Trial Camp be recognized with a 2025 Project of the Year Award. We would like to take this opportunity to share information about the program to help other libraries that might be considering developing their own Mock Trial program for middle school students.

CCPL's Mock Trial Camp is designed for Carroll County Public Schools students entering grades six through nine. During this two-day competition, students learn about Mock Trial by taking on a legal case, either civil or criminal in nature, that challenges them to think critically about timely issues. Acting as attorneys and witnesses, students portray the defense or plaintiff/prosecution and are scored on their performances by the judges. The program takes place in July when the middle school students are on summer vacation and experienced high school students are available to serve as coaches.

Our planning for the first Mock Trial Camp began in spring 2023. CCPL's Executive Director, Andrea Berstler, was familiar with mock trial through participation by her nephew in high school. We were also aware of the long-running successful high school experience led by the coordinators of secondary Social Studies at Carroll County Public Schools. The next step was to leverage these existing partnerships, form a small team of CCPL staff, and begin planning for what mock trial would look like if we adapted it as a middle school experience.

We have now offered two programs and are planning our third to take place in July 2025. During the 2023 Mock Trial Camp, we welcomed 39 students into the experience. The following year, 2024, we had 55 students participate. We had a full wait list after only three days of registration and could have had more students participate if we only had



space for them!

The student participants have benefited in several significant ways. They have been able to further their understanding of the law, court procedures, and the legal system, while learning more about law-related professions. They have also increased their proficiency in skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, research, reasoning, critical thinking, and teamwork.

What makes this program so unique is the collaborative partnership between Carroll County Public Schools and Carroll County Public Library, which is vital to the program's success. Each partner brings ex-

perience that is integral to planning and carrying it out. The collaboration supports the development of well-rounded, informed citizens, and builds a more informed, connected community.

The Honorable Brian L. DeLeonardo, Associate Judge, Carroll County Circuit Court, Fifth Judicial Circuit offered the following observations based on his participation during both years of the program:

"For many years I served as a coach, and now a judge, to the high school mock trial program. As a result, I know first-hand the incredible benefits students receive participating in mock trial. That is why when the Carroll County Public Library asked if I was willing to participate in a summer Mock Trial Camp designed for middle school students, I agreed without hesitation.

I have found the Camp to be such a unique and rewarding program, and I feel very privileged to be a part of "judging" the middle school students in the courtroom portion of the Camp. Middle school students receive the opportunity to develop skills such as identifying the strengths and weaknesses of arguments, examining the case from the other party's viewpoint, and refining skills of argument and persuasion. A wonderful

aspect of the Camp is utilizing Carroll County's high school mock trial team members as coaches for the middle school students, which creates a true "win-win" for all students in the County.

As a result of the tremendous efforts of the Carroll County Public Library, this program has become a highly sought-out summer camp that often fills as soon as sign-ups are announced. Over the years, when I have had the opportunity to speak with the students and their parents, they simply rave about their experience. Many of these students also share that they look forward to participating in the high school mock trial program as soon as they are able. Their excitement to continue developing their "courtroom skills" is great to see. Without question, the Mock Trial Camp is making a difference in not only the lives of students participating, but in the long run the community as a whole."

Parents and guardians of the student participants have also offered high praise for the program, including:

- 👤 "This is our second year participating in mock trial and we absolutely love it. The logistics are so well done, cases are relevant and interesting, and my son genuinely learns and enjoys his time."
- 👤 "It was great. She gained confidence. I wish there were more camps throughout the year for interested students. Thank you so much for what you do."
- 👤 "My son loved the camp, enjoyed the experience and learned a lot. Honestly, I think he would have loved to do this as a week-long experience - perhaps something that we'll look into if we can find one offered. The fact that this was a free camp is amazing!"
- 👤 "Thank you for the experience that the kids will remember and learn from for a lifetime."

You can read more about the camp in the Carroll County Times, July 19, 2023, [Mock trial camp teaches Carroll County middle school students presentation skills, teamwork – Baltimore Sun](#).



OutRAIGeous Reviews

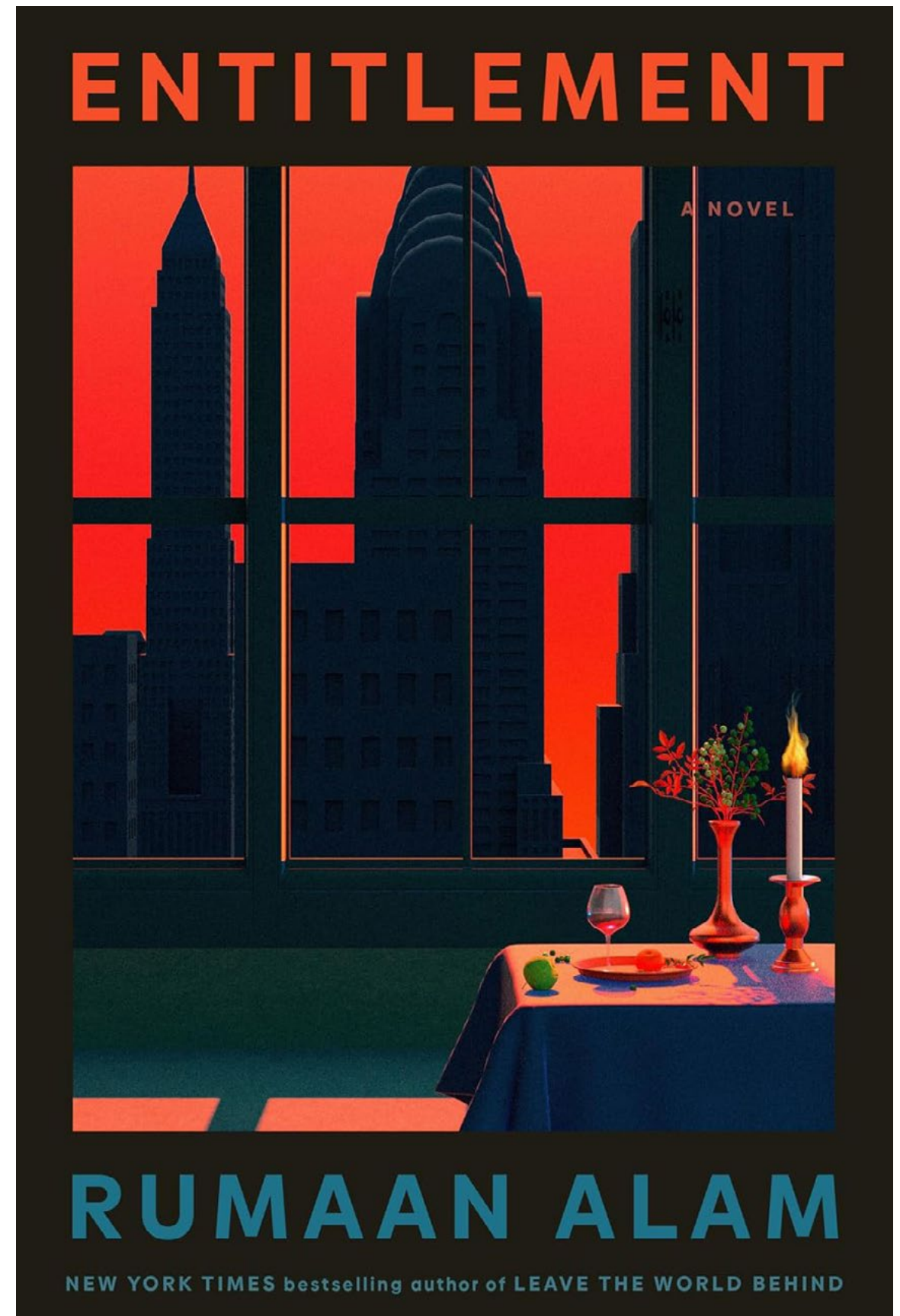
*Books recommended by members of
the Reader's Advisory Interest Group*

***Entitlement* by Rumaan Alam (Riverhead Books, 2024)**

Review by Monica McAbee

Brooke Orr is thirty-three and trying to decide what to do with her life. Having dumped a teaching job, she is now the new program coordinator at the Asher and Carol Jaffee Foundation. It's her job to identify worthy recipients of Asher Jaffee's massive fortune. Asher, a white man in his eighties eager to dispose of his billions, is intrigued and impressed by this young Black woman's seeming forthrightness and drive. When he offers her a generous check for apparently no reason, Brooke tries to turn it down. Asher, calling Brooke his protégé, convinces her that she deserves it. Unfortunately, this gift becomes an insidious poison as Brooke begins to think of herself as entitled to more and more – and starts taking it. Plagued by self-absorbed tunnel vision, Brooke seeks a sense of purpose and lasting security but goes about obtaining these things in all the wrong ways.

I read this because I loved Alam's previous novel, *Leave the World Behind*. *Entitlement* uses a similar technique of conveying a sense of foreboding without having to spell everything out for the reader. Astute, gripping, and thought-provoking, *Entitlement* is perfect for readers who love sophisticated tales of psychological suspense and social commentary.



***Starlight Mates (The Nexus Series Book 1)* by G. Bailey (Midnight Publishing, 2024)**

Review by Amanda Crabill

This is the first book in a new four-book series that is INSANE. The main character's name is Gwen, and she is a Nexus shifter. Her Nexus is a monster. So, to save her five fated mates' souls and her own life, at fifteen, she rejects them and runs with her parents and stays on the run until she is caught and brought back. The worldbuilding and suspense of this story is amazing. So many emotions are brought out within this story, such as intrigue, secrecy, heartbreak and trauma. You really feel for Gwen and everything she suffers through, but she is an amazingly strong person and continues to follow what she believes is the right path no matter the cost. The political drama that is constantly in the background of the story hints at a lot of problems to come. The relationship between the main characters is also packed with drama. I would recommend this book if you like dark romantasy, wolf shifters, fated mates, forced proximity, the "why choose" romance trope, and a strong female main character. The second book of this series, *Celestial Alphas*, was published in December 2024.

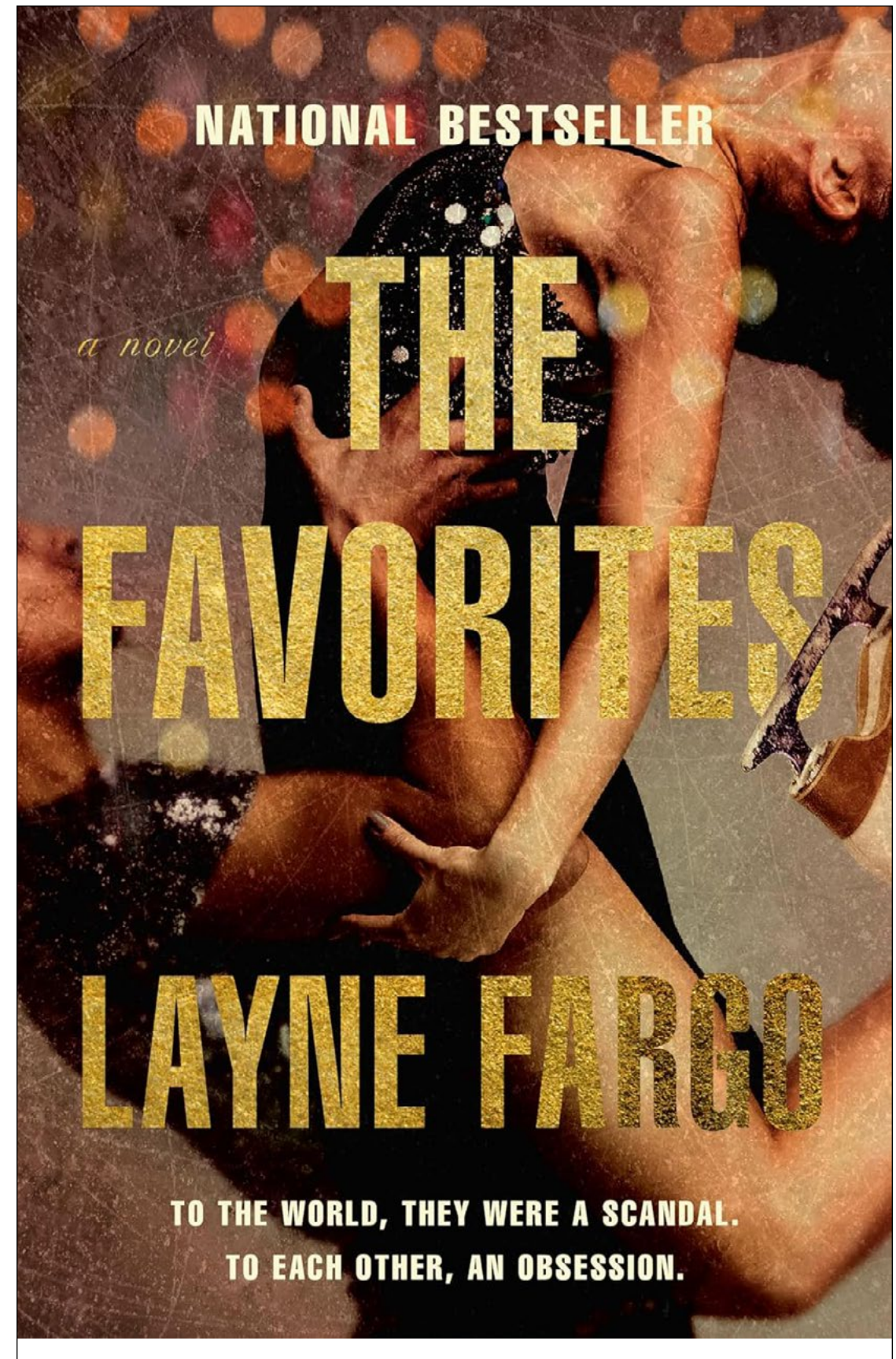


***The Favorites* by Layne Fargo (Random House, 2025)**

Review by Theo Scully

If you are someone who loves it when the Olympics come around, not for the sports, but for the drama and gags, then you'll want to read *The Favorites* by Layne Fargo. The book switches between interviews with close friends and rivals and a tell-all by famed Olympic skater Katarina Shaw about her career and relationship with foster-kid-turned-skater Heath Rocha. The two have been inseparable since early childhood in Cleveland and cling to each other both on and off the ice. Through the years, Kat and Heath's relationship has been constantly evolving—from childhood sweethearts to champion ice dancers to bitter rivals and more. Their chemistry and rebellious attitudes captivated the world and elevated ice dancing to a household sport. But when a shocking incident at the Sochi Games brings their partnership to a sudden end, the two withdraw and are silent until an unauthorized documentary airs ten years later, and Kat decides to tell her and Heath's side of the story.

Don't worry—you don't need to know anything about ice dancing to enjoy *The Favorites*. What will keep you captivated will be the hot and cold relationship between Kat and Heath, as well as the complex friendships between them and Bella and Garrett Lin, another ice-dancing duo whose lives intertwine with theirs. This retelling of *Wuthering Heights* is faithful to the romance and suspense of the original and will make you want to read it if you haven't before. I would highly recommend this book for readers who enjoy low-stakes thrillers, messy relationships, and complex female characters.





Maryland Library Association's Future of Libraries Interest Group

Libraries Building Community Relationships

Tracy Miller, Harford County Public Library

In January, the Future of Libraries Interest Group met to discuss “We Are not Alone: Libraries Making a Stronger Impact in a Global Community,” a chapter in the book *Libraries 2035: Imagining the Next Generation of Libraries*. We were joined by the author of the chapter, Lynn Silipigni Connaway. Thanks to Paul Chasen for inviting our guest and facilitating the program.

Lynn Silipigni Connaway, PhD, is the Director of the Library Trends and User Research group at OCLC Research and leads the User Studies research. She is the author or co-author of several industry publications and books, and she speaks internationally on library topics.

Lynn begins her chapter in *Libraries 2035* with this statement, “The library of 2035 will be dependent upon relationship building and adaptability.” She goes on to review the history of libraries and their relationship with customers. She explains that libraries initially did not place much emphasis on the needs of the customers. Then, there was an effort made to better understand how customers use the library through data collection and analysis. In the present, she argues that libraries need to focus on building relationships with their community.

Lynn believes that in a world of AI and other technologies, people are craving human connection. This need provides an excellent opportunity for librarians to act as experts and translators of the digital world to our users. We can reach those users by creating relationships with them and other organizations in the community that serve them.

Lynn emphasizes the need for librarians to tell the story of the library. All the data collection and numbers that we have gathered can be used to support those stories. The

important thing is the conversation and the connection that libraries have within the community.

In our conversation with Lynn, we talked about broadening the definition of information literacy and focusing on the needs of the user. We talked about the definition of community within a particular library and having that community be based on the mission and the goals of the library. Lynn talked about a library that made themselves more community-focused by requiring everyone at a certain level to become involved in a community activity to represent the library.

Lynn challenged the attendees of the meeting to pay attention and observe people in their everyday lives. She told us to pay attention to the different ways that people use the spaces they occupy. Also, how can you take what you see and bring it back to your library?

If this conversation sounds interesting to you, please join in by attending a Future of Libraries Interest Group meeting! We meet virtually on the first Monday of the month and welcome everyone from the Maryland library community. ■



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Panel

Word on the Street: What Does Intersectionality Mean for Libraries?

Cassandra Miller, Baltimore County Public Library

You've likely encountered the term "intersectionality" in discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion, but what does it mean—and why is it relevant to library workers?

Coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality refers to how individuals experience overlapping systems of oppression or privilege based on race, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc. Crenshaw introduced this concept to highlight how Black women face unique forms of discrimination that are not fully captured when discussing racism or sexism in isolation.

For libraries, understanding intersectionality is crucial for providing inclusive services. For instance, a program focused on LGBTQ+ history might unintentionally feature only white queer voices if it doesn't also consider racial perspectives. Similarly, a display about disability rights might overlook the viewpoints of people of color with disabilities. When we neglect the intersections of identity, we risk reinforcing the barriers we aim to dismantle.

So, what does intersectionality look like in practice?

1. Program Planning: When planning programs or inviting speakers, look for ways to reflect the diversity within communities, not just across them. A Pride event, for example, should include queer people of color, trans voices, or LGBTQ+ individuals with disabilities. Similarly, women's history programs should highlight leaders from various racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Prioritizing intersectional representation ensures programs don't unintentionally reinforce a single story but instead reflect the full complexity of the communities we serve.

2. Collection Development: Take a closer look at whose stories are being told—and whose are missing. Aim to highlight books in displays, reading lists, and programs that feature characters or authors who embody intersectionality rather than reinforcing a single narrative. For example, seek out titles about queer characters of color or Indigenous women leaders. This helps move beyond surface-level representation and reflects our communities' full range of lived experiences.

3. Workplace Culture: Remember that staff experiences are not universal. For example, a "neutral" dress code policy might unintentionally penalize Black employees for natural hairstyles or impact staff whose cultural or religious dress doesn't align with Western norms. What seems fair on paper can land differently based on identity and lived experience.

At its heart, intersectionality pushes us to move beyond one-size-fits-all thinking. It challenges us to recognize the layered identities within our communities and consider how different experiences shape how people access and engage with library spaces. Next time you plan a program or review a policy, pause and ask: "Whose voices are the loudest and whose are missing?" These questions are where intersectionality begins.

Do you have a term you'd like us to explore in future columns? Share your suggestions with us!

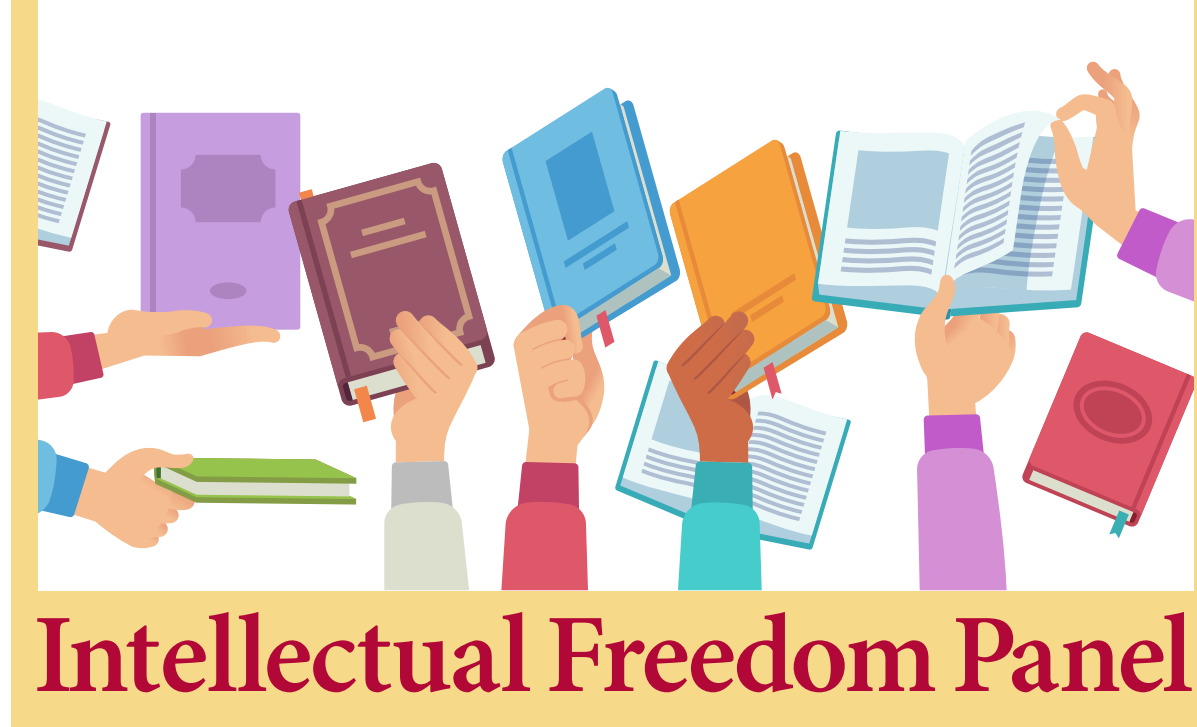
Building a Stronger LibGuide Together

William Wallace, Wicomico Public Library

Recent events continue to highlight just how much misinformation surrounds equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); who it benefits and why it matters to everyone. At its core, EDI work isn't about prioritizing one group over another; it's about ensuring our libraries reflect and serve the full breadth of our communities. When we create spaces that are more accessible, welcoming, and representative of diverse perspectives, everyone benefits, from staff to patrons to the broader community.

The Maryland Library Association's EDI Panel is working to develop a resource guide to help library staff across the state navigate this vital work. Whether you're tackling book challenges, striving to create more inclusive programming, or working to foster a supportive workplace culture, we know many libraries are already doing this work and we'd love to learn from you. If your library has policies, programs, or resources that support EDI efforts, especially those that address the challenges of today's climate, we'd welcome your input to help strengthen this guide for libraries statewide.

If you have something to share or want to connect, please reach out. Together, we can build more resilient, inclusive, and informed library spaces for all Marylanders. ■



Upcoming Activities

Lloyd Jansen, Charles County Public Library

There is a full slate of intellectual freedom programs on the schedule for the MLA/DLA Annual Conference in Ocean City:

Wednesday, 5/7/25 Pre-Conferences:

8:30-11:30 a.m.: Prepared Libraries, Empowered Teams: Landing an All Hands on Deck Challenge-Ready Plan (Presenter: Val Edwards, co-author of *Prepared Libraries, Empowered Teams*) \$90

1-4 p.m.: Intellectual Freedom in Crisis Times (Presenters: Tess Wilson and Alison Macrina, Library Freedom Project) \$90

Thursday, 5/8/25:

8:30-9:30 a.m.: Intellectual Freedom Helpline (Presenter: Tif Sutherland, Calvert Library)

10:45-11:45 a.m.: Privacy Programming in Your Library: Using Library Freedom Project Resources (Presenters: Tess Wilson and Alison Macrina, Library Freedom Project)

2:15-3:15 p.m.: About Book Bans (Presenter: Becky Calzada, American Association of School Librarians)

3:45-4:45 p.m.: How to Establish a Book Sanctuary in Your Library and Community (Presenters: Catherine Hollerbach, Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL), and Rachel Myers, AACPL Discoveries: The Library at the Mall)

Friday, 5/9/25:

11 a.m.-12 p.m.: Banned Books Week at an Academic Library: Collaboration and Promoting Student Engagement (Presenters: Maren Cornett, Jessica Dai and Bob Tolliver, University of Delaware)

1-2 p.m.: MLA | DLA: The Ethics Edition (Presenter: Elizabeth De Coster, Towson University)

We hope to see you at one or more of these great sessions. ■



Materials Interest Group

2025 Updates

Laura Bandoch, Harford County Public Library

In case you missed it, here is a release that Hoopla sent out on Feb. 14, 2025, regarding AI-generated content on their platform:

“Updated Collection Development Policy:

We are rolling out a revised collection development policy to ensure we adhere to and evolve with industry best practices. This policy reflects our commitment to providing high-quality curated content and mitigating the presence of poorly AI-generated content, summaries, and misinformation while offering a contemporary and relevant collection in various formats that meets the informational, educational, and recreational needs of our diverse communities.

Summary Titles Update:

We have removed and parked summary titles from all vendors, with some exceptions, such as HMH Books (CliffsNotes). This action aims to reduce the total number of AI-generated summaries while offering a better patron experience and a more thoughtfully curated collection of summaries for libraries that continue to make them available. The evaluation of content in this summary category will be ongoing, and the processes will adapt as needed.

It is important to note that libraries may still choose to opt out of all summaries by contacting their sales representative.

Poor-Quality and/or Poor-Quality Artificial Intelligence (AI) Titles Update:

We have also removed and parked some aggregated publishers and authors identified

as providing poor-quality and/or poor-quality AI-generated content. We have utilized industry metadata standards to identify AI-generated content, when provided by publishers and authors. This has enabled us to flag and remove some existing Hoopla content, as well as flag and park some incoming content for further review. Currently, we are in ongoing discussions with our content providers to advocate for additional transparency in the metadata they provide around AI-generated content. However, please note that at this time, there is a lack of industry standardization in AI-generated content, specifically in the eBook publishing space.

It is important to note that libraries may still choose to opt out of all publisher-tagged AI-generated content by contacting their sales representative.

Tailored Management for Libraries:

We acknowledge that each library may have its own collection development policies. To support this, we are committed to continually developing better ways to manage the Hoopla catalog. We encourage you to reach out to our sales and support team at 800.875.2785 for assistance with any additional changes you may need to make to the Hoopla catalog to ensure alignment with your library’s collection development policy.”

Upcoming Events

If you would like to discuss topics like these, the Materials Interest Group (MIG) is meeting on the following dates from 3 p.m.- 4 p.m. on the new MLA Connect platform:

May 14, 2025

July 9, 2025

Sept. 10, 2025

Nov. 12, 2025

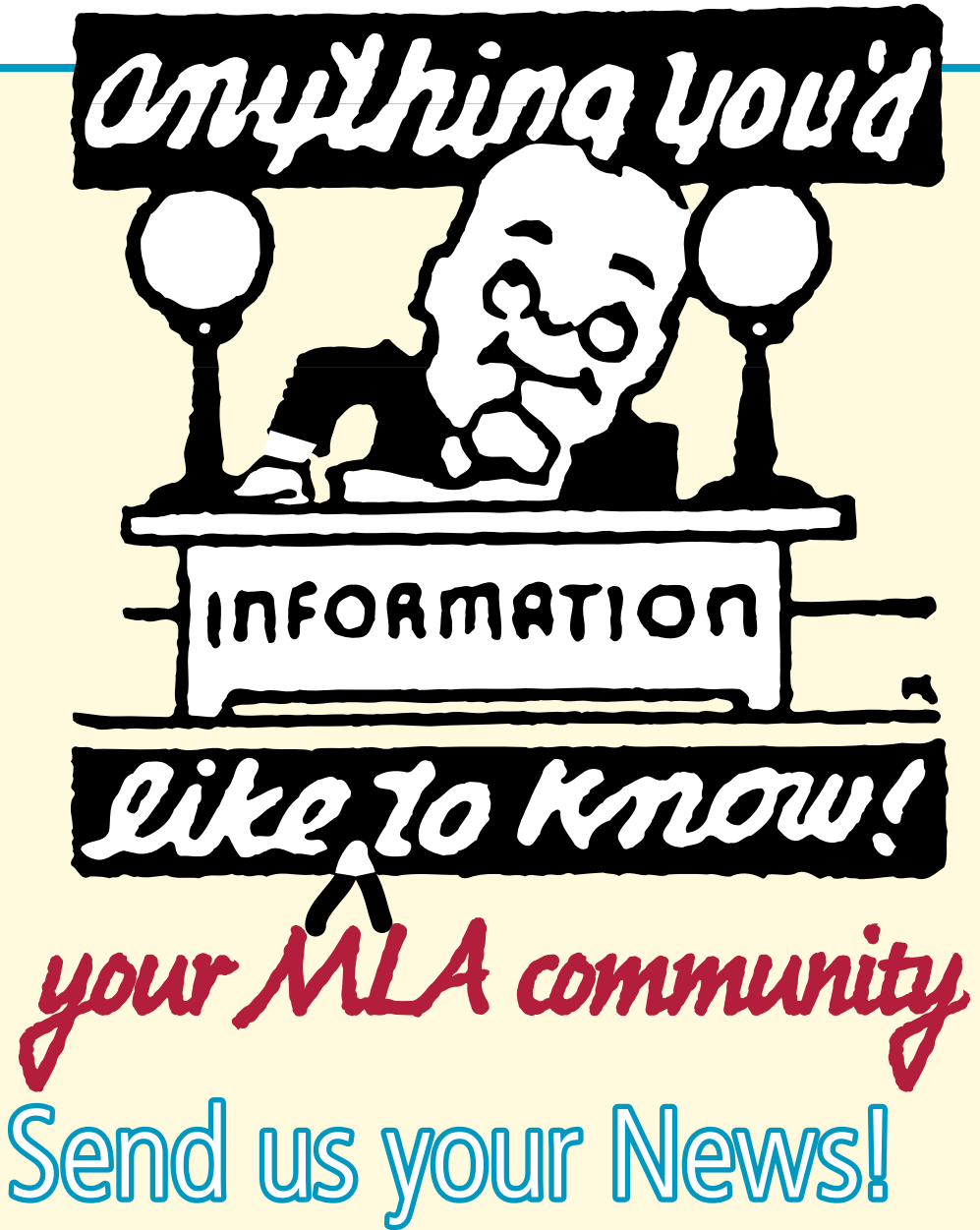
Additionally, MIG will be sponsoring the following sessions at the 2025 MLA/DLA Conference:

Riding the Waves of Library Collection Trends: We all know Romantasy is in now and circulation is rebounding from the pandemic, but what about other trends? Join us for a session that looks at new trends in publishing and collection development.

Converging Oceans: Conversations in Global Resource Sharing: Interlibrary Loan brings together resources for people all over the globe; however, not all libraries conduct resource sharing in the same way. Join us for a resource-sharing conversation where we learn about one another’s ILL practices and how we can improve on the services we provide. Attendees will learn about one another’s daily processes and best practices, as well as how Maryland’s Public Library Systems share materials across the state. Enoch Pratt Free Library staff from the MILO department will share Pratt’s practices for interlibrary

loan across both Marina and OCLC PRA-14217474 and answer questions about interlibrary loan from attendees.

Putting the “Special” in Special Collections: We will present the success we’ve had with both the DIY Education Center and the Enchanted Garden at Howard County Library System (HCLS). The programs have enabled HCLS to attract and empower new and different audiences—in many cases, customers who have never attended a library class. Library users who come to take advantage of practical, hands-on learning opportunities can also be made aware of all the things HCLS offers and perhaps take advantage of more traditional offerings (i.e. books and community space). ■



anything you'd
like to know!
your MLA community
Send us your News!

“All the news that’s fit to format.” And we mean *all*. The more you contribute, the more you help the community innovate and serve. Check the mast-head on the last page for our address, and tell us what you and your colleagues have been up to.

You’re making news. Now, let us all read it.

Support Staff Division

Support Staff Division News

Lou Sica, Baltimore County Public Library

Please join the Support Staff Division (SSD) for our programs at the MLA/DLA Conference in Ocean City!

Thursday May 8, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

The Library is for Everyone: Engaging Adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Join speaker Katie York, Health and Human Services Coordinator from the Community College of Baltimore County. This program is a transformative workshop dedicated to engaging patrons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities through a holistic approach. This program will include inclusive strategies that foster social interaction, lifelong learning, and community integration.

Friday May 9, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Let's Talk Stuff

The panelists will each discuss a new or exciting service happening at their system. Afterwards, there is time for an open discussion in which attendees can share what's happening in their libraries related to any area- circulation, technology, programming, new services, supervising, etc. Panelists include Marlyn Norton, Adult & Community Engagement Coordinator at Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL), who will be discussing BCPL's Books By Mail program, and Cassandra Zamutt from the BCPL North Point Branch, who will be discussing the Little Chef program.

Marlyn has been dedicated to enhancing library access through Mobile Services for over eight years, with six years in their current leadership role. They supervise a team of five full-time staff and oversee four innovative services designed to reach individuals who face barriers to visiting the library. Their work focuses on ensuring equitable access to



information and resources for all members of the community.

Cassandra is a librarian at the North Point branch of the Baltimore County Public Library. Cassandra worked for Orange County Library System as a Youth Program Specialist for five years before moving to Baltimore in 2023. She has developed programs for all ages and taught other library staff how to present them. Her favorite age group to work with is preschoolers. Little Chef is a series of preschool programs designed to teach early literacy, independence, patience, fine-motor skills, and culinary skills. During each program, library staff present a short story time, and then preschoolers are given the opportunity to create a simple recipe. Each recipe is chosen to allow the children to experience new flavors and learn new things. Cassandra will give a presentation on the development of Little Chef and how to introduce it at your library. ■

NASA's Night Sky Network

April's Night Sky Notes: Catch the Waves!

Kat Troche

The Electromagnetic Spectrum

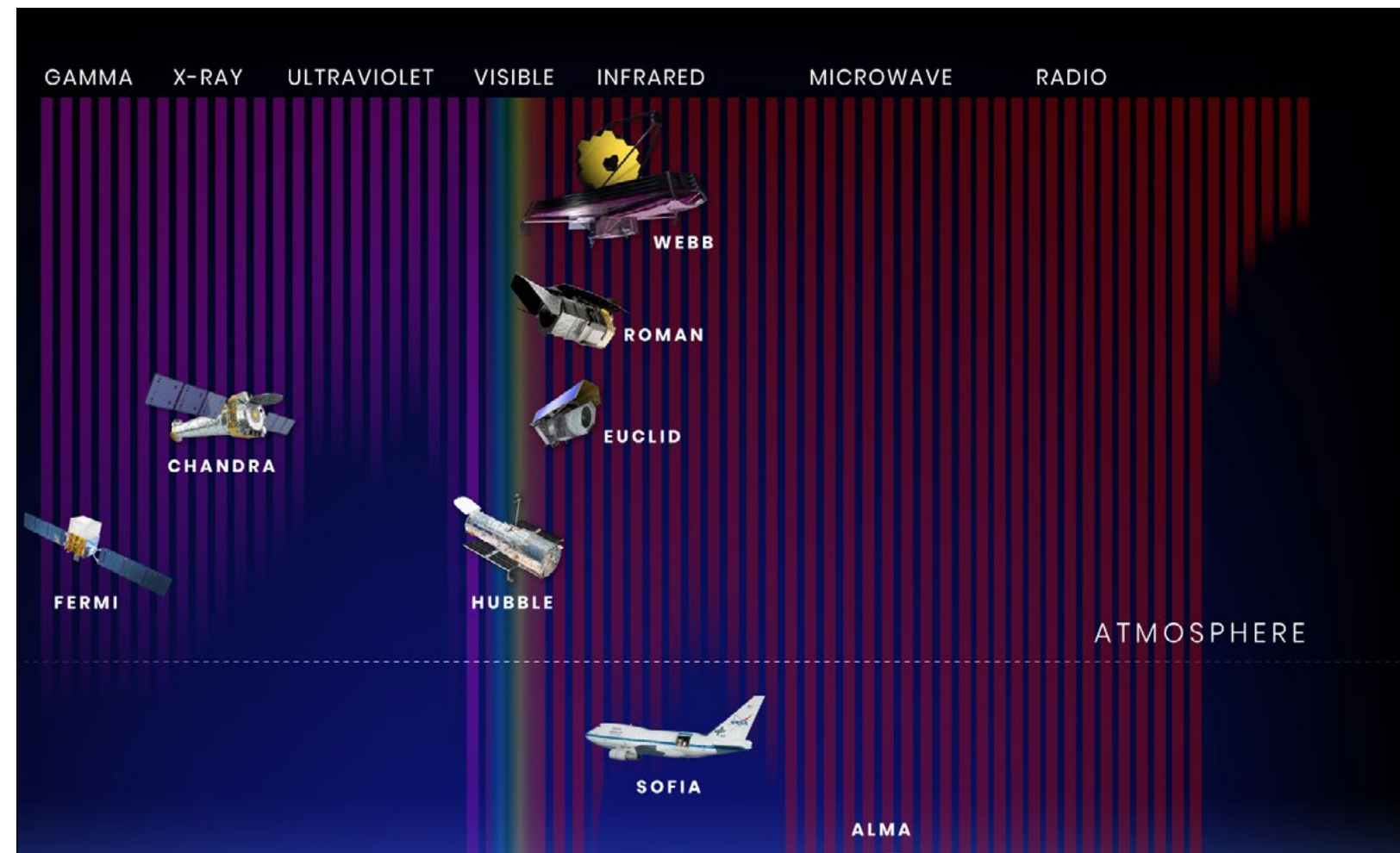
If you've ever heard the term "radio waves," used a microwave or a television remote, or had an X-ray, you have experienced a broad range of the electromagnetic spectrum! But what is the electromagnetic spectrum? According to Merriam-Webster, this spectrum is "the entire range of wavelengths or frequencies of electromagnetic radiation extending from gamma rays to the longest radio waves and including visible light." But what does that mean? Scientists think of the entire electromagnetic spectrum as many types of light, only some that we can see with our eyes. We can detect others with our bodies, like infrared light, which we feel as heat, and ultraviolet light, which can give us sunburns. Astronomers have created many detectors that can "see" in the full spectrum of wavelengths.

Telescope Types

While multiple types of telescopes operate across the electromagnetic spectrum, here are some of the largest, based on the wavelength they primarily work in:

Radio: probably the most famous radio telescope observatory would be the Very Large Array (VLA) in Socorro County, New Mexico.

This set of 25-meter radio telescopes was featured in the 1997 movie *Contact*. Astronomers use these telescopes to observe protoplanetary disks and black holes. Another famous set of radio telescopes would be the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA) located in the Atacama Desert in Chile. ALMA was one of eight radio observatories that helped produce the first image of supermassive black holes at the center of M87 and Sagittarius A* at the center of our galaxy. Radio telescopes have also been used to study the microwave portion of the electromagnetic spectrum.



This illustration shows the wavelength sensitivity of a number of current and future space- and ground-based observatories, along with their position relative to the ground and to Earth's atmosphere. The wavelength bands are arranged from shortest (gamma rays) to longest (radio waves). The vertical color bars show the relative penetration of each band of light through Earth's atmosphere. Credit: NASA, STScI.

Infrared: The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) operates in the infrared, allowing astronomers to see some of the earliest galaxies formed nearly 300 million years after the Big Bang. Infrared light allows astronomers to study galaxies and nebulae, which dense dust clouds would otherwise obscure. An excellent example is the Pillars of Creation located in the Eagle Nebula. With the side-by-side image comparison seen here, you can see the differences between what JWST and the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) were able to capture with their respective instruments.

Visible: While it does have some near-infrared and ultra-violet capabilities, the Hubble Space Telescope has primarily operated in the visible light spectrum for the last 35 years. With over 1.6 million observations made, HST has played an integral role in how we view the universe. [Review Hubble's Highlights here.](#)

X-ray: Chandra X-ray Observatory was designed to detect emissions from the hottest parts of our universe, like exploding stars. X-rays help us better understand the composition of deep space objects, highlighting areas unseen by visible light and infrared telescopes. This image of the Crab Nebula combines data from five different telescopes: The VLA (radio) in red; Spitzer Space Telescope (infrared) in yellow; Hubble Space Telescope (visible) in green; XMM-Newton (ultraviolet) in blue; and Chandra X-ray Observatory (X-ray) in purple. You can view the breakdown of this multiwavelength image [here.](#)



Try This At Home

Even though we can't see these other wavelengths with our eyes, learn how to create multiwavelength images with the [Cosmic Coloring Compositor](#) activity and explore how astronomers use representational color to show light that our eyes cannot see with our [Clues to the Cosmos](#) activity. ■


This article is distributed by NASA's Night Sky Network (NSN).

The NSN program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit <https://science.nasa.gov/skywatching/night-sky-network/> to find local clubs, events, and more!



NASA's Hubble Telescope captured the Pillars of Creation in 1995  and revisited them in 2014  with a sharper view. Webb's infrared image reveals more stars by penetrating dust. Hubble highlights thick dust layers, while Webb shows hydrogen atoms and emerging stars. You can find this and other parts of the Eagle Nebula in the Serpens constellation.

Credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, STScI, Hubble Heritage Project (STScI, AURA).

 The Crab Nebula, located in the Taurus constellation, is the result of a bright supernova explosion in the year 1054, 6,500 light-years from Earth.

Credit: X-ray: NASA/CXC/SAO; Optical: NASA/STScI; Infrared: NASA/JPL/Caltech; Radio: NSF/NRAO/VLA; Ultraviolet: ESA/XMM-Newton.

Mina Pincus, Caroline County Public Library

About Mina's job and MLA responsibilities

What is your job title/employer? Professional history in libraries? Work responsibilities/special projects/initiatives?

I am the Youth Services Manager for Caroline County Public Library (CCPL). My library career began at CCPL in 2013 as a part-time youth services library associate. I was offered full-time status in 2016 and continued to hone my skills. At the urging of my supervisor and coworkers, I began graduate school in 2019 at PennWest University. I received my MLIS in 2022 and became a licensed Professional Public Librarian in Maryland.

CCPL is a small rural library system on Maryland's Eastern Shore, consisting of a central library and two smaller branches. With a staff of just 21 employees, including administration, we fill diverse roles, participating in circulation, information, and reference services while covering multiple service points and staffing the three locations as needed. This flexibility has been an advantage, allowing me to gain experience in many aspects of library services.



I supervise the youth services team, which currently includes myself and two full-time library associates. This year, I am working with administration to hire an additional part-time library associate. I oversee all aspects of collection development and maintenance for the youth collections across all three locations. Additionally, I develop, implement, oversee, and evaluate programs and services for children, young adults, and families, including the summer reading program. I also manage the youth services programming and collection development budgets.

As part of the CCPL management team, I work with administration to develop and implement the library's strategic plan and with other managers to develop and implement department, branch, and overall system goals.

I am especially proud of CCPL's acceptance into the third cohort of the Mother Goose on the Loose Hatchlings

pilot program. Despite staffing shortages, we successfully hosted two programs in collaboration with the two Judy Centers in Caroline County. Hatchlings presented unique challenges, particularly language barriers in Spanish and Haitian Creole. However, we secured two enthusiastic translators whose contributions were vital to the program's success. Our partnership with the Judy Centers also allowed us to provide meals for participants and distribute essential giveaways such as diapers, wipes, and car seats. I look forward to continuing the Hatchlings program at CCPL later this year.

What work have you done within MLA and what are your hopes and goals for your division in the upcoming year? What are you most excited about? How can the MLA community support you in achieving your goals?

Since the fall of 2022, I have served as the Newsletter Editor for the Youth Services Division (YSD) of the Maryland Library Association. While my bachelor's degree is in communication with an emphasis on print journalism, I never pursued a career in journalism. However, I've found that my BA feels like a natural complement to my MLIS, as both fields focus on providing accurate information from reliable, vetted sources.

During my undergraduate years, I enjoyed serving as the editor of my university's newspaper, so I jumped at the opportunity to become the YSD newsletter editor. I have made bold format changes, and I've been thrilled with the positive feedback I received. Collaborating with the current YSD President, I've worked to represent as many library systems as possible in the newsletter. To better distribute the workload, I hope to expand the YSD Newsletter staff by adding an assistant editor. With a second team member, we can continue to ensure that all systems may contribute content to the quarterly publication. My goal is for the newsletter to be both an informational resource for youth coordinators and

staff and a platform to highlight the impactful work they are doing in their communities.

How are you involved in the wider community?

I represent CCPL in various capacities, serving as a liaison with local public schools and agencies that support youth, including Early Head Start and Head Start. I actively participate in the Caroline Early Learning Advisory Council and Children's Librarians of the Eastern Shore and attend the Maryland Library Association Youth Services Council. Additionally, I am currently one of two Eastern Shore Representatives on the MSLA Summer Reading Advisory Council.

Throughout my career with CCPL, I have built a strong network of contacts within organizations that serve the youth of Caroline County, including the Caroline County Human Services Council, Recreation and Parks, Caroline Better Together, His Hope Ministries homeless shelter, as well as local government and religious institutions.

In addition, I serve on the board of Appleseed Books, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that children of all ages have access to books at home. Appleseed Books collects and distributes both new and gently used books throughout the Eastern Shore, provides community storytime programs, and participates in numerous outreach events focused on book distribution.

What is it about libraries that inspires or motivates you?

The people I serve every day are my greatest inspiration. Whether it's watching children grow and develop new skills in our Storytime or Petite Picassos programs, helping someone apply for a job and later celebrating their success, listening to a teen vent after a rough day, or simply chatting with residents of our homeless shelter while providing a preschooler with magnetic cars to play with as their parents apply for services online—these moments remind me why I do this work. It is the library users who motivate me to push through the challenges and fully

embrace the magical moments when they happen. Libraries truly make a difference in people's lives.

About Mina

Favorite movie, TV show, or play?

I have loved *West Side Story* since I was a child, having watched the original film with my older sister. I was pleasantly surprised to find that I liked the 2021 remake just as much.

Favorite sport and/or sports team?

I have been a die-hard Washington football fan since the 80s.

What was your first job?

My first job was babysitting for neighbors. At 16, I worked as a receptionist/secretary through a temporary agency.

Do you have pets? What kind?

I have a sweet, loveable, nine-year-old shar pei named Mabel. She is a rescue and was three years old when I adopted her. We have completed several training courses, and she is obedient, but she remains a shy, high-maintenance girl who loves routine. And treats!

Favorite type of music?

I truly enjoy all kinds of music, but my all-time, life-long favorite is Bruce Springsteen (with and without the E Street Band). His lyrics are poetic, rebellious, hopeful, and inspiring. There's an appropriate Springsteen song for every moment of my life.

Favorite smell or sound?

My favorite sounds are my children's voices and their laughter. (They're adults now, ages 29, 27, and 22.)

What book is currently on your nightstand?

One book?? Who has just one book on their nightstand? I am currently reading *change·able: How Collaborative Problem Solving Changes Lives at Home, at School, and at Work* by J. Stuart Ablon, PhD. I am also reading *Mom & Me & Mom* by Maya Angelou, and I just finished *Tell Me*

Everything by Elizabeth Strout.

Do you read more than one book at a time?

See my nightstand. 😊

What's your favorite place to travel, or a dream destination?

I have not visited Europe, and I have a strong desire to go to the United Kingdom.

Do you speak other languages?

Unfortunately, no.

If you could be a superhero, who would you be and why?

I became a superhero twice already: when I became a mother and again when I became a librarian.

What is a book you've read that changed how you think about a topic or about your life?

The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness, and Healing in a Toxic Culture by Gabor Maté and Daniel Maté. In a podcast, he said that if a child is acting out, you must look at the conditions, and if you change the conditions, the child's behavior will change. This statement inspired me to read his book and explore other podcasts and interviews with Maté. It has profoundly shifted my perspective on children's behavior in the library and reinforced the importance of empathy and compassion when engaging with both children and adults, whether at work, at home, or in any other setting.

What is something that you think would surprise someone about you or your job?

I think people would be surprised to know how quiet and painfully shy I was when I was younger. Those who knew me then wouldn't recognize me now.

What is your hidden talent or an unusual fact about you?

I am also a first generation American on my dad's side of the family. He was born and raised in Turkey, immigrated to America in his 30s, and became a naturalized US citizen before I was born. ■

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