

## **Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL)**

### **Annual Report: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**

The Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL) continued to provide programs, initiatives, and leadership opportunities to support academic librarians in Illinois. The year emphasized virtual engagement and professional development, while also laying the groundwork for future in-person events.

The Conference and Continuing Education Committee (C&CE) organized multiple programs to foster learning and networking. In November 2024, the committee hosted a panel discussion on the topic of mentorship. In April 2025, it presented the Spring Sampler, a mini virtual conference featuring lightning talks and panel discussions from institutions such as UIUC, CARLI, and NIU. These events provided valuable professional development opportunities and highlighted best practices for online engagement.

The Communications Committee produced both the fall 2024 and spring 2025 newsletters, promoting IACRL programs and ensuring ongoing visibility of the forum's initiatives. Social media and newsletter outreach also supported conference programming and public statements on issues impacting academic librarianship.

IACRL maintained a prominent presence at the ILA Annual Conference, including the IACRL Luncheon and the Unconference. The luncheon featured speaker April Anderson-Zorn, who addressed topics such as impostor phenomenon and access to historical information on underrepresented populations. The Unconference continued to provide a platform for networking and discussing pressing issues within the academic library community.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee planned future programming, including panels on reparative cataloging and inclusive practices. The committee collaborated with other ILA groups and RAILS to broaden outreach and resources.

The Awards Committee recognized excellence across multiple areas. The People's Choice Award was presented to three outstanding publications:

**First Place:** Title: **"Along for the Journey: Graduate Student Perceptions of Research"** Authors: Alissa Droog, Northern Illinois University; Kari D. Weaver, University of Waterloo; Francis Brady, National Louis University

**Second Place:** Title: **"Change What You Can, Teach What You Can't: A Usability Study of Primo VE at an Academic Library"** Authors: Christina Norton and Michelle Nielson Ott, Bradley University; Elizabeth Bloodworth, Illinois Wesleyan University

**Third Place (tied):** Title: **“It All Started with Etienne: Developing Fine Arts Outreach with Unique Archival Collections”** Author: Robert Ridinger, Northern Illinois University

Title: **“Consulting with an Embedded Librarian: Student Perceptions on the Value of Required Research Meetings”** Authors: Susan R. Franzen, Caitlin Stewart, and Joshua Newport, Illinois State University; Mallory Jallas, University of Illinois at Springfield

The OER Campus Kickstart Award honored teams from Illinois colleges and universities for their contributions to open educational resources. These awards underscored IACRL’s commitment to celebrating innovation and scholarship in academic librarianship. The recipients listed below will participate in an IACRL webinar in Fall 2025 to share their efforts with OER. The recipients are:

- Evangeline Reid and Renae Franiuk - Aurora University
- Charlene Snelling and April Andry Rah’man - Chicago State University
- Jennifer Funk and Timothy Ros - McKendree University
- Michelle Oh and Susan Uribe - Oakton College
- Lukas Wenner and David Dosier - Rock Valley College
- Robin Hofstetter and Vincen Francone - Roosevelt University
- Sangeeta Kumar and Juhelia Thompson - South Suburban College
- Tineka Scalzo and Dr. Cynthia Vessel - Wilbur Wright College

The Nominations Committee successfully facilitated elections for IACRL leadership. Shannon Pohrte assumed the role of President, with Joshua Newport as Vice President/President-Elect and Ted Schwitzner as Secretary.

Throughout the year, the Executive Committee, board liaisons, and committee chairs provided strong leadership and support. Their efforts ensured smooth transitions, practical programming, and ongoing member engagement. Special acknowledgment is extended to Tamara Jenkins, ILA Communications and Engagement Manager, for her continued support as forum liaison.

Overall, 2024–2025 was a year of adaptation, growth, and planning for IACRL. The forum successfully leveraged virtual programming to expand access and engagement while beginning preparations for a 2026 in-person statewide conference. IACRL remains committed to fostering professional development, networking, and advocacy for Illinois academic librarians.

**Submitted by Shannon Pohrte, IACRL President, September 29, 2025**