

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



Photo by Dennis Pryber, Verso Design Corp.

ON THE COVER

Mychal Threats brought library joy to the 2024 ILA Annual Conference at the President's Program, made possible by the generous support of Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), on October 9. ILA President Amy Byers chatted with Mychal and asked some questions before opening the floor for audience questions.

Mychal Threats is a librarian. He grew up in Fairfield, CA—right between Sacramento and San Francisco. He grew up in libraries as a homeschool kid.

Mychal loves stories! He enjoys learning something new every day, and that includes learning why people love their local library. He utilizes social media to share the stories of library kids and library grown-ups that he encounters in library land.

He got his first library card at the age of 5 and was hooked on libraries from there. He got his first library job as a library shelver at the library he grew up in and worked his way up to become Supervising Librarian of that very same library.

He got his Bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Phoenix and his MLIS degree from San Jose State University. He is proud to be a 2023 recipient of the American Library Association's "I Love My Librarian" Award!

He is very open about his mental health. He talks about it in hopes that it'll help others in their mental health journey. He is adamant about encouraging people to believe him when he says he's happy they are here.

When Mychal isn't at the library or talking about libraries, he's often with his family, friends, or troublesome cats—Machine Gun Kitty and Kissin' Kat Barlow.

The Illinois Library Association is collaboratively shaping a strong future for libraries in Illinois, providing leadership, advocacy, partnership, and learning for the benefit of Illinois libraries. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 3,000 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has seven full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Blaida and Associates for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization.

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See ILA website for submission deadlines for the *ILA Reporter*. Copy should be submitted by email to ila@ila.org. You are encouraged to include press-ready digital photos (300 p.p.i.) and graphics with your articles, which will be included on a space-available basis.

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You're Never Too Old for the Library: Senior Services at Three Illinois Public Libraries

One of the best things about public libraries is that they serve the whole community at every life stage. This article is a celebration of the joy of senior services at Illinois public libraries and is the culmination of a survey of senior services librarians conducted in spring of 2024. Illinois libraries provide a vast range and variety of services for their senior patrons. There are libraries that collaborate with senior housing facilities to provide storytimes and book drop-offs. At least one library loans mechanical cats and dogs from a Memory Care Collection to help seniors relax or feel comfortable in group programs. Other libraries offer multilingual programming. While we had several responses, this article focuses on three Illinois public libraries, Jerseyville Public Library, Fremont Public Library, and Gail Borden Public Library, to offer a snapshot of the variety of services Illinois' senior residents can find at their public library.

JERSEYVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Jerseyville Public Library (Jerseyville Library) serves the City of Jerseyville, population 8,357, and is about 80 miles southwest of Springfield, IL. Jerseyville Library has 2,407 card holders—2,100 residents, 307 non-residents—and annually circulates 67,762 items including physical and electronic materials.

Beth Smilack, Marketing and Communication Specialist, oversees Senior Services at Jerseyville Library with Library Director Judy Pruitt. Smilack began her work with senior patrons by creating a new Senior StoryTime program along with providing digital literacy courses after receiving a Digital Literacy Workshop Incentive through the Public Library Association and supported by AT&T.

Beth and Judy regularly visit three assisted living facilities in the community to conduct storytime programming and provide materials to these facilities and to home-bound patrons.

At the new Senior StoryTime programs, Smilack and Pruitt read a story, lead a group sing-along with ukulele and piano, and do a craft with the seniors. Depending on which facility they're at, there are usually between 10-20 attendees.

Beth says, "We love it when they help each other find what song we are on by pointing it out on the song sheet and when they assist each other in making the crafts. We love the camaraderie and the chance for them to interact with each other when otherwise they might just be in their rooms by themselves and not socializing."

The vision and hope for the future of Jerseyville Library's senior services is "to continue to provide StoryTimes, digital training, and providing materials both educational and entertaining to those who are not able to get out easily in their golden years." Jerseyville Public Library's ultimate goal is library access for all.

“We love the camaraderie and the chance for them to interact with each other when otherwise they might just be in their rooms by themselves and not socializing.”



Judy Pruitt leads a Senior StoryTime session.

FREMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Fremont Public Library District (Fremont Library) provides similar services to Jerseyville Library and more. Fremont Library serves parts of Mundelein, Grayslake, Hawthorn Woods, Round Lake, and Round Lake Park. It serves a population of 38,792, with 12,494 cardholders. The library's physical item circulation the last fiscal year was 349,684.

Zoe Stein is the Adult Services Librarian who oversees Senior Outreach. She became a Senior Outreach Librarian “through a love of helping [seniors]” when she discovered her most fulfilling work was with the senior population. Her favorite example is a seniors’ book club called Senior Connections.

Senior Connections meets once a month at the Fremont Library to discuss fiction and nonfiction. Since Stein has started moderating Senior Connections, participation has increased by 240%! She reports that participants “are opinionated and love to talk about the book whether they loved it or not.” A surprise was the huge success of the discussion of *All Boys Aren't Blue*, the second most challenged book in America in both 2022 and 2023 according to the American Library Association. *All Boys Aren't Blue* is George M. Johnson's memoirs about growing up black, queer, and nonbinary. Initially nervous for the discussion, attendees had “fantastic insights and were happy to discuss all the things they learned.”

Fremont Library hosts programs for active seniors such as sessions on Medicare and Social Security, movie screenings, and flower arranging classes.

Stein has begun collaborations with senior residences. She recently started a program “The Librarian is In.” Accompanied by Circulation Department staff, she goes to retirement communities and independent living communities to bring books, offer on-site readers’ advisory, provide tech help and library app tutorials, and sign-up patrons for library cards. Forty-nine people attended her first program. Stein hopes to add an assisted living and memory care facility currently being built at the time of writing to Senior Connections’ rounds.

Stein's hope for the future is “to cultivate a thriving and vibrant community at the library for senior patrons.” She wants “to meet them where they are, whether that is hosting pop-up librarian services at more senior centers, or other places they frequent like local coffee shops.” Also on her agenda is building a collection of activity kits, which would help Alzheimer's patients, in particular.

GAIL BORDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Like Fremont Library, Gail Borden Public Library District (Gail Borden) has a wide array of services and programming for seniors. The library serves 149,907 residents of Elgin, South Elgin, parts of Hoffman Estates, Streamwood, and Bartlett of which 90,693 residents are cardholders. Gail Borden sees 1,003,210 visitors annually and serves the fifth largest library population in Illinois after Chicago, Aurora, Rockford, and Joliet.

Glenna Godinsky is Gail Borden's Life Enrichment Manager. She oversees services for seniors in the community, outside the walls of the library. Glenna has a team of twelve senior volunteers who assist at over twenty-five memory care, assisted living, developmental, skilled care, supportive living, and independent living locations. They conduct programs; lead craft activities, songs, and poems; and drop off donated library materials. The Life Enrichment Team not only serves the seniors, but offers staff support for how to use the library materials in programming.

Life Enrichment hosts an Elgin Area Memory Café for patrons with dementia and their caregivers while *Cafecito entré Amigos* serves the Spanish-speaking population in this demographic. Both programs were established in 2018. Participants hear educational speakers, do crafts, converse, and play games to connect and socialize. A Memory Care Collection has been added to the library's collection and includes medical information, memoirs, and books written for adults living with dementia.

Elgin was the fifth city in Illinois to get a Dementia Friendly Designation from Dementia Friendly America. Godinsky is a Certified Dementia Practitioner which allows her to train business people, first responders, and organizations on dementia awareness. She provides resource materials and information to memory cafés in the community that speak English, Spanish, Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese.

On July 9, 2024, the library celebrated its fifth year as part of Dementia Friendly Elgin Area with Mayor Dave Kaptain. Elgin Memory Café members, *Cafecito entré Amigos* members, and Chinese Mutual Aid Association members participated. A social event for the three groups has also been planned for September 2024 to help grow trust and strengthen connections.

A surprise success has been the purchase of both a Hasbro Toy for All Animatronic cat and dog. Godinsky uses the cat to help residents feel comfortable leaving their rooms, attending a program with the toy in their lap. The toys help reduce anxiety “quite well.” Several of these robotic toys have since been purchased and now circulate widely through the library's Home Services Department in a library-of-things style.



Dementia Friendly Elgin Area (DFEA) Advisory Council

The library-of-things collection for senior patrons has grown in general at Gail Borden. Specifically, Godinsky grew the Memory Care Collection which now includes puzzles, bingo games, and wooden locks and latches. She states that these items can help “reduce anxiety and help people ‘live in the moment’ while spending time together.”

Godinsky says Gail Borden is “on the cusp of reaching exponentially more people who are at the highest risk of developing dementia—the people of color in our culturally-diverse library district.” Also, the library has “reached the goal of serving each senior/developmental care community in our district with library programs every other month” with “access to library services through Life Enrichment, Home Services, and the Technow Mobile (which circulates technology such as Wi-Fi hotspots, provides instruction, circulates books, and other items).”

The most popular programs for seniors are on topics relevant to participants when they were teens. Examples are Elvis Presley, big band music, and drive-in movie theater history. Programs on nature such as butterfly migration and ice castles are also popular. For more active seniors, there are programs on investing, downsizing, home health services, and more. Many programs for general audiences also attract a lot of seniors, such as Gail Borden’s Sunday night concert series and craft programs. These are conducted by the library’s Community Engagement Team.

The library is also:

- reaching seniors who live in care communities and seniors who are aging in place at home;
- partnered with multiple agencies in the district who serve seniors; and,
- empowering both active seniors and seniors who need extra care to be volunteers for their community through their library.

For the future, Godinsky says, “We must continue to uphold the trust that we have built in seniors throughout our community as we listen to them and design future programs and services.”

Senior Services will continue to thrive at Jerseyville, Fremont, Gail Borden, and other Illinois public libraries with librarians such as Smilack, Stein, and Godinsky leading the charge. Through innovations such as Smilack’s addition of sing-alongs with ukulele and piano to storytimes, Stein’s book discussions about current fiction and nonfiction, and Godinsky’s programs about Elvis Presley and emphasis on memory care, seniors will continue to be engaged and develop a passion for their libraries. This article is a testimonial to the rich services available for one of our most respected populations.

A special thank you to all those who responded to the questionnaire to share their experience.

ILA

Keep Calm and Carry On: First Amendment Audits at Your Library

Protecting First Amendment rights is at the heart of what public libraries do. Every day we stand up for the right to speak, publish, read, and view freely. That is why we need to understand what a “First Amendment audit” is, how auditors are allowed to exercise their rights, and that staff reactions while being filmed may help or hinder our organizations.

Being on film may be uncomfortable for some, but by preparing ahead, remaining calm, practicing de-escalation, and not “taking the bait,” your facility can easily pass an audit, avoid negative publicity, and get back to the business of serving patrons.

WHAT IS A FIRST AMENDMENT AUDIT?

“First Amendment auditors” take their cameras and gear into government buildings to film public employees such as police officers, postal workers, or other staff just doing their job, along with members of the public in the building. While “auditor” may sound official, these individuals are private citizens, not government authorities.

Sometimes the auditor’s motive for testing their First Amendment right to film in public may authentically be meant to raise awareness. However, in our current era of social media and YouTube, their motives may be less about justice and more about generating clicks and views. Just as prospectors once flocked to find gold in the Black Hills, today many are turning to social media as a get-rich-quick strategy.

In the case of those bad actors, their strategy is:

1. Film the employee in their work environment
2. Make the employee and others uncomfortable
3. Trigger a bad reaction from the employee
4. Post the video on social media for clicks and views
5. Profit

Why does this work? Fighting, arguing, and awkward “cringe” scenarios fuel views. What is one of the reasons why so many people watch the tv show, *The Office*? It is for the cringe-inducing antics of Michael Scott of Dunder Mifflin. It is like watching a train-wreck—you cannot look away.

Meanwhile, the organization that was filmed may be forced to redirect time and energy from providing excellent service to responding to bad publicity and negative reviews.

Recently, auditors have been targeting public libraries, and the frequency of this has been increasing.¹ It is a good idea to be proactive since it is not a matter of *if*, but rather *when*, you will receive an auditor.



BEFORE THE AUDIT

Begin your preparation by updating your library policies to reflect current law and practice. Consider writing policies that do not prohibit filming in your facility, while at the same time protecting your patrons' privacy.² Work with your attorney to make sure everything is up-to-date, especially policies that deal with the following subjects:

- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- Patron Behavior
- Photography and Video Recording
- Privacy
- Solicitation

Next, look at your physical space. A few simple, easy, and relatively cheap upgrades that can go a long way are:

- Clearly labeling "Staff-Only" areas
- Installing frosted glass or other window coverings on doors and windows
- Adding privacy screens to computer monitors
- Keeping sensitive documents out of plain sight
- Making FOIA request and book challenge materials readily accessible

Then prepare your staff. There is a high probability that an auditor knows the First Amendment in and out, has researched the local laws, and reviewed your library policies. Make sure your staff are as well-versed as the auditors are. Provide a staff FAQ to address difficult questions or situations that might arise.

Lastly, anticipate that patrons and staff will be nervous when an auditor visits your facility. This is normal. Understanding how our fight-or-flight response works will pay off in the end. Your heart rate and breathing will increase, you may feel jittery, and you may even start to sweat. The adrenaline rush you may experience in front of an auditor will likely be similar to when dealing with a combative patron. Being aware of your body's physical reaction to confrontation will allow you better control over your non-verbal language—thus helping to de-escalate any situation. Practicing mindfulness and situational awareness on a daily basis helps with this.

DURING THE AUDIT

Whether a single auditor comes in with a cell phone, or a group visits with professional equipment and intimidating uniforms, here is what you need to do:

RELAX.

Treat them like any other patron. Smile, make eye contact, and offer assistance. Be aware of your tone and body language. As long as they are not violating any library policies, it is best to leave them alone. They will get bored, conclude there is nothing to see here, and leave.

Resist giving in to the temptation to confront them unless they are breaching the law or your library policies. Are they filming in a place where people have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a restroom or a nursing room? Are they harassing, intimidating, or threatening others? Is their camera equipment blocking the emergency exit? Consider the behavior that seems problematic and whether your library has a policy that covers it.

"Resist giving in to the temptation to confront them unless they are breaching the law or your library policies."

If they are, in fact, violating your library policies and you must confront them, do not make it about them filming. Only make it about the policy they violated.

If their camera is focusing on what a patron is reading or checking out (a clear privacy violation), try to distract the auditor to refocus their attention to something else. This way we are protecting the patron's privacy while at the same time de-escalating the situation.

If a patron is concerned about an auditor filming them, let the patron know that filming is allowed in the library. Suggest they move to a different area within the library or come back at another time.

If the auditor asks for your name, respond with your name. Chances are you are wearing a name tag anyway and they are just testing you. If you refuse to give your name and they have to take the extra step of a FOIA request to get it, you are likely going to end up on social media.

The second you bring filming into the conversation, it is game over. They will edit their video footage to show just the parts where you talked about them filming. Do not take the bait.

It is okay to be nervous—we are human. Just remain calm and go about your business. Do not immediately call a manager, do not group up with other employees and stare, and do not ask why they are filming (it could be for a school project for all you know).

It may help to remember that everywhere you go these days there is a chance that you are being filmed in some manner. It could be a TikTok star filming while you walk in the background, or a Google street car driving by. It is a safe bet that you will end up on camera at some point. So, just act normal when you see someone come in with a camera rolling. Remember: fighting, arguing, and awkward “cringe” scenarios fuel views. Routine, polite government work does not.



Scan the QR code to watch Vernon Area Public Library District's examples of a "good" audit and a "bad" audit."

AFTER THE AUDIT

Report the incident following your organization's reporting procedures. As they say: *Document! Document! Document!* Also report the incident to the American Library Association using their Challenge Reporting tool.³

Then, notify nearby libraries and government facilities. They will appreciate a heads-up from you that a First Amendment auditor is in the area. This way they can adequately prepare.

Regardless of the audit's outcome, allow staff an opportunity to express their feelings and concerns. Reassure and congratulate them on a job well done if your facility passed an audit; and reassure and coach them if the audit did not go well. If it did not, make sure your PR representative is aware.

Lastly, do not become complacent. The auditor will likely return within days or weeks. If you failed your audit they may come back to see if you “learned your lesson.” If you passed they may come back to see if you were just putting up a facade the first time around.

As friendly customer service professionals who are well prepared for these situations, you have nothing to worry about. Just keep calm and carry on, and you will pass with flying colors every time.

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Data-Driven Strategic Planning: An Anecdotal Approach

Library administrators nearly exclusively shoulder the weight of all institutional outcomes to collections, programs, and services, positive or negative. They are responsible for spearheading the establishment of the mission, vision, and core services for the library; determining the policies that govern finances, materials, programs, services, staff, and patrons for Board approval; overseeing the general management of the library; and empowering and supporting staff to carry out their work in full service to the public. However, in order to manage all of these tasks successfully, access to sufficient and reliable data is paramount, because the improvement of library services and patron and employee experiences rests largely on the quality of data used to inform decisions about them. For these reasons, careful strategic planning is crucial.

The Downers Grove Public Library's (DGPL) previous strategic plan concluded just as the pandemic rushed pell-mell through the global landscape and sent us frenetically in countless directions. Little did we know that we would spend the next two years practicing and mastering the art of "the pivot," as changes to programs, services, budgeting, and staffing evolved at such a pace with which we could barely keep up. Creating, codifying, and implementing a new strategic plan during a time of unprecedented, daily unpredictability was both impractical and unsustainable. Instead, we focused all our efforts on evolving with the ever-changing COVID landscape and assembled a team to work on the creation of an Equity Strategic Plan (ESP).

The DGPL Board of Library Trustees approved our ESP in April 2022. It was the culmination of twelve months of hard work performed by our newly formed Equity Advisory Team (EAT)—a small group composed of diverse library staff, community residents, and partners. The plan outlined our internal and external equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) goals, objectives, and activities for the next several years and was structured on the four quadrants of racism: internal, interpersonal, institutional, and structural. These goals would serve as the foundation and building blocks for our next overarching, library-wide strategic plan.

We spent that autumn searching for and hiring the right consultants to help us with the process because we knew, unequivocally, that we could not embark on a project of this weight and magnitude—and be successful—without outside assistance. Prior to our kickoff meeting, we provided the consultants with as much institutional information as possible about library operations, such as previous strategic plans and outcomes, community demographics, staff composition, survey results, job descriptions, annual reports, collection analyses, and inventory and programming statistics. While copious, we believed our history would play an important role in helping to determine the future aspirations and activities of DGPL.

"...access to sufficient and reliable data is paramount, because the improvement of library services and patron and employee experiences rests largely on the quality of data used to inform decisions about them."



At the kickoff meeting, we discussed the entire strategic planning process from start to finish, including the scope of work, timeline of events, and outcomes (a high- and low-level strategic plan). Part of the scope of work included the creation of a survey that would not only strive to reach and engage every single member of our community, but also provide good, reliable, and actionable data. After several iterations, we completed the final draft and made it available to our community members via multiple channels: hard copies at public service desks, links to the survey in weekly e-newsletters, QR codes on checkout receipts, forms in home-delivered newsletters, and QR codes on 5"x7" cards affixed to the surfaces of café and study tables throughout the library. We also marketed the survey on our website and posted it on social media. After ten weeks of open submission, over 2,000 respondents voiced their experiences about how they utilized the library (or not) and opined about the areas in which they wished to see progress, improvements, and/or change.

In addition to the survey, we prepared to host community engagement sessions, or focus groups, in order to provide us with yet another opportunity for gathering stakeholder input. We held a total of eleven focus groups that were comprised of the following demographics: Board of Library Trustees (including the Library Director and Assistant Director); supervisory staff; two sessions with nonsupervisory staff; two sessions with community leaders/partners; parents and caregivers of children; older adults; teens; traditionally marginalized people groups; and general public. We were very careful and intentional about creating demographic-specific focus groups in order to create safe spaces for participants to be vulnerable and share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns without fear of judgment and to ensure that the conversations in each group were germane to the participants' experiences, perspectives, and needs. Every one of these groups had a right to representation because each one had its own set of unique challenges, perspectives, and concerns—and we wanted to hear all of them! By providing a safe and welcoming space and giving a voice to each group, we were able to hear the perspectives from community members who might have been reluctant to share their views and opinions if everyone were assembled together. We felt strongly that the focus groups would serve as platforms for empowerment and transparency because participants were able to voice their opinions freely and honestly without judgment, hence, influencing the decision-making process.

Most of the focus group participants were assembled by personal invitation. We endeavored to invite as many different types of community members as possible, including the mayor and village council members; in-district school superintendents, principals, and teachers; business owners, clergy people, and leaders of other religious organizations; parents, caregivers,

older adults, and teens/tweens; historically, intentionally, and/or traditionally marginalized people groups; and general public. We also opened up participation to those not personally invited, but who met the demographics of that particular focus group.

In total, 140 people attended the eleven focus groups. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions about library use or non-use, and how services, programs, spaces, and collections could be better utilized, expanded upon, and/or improved. Participants brainstormed enormous lists of changes/activities they wanted to see at DGPL and each session culminated in a sticky-dot, visual voting exercise, whereby each attendee (given a specified number of sticky dots), placed them next to the activities listed on large poster paper they deemed most important.

After the initial data-gathering phase (survey and focus groups) ended, the consultants aggregated all stakeholder feedback into a dense Findings Book, which included the sum total of all the raw data gathered throughout the process. The final data-gathering activity was a Strategic Retreat, which included a group of twenty-five individuals—composed of a diverse pool of previous focus group attendees—who thoroughly reviewed, analyzed, and discussed the Findings Book data; brainstormed and updated our mission, vision, and core values; and discussed best practices for 21st century public libraries. We accomplished this work through a series of small and large group exercises, and in so doing, successfully identified the most urgent and important issues and opportunities affecting DGPL and classified them into four broad focus areas: programs and services, access, turn outward, and turn inward. These four categories, and the potential initiatives connected to each, along with the below mentioned mission, vision, and values, became the framework for our high-level strategic plan.

Mission: Welcoming all to discover, grow, play and learn.

Vision: The heart of a diverse community providing inspiring ideas, community connections, and empowering opportunities.

Values: Inclusive and Welcoming Environment: We celebrate our individual uniqueness and create spaces where everyone is valued, represented, and included.

Community Engagement: We listen and respond to the changing needs of our community.

Equitable Access: We remove barriers and enable access for all.

Intellectual Freedom: We provide a variety of programs, services, and materials so community members can customize their own library experience.

Lifelong Learning: We are always learning and encourage our community to be curious and continue to learn throughout all stages of life

Integrity: We advocate for and uphold ethical library practices and responsible financial stewardship.

After the DGPL Board of Library Trustees reviewed and approved the high-level strategic plan, our management team evaluated all the initiatives in each of the four categories to determine which ones were realistic and achievable (i.e., within our purview, budget, and power to control) and which ones were not. From there, we prioritized those initiatives that would become a part of our first year’s work and discussed how we would bring them to life. We assigned concrete action steps to each initiative, identified staff who would be responsible for managing and overseeing the work, established specific methods for successfully carrying out the work, and estimated project timelines and hopeful completion dates. Lastly, we fully incorporated the ESP into the final work plan product. The following is an example of how one of our initiatives appears in our work plan:

| Focus Area | Initiative | Project(s) | Point Person |
|------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| Access | Evaluate Options for Increased Security in the Building | Investigate Options for Building Control Access | Building Operations Monitor |
| Action Steps | Action Steps End Date | Metrics/ Outcome | Additional Notes |
| Explore Building Needs and Vendors | Q2 2024 | Present Building Control Access Options in 2024 | Quotes from Vendors Received |

DESIGNING A BETTER FUTURE FOR LIBRARIES



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Building Condition Studies

Needs Assessment

Construction Grant Assistance

New Construction

Additions & Renovations

Interior Design & Furniture Selection



At DGPL, the entire process from beginning to end was an emotional labor of love. It was intentional, methodical, nearly one year in the making, and a lot of hard work. By creating a welcoming atmosphere and placing paramount importance on hearing from diverse voices, we have a special, one-of-a-kind plan that will effectuate positive, equitable, inclusive, and lasting change. It truly has enormous potential to benefit every type of person in our community because of the diverse pool of participants who contributed to its creation and development from the very inception.

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Timeline of Strategic Planning Events:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| March 2021 | Created Equity Advisory Team (EAT) |
| March 2021–April 2022 | Developed Equity Strategic Plan (ESP) Strategic Planning Pre-Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected & Evaluated Examples of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from Other Libraries • Created List of Potential Strategic Planning Consultants |
| April 2022 | Board Approved ESP |
| June 2022 | Finalized RFP for Strategic Planning Consultants |
| July–December 2022 | Conducted Search for and Hired Strategic Planning Consultants |
| January 2023 | Held Kick-Off Meeting |
| January–February 2023 | Provided Consultants with Library Histronics |
| March 2023 | Launched Community Survey |
| March–April 2023 | Collected Community Survey Results Hosted Focus Group Invitees Consultants Aggregated all Feedback into “Findings Book” |
| May 2023 | Held Strategic Retreat |
| June 2023 | Finalized New Mission, Purpose, Vision, and High-Level Plan |
| July 2023 | Incorporated ESP into the High-Level Plan |
| August 2023 | Board Approved High-Level Strategic Plan (2023–2027) |
| September–October 2023 | Prioritized Initiatives for First Year |
| November–December 2023 | Determined Action Steps, Target Dates, and Outcomes |
| December 2023 | Began the Work |

ILA

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A Look Inside: ILA visits the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries

On a rainy afternoon along Michigan Avenue, the iconic lions stand guard over the world's most beloved art museum. Inside, near the museum shop and next to the Woman's Board Grand Staircase, lies a space filled with the rich history and special collections of the Art Institute—the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries.

ILA staff and colleagues were recently given a tour of these beloved libraries. On this day, members from the National Archives at Chicago also visited the libraries, making the occasion even more memorable. Our visit was guided by Violet Jaffe, Director of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, who had previously shared detailed information about the space through a Q&A session. The tour offered an exclusive look at the library's collection, recent renovations, and work areas, as well as the opportunity to view some of its most treasured special collections on display.

With a background in public libraries, Jaffe has focused on breaking down barriers that may hinder anyone from accessing library materials. Under her leadership, the libraries have made it clear that the collection is available to all. An appointment is required to ensure proper preparation and the feasibility of the request. However, once it's in place, Jaffe and her team take care of the rest, ensuring that the items are ready and waiting for the guests' arrival. Live far away? They also lend items to other institutions through InterLibrary Loan and scans of images and texts upon request.

As we toured the space, we all were amazed by the beautiful decor. According to Jaffe, the walls of the libraries are adorned with museum art carefully selected by the staff to match the colors of the carpet and walls. Each piece was handpicked to complement the space's overall aesthetic, creating a welcoming environment that enhances the visitor experience. The collections themselves have been updated to reflect the evolving interests of the library's visitors, ensuring that the libraries remain a sought-after and relevant resource.

One of the most interesting facts about the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries is that the space has been preserved as it was originally intended. This careful preservation allows visitors to experience the libraries as they were when first built, offering a historical glimpse into the past.

The Ryerson and Burnham Libraries' roots date back to 1893, when the Art Institute of Chicago's first director began assembling an art library in his office. Initially, the director's secretary acted as the librarian, overseeing the expanding collection that soon outgrew its modest beginnings. In response, Chicago philanthropist Martin Ryerson donated \$50,000 in 1901 to create a dedicated art library. This donation funded the construction of an enclosed courtyard near the museum's main entrance, which continues to serve as the library's Reading Room today.





Becca Boland, Monica Harris, and Alec McGowan view archival items on display.

The architecture library was established in 1912 through a \$50,000 bequest from the renowned architect, urban planner, and Director of Works for the Chicago World's Fair Daniel Burnham. Originally, it was kept separate from the art library. In the 1960s the two collections were combined, resulting in the creation of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries.

Since their inception, the library collections have been an essential part of the Art Institute of Chicago. As a vital foundation for the museum's research and educational efforts, the libraries have played a key role not just as knowledge repositories, but as active contributors to the scholarship that drives the museum's exhibitions, publications, and educational programs.

As integral parts of the Art Institute's Research Center, the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries collaborate closely with the Archives and the Academic Engagement and Research teams. Together, they aim to support museum staff in every facet of their research, including exhibition planning and academic publications. Additionally, the libraries are vital in preserving the museum's vast collections and providing public access to them through the Franke Reading Room.

According to Jaffe, the libraries hosted 817 appointments over the past year, welcomed 195 School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) students during class visits, and answered 968 reference inquiries. Additionally, the libraries maintain public open hours, allowing museum visitors to converse and ask questions with staff at the libraries' reception desk.

The Ryerson and Burnham Libraries house a collection of around 838,000 print titles covering the worldwide history of art, architecture, and design. This extensive collection includes auction catalogs, artist files, and a wide range of digital resources.

During our visit, we were given a quick glance at the extensive stored collection housed below the libraries, accessible by a spiral staircase that adds a touch of charm to the experience. Once there, Jaffe opened the doors to reveal what looked like a never-ending aisle of physical materials, each item just waiting to be touched by the human hand once again. The group was collectively stunned by the extensive in-house preservation of materials. It was at that moment we realized how privileged we were to access a space rarely seen by the public.

When asked about the most significant or unique items in the libraries' collections, Jaffe responded, "The jewel in the crown for the library is the Mary Reynolds collection. Mary Reynolds was a bookbinder whose bold choices of materials, colors, and imagery create a stunning collection of hand-bound books."

A simple search through the libraries' archives website offers a quick look into Reynold's fascinating creations, easily accessible on any modern device. Her unique work complements the words they encase. For instance, *Les Yeux fertiles* (*The Fertile Eyes*) by Paul Éluard, featuring a portrait and illustrations by Pablo Picasso, is bound in ostrich leather and calfskin.

Other notable bindings include materials like a boa constrictor, goatskin, a child's glove, and fragments of a broken teacup.

Visitors will soon have the opportunity to experience these remarkable works firsthand in the upcoming exhibition *Frida Kahlo's Month in Paris: A Friendship with Mary Reynolds*, scheduled for March 2025. This exhibition will feature several of Reynolds' book bindings, showcasing the unique artistry and creativity that define her work.

The resources of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries have been instrumental in countless research projects and exhibitions. "In addition to informing all of the stunning exhibitions presented at the Art Institute each year, researchers from around the world have used our resources for a wide variety of projects. Erik Larson credited our collections in his research for *The Devil in the White City*," Jaffe mentioned during the Q&A.

Although the libraries are primarily used for research, Jaffe shared a touching moment when she was reminded that these collections were once owned by individuals with families who hoped others would also appreciate their treasured collection. She recalls, "Personally, one of my favorite visits was from a woman whose grandfather was an artist—to be able to show her our file of ephemera from his career was very gratifying."



ILA and colleagues examine the extensive collection stored beneath the libraries.



Violet Jaffe, Director of the Ryerson & Burnham Libraries, discusses the special collections, giving the group a unique opportunity to view each piece up close.

The success of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries is due in large part to the dedicated team of professionals who manage every aspect of the collections and services. Jaffe explained, “Our Collection Services team manages all the logistics of acquisitions, labeling, and cataloging our collections. Our Access Services team answers reference questions by phone or email from our museum staff, students and faculty from SAIC, and public researchers. They pull requested items from our collection and prepare them for viewing. This is a specialized and often time-consuming task as many of our items are rare, one of a kind, or centuries old.”

“The Archives staff do all the things the library staff do, but with non-published materials such as photographs, letters, and documents about every aspect of art, architecture, and Chicago history,” Jaffe added, highlighting the comprehensive nature of the work done at the libraries.

While the ILA staff and guests appreciated the work displayed, they particularly noticed the care taken in its presentation. The careful preparation to ensure each piece was safely exhibited was essential, given the fragile state of the materials.

“Both the [Collection Services and Access Services] teams play a vital role in preparing items from the collections for museum exhibitions and loans to other institutions. They collaborate closely with the book conservation staff to ensure that all materials are safe and displayed in the best possible conditions.”

Anthony Morgano, Associate Director of Access Services for the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, highlighted that the most valuable aspect is the diverse experiences of the staff, which fosters the sharing of unique perspectives.



Interior view of the Franke Reading Room featuring selected museum artwork displayed for public viewing.

The Ryerson and Burnham Libraries remain an invaluable resource for both the Art Institute of Chicago and the global research community. The dedicated staff continually evolve beyond traditional customer service, striving to make each visitor's experience truly special. We sincerely thank the Art Institute of Chicago and its staff for their warm hospitality and for sharing their beautiful space with us. For more information about the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, please visit <https://www.artic.edu/library>. To inquire about tours or schedule a reservation, visit <https://www.artic.edu/library/plan-a-library-visit>.



"The success of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries is due in large part to the dedicated team of professionals who manage every aspect of the collections and services."

ILA Welcomes New Members

On behalf of the ILA community, Executive Board, and staff we would like to welcome our recent new members. We hope as a member of ILA you contribute, grow, and thrive within the library profession and the ILA community; and support ILA's continuing efforts to create and promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

DuPage Children's Museum, Naperville
FacilitySight, Lithopolis, OH
FEH Design, Dubuque, IA
Virco, Inc., Torrance, CA

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Forsyth Public Library, Forsyth
Homewood Flossmoor High School, Flossmoor
La Harpe Carnegie Public Library, La Harpe
Martinsville Public Library District, Martinsville
Oswego Public Library District, Oswego

TRUSTEE MEMBERS

Daly Andersson, Zion-Benton Public Library District
Jean Carroll, Thomas Ford Memorial Library
Charlisa Hart, Champaign Public Library
Ginger Kearney, Helen M. Plum Memorial Public Library District
Sanjay Singhal, Zion-Benton Public Library District

STUDENT MEMBERS

Mary Ashley Dotson, Mattoon
Casey Foubert, Brookfield
Eve Geiggar, North Little Rock, AR
Nikki Gross, Champaign
Madison Hill, Santa Clara, CA
Noel Huntley, Rock Island
Yanling Liu, Urbana
Samuel Jackson, Plainfield
Leslie Lopez, Chicago
Laura Robey, Arcola
Anna Smith, Urbana
Rhiannon Stringer, Bourbonnais
Andrew West, Winlock, WA
Nicole Young, Carterville

PERSONAL MEMBERS

Destiny Abercrombie, Matteson
Musah Ahmed, Pompano Beach, FL
Kelly Avila, Barrington Area Library
Meredith Bazzoli, Glen Ellyn Public Library
Emily Bell, Anne West Lindsey District Library
Emily Bradshaw, Helen M. Plum Memorial Public Library District
Katelynn Clark, Fossil Ridge Public Library District
Jeremy Donaldson, Carol Stream Public Library
Beau Elliott, Alpha Park Public Library
Kirstin Gebhart, Fast Forward Libraries
Jacinto Gonzalez, Fountaindale Public Library District
Marissa Keistler, Alpha Park Public Library
Ellen Keith, Chicago History Museum
Tanya King, Broadview Public Library District
Christina Loraine, Bradley Public Library District
Polly Lynn, Polly Lynn Press
Victoria Martinez, Chicago Public Library
Jennifer May, McHenry Public Library District
Savannah McClellan, Washington District Library
Phoebe Metz, Aurora Public Library District
Joshua O'Shea, Glen Ellyn Public Library
Vannessa Powell, Lake Forest Library
Diane Reid, Northbrook Public Library
Ash Lee Simons, Nippersink Public Library District
Crystal Snyder, Columbia Public Library
Claire Stewart, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Gabrielle Toth, Chicago State University
Becki Wells, River Valley District Library
Samantha Wright, Carol Stream Public Library

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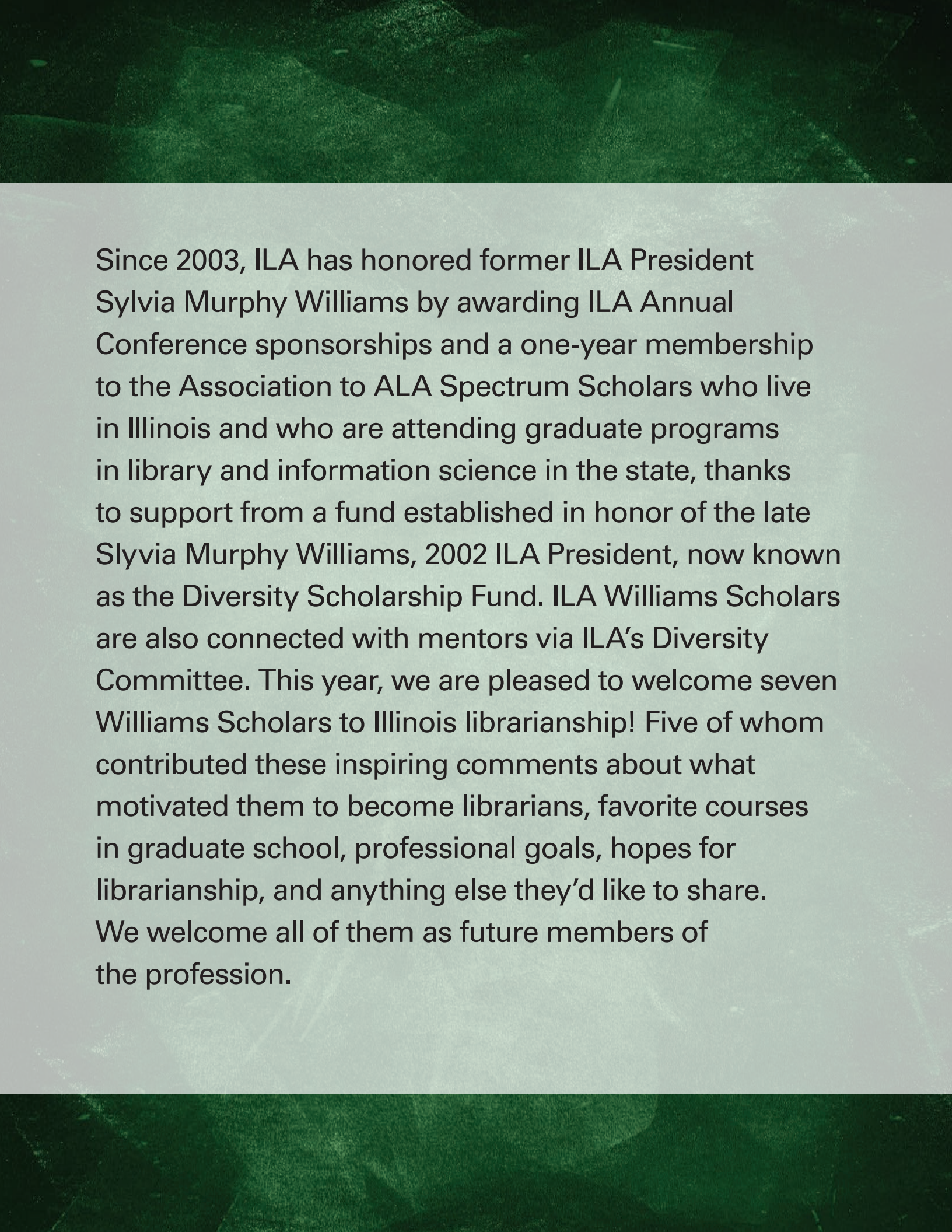
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Since 2003, ILA has honored former ILA President Sylvia Murphy Williams by awarding ILA Annual Conference sponsorships and a one-year membership to the Association to ALA Spectrum Scholars who live in Illinois and who are attending graduate programs in library and information science in the state, thanks to support from a fund established in honor of the late Sylvia Murphy Williams, 2002 ILA President, now known as the Diversity Scholarship Fund. ILA Williams Scholars are also connected with mentors via ILA's Diversity Committee. This year, we are pleased to welcome seven Williams Scholars to Illinois librarianship! Five of whom contributed these inspiring comments about what motivated them to become librarians, favorite courses in graduate school, professional goals, hopes for librarianship, and anything else they'd like to share. We welcome all of them as future members of the profession.



LESLIE LOPEZ

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Graduating from undergrad in Spring 2020 made me pause and really think about what I wanted to pursue. I didn't want to rush attending graduate school if I wasn't sure of bigger career plans, so I found a job working in a nonprofit where I focused on fundraising and communications. Over the next few years, I wrestled with a few ideas, but I didn't feel very passionate about them. Then I talked to one of my best friends who studied to be a librarian and hearing them speak about why they chose this career felt like a revelatory moment. In many ways—and without my knowledge—I had already taken on the role of a budding information professional.

For instance, before *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, I volunteered with an abortion fund and spent a lot of time addressing misinformation. I witnessed the frustration, anger, and confusion people felt when realizing they had been lied to or not properly informed. During those moments, I did my best to share pointers on how to find accurate information related to their needs.

Ultimately, that experience—as did my short time volunteering at a library—made me see the ways possessing information, media, and digital literacy skills can be a lifesaving and empowering skill for people of all ages.

My favorite class so far has been Reference and Information Services. I'm really enjoying learning how to answer patrons' questions through resources ranging from books to maps to websites like the CIA's World Factbook. Additionally, I've been able to conduct light research on how librarians provide reproductive health information at the reference desk which has been intriguing to learn about.

At this point in time, I'm really interested in pursuing Teen Librarianship in a public library setting because I want to help equip young people with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate the world in more educated ways. I also strongly believe we need to keep the library a welcoming place where young people—especially LGBTQ+ folks and BIPOC—can see themselves represented on the pages, in library leadership, and beyond.

My hopes for my ILA membership are that I am able to grow my community of librarians and can learn about the ways librarians across Illinois are tackling unique issues in their communities. I feel ready to soak up all the invaluable information people who have been in this field for a lot longer have to offer!

My hope for the library profession is that representation in our field continues to grow. Despite having spent so much of my life in libraries, it simply didn't occur to me that I could also become a librarian and part of it is because I never saw anyone who looked like me. But this also means that we have to keep fighting against censorship while protecting fellow library workers. Representation can only mean so much if the people running libraries do not feel safe or supported enough to do so.

I feel immense gratitude for the opportunity to be an ILA Williams Scholar, so thank you for investing in the next generation of librarians!



CITLALLI CARDENAS

Dominican University

I have always had an adoration for the world of books since childhood. The Cicero Public Library was the first place that made me fall in love with these resources. From sneakily reading *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* by Bryan Lee O'Malley to participating in storytimes led by volunteers, this space showed me what it meant to be raised in a library. As I continued my education, I strove to center my career and academic pursuits around literature.

My dream of becoming a librarian was cemented when I took a job as a Cyber Navigator for the Chicago Public Library, specifically at the Little Village branch. This position helped me understand the importance of providing technology assistance to patrons.

For two years, I observed how staff and librarians ensured access to information and resources for patrons, finding creative ways to facilitate programs that served the Little Village and Lawndale communities. From the pages to the librarians, and even the security guard and cleaners, this branch demonstrated the beauty of collaboration and community in the library. Every day was a joy to walk in and help patrons with digital skills, while learning how to teach effectively. I will forever be grateful to the Little Village Public Library and its staff for not only motivating me but also continuously showing support as a first-generation Latine in graduate school.

My favorite class so far in Dominican University's iSchool is Organization of Knowledge. I admit it is a challenging course, as I am new to the cataloging system, but it is rewarding to truly understand the intricacies of how information is organized in libraries. It's been fun testing myself on how to catalog MARC 21 format and see how different libraries input fields in their databases.

My professional goal is to continue to work in public libraries as an adult services librarian. Working with the general public has been an amazing experience, allowing me to build relationships and a sense of community with patrons. I hope to continue fostering a safe and inclusive third space, especially by ensuring the accessibility of information to marginalized communities.

I hope to connect with library staff through my ILA membership. I find it fascinating to learn how different libraries in Illinois function and serve their communities. I would love to engage with librarians and explore what needs to be addressed in various Illinois communities.



KATHERINE MENDOZA GONZALEZ

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Five years ago, if you would have told me I was going to one day become a librarian, I probably would've given you an eyeroll. That's not to look down at librarians but more so as a reflection on how I felt at the library. Growing up as an elementary schooler in Chicago, I can recall exactly one time that I went to the public library. I recall the uncomfortable feeling of not belonging, of neither my mom nor I understanding how any of it works. I believe we checked out a book but the dread of losing that book and potentially having to pay took most of the joy from the experience. In school, the library was a place that we often had to be still, and quick. It felt as though we had to get a book and get out.

In 7th grade, my family moved to Aurora, IL and I started to enjoy reading but wasn't what you would consider a "bookworm." I still only visited the library to utilize the computer or get a group project done.

My junior year in high school I learned about the Teen Advisory Board (TAB) at the Aurora Public Library through a friend and I was always on a search for volunteer hours and extra curricular activities. During my time in TAB, I helped with some of the teen programming, I participated in teen program events, and I even got to advocate for the building of our new library at city hall (which is now the building I currently work at). Now you would think that was when I decided I wanted to be a librarian but you would be so wrong. While I learned that libraries had more to offer, I still didn't relate to much of the content or programming. The teen librarian was kind and we could talk about some aspects of our lives; I just knew we were too different and reading was never my passion, so I figured this isn't really for me.

I mostly stayed away from my public library up until a friend of mine recommended I apply for a position that had opened up. It was a year since I had earned my History degree and I still felt so lost. I looked at the application, and realized I can surely utilize my skills and previous experiences. I started as a part-timer and then less than a year in, COVID hit and I was truly astounded by the quick reaction of the library and my colleagues. Everyone worked so hard to try to find ways to continue providing services to patrons. This, along with my new insights of the library as a community center that serves diverse communities, is the reason why I have a love of libraries and know that I also want to be a part of the change towards diversifying them.

My favorite class so far is Libraries, Information, and Society because it really connects the values, ethics, and changes with libraries to real world situations.

Currently at work, I love doing cultural and Spanish language programming with adults so I want to continue to expand on that and potentially become an events coordinator.

ILA was a fantastic first conference because it really gave me a sense of connection to other libraries and librarians, knowing that so many of us have the same goals and that we face similar challenges. It also was great to learn about other library initiatives and all the resources available.

I hope to continue to connect with other librarians in ILA and potentially join a committee.

I truly hope that more and more community members are able to one day see that libraries are for everyone and that the library profession continues to diversify and that everyone can one day see themselves reflected at their library.



HILDA VAZQUEZ MEDINA

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

When I moved to Chicago in 2016, I was navigating life in a new country and still learning English when I discovered my local library branch. Even though I couldn't understand everything, I felt comfortable and safe there. I was very excited when I got my library card and started checking out books. Soon after, I realized that the library also provides services and programs for the community. The librarians I met were friendly and welcoming. Around the same time, I decided to transition to a new career. (I'm a historian by training and completed a Ph.D. in Latin American Studies at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, but I decided not to go into academia.) My realization of the essential role that public libraries play in the community inspired my interest in becoming a librarian.

It's difficult to say what my favorite class has been, since I have enjoyed most of the classes. I'm currently taking Youth Services Librarianship with Professor Carol Tilley and Reference and Information Services with Professor Melissa Wong. Both are excellent and have challenged me and taught me a lot.

My professional goal is to become a children's librarian at a public library. I would like to serve and work with Chicago's diverse residents, including immigrants, asylum seekers, and Spanish speakers.

I'm enthusiastic about the possibility of meeting, learning from, and working with librarians and colleagues from across the state. I'm also eager to take advantage of professional development and continuing education opportunities.

My hope is that we, both new librarians and experienced librarians, can create a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment in our communities and profession.

I like to think that there's a kind of symbiotic relationship between libraries and communities. Without libraries (and librarians!), communities wouldn't have access to information and other vital resources and services. Without communities, libraries would only be mere repositories of books and knowledge. Communities need libraries and libraries need communities. I look forward to contributing to an institution that's essential to our society and democracy.



DANIEL VESURAI

Valdosta State University

Libraries have always been an important part of my life. They were welcoming, accessible, and fostered my desire to be a lifelong learner by providing me with intellectual nourishment. It's somewhat surprising, then, that I never considered becoming a librarian until well into my undergraduate degree when I asked an academic librarian how he had become one. His simple answer—by getting a Master's in library science—made me realize that librarianship was both a real, viable profession and one that I wanted to pursue. After working in a library for a few months, I knew that the service I had enjoyed as a child and still enjoy in my adult life was something I wanted to provide to my community, so I began my MLIS.

I am most interested in working as a cataloger in a public library. I find cataloging work systematic, interesting, and fulfilling. My favorite class so far in library school has been Organization of Information, which is an introductory course to cataloging and the theoretical principles that guide cataloging.

The ILA Conference was exciting and exposed me to a lot of novel ideas. It was my first multi-day conference, so it was quite tiring, but I enjoyed meeting and learning from both aspiring and seasoned professionals working in different specialties. Some of my favorite sessions were about supporting queer teens, de-escalation strategies for irate visitors, and using blended Dewey to reorganize cookbooks. As I work at a relatively small library and have less experience than many in the profession, each session I attended was insightful and gave me much to think about. With my ILA membership, I look forward to continuing to connect with and learn from my colleagues across the state.

I hope that the library profession continues to address and discuss the questions of diversity and social justice in the context of libraries. In unsettling times in which truth, knowledge, and access to knowledge are challenged for the sake of maintaining systems of oppression, libraries must take a stand and fight for the values that enable them to operate. At the same time, I hope that librarianship continues to confront its own histories of oppression and evaluate how libraries are still complicit in marginalizing certain groups. With this comes my hope that aspiring librarians of color are as supported and encouraged as I have been during my time in the field. I am extremely grateful to have received ALA's Spectrum Scholarship and ILA's Williams Scholarship, and I hope more and more people receive these and other funds in the future and join the effort to transform librarianship for the better.

2024 Small and Rural Libraries (SARL) ILA Grant Recipients

Starting this year, the Small and Rural Libraries Forum (SARL) is proud to award two recipients the SARL ILA Annual Conference Grant. Sponsored by Fast Forward Libraries, LLC this grant seeks to encourage attendance at the ILA Annual Conference by small and/or rural library workers. We congratulate this year's inaugural recipients and hope to see them continue to attend the ILA Annual Conference, engage with the ILA community, and continue being stewards of librarianship in their communities. Following are their responses to questions such as what inspired them to become a librarian, their current professional goal or proudest professional achievement, what they love best about working in a small and/or rural library, their hopes for the library profession, and more!



LISA CASTERLINE

Director, Nokomis Public Library

In college I was a student worker at the library on campus as a circulation clerk. I enjoyed helping people find books they enjoyed reading and assisting them to locate reference material. I earned a degree in journalism and worked for several newspapers. When my husband and I started our family, I would tell the kids how important it was for everyone to learn to read because if people stopped learning to read then journalists like myself would be out of a job. I would also tell them reading is something you have to do your entire life so it might as well be something you love.

One of my top professional goals is just making our library a welcoming and fun place to go for people of all ages and interests. We've had several events in just the year and a half I've been director, with more than 100 people in attendance. This shows our board, the staff, and myself that we are needed and wanted in the community. I'd like to have every event so well received, but honestly, I know that's not necessarily feasible with everyone's busy lives, but reaching even just a few individuals makes an event a success to me.

The people are absolutely the thing I love most about working in a small, rural library. You get to see the children grow and thrive in the library and you witness the adults learning new things and getting outside of their comfort zones.

I would love to see children and young adults rediscover a love of books. I am also very excited to see libraries really evolve from the stigmatism of everyone having to be quiet to more of a community gathering place that is welcoming to everyone.

I thought the ILA Annual Conference was a great experience for me as a relatively new director, but also as a first-time conference attendee. Workshops and programs were offered for all types, sizes, and budgets, as well as for different positions within libraries. We also had time to find out what works, or doesn't work, for certain libraries and to brainstorm with others about topics we've been wondering about.



DEVIN SCOTT

Programming Coordinator, Salem Township Public Library District

Growing up I spent a lot of time in the library and that helped sparked my interest!

My proudest achievement to date has to be increasing our summer reading participation.

Working at a small and rural library, I love making meaningful connections with patrons.

Small and rural libraries might be small on paper, but can achieve big things.

My hope for the library profession is that it continues to grow.

I had a wonderful time at the ILA Annual Conference, it was so informative. It also provided great opportunities for networking. Thank you so much for the experience.



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2024 ILA Awards Showcase



Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award for Interlibrary Cooperation

Sponsored by the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Fund. The recipients from left: Leslie Bednar, director of the Illinois Heartland Library System, Monica Harris, director of the Reaching Across Illinois Library System, Greg McCormick, director of the Illinois State Library, Carolyn Kinsella, executive secretary of the Association of Illinois School Library Educators, and Cynthia Robinson, executive director of the Illinois Library Association.



Crosman Memorial Award for New Library Workers

Sponsored by Dominican University School of Information Studies. Presented by Don Hamerly, Dominican University SOIS, to award recipient Selicia Applegate.



Illinois Academic Librarian of the Year Award

Sponsored by Library Juice Academy. Award recipient Emily Gilbert.



Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award

Sponsored by the Robert R. McClarren Fund. Award presented by Laura Long, chair of the ILA Public Policy Committee, to Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias.



Innovative Programs and Services Award

Sponsored by Deiters & Todd Library Consulting. Award presented by Alex Todd, Deiters & Todd Library Consulting, to award recipients Ana Beltran and Elizabeth Freebairn.



Intellectual Freedom Award

Sponsored by the ILA Intellectual Freedom Fund. Award presented by Elizabeth Lynch, chair of the ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee to award recipient Lia Neveu.



Librarian of the Year Award

Sponsored by Today's Business Solutions Inc. Award presented by Mickey Smith, TBS, Inc., to award recipient Jennifer Drinka.



Deborah Dowley Preiser Marketing Award

Sponsored by the Oak Park Public Library. Award presented by Suzanne Wulf, Oak Park Public Library, to award recipient Trente Arens.



Readers' Advisory Service Award

Sponsored by the Adult Reading Round Table (ARRT). Award presented by Matthew Matkowski, member of ARRT, to award recipient Jennifer Asimakopoulos.



Alexander J. Skrzypek Award for Exceptional Service to People with Disabilities

Sponsored by the Illinois State Library. Award presented by Greg McCormick, Illinois State Library, to award recipient Dawn Wlezien.



TBS, Inc. Technical Services Award

Sponsored by Today's Business Solutions Inc. Award presented by Mickey Smith, TBS, Inc., to award recipient Jennifer Cuevas.



Trustee of the Year Award

Sponsored by Peregrine, Stime, Newman, Ritzman & Bruckner, Ltd. Award presented by Roger Ritzman, Peregrine, Stime, Newman, Ritzman & Bruckner, Ltd., to award recipient Thomas Stagg.



Young Adult Library Professional of the Year Award

Sponsored by Sourcebooks. Award presented by Sonya Hill, manager of the ILA Young Adult Services Forum, to award recipient Courtney Moore.



Youth Services Achievement Award

Sponsored by Brainfuse, Inc. Award recipient Debbie Sanchez.



Youth Services Librarian of the Year Award

Sponsored by LIBRARIA. Award presented by Rob Innes, LIBRARIA, to award recipient Katie Salo.



Resources and Technical Services Forum (RTSF) Scholarship

Sponsored by the ILA Resources and Technical Services Forum. Scholarship recipient Hannah Malmstrom.

2024 Conference Report

By the Numbers



SCAN HERE

15 Conference Planning Committee Members



91% OF ATTENDEES WERE VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED WITH THE OVERALL CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE



My favorite thing was the variety of programs. Coming from a small library, I was able to take home many tips and ideas that I could implement.

1127

Attendees

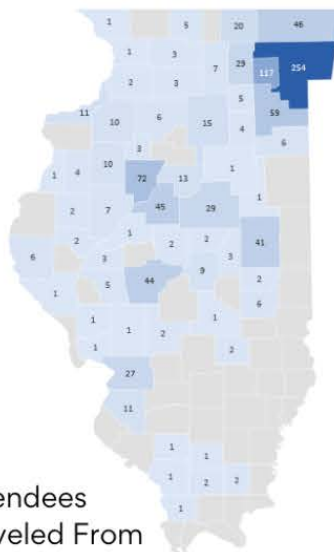


257

Speakers

166

Exhibitor
Representatives



Attendees
Traveled From
60 Counties

78

 Program Sessions

32

 Poster Sessions

4

 Unconferences

3

 Featured Speakers

3

 Keynote Speakers

I ♥ Intellectual
Freedom Funds

\$715

Peoria Proud
Contribution

\$2685

15

Sponsors

Trivia Teams

19

95

Trustees

57

Dog
Toys

72

Exhibiting
Booths

SAVE THE DATE

October
14-16
2025

Donald E. Stephens
Convention Center,
Rosemont, IL



Illinois Library Association Annual Report 2023–2024

Dear Illinois Library Community,

As I reflect on my year as president, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible achievements and unwavering dedication of our library community. Our Annual Conference in Springfield was a resounding success, featuring inspiring speakers like Dr. Emily Knox and Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias. Additionally, our Reaching Forward North and South events saw record turnouts, highlighting our collective commitment to professional development and community engagement.

One of our most significant accomplishments this year has been the rollout and implementation of Public Act 103-0100, a groundbreaking law designed to prevent book bans and promote education, literary justice, and equity. This legislation marks a pivotal moment for our schools and libraries, encouraging us to embrace a future where access to diverse literature is safeguarded for all.

We also celebrated the introduction of a new statewide database package through the State Library, which will collectively save our libraries millions of dollars every single year. This initiative underscores our commitment to resource sharing and financial stewardship, ensuring that our libraries can continue to offer invaluable services to their communities.

In response to the challenges posed by political polarization, censorship campaigns, viral disinformation, and threats to public servants, we launched the More Than a Building campaign. This initiative provides libraries with the tools and support they need to remain resilient and strong during difficult times. As this campaign continues to grow, it will become an essential resource for libraries navigating these complex issues.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the future of the Illinois Library Association. With the recent adoption of our new Strategic Plan and the forthcoming update to the *Serving Our Public: Standards for Public Libraries*, I am confident that our organization will continue to be a pillar of strength for the entire library community.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the entire ILA Board, the dedicated volunteers who serve on our committees and forums, and, of course, to Cyndi and her amazing staff. Your hard work and passion have been the driving force behind our successes.

As we move forward, let us carry this spirit of gratitude and optimism, knowing that together, we can overcome any challenge and continue to champion the vital role of libraries in our society.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ryan" and last name "Johnson" clearly distinguishable.

Ryan Johnson, Director, O'Fallon Public Library
ILA President, 2023–2024

2019–2024 ILA Strategic Plan

Vision

Collaboratively shaping a new future for libraries in Illinois

Mission

Leadership, advocacy, partnership, and learning for the benefit of Illinois libraries

Core Strategic Values

- Energizing, visionary leadership
- Adaptation to change
- Long-term strategic perspective/direction
- Member service focus
- Partnerships and alliances
- Diversity and equity of opportunity

Core Values of the Profession

Information access, equity, intellectual freedom, and objective truth

Strategies, Goals, and Desired Outcomes

Strategy: Advocacy

Goal: Legislative Advocacy

- Invest in advocacy. Educate and mobilize activist groups and other professional associations to understand and support the cause and critical nature of libraries.
- *Desired outcomes:* Activated strategic alliances and informed advocacy at all levels achieve adequate funding for libraries. Governmental decision-makers increase support for libraries.

Goal: Community Advocacy

- Develop education and tools for library leaders and staff to establish clear understanding of libraries' worth among the people served, resulting in community and stakeholder ambassadorship and engagement.
- *Desired outcomes:* The communities and people served value the presence and vitality of libraries. The communities and people served are vocal advocates for libraries.

Strategy: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion

Goal: In the Profession

- Develop education for library leaders and staff about increasing diversity in collections and programs and creating an inclusive environment in libraries and librarianship.
- *Desired outcome:* Library leadership and staff are cultivated and engaged in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the communities they serve.

Goal: In the Association

- Review and revamp the committee and volunteer system for functionality, diversity, inclusivity, and recognition. Increase awareness, understanding, and commitment to creating an inclusive environment in ILA.
- *Desired outcomes:* Members recognize their ownership in and have equitable access to participate and be heard in ILA's volunteer structure. Members connect collaboratively for sharing and creation of knowledge.

Strategy: Delivery of Member Value

- **Goal:** Assess and refresh programs and services, integrating new approaches and technologies to deliver member value in programming, communication, and involvement.
- *Desired outcome:* Members in every segment find relevant value from ILA programs and services.

Strategy: Leadership

- **Goal:** Convene critical conversations with partners in the library ecosystem including the Illinois State Library, the three systems, AISLE, and other related consortia and organizations.
- *Desired outcomes:* Access to library service continually expands to increasing numbers of Illinois residents. Librarians, library staff, and trustees are supported effectively and efficiently by the library ecosystem in the state.

Strategic Progress

2023-24 is the fifth and final governance year for ILA's strategic plan, which was developed in 2018-19 and approved in April 2019. Originally intended to be a three-year plan in effect from 2019-20 through 2021-22, it was extended for one year by Executive Board vote in September 2021, to run through 2022-23. The Executive Board voted in November 2022 that the plan be extended for an additional year with an updated plan in 2024. On May 16, 2024, the ILA Executive Board voted to approve the association's strategic plan for 2024-2029.

This assessment will be the final report on the progress toward the association's 2019-24 strategic priorities since the prior (2023) report:

Strategic Priority: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion in the Association

- Continuing "Courageous Conversations" and "Otter Tech Code of Conduct Enforcement Workshops" training for Executive Board members and staff.
- Heath Umbreit presented "Trans Identities: Myths & Misinformation" to the Executive Board at the January 2024 meeting.
- The Diversity Committee Initiated a mentorship program to lay a solid professional foundation for the mentees to grow, learn, and thrive in the field of librarianship in Illinois.

Strategic Priority: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion in the Profession

- Awarded \$3,000 in travel stipends for two Illinois librarians from underrepresented populations to attend their first national conferences.
- Published article "Making Decisions Centered Around EDI" by Cindy Khatri & Van McGary, Downers Grove Public Library, in the December 2023 *ILA Reporter*.
- Published article "Stephen Jackson: A DiversiTEA Recap" by the ILA Diversity Committee in the March 2024 *ILA Reporter*.

Strategic Priority: Legislative Advocacy

- The first in-person Legislative Meetups since February 2020 were held in November and December, giving us the opportunity to get our legislation in front of legislators before the 2024 session began.

- HB 4224 was introduced to lower the treasurer bond percentage from 50% to 10–25% of total revenue collections from the previous fiscal year and signed into law by the Governor.

Strategic Priority: Community Advocacy

- The Advocacy Committee presented "Ready, Set, Advocate" programs at the ILA Annual Conference, AISLE Conference, and Reaching Forward North.
- When Illinois libraries faced a series of bomb threats in the autumn of 2023, ILA developed More Than a Building, a project to support library workers, trustees, and the community. More Than a Building was made possible by support from Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias and the Illinois State Library.

Strategic Priority: Leadership

- The 2023 Annual Conference was held in Springfield, with more than 91% of attendees saying they were happy or very happy with the conference overall.
- Illinois School Library Workers Symposium is a one-day online event designed for individuals who are working in school libraries with no formal library education, certified or not-certified, paraprofessionals, and those considering getting a school library endorsement. The event is a joint project of the Association of Illinois School Library Educators, Illinois Library Association, Illinois Heartland Library System, Illinois State Library, and Reaching Across Illinois Library System.

- The eighth Director's University (DU) was held in August 2023 and a third session of Directors University 2.0 (DU 2.0) was held in April 2024. DU is intended for first-time directors and directors new to Illinois from public libraries of all shapes and sizes. DU 2.0 dives deeper into topics that were touched on in the prior sessions.

Strategic Priority: Delivery of Member Value

- iREAD® 2024 "Read, Renew, Repeat" has wrapped up with great success, which has had more than 1,300 libraries in 41 states participate and also had purchases from Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. In addition to Illinois, the 2024 iREAD campaign was adopted by ten states – Alaska, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington.
- The ILA Executive Board endorsed the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) statement on Appropriate Staffing for School Libraries. AASL states that in addition to qualified school library professionals, highly trained technical and clerical support staff are essential for all school libraries at every grade level.
- Reaching Forward South has been confirmed as an ILA committee. From now on, the Reaching Forward events will be known as Reaching Forward South and Reaching Forward North.
- The Human Resources and Administration Forum is the newest ILA Forum, representing the interests of those who are human resources professionals and/or administrative professionals in all types of libraries.

ILA'S Advocacy Efforts

In Illinois

The Illinois General Assembly passed and Governor Pritzker recently signed into law over \$75 million in Fiscal Year 2025 library funding. Library grants and other formulaic revenue streams upon which we rely are again contained within the state's spending package, which became effective on July 1. The Illinois Library Association thanks Illinois legislators for recognizing the importance of these dollars to our state's libraries.

Contained within one of the omnibus budget bills this session is ILA's House Bill 4224. The bill was introduced to lower the treasurer bond percentage from 50% to 10-25% of total revenue collections from the previous fiscal year and was signed into law by Governor Pritzker.

On the Federal Level

The American Library Association (ALA) submitted comments to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees calling for IMLS/LSTA funding of \$232 million and IAL funding of \$50 million. This followed on the heels of the "Dear Appropriator" letters and the work of library advocates during the in-person "Fly-In" events in March. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth both signed the LSTA and IAL letters; eight Representatives signed the letter in favor of IMLS/LSTA and five signed the letter in favor of IAL.

Veronica De Fazio, Deputy Director of Peoria Public Library and Past ILA President, represented Illinois at ALA's "Fly-in Day." This is a day when librarians from across the country visit their legislators on Capitol Hill with the same goals in mind. Veronica was invited to attend as a constituent of Representative Darin LaHood's district.



Conferences and Events



ILA's Annual Conference returned to Springfield for the first time since 2014. Held at the BOS Center, the conference attracted 632 attendees and 158 exhibitor representatives. The theme — Connect, Cultivate, Collaborate — focused on finding our commonalities while working and growing together, and still acknowledging and respecting our differences. Conference Co-Chairs Amber Creger and Eric Edwards led a committee that built a strong array of speakers: Dr. Emily J.M. Knox, Keynote Speaker; Illustrator Jason Chin, Youth Services Forum Author Breakfast; Fobazi Ettarh, IACRL Luncheon; Stephen Jackson, DiversiTEA; and De'Amon Harges, President's Program.



The eighth Directors' University (DU) was held in August 2023. Due to demand, a third Directors' University 2.0 (DU 2.0) session was held in April 2024 at Starved Rock. The Directors' University events are collaborative projects of ILA, IHLS, RAILS, and the Illinois State Library and are intended to give new directors — and now, with DU 2.0, seasoned directors — the information and connections with colleagues they need to succeed.



The Reaching Forward South (RFS) Conference was held Friday, April 19, 2024 at the DoubleTree Collinsville. The conference was a success with 252 attendees — a record high attendance.



The Reaching Forward North (RFN) Conference held Friday, May 10, 2024 at the Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, was successful. The variety of exhibitors and program topics contributed to an attendance of 899!



Once again, the Library Trustee Forum has presented its series of spring workshops online, which has enabled greater attendance from trustees all over the states. Topics covered included "Inclusive Placemaking: Understanding the Power of an Accessible Library for All" by Zachary Benedict, MKM architecture + design; "Illinois Library Trustees: What's the Job and What I Wish I Had Known?" by Amanda Standerfer, Fast Forward Libraries; and "Director Searches & Evaluations: Tips & Tricks from Two Veterans" by Jim Deiters and Alex Todd, Deiters & Todd Library Consulting.



The "Noon Network," a series of midday micro-learning webinars on various topics designed to help achieve professional development goals, continued for its third year. Webinars are held at noon on Mondays and Wednesdays for 20 to 30 minutes followed by a question-and-answer session. Topics included "Making Decisions Centered Around EDI" and "The Great North American Solar Eclipse."

"ILA enjoys a diverse array of revenue sources, making the association unique among state chapters of ALA."

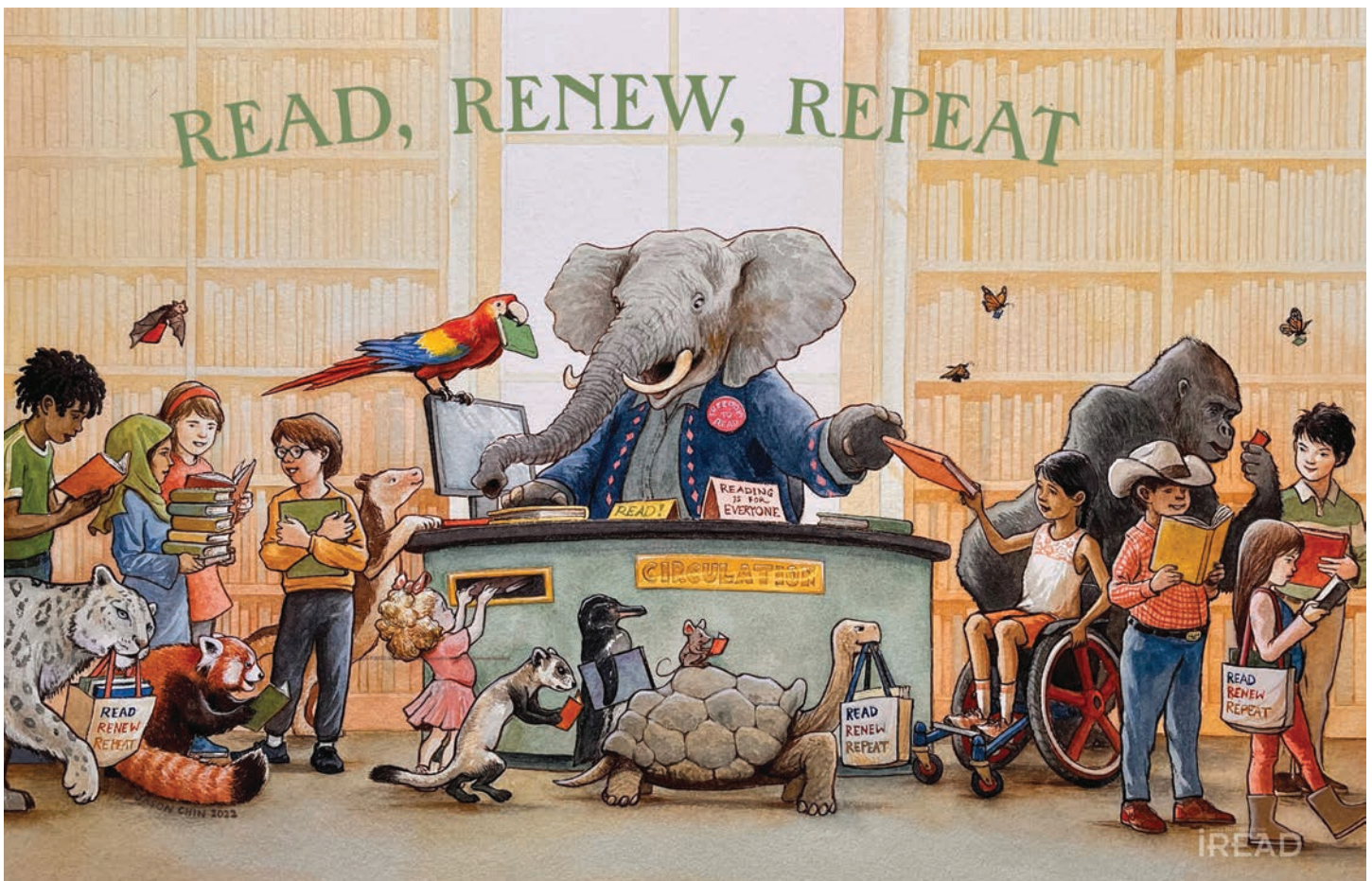
Realizing Revenue

ILA enjoys a diverse array of revenue sources, making the association unique among state chapters of ALA. Membership, continuing education, and publications are all traditional sources of revenue; the iREAD® summer reading program enables ILA to survive and thrive as traditional revenue sources face pressure from tight budgets and changing environments. The Fund for Illinois Libraries continues to offer ILA institutional members who do not have their own associated foundations or friends groups a way to accept monetary donations, primarily from corporations that require a 501(c)3 for their philanthropy. More than 40 libraries in Central and Southern Illinois received \$2,000 each from Ameren's Love Your Library program by utilizing the Fund for Illinois Libraries. Our long-term investments help ensure the Association's continuity; although the portfolio is managed conservatively, we do historically see investment growth over the long term.

More than 1,300 libraries in 41 states, plus all Department of Defense base libraries worldwide, and libraries in Australia and New Zealand participated in iREAD® in 2024, themed "Read, Renew, Repeat." Conservation as a movement focuses on protecting species from extinction, maintaining and restoring habitats, enhancing ecosystem services, and protecting biological diversity. iREAD® 2024: "Read, Renew, Repeat" made for a wonderfully diversified summer reading program that encouraged reading as a restorative method of self-improvement and self-preservation.

Begun in 1981 as an Illinois-only partnership among youth services librarians in the state, iREAD® has grown to include formal or partial statewide adoptions well beyond our borders, including Alaska, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington. This year we also welcomed a consortium from Alberta, Canada to our partnership family.

Contributions to the association also continue to increase, most notably through the Illinois Library Luminaries program, which supports the ILA Endowment and saw two new inductees in 2023-2024: Dr. Emily J.M. Knox and Ellen Popit. Contributed income also helps build ILA's array of restricted funds, which primarily support awards and scholarships, including the Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Fund, the Diversity Scholarship Fund, the Intellectual Freedom Fund, the Legal Defense Fund, the Valerie J. Wilford Memorial Fund, and the Robert R. McClarren Fund.



Fiscal Report (Year Ended June 30, 2024)

Revenue

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| General Operations | \$172,664 |
| Membership | \$296,021 |
| Conference | \$362,500 |
| iREAD | \$2,422,529 |
| Publications | \$44,615 |
| Public Policy | \$2,000 |
| Awards | \$12,100 |
| Endowment Contributions | \$10,020 |
| Workshops/Projects | \$133,335 |
| Reaching Forward | \$162,679 |
| Donor Restricted Funds Contributions | \$32,596 |
| Total Revenue | \$3,651,059 |

Expenses (reflecting allocation of staff salaries, taxes, and benefits to functional areas)

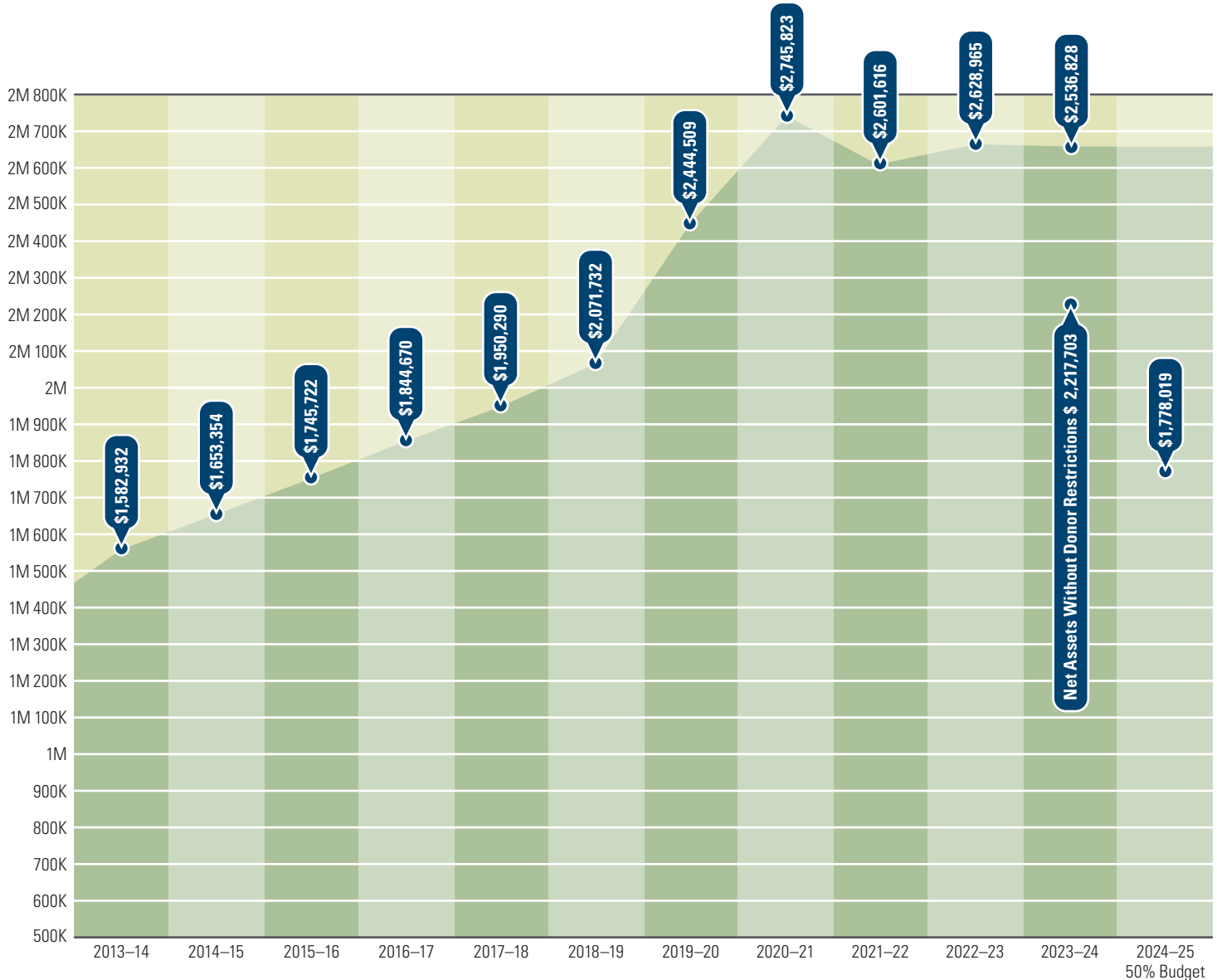
| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| General Operations | \$319,218 |
| Membership | \$206,345 |
| Conference | \$320,741 |
| iREAD | \$2,293,896 |
| Publications | \$51,958 |
| Public Policy | \$178,787 |
| Awards | \$32,479 |
| Workshops/Projects | \$178,778 |
| Forums & Committees | \$9,441 |
| Reaching Forward | \$141,533 |
| Total Operating Expenses | \$3,733,176 |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Operating Net | -\$92,137 |
| Other Revenue: Gain on Long-term Investments | \$156,815 |
| Other Expenses: Amortization, Depreciation | -\$13,507 |
| Increase in Net Assets | -\$92,137 |
| Net Assets at end of FY 2023 | \$2,628,965 |
| Net Assets at end of FY 2024 | \$2,536,828 |

Net Assets Comprise:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions | \$2,217,703 |
| Net Assets With Donor Restrictions | \$319,125 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atkinson Memorial Award: \$35 • Robert R. McClarren Award Fund for Legislative Development: \$8,548 • Legal Defense Fund: \$1,205 • OCLC Users Group: \$25,266 • Valerie Wilford Fund: \$14,070 • Diversity Scholarship: \$1,871 • Diversity Scholarship (Board Designated): \$0 • Intellectual Freedom Fund: \$1,118 • Endowment Fund: \$223,742 • Unappropriated Endowment Fund Earnings: \$38,270 | |
| Total Net Assets at End of FY 2023 | \$2,536,828 |

Net Assets Ensure Long-Term Stability



Cumulative Surplus

The growth in ILA's net assets, particularly net assets without donor restrictions, has been a conscious strategy over the past 20-plus years, with the goal of producing an annual budget surplus that will build up a reserve fund of net assets without donor restrictions equal to at least 50% of the subsequent year's budgeted expenses, according to ILA fiscal policy. This goal has been achieved since 2013; this year, of the net assets listed in the chart above, \$2,536,828 are without donor restrictions. The expense budget for 2023-24 totals \$3,733,176; 50% is \$1,866,588.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2023-2024 | -\$93,137 |
| 2022-2023 | \$27,350 |
| 2021-2022 | -\$144,209 |
| 2020-2021 | \$301,314 |
| 2019-2020 | \$372,777 |
| 2018-2019 | \$121,442 |
| 2017-2018 | \$105,620 |
| 2016-2017 | \$98,948 |
| 2015-2016 | \$92,368 |
| 2014-2015 | \$70,422 |
| 2013-2014 | \$98,833 |
| 2012-2013 | \$353,247 |
| 2011-2012 | \$178,331 |
| 2010-2011 | \$193,267 |
| 2009-2010 | \$372,938 |
| 1896-2009 | \$386,316 |
| Grand Total | \$2,535,827 |

Thank You to Our Donors



Help light the way forward for libraries in Illinois! The Illuminate initiative is designed to encourage individual giving with universal recognition of all gifts of \$5 or more, and additional honors for increasing levels of cumulative lifetime support. Contributions to ANY fund or purpose at ILA count toward Illuminate recognition.

SPARK

We thank all donors who sparked change with a gift during the 2023–2024 fiscal year (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024).

Jeanne Aken
Nancy Alexander
Susan E. Anderson
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Caitlin E. Archer-Helke
Rob Bagstad
Bradley F. Baker
Laura L. Barnes
Leslie Bednar
Mary Beil
Jennifer Billingsley
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Maggie Thomann
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Michael Treece
Ilani Valero
Leanne Vandecreek
Rebecca Vnuk
Lexie Walsh
Marisa Walstrum
Kyla Waltermire
Janet Wigodner
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Deborah Will
Nina M. Wunderlich

IGNITE

We thank donors who ignited possibilities with cumulative gifts of at least \$1,000 in their lifetime.

Bradley Baker
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Jeanne Hamilton
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James Jarog
Paul Kobasa
Cynthia Maiello-Gluecklich
Julie Milavec
Megan Millen
Sharon Reese
Cynthia M. Robinson
Carol Steffensmeier

ENERGIZE

We thank donors who energized Illinois librarianship with cumulative gifts of at least \$1,500 in their lifetime.

Gail Bush
Margaret Cousin
Margaret Danhof
James Farrell
Kate Marek
Pattie Piotrowski



INSPIRE

We thank all donors who inspired the profession with cumulative gifts of at least \$2,500 during their lifetime or via estate plans.

Betsy Adamowski
Robert P. Doyle
Carol Johnston
John Shales
Amanda E. Standerfer
Peggy Sullivan
Myung Sung
Alex C. Todd
Sharon Wilford

2023–2024 Executive Board

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Vice President/President-Elect

Amy Byers, Chatham Area Public Library District

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Greg McCormick, Illinois State Library, Springfield

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Sarah Anderson
Member Services Specialist and Editor

Becca Boland
iREAD Content and Development Manager

Tamara Jenkins
Communication and Engagement Manager

Tina Koleva
ILA/iREAD Operations Director

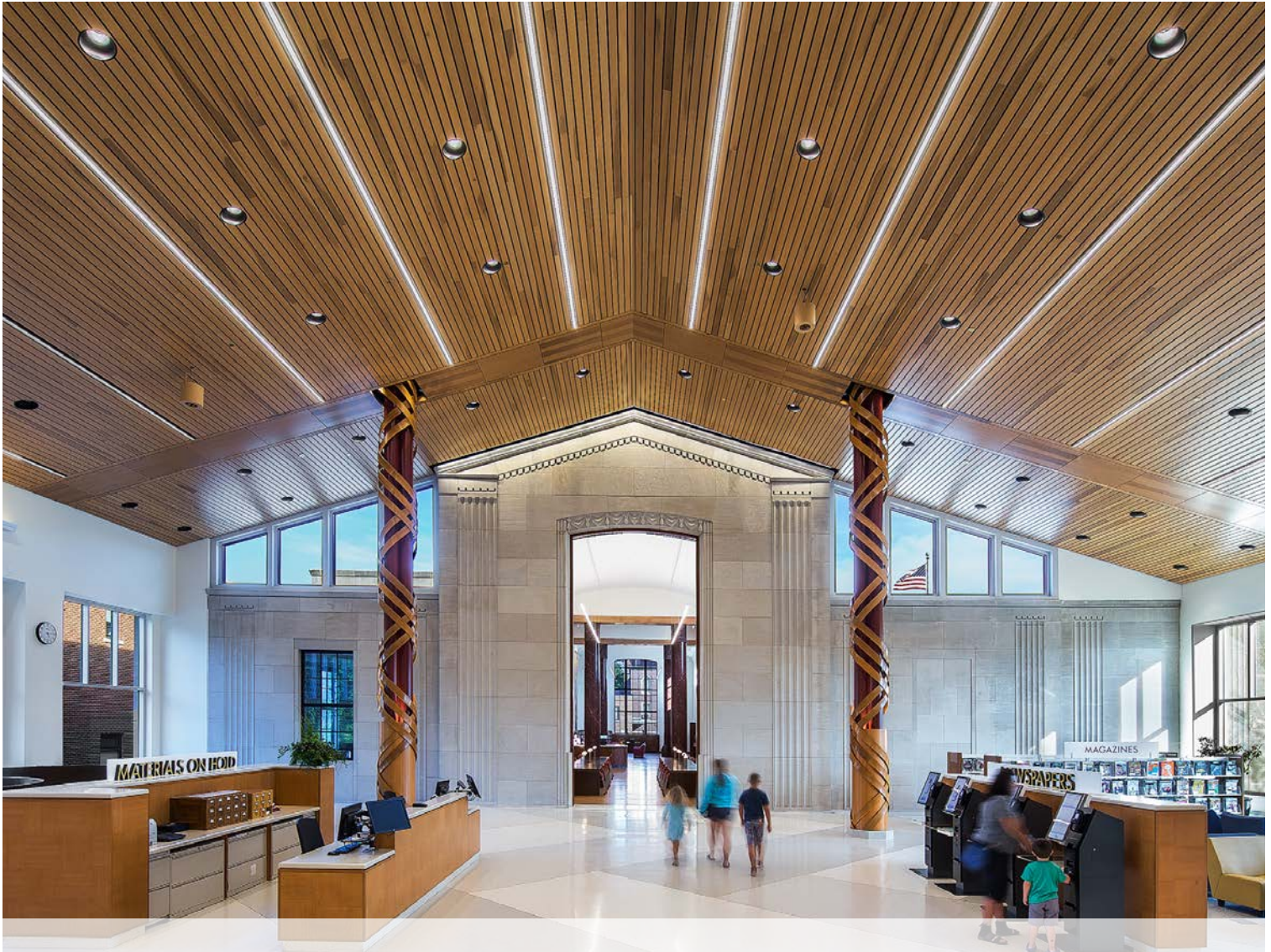
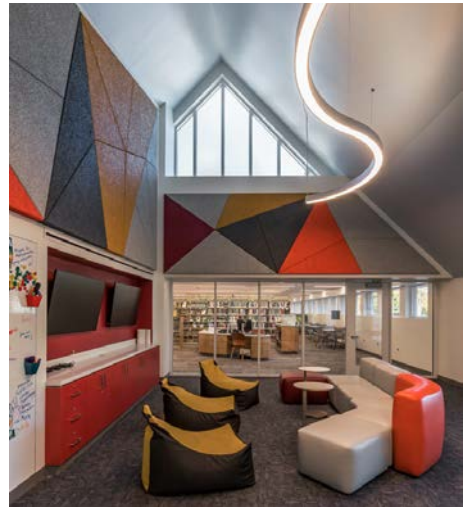
Kristin Pekoll
Conference and Continuing Education Manager



Illinois Library Association

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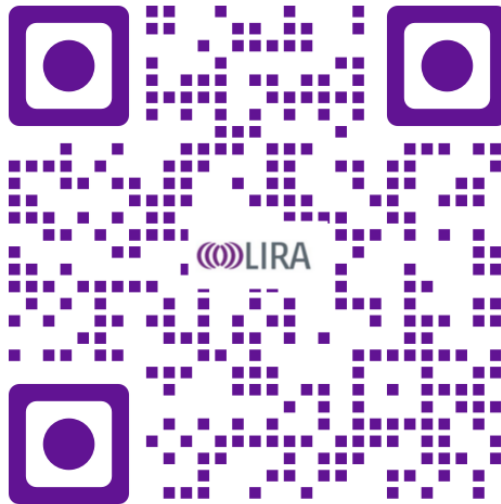

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Illinois Library Association

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