

Annual Reports from Sections and Committees 2021



Conference Committee Annual Report 2021

Traditionally, the conference committee's annual report has been a summary of the prior year's conference highlights and revenue. This past year has not been traditional. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the annual conference was cancelled. Planning for the 2021 conference began in the summer of 2020. In light of the ongoing uncertainty regarding the virus and vaccines, the committee decided to hold the conference virtually for this year.

Conference Director, Kristen Collins sought out a range of virtual conference service providers for the co-chairs to meet and evaluate. After much careful consideration of service options, functionality and costs, Massachusetts based Multimedia Focus was selected as our vendor. Ms. Collins and the co-chairs worked with Multimedia Focus to build the virtual environment for MLA's first virtual conference.

The conference committee reviewed the programs that had been selected for the 2020 conference to determine which were good choices to host in 2021. The committee also solicited new program ideas. All submissions were carefully assessed for inclusion in a much more compact conference than is our usual practice when in person. The result being a streamlined yet robust conference that we hope is both informative and enjoyable.

A lasting innovation to MLA annual conferences that was inaugurated this year is a dedicated conference website. Ms. Collins worked with a designer to build a beautiful, professional, highly functional conference website. This site will be able to be repurposed for future conferences, elevating our online conference presence.

Due to her tireless efforts, Ms. Collins was able to secure \$6409 (as of this writing) in sponsorships and virtual exhibitor spaces. This is about 15% over the revised projected income proposal. She also partnered with some of the vendors who had planned to exhibit in 2020 to convert their 2020 exhibitor fees into 2021 sponsorships. The virtual nature of the conference offered us an opportunity to reimagine sponsorship offerings in such ways as adding video advertising on the livestream dashboard and banner ads on the conference website (which is not allowed on the Wild Apricot site). Post-conference, it is possible that additional a modest amount of revenue could be earned since all the sessions will be recorded.

The registration fee pricing structure was redesigned due to the compressed agenda and virtual experience.

Anna Gooding-Call, a member of the conference committee, will be stepping up into the role of committee co-chair with special focus on technology related conference issues.

After several years as a conference co-chair, Kim Hewitt is stepping away to assume the role of MLA Vice President. Ms. Hewitt has been an incredible co-chair and was responsible for overhauling the program proposal submission process. She was also the driving force behind the adoption of DocuSign which has made the speaker agreement process much more cohesive. The conference has benefitted greatly from her

contributions and the committee thanks her for her service. Her excellent work as a conference co-chair promises that she will be a great asset to MLA in her new role as Vice President.

Ms. Hewitt is not the first conference co-chair to have left the committee to serve in MLA's administration. In 2020, our incoming MLA President, Joanne Lamothe, stepped away from the conference co-chair role and into that of MLA VP, as the conference committee's loss was MLA administration's gain. That path is about to be reversed as, outgoing MLA Past President, Esmè Green, resumes her role as conference co-chair. The committee is excited for her return to conference planning and enthusiastically welcomes her back.

This year has been unprecedented is an understatement. The decision to cancel the 2020 conference was the correct one but difficult and discouraging. The conference committee wrestled with the optimistic desire to hold a traditional, in person conference in 2021. Weighing all available information, we determined that a virtual conference was the best possible choice. We worked hard to create a top tier virtual conference for all attendees. We are cautiously confident that we will return to an **in-person** conference next year and have already begun work on securing a venue. We hope to see all of you in person in 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

MLA Conference Committee Co-Chairs

Ellen MJ Keane

Michelle Filleul

Kim Hewitt



Intellectual Freedom/Social Responsibility Committee Annual Report 2021

Fiscal year 2021 was very quiet for IF/SRC. We last met in March of 2020 just prior to the state shut down due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Since then our work has continued irregularly, primarily via email. We have lost members and switched or eliminated some roles. We will host a Networking & IdeaShare Social June 8th.

Roles:

- Chair: Andrea Fiorillo
- Co chair: open
- ALA Liaison: Stephanie Alexandra Barnaby
- Conference Committee Liaison: open
- Intellectual Freedom Champions: Matt Amory and Susan Caulfield
- Legislative Committee Liaison: William Adamczyk
- MLS Liaison: Michelle Eberle
- Secretary: open
- Social Media Maven: open
- Social Planner: Annette Diola

A few highlight of this year's work include:

- Began promoting participation in the 2020 Census after receiving MBLC training in FY20
- Helped Citizen's Responding to Climate Change in creating Climate Resilience hubs in libraries and participated in virtual Climate Preparedness Week programs
- Planned annual conference programs, some unfortunately cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Two are going forward: The opening keynote: *30 Black Moments and The Challenge of Oblivia* with Anika Nailah, former professor at Wheaton, Cambridge, and Smith colleges, discusses what life is like for African Americans in a USA where self-described white allies don't know what they don't know. *Public Library as Refuge: Social Service Efforts at the Boston Public Library* panel.
- Provided ongoing support for a school librarian in Ludlow, MA over a challenge to the book, *Sex is a Funny Word* by Cory Silverberg by attending school committee meetings, writing letters objecting to the violation of challenge policy and personal attacks on the librarian. Stayed in touch with ALA OIF over the challenge.
- Tabled plans for a symposium due to the pandemic

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Fiorillo,
Chair



Jordan Miller Committee Annual Report Annual Report 2021

The Jordan Miller Committee reviewed 113 applications for the \$500 Jordan Miller mini grant and chose Greensboro Free Library in Greensboro, VT. This was a very competitive year, due probably to funding cuts related to the pandemic.

The Greensboro Free Library will use the grant to hire Abenaki storytellers for a storytelling event that will honor Abenaki culture past and present in Vermont. The Abenaki storytelling event will be a part of the Greensboro Free Library's Summer Reading Program "Tails & Tales."

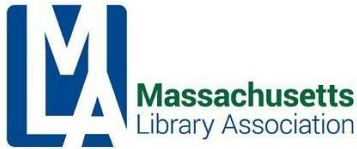
The award was announced through the NERTCL state representatives in March

Preference went to New England libraries outside of Massachusetts. Next year, preference will go to Massachusetts libraries.

Pam McCuen of the Wayland Free Public Library and Amy Dorsheimer of the Nevins Public Library served on the committee this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam McCuen
Jordan Miller Committee Co-Chair



Leadership and Management Section (LAMS) Annual Report 2021

The section was approved by membership at the annual meeting in May 2020.
The section's officers for FY 2021 were:

- Co-Chair: Lynne Soukup, Assistant Director, Westborough Public Library
- Co-Chair: Sara Sullivan, Head of Reader Services, Nevins Memorial Library
- Secretary: Maura Deedy, MBLC

We held six meetings, 2-3:30 p.m. September 17, November 19, January 21, March 18 and May 6 (upcoming), all via ZOOM due to the pandemic.

We hosted two presentations this year:

Meeting People Where They Are: Service Design in Rapidly Changing Libraries- Callan Bignoli and Lauren Stara

An exploration of service design – what is it and how can it make your library better tomorrow? Services and the way we deliver them are changing very quickly and unpredictably. Being intentional about what and how we do is what we mean by service design. Digital, physical, and even philosophical: it's all about service.

Learning objectives:

- Learn how to harness rapid change and community feedback to provide more responsive, user-centered library service
- Understand the ways in which libraries straddle the physical and the digital, in areas such as service provision and collections, illuminating how they overlap and can be improved using similar philosophies
- Embrace an openness to change as a foundation for project management, problem solving, preparing for future challenges, personal reflection and self-care, and leadership.

Christine Tieri, Brand Strategy Coach, Consultant and Speaker

Dream Big: Goal Setting for 2021

Today, more than ever we are all looking for a great start to the new year. Ask yourself, what are you hoping to achieve personally and professionally in 2021? How do you hope to influence and make an impact on others? Goals have the power to activate and energize. They serve as guideposts for decision making, and keep you on track and on task. Come along as we capture our dreams, recognize our strengths, organize our thoughts, and build a plan with purpose. And remember, when pursuing your goals, it's really the journey that counts.

Additionally we led discussion on the following topics:

- September: Leadership styles - Case exercises
- November: Service Design

- January: Goal Setting
- March: What are your plans/challenges for reopening?

The year is ending with 74 people on our distribution list!

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Soukup, Co-Chair



Legislative Committee Annual Report 2021

The MLA Legislative Committee is comprised of members from across the Commonwealth and includes many libraries, networks, academics and organizations. We are always open to new members who express an interest and understanding of the need to advocate locally, state and national level for all types of libraries. While this year was challenging at so many levels; we used this time to keep focused on remaining strong by continuing to add to our membership. Timothy Cherubini, Executive Director of COSLA joined the committee as he lives in Williamstown and is interested in becoming active with local legislators. CMLA had changes in leadership as we welcomed Brittany McDougal, Oxford Public Library Director, CMLA President and Lisa Cheever, Blackstone Public Library Director, CMLA Vice President.

We met virtually throughout the year; every other month as usual except for when preparing our advocacy campaign for the state budget season. We expect to continue meeting remotely until further notice. Jennifer Harris (Retired) and William Adamczyk (Milton) will co-chair in FY22. Plans are in place to add a junior member-in-training for co-chair.

The sub-committee to organize Virtual Library Legislative Day at the State House was comprised of Jennifer Harris, (Retired) Will Adamczyk, (Milton) Greg Pronevitz, (MSLA) Catherine Halpin, (BPL) Kimberly Lynns, (Andover) Michael Moran, (WMLA) and Lisa Cheever (CMLA). The purpose is to organize in conjunction with MSLA, with WMLA and CMLA feature; the advocacy effort to support the MBLC Library Legislative Agenda with Legislators. The sub-committee was able to use the Virtual model from FY21 consisting of four (4) Virtual Legislative Day events on April 6, April 7, and April 8, 2021. Thanks go to all the committee members, Mary Ann Cluggish, Chair of MBLC, James Lonergan, Director of MBLC and Mary Rose Quinn, MBLC, and Will Adamczyk's skill and patience in using the new MLA Zoom software. We used the webinar style set up with panelists being visible, monitored chat by including thank yous to any Legislators or Aides in attendance and kept each event to the targeted 45 minute time allotment. A total of 350 attendees were registered with a breakdown as follows: Western 91, Central 68, Boston/North 97 and Boston/South 94. A total of 50 Senators, Representatives and Aides attended, up from 15 in FY20! We considered this Virtual approach a success. The Committee intends to keep a virtual element in play for next year, while hosting an in-person event at the State House in 2022.

NOTE: The MBLC developed a link on their website to host all MBLC Legislative Agenda information which was stellar. Anyone preparing to speak with their local or state legislatures can easily prepare a presentation by using the link. While the Legislators made it very clear that the budget lines are in jeopardy due to COVID-19 and how the economy would recover; in the end they supported State Aid to Libraries with strong funding as well as additional funding to regional budget lines. Funding for the Massachusetts Center for the Book received an increase for the first time in several years up to \$300,000. Advocacy works!

The Legislative Committee efforts also include:

- Promoting Legislative breakfasts throughout the Commonwealth and maintain a calendar of events. We supported libraries choosing not to host Legislative Breakfasts in FY 21 as there was so much loss of staff and service. WMLA successfully hosted their annual event with some changes. The Committee will work on FY22 to assist libraries in breakfast planning again.
- The Committee promotes library supporters across the state to write to their legislators about library funding, to attend Library Legislative Day, and to advocate for IMLS funding.

- The CQ Engage Advocacy Software database was improved by ALA so users enjoy a better experience. Thanks go to Will Adamczyk for his expertise in implementing the messages that are created. Anyone can access specific engage messages designed as the Legislators move through the budget process. The user can sign in to locate their local Legislators. People are encouraged to personalize the message; Legislators respond to direct communication when learning what our Libraries need to thrive.
- A stronger connection has been developed with the Library Caucus; efforts are being made to meet with the Library Caucus at some point during the budget cycle. · The Committee works with the MSLA liaison to the Legislative Committee and receives updates on MSLA advocacy work and plans for the following year.
- The Committee planned a session at the MLA Annual Conference in May 2021: *“Expand your Library’s Advocacy Potential to the Max” featuring John Chrastka, EveryLibrary Executive Director*. A promotional email was sent to all regions to drum up interest in this important program.

Ultimately, the effort is always to encourage advocacy training for the library community. The final meeting this year will be June 25th where we will set the meeting schedule for FY22.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Harris and Will Adamczyk, Co-chairs



Paralibrarian Section Annual Report 2021

The Paralibrarian Section of the Massachusetts Library Association held six virtual meetings between, June 2020 and May 2021.

The main takeaway from the past year is the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the section's budget. We had fewer applications for PARA certification, and we have not been able to secure a sponsorship from DEMCO for this year. We have reached out to two other vendors for sponsorship, but they have not been able to partner with us at this time. Since the section is significantly supported by the above endeavors, we will not be able to self-fund this year.

This Year's Highlights

Heather Maganzini worked with MLA's PR section to move the paralibrarian social media under the MLA umbrella.

The section conferred PARA Certifications on two candidates (see attached list).

The Paralibrarian reward committee received seven nominations for the "MLA Paralibrarian Section Award for Outstanding Library Support Staff" and two nominations for "MLA Paralibrarian Section Award for Library Support Staff Advocate". The executive board reviewed and selected the winners on April 29, 2021. The winners will be recognized and announced at our annual meeting on May 18, 2021.

The proposed slate of officers for 2021/2022 for the Paralibrarian Section Executive Board are:

Annamarie McGrath, Chair
Heather Maganzini, Vice Chair
Allison Sloan, Past Chair
Lori Salotto, Secretary, PARA Review Board
Andrea Hogan, Treasurer
Geraldine Deyermund, Member At-Large/Conference Committee
Karen Horn, Member At-Large/Career Development, Chair PARA Review Board
Patty Bailey, Awards Chair

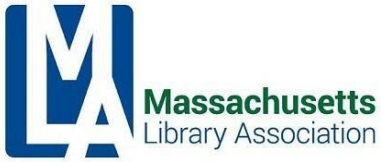
The election for board members will be at our annual meeting at the MLA Conference on May 18, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,
Annamarie McGrath,
Chair MLA Paralibrarian Section

Certificates for PARA, 2020- 2021 Paralibrarian Section

Level 2

Elise Jansson
Cyndi Zarriello



Public Relations Committee Annual Report 2021

The Public Relations Committee had a productive year, and focused much of its energy on supporting the Association in its advocacy efforts to protect library workers and advocate for safe working conditions during the Covid-19 Pandemic. During this year, Membership in the PR Committee has dwindled, largely due to the increased demands from work and few support systems in place.

MLA PR Committee assisted Admin Board and the Executive Board on developing formal statements on larger advocacy issues to protect library workers, guidance around vaccinations, asserted the value and importance of libraries, offered direct assistance to libraries who sought letters of support for their specific situation. MLA PR Committee also created graphics which were shared on social media to help MLA's statements stand out on social media and reinforce the urgency of the moment. PR Committee Members continued to post on Social Media as Massachusetts Library Association, keeping our organization's presence active and connected to the wider community. MLA PR Committee also worked with the Executive Board on compiling content that was included in our newsletter sent out to Membership.

MLA PR Committee continued to address any carryover projects from 2020, including the Hall of Fame Awards, and reviewing the nominations and identifying recipients of this honor. MLA PR Committee Members met to discuss MLA PR Awards which will be broken out of 2021's Virtual Conference and held as an independent event during the Summer/Fall of 2021. MLA PR Members also worked together to sponsor its own Committee-based program which was rescheduled from 2020 to be included in the 2021 Virtual Conference. The program, "Control the Beast: Making Social Media Work for Your #LibraryLife" will be presented by Andrea Puglisi, Chair of MLA PR Committee, and Erin Fragola, MLA PR Committee Member. Jocelyn Tavares, Chair of MLA PR Committee and Manny Liete, MLA PR Committee Member, will moderate the discussion during the conference. Jocelyn Tavares, Chair of MLA PR, worked tirelessly with the Conference Committee on representing the Public Relations Committee and offering critical feedback on Conference.

MLA PR Committee kept its relationship with NELA PR Committee strong. We have remained in touch and kept the door open on any collaborations in the future. One event that did emerge as part of our connection with NELA was the opportunity to offer a Virtual Conversation via Facebook with New Hampshire Library Association to discuss Social Media Marketing. The program which was held on August 13 at 3:00 PM was led by Andrea Puglisi, Jocelyn Tavares, and Erin Fragola of MLA PR Committee. Additional members, including Melody Friedenthal and Carol Gafford were in attendance.

MLA PR Committee finalized the development of Massachusetts Library Association's (first!) Social Media policy, which was ratified by MLA's PR Committee on February 3, 2021 and adopted by MLA's Executive Board on February 12, 2021. MLA PR Committee also ratified Social Media Guidelines for MLA Members, which is a document that serves to provide tips to members on how to be successful online. This document was also adopted by MLA's Executive Board on February 21, 2021. MLA PR also expresses gratitude to PR Committee Member Anna Mickelsen for her work on copy editing both policy documents and for her work on editing the Conference program.

As a result of the newly adopted Social Media policy, MLA PR Committee has been working with various committees and sections on phasing out social media accounts and weaving them into MLA's central accounts. MLA PR Committee has also been working on connecting any Sections or Committees that would like to utilize social media with the resources they need in order to publish as MLA. At the time of this report, MLA PR Committee has welcomed Social Media liaisons from Legislative Committee, Youth Services Section, Paralibrarians Section and Reader's Advisory Section. MLA PR Committee is working on formalizing the hashtags specific to each section, which should open up opportunities for members to speak across platforms, and for the Association to keep content organized and easily discoverable online. We are organizing this process behind the scenes, setting up a process for longevity, and eventual new Chairs.

MLA PR Committee hopes to begin the process of identifying a new Committee liaison to the Conference Committee, and begin identifying new avenues of support for the Awards process. MLA PR Committee is working to develop guidelines around Style and a concrete publishing schedule of content for the Association over the next year.

MLA PR is grateful to the work and service of its committee members. We have a small team and everyone's role is critical to our success. We also thank all of our peers on the Executive Board for their support in our successful year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jocelyn Tavares & Andrea Puglisi, MLA PR Chairs

May 5, 2021



Readers' Advisory Section Annual Report Annual Report 2021

This report covers June 2020-May 2021

The Readers' Advisory Section met June 4, October 22 and December 3, 2020, and February 3 and April 1, 2021. In addition to our meetings, section co-chair Alene Moroni facilitated the virtual Fireside Chat with Nancy Pearl at the MLA Annual Meeting June 11, and Kristi Chadwick arranged a virtual nonfiction book buzz with three publisher representatives July 23.

With the cancellation of the MLA 2020 conference, the section missed out on in-person recruiting opportunities and promotional activities to build membership. We worked with the conference committee to determine which of our previously approved programs may be presented virtually in 2021, and submitted additional programs for consideration.

We are holding virtual meetings until further notice, and sending out invitations and reminders to various state distribution lists. In addition to holding meetings online, we implemented a structure that has our short business meeting followed by a professional development opportunity. We had genre overviews for science fiction, mystery, horror, and gentle reads. We saw increased attendance with these improvements, and plan to continue this format indefinitely.

At the MLA 2021 conference, the section is cosponsoring Becky Spratford's presentation "Actively Anti-Racist Library Service to Leisure Readers," and section co-chair Alene Moroni will facilitate fireside chats with HarperCollins authors Juliette Fay and Ben Philippe.

Our transitional meeting is scheduled June 3, 2021, when Anna Mickelsen will succeed Alene Moroni as co-chair. Pam Aghababian will continue in her role as co-chair, and we will elect the remaining members of our board at that meeting.

We continue to work on creating a sustainable plan for the future of the section.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Aghababian and Alene Moroni, co-chairs



Reference User Services Section (RUSS) Annual Report 2021

The Reference and User Services Section (RUSS) provides professional development and guidance for those who work in reference, information, user, and adult services. These opportunities exist via sessions at the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) Annual Conference, stand alone programs, section meetings, and other opportunities throughout the year. All who work or are interested in reference and user services are encouraged to become involved in the section.

- The section's officers were:
 - Co-Chair and Conference Committee Liaison: Sarah Breen, Reference Supervisor, Needham Free Public Library
 - Co-Chair: Becca Tansey, Staff Librarian, Newburyport Public Library
 - Secretary: Sara Kelso, Assistant Director, Newburyport Public Library
- RUSS did not meet in FY21.
- Next fiscal year we plan to meet quarterly, most likely virtually.
 - The meetings will include a short business meeting followed by a discussion on a relevant topic to reference and user services. Previous topics have included immigration, programming, and mental health. All MLA members are welcome at the meetings
- Sarah Breen attended all Conference Committee meetings in FY21 as the RUSS liaison.

Contact RUSS at russ@masslib.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Breen
RUSS Co-Chair



Youth Services Section Annual Report 2021

Board: Lizzy McGovern (Chair, Westwood); Katrina Ireland-Bilodeau (Conference Committee Liaison, Northborough); Audrey Snowden (Secretary, Medway); Marissa Antosh (Past Chair, Duxbury)

Regional Members at Large: Carol Gafford (Southeast, Swansea); Caitlyn Clarke (Cape Cod and Islands, Oak Bluffs)

The mission of the Youth Services Section is to promote library service to youth and the profession of youth librarianship. We also strive to further the awareness of youth within the profession, further the awareness of youth within the community at large, and aid in implementing MLA state standards for the Massachusetts Library Services for Children and Young Adults. What that means is we believe that youth deserve excellent library service and we encourage a high standard of excellence in those who work in youth services.

Youth librarians are innovative and adaptable. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we shifted programs to the virtual landscape and continued to provide readers' advisory through social media and made sure to get books in the hands of readers through book bundles and the like. In previous years YSS has held professional development activities such as overnight retreats focusing on storytelling and mindfulness and unconferences where participants led the discussion that reflected their current needs and the needs of their communities. This past year we have focused our professional development on librarian led gaming nights where we learned how to play *Among Us* and had discussions on setting up online gaming for our young patrons via discord and Roll22.

Starting in March 2021, the Youth services section has created a monthly newsletter *The Flyleaf*. The name Flyleaf is a bookbinding term and refers to a blank sheet of paper at the beginning or end of a book that helps to reinforce the cover and body of the book. We think Flyleaf is a great metaphor for the Youth Services Section's mission about promoting youth services and librarianship. It is filled with professional news, book suggestions, collection management ideas, and a little dose of joie de vivre. We are excited to launch a more in-depth quarterly newsletter filled with articles from fellow youth librarians across the state.

We anticipate a continued "new normal" of youth services as communities adapt to the ongoing pandemic and reopening plans. We hope to start new initiatives for teen and children's librarians that support the changing nature of our day-to-day profession; where we can continue to support each other, bounce around ideas, and grow together in this new landscape of librarianship.

Please encourage your youth librarians to join us! In the past, we met bimonthly all over Massachusetts. We will continue to utilize zoom for our bimonthly meetings with potential in-person meetings quarterly. If you are interested in getting involved in any way please don't hesitate to reach out.

Contact the section at yss@masslib.org

Respectfully submitted,
Lizzy McGovern,
Youth Services Section Chair