



## **Annual Reports of Sections and Committees**

**May 2019**

### **CONFERENCE COMMITTEE 2018—ANNUAL REPORT**

Conference Recap: The 2018 MLA Annual Conference, *Libraries: Our Common Wealth* was held May 21-23 at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Framingham. There were 547 attendees, 67 exhibitors and 12 sponsors. General Sessions speakers included Debby Irving, racial justice educator and author presenting *Racial Justice* followed by an Interactive Workshop entitled *Leveling the Playing Field: Interrupting Patterns of Power Privilege*; *Library Security: Dealing with Challenging Patrons* with Dr. Steve Albrecht; Steve Puleo, author of *American Treasures: the Secret Efforts to Save the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Gettysburg Address* which was our One Book, One Conference selection; Chris King, editor of the St. Louis American presented *Adventures of a Citizen Journalist* and Steve Woolfolk, Director of Programming and Marketing, Kansas City Public Library with *Librarians on the Front Line: Protecting Free Speech*. Other sessions covered a wide variety of timely topics including Advocacy, Healthy Aging, Programming for New Adults, Readers' Advisory, Escape Room Programs, Laughter Yoga, Addressing Sexual Harassment in Libraries and an author panel with Hank Phillip Ryan and David Rosenfelt. Traditional events at conference including the induction of Nanci Milone Hill and Carolyn Noah to the MLA Hall of Fame, Paralibrarian Awards and Trivia.

The 2019 Conference, *The Greatest Job on Earth*, will again be held in Framingham at the Sheraton Framingham Hotel and Conference Center, from May 20-22. General session speakers include Deborah Plummer, PhD, *Radical Respect in Troubling Times*; *Neutrality in the Library*; author and actor Marianne Leone, *How I Became a Warrior Mom*; *The Story of Little Women and Why It Still Matters* author Anne Boyd Rioux and a full complement of sessions addressing timely topics in today's libraries.

Submitted by, Joanne Lamothe, Conference Co-chair



## **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES COMMITTEE-- FY19 ANNUAL REPORT**

The MLA Intellectual Freedom & Social Responsibilities Committee (MLA-IF/SRC) had a busy year monitoring emerging and evolving issues related to intellectual freedom, civil liberties, and injustice. We provided support for challenged items in libraries, a challenged program, and stood in opposition the move to gut the Everett Libraries' Board of Trustees. We turned our focus to in wealth and race inequality and how that shapes privacy data collection. We also spotlighted current "zero tolerance" immigration policy and the practice of incarceration/separation of families seeking asylum and the censoring and expunging of information on government websites on these policies.

The committee thanked long-time committee co-chairs Diane Annuziatio and Jackie Rafferty for their years of dedicated service. Carol Witt and Andrea Fiorillo stepped in and have focused on trying to find new members.

### **Outreach & Training**

During FY19, Krista McLeod gave two workshops: *Defending Access with Confidence* Library and *Customer Service: Rights & Responsibilities* at Dracut Public Library and Medway Public Library. Total income for MLA was \$600.00.

### **Inaugural Civil Liberties Champion Award**

The first ever Civil Liberties Champion Award was awarded to Roopika Risam (see below for details)

### **Professional Development Symposium: Confronting Inequality**

On October 18, 2018, the IF/SRC held its second symposium. *Confronting Inequality* took place at Milton Public Library with forty six attendees. The day featured a Civic Engagement Fair with various libraries, government agencies, and not-for-profits sharing ideas and resources. Roopika Risam was awarded the inaugural Civil Liberties Champion Award by former co-chair Jacqueline Rafferty who conceived of the prize. Risam was chosen for her work as co-creator of the website Torn Apart / Separados, a data visualization of "zero tolerance" detention centers for asylum seekers. Chuck Collins Director of the Institute for Policy Studies' Program on Inequality and the Common Good, editor of Inequality.org, and author of *Is Inequality in America Irreversible?* spoke. Virginia Eubanks Associate Professor of Political Science at the University at Albany SUNY and author of *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Punish, Police, and Profile the Poor* also spoke. Their presentations were followed by a moderated q&a. It was an ambitious and successful day with many connections made and attendees from all kinds of libraries. We also used it as an opportunity to recruit new members.

### **2019 MLA Annual Conference**

Created a basket for the raffle fundraiser themed #IWOKEuplikethis. Will continue to recruit new members.

## **IFSRC sponsored sessions:**

**8:45 am - 9:45 am**

### **Keynote Session: Radical Respect in Troubling Times**

Amid explosive race, gender, and immigration issues, the public struggle between advocates of religious liberties and advocates for LGBT equality, campaigns for hiring more people with disabilities, and movements such as Black Lives Matter and #MeToo, we can be confident that diversity issues will not be relegated to obscurity. Technological advances have allowed us to get our information from customized sources tailored to align with what we want to know, understand, and believe, making it increasingly challenging to build coalitions and advance inclusion toward the benefit of all. Critically important to the inclusion effort are librarians who help people find the information they need and who can act as informed diversity leaders, transformative change agents, and compassionate healers capable of building inclusive organizations and peaceful communities. As librarians who interface with the public and pull from their multiple and intersecting identities, this keynote will explore how we can use ourselves as tools for fostering the three components of respect: admiration, dignity, and civility.

Speaker: Deborah Plummer, PhD, Vice Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer at UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care

**10:30 am - 11:30 am**

### **Communicating Across Differences Workshop**

No matter how much we value diversity, successfully navigating our increasingly multiracial and multicultural society requires cultural competence. This workshop is designed to leave participants with the skill set of communicating effectively across differences: balancing intention and impact; holding multiple realities, identities, and perspectives; moving from certainty to curiosity; using privilege as a life skill; and making quality decisions in the midst of diversity tension.

Speaker: Deborah Plummer, PhD, Vice Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer at UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Health Care

### **Spotlight Session: Neutrality in the Library: A Continuing Conversation - Laura Saunders and Rachel D. Williams**

*Sponsored by Simmons University School of Library and Information Science*

What happens when our core values conflict? How do we remain proponents of free speech and make the marginalized communities we serve feel safe? What does it look like to be neutral (or not)? Join two Simmons professors for a moderated discussion around the topic of neutrality in the library. Our choices around the issue of neutrality can impact the lives of our patrons in ways we may not have considered. Come be part of this necessary conversation!

Speakers: Laura Saunders is an associate professor at Simmons SLIS and a published author. She teaches courses in reference and information services, user instruction, services to diverse users, intellectual freedom, and censorship and academic libraries. Rachel D. Williams is an Assistant Professor in SLIS. Her research interests are centered on information services for people in crisis, professionalization and boundary management, and public librarianship. Dr. Williams' work employs qualitative methods to explore what being a professional means in the context of public librarians and their roles and responsibilities in assisting people in crisis.

### **Dementia Friends of Massachusetts Information Session**

Increase your understanding of dementia and learn how to take small actions to better serve patrons, family, and community members living with cognitive decline. Dementia Friends is both a statewide and global movement that is changing the way people think, act, and talk about dementia.

Speaker: Andrea Fiorillo, Reference & Adult Services Librarian, Reading Public Library, Co-Chair of MLA's Intellectual Freedom & Social Responsibility Committee, and a Dementia Champion

### **Real Talk: A Framework for Youth-Led Conversation Forums**

Founded in 2016 by Waltham youth to discuss the issues that are important to them, Real Talk is a youth-led conversation forum that has become the centerpiece of programming at the Waltham Public Library Teen Room. Twice a month, 4 teen leaders lead their peers in activities that promote youth voice, encourage socioemotional learning, and develop awareness of social justice issues in our community. Thanks to funding by from the Library Initiative for Teens and Tweens (distributed by the Rhyme & Reason Fund of the Boston Foundation), we serve dinner to the group at each event; bring in professionals to lead specialized workshops on the most challenging topics; provide transportation for field trips; and pay stipends to our teen leaders for developing the agendas, promoting the events, and executing the activities. Over the three years we have run this program, we have developed a curriculum to sustain the work of our founders and guide librarians in developing similar programs in their libraries. Speakers: Luke Kirkland, Teen Specialist, Waltham Public Library; Rachel Cosgrove, Senior, Waltham High School; Alia Touadjine, Senior, Waltham High School and Stevenson Youyoute Senior, Waltham High School

### **#WeToo: Sexual Assault Prevention, Resources, and Discussion**

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center aims to shift the responsibility of preventing sexual violence from the individual to the community. In this session, BARCC will provide resource and referral info, facilitate a discussion of sexual assault dynamics, and teach bystander strategies.

### **Torn Apart/Separados: Using Digital Humanities to Fight the Family Separation Crisis**

Explore *Torn Apart/Separados*, an interactive data visualization of the USA's "Zero Tolerance" policy for asylum seekers and the resulting humanitarian crisis. Librarians, faculty, and students produced this digital humanities project as a rapid response intervention, bringing information to light on immigrant incarceration and its public/private funding sources. Moacir P. de Sá Pereira will discuss the technological dimensions of the project and its implications for librarians. Roopika Risam will cover the ethics of data collection and use within the project.

Speakers: Roopika Risam, Assistant Professor of English and Faculty Fellow for Digital Library Initiatives, Salem State University; Moacir P. de Sá Pereira, Research Data Librarian, Science, Engineering, and Social Sciences Libraries Division, Columbia University Libraries

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Fiorillo, IFSRC Co-Chair,



## LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE—ANNUAL REPORT

The Legislative Committee, made up of members from across the Commonwealth from many libraries, networks, and organizations, began the year meeting on July 20, 2018 at the SAILS central site in Lakeville, MA. Jennifer Harris (Plymouth) and Charlotte Canelli (Norwood) co-chaired the committee for the year.

Jayme Viveiros agreed to co-chair the Legislative Day committee with Tressa Santillo. After his retirement from MLS, Greg acted as MSLA liaison to the Legislative Committee and he updated the committee on MSLA advocacy work and plans for the next year. We also added CMLA representation with Margaret Cardello and WMLA representation with Michael Moran. A thank you letter to the Library Caucus was forwarded to members. Other topics were: a much-needed subscription to Go To Meeting, attendance at the Boston Book Festival on October 13, 2018, Net Neutrality, MCB's Mass Book Trails and the ALA Bill of Rights interpretation for meeting room use.

A schedule of meetings for the year was set for September 28, November 30, February 22 and June 28 at MLN; October 26, January 25 and April 26 at MLS.

Planning for Library Legislative Day was exhaustive up to and through March 7. The committee planned a session at the annual conference for Monday, May 20: *Meet Your Legislative Committee and Library Caucus*.

The year's efforts concluded with these actions and observations:

- Legislative breakfasts were very successful across the state with early planning a key to success;
- Committee co-chairs urged supporters across the state several times to write to their legislators to support library funding, to attend Library Legislative Day, and to advocate for IML S funding. The committee is ironing out the difficulties with the Engage software and continuing to train.
- The Legislative Committee sent letters to the House Ways and Means advocating for the budget for the Commonwealth.
- Library Legislative Day in Boston had another year of success with thanks to many people and much work, including Legislative Day organizer Tressa Santillo and Jayme Viveiros as well as the libraries who highlighted their innovative efforts, and the work of the rest of the committee. The day was shared by MSLA and MLA with additional support from WMLA and CMLA.
- A survey was conducted after Legislative Day. Results showed that participants did visit the office of their legislators (85%). 59 comments were collected as feedback from the survey.
- A social media campaign, #supportMALibraries was successful and will be used in the future.
- An unusually fruitful budget year was the result of strong advocacy on the part of Massachusetts librarians, especially that of the committee. Work continues to sustain funding for the Massachusetts Center for the Book.
- A last meeting of the Legislative Committee will be held on June 28.

Respectfully submitted,  
MLA Legislative Committee Co-Chairs,  
Jennifer Harris & Charlotte Canelli  
May 16, 2019



## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE—2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

As of May 12th, the Massachusetts Library Association has 559 members. 82 are members within one of the 13 Gold or 13 Platinum Institutional memberships. We gained 188 new members during FY19.

The Membership Committee hosted two Trivia Night meet & greets. One in July in Attleboro with eight attendees and another in December in Mansfield, with nine attendees.

In April, Esme Green and I attended the Simmons School of Library and Information Science Career & Networking Fair. We represented the association by explaining our role as the professional association for librarians in MA and the benefits that come from having work-related connections. It was also a fun opportunity to get people excited about conference and encourage the students to come for at least a day and take advantage of the great sessions without the travel expense.

The lower membership fees for friends and trustees put in place this year didn't seem to attract new members. We only have one new friend/trustee. Membership will be looking into marketing this membership level.

In May at the annual conference, there will be MLA Acronym Bingo hosted by the Membership Committee. As with last year's committee faire, the goal is to get people involved and feel a part of the organization. Feedback from the 2018 faire was very positive and committee reps did report several people showing real interest.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Laurie Lessner, Chair  
Melissa Campbell  
Kim Hewitt  
Patrick Marshall



## PARALIBRARIAN SECTION--ANNUAL REPORT

The Paralibrarian Section of the Massachusetts Library Association held seven meetings, June 2018 to May 2019, including this Annual Meeting, and one Virtual Meeting via Skype and call in.

The elected members of the Section Executive Board are:

Annamarie McGrath, Acting Chair

Allison Sloan, Past Chair

Lori Salotto, Secretary; PARA Review Board

Joyce Senior, Treasurer; PARA Review Board

Geraldine Deyermond, Member At-Large/Conference Committee

Karen Horn, Member At-Large/Career Development; Chair PARA Review Board

Annamarie McGrath stepped into the Acting Chairperson position when the former Chairperson stepped down, leaving the position of Vice Chair temporarily vacant.

Heather Maganzini serves in the appointed position of Chair of Awards. This position has been evaluated and the Section voted to amend the Section Bylaws to add the Chair of Awards to the Section Executive Board, as a full voting member. The changes were presented to the Section Executive Board on November 15, 2018 and approved by unanimous vote on January 17, 2019. The notice of proposed bylaw changes were distributed to the Section membership via email, blog, and Facebook on April 18, 2019 and are submitted for a vote of the membership at this Annual Meeting.

The Section sponsored two programs at the MLA Annual Conference in 2018, and maintains presence on the MLA web site <https://mla.wildapricot.org/paralibrarian>, the MLA blog <http://mlaparalibrarian.wordpress.com/>, Twitter [MLAParas](#), Facebook [www.facebook.com/groups/MLAParalibrarians/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MLAParalibrarians/) and in the MLA online Newsletter. The Section has a balanced budget, with income from sponsor DEMCO, fees generated by the PARA Certification program and Book Cart Drill Team registration fees.

At the 2019 MLA Conference, the Section will present twelve candidates with a PARA Certification, representing achievements at seven libraries across the state. (Please see attached list). The Career Development committee, under the leadership of Karen Horn, hosted training for the Paralibrarian Recognition of Achievement (PARA) Certification at Dracut Library. The PARA Review Board presented a revision of the PARA Certification Guidelines in 2019, to clarify certain language regarding the point system. These new guidelines will take effect following the Section Annual Meeting for all future PARA applications. In addition, the PARA Subcommittee met with the New Hampshire Library Association Paralibrarian Section to develop a reciprocal agreement by which recipients of NHLA and MLA PARA Certifications will be granted reciprocal certification recognition in both states.

The Awards Committee received thirteen nominations for the Outstanding Library Support Staff of the Year and Paralibrarian Advocate of the Year awards. (Please see attached list). Two libraries submitted video Book Cart Drill Team routines for the annual competition, and the Paralibrarian Section presented a short routine to demonstrate the value of teamwork, branding, marketing, diversity, and fun.

Respectfully Submitted:

Annamarie McGrath, Acting Chairperson

May 21, 2019

MLA Paralibrarian Section

**Certificates for PARA**  
**2018 2019 Paralibrarian Section**

**Level 1**

Elise Jansson  
Darshana Merchant  
Katherine Szuplat

**Level 2**

Emily Boughton  
Irene Cunningham  
Kelsey Matthews  
Melissa Ryan  
Amy Spence

**Level 3**

Robin Brzozowski  
Judith Fallon  
  
Cheryl Salem

**Level 4**

Andrea Grant

**2019 MLA Paralibrarian Section**

**Award for Outstanding Library Support Staff Nominations**

Patty Bailey, Morrill Memorial Library

Jill Emmons, Forbes Library

Patricia Franco, Somerville Public Library, West Branch

Ann-Marie Harris, Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield's Public Library

Lisa Julien Hayes, Swampscott Public Library

Kathleen Haynes, Jonathan Bourne Public Library

David Mello, Fall River Public Library

Diane Nelson, Bellingham Public Library

Shaun Ramsay, Weymouth Public Library

May Seeto, Turner Free Library

Michelle Sheehan, West Bridgewater Public Library

Sara Smith, Westhampton Public Library

**2019 MLA Paralibrarian Section**

**Award for Library Support Staff Advocate**

Charlotte Canelli, Morrill Memorial Library Norwood



## **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE—ANNUAL REPORT**

The Public Relations Committee continued with Bernadette Rivard and Jocelyn Tavares as co-chairs during 2019. We thank Bernadette for her service in the role of co-chair, as she will be the Association's Treasurer in 2020. We are also pleased to formally welcome new members Anna Mickelson and Andrea Puglisi to the PR committee.

One of the goals for 2018-2019 was to update the Association's social media accounts. Some of this has been accomplished with a plan for the Association's Twitter (@MassLibAssoc), Instagram (@masslibassoc) and Facebook (Massachusetts Library Association and Massachusetts Library Association fans). There is still work to be done on creating policy and a manual to make the workflow more cohesive.

Correspondence to the Association included a biennial email newsletter to the association, a more regular social media post, and targeted communications to the association when there were issues that MLA took a position on, such as the situation at the Everett Public Libraries. The PR Committee has also supported the Legislative Committee with Legislative Day activities in Boston.

Odd-numbered years at conference are years in which the PR Committee hosts the PR Awards. Libraries and librarians are invited to submit their favorite publicity for the awards. The committee recruits volunteer judges who evaluate the submissions based on the application itself and the PR product's creativity and message. Volunteer judges are professionals from the advertising and marketing, PR, and media fields or are retired librarians or current librarians working outside Massachusetts.

This year the committee streamlined the awards to make them more competitive and bring some control around the many categories that are available to compete in. The new category groups are: "Print," "Digital," and "Programming, Advocacy, and Outreach." The highest awards of "PR for Pennies" and "Best in Show" are still chosen from these finalists.

We've continued to work closely with the Conference Committee to make sure messaging about conference has been delivered to librarians across Massachusetts. The PR Committee has worked with Anna Popp of the Massachusetts Library System to bring her "Word of Mouth Marketing" program and a "Swag Swap" program to conference.

We thank all of our peers on the Executive Board for their help in our successful year.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernadette Rivard & Jocelyn Tavares, Co-Chairs



## REFERENCE USERS SECTION (RUSS)—ANNUAL REPORT, FISCAL YEAR 2019

- We had a great year!
- The section's officers were:
  - Co-Chair: Laura Bernheim, Head of Reference, Waltham Public Library
  - Co-Chair: Kristy Lockhart, Assistant Director, Weymouth Public Libraries
  - Secretary: Sara Kelso, Assistant Director, Newburyport Public Library
- We held three meetings at the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Offices in Marlborough throughout the year where we addressed the following topics: Mental Health (featuring speakers from the Department of Mental Health), Legal Reference, and Programming. In May we held our final meeting at the MLS Offices in Northampton to provide greater access to librarians in Western Massachusetts and discussed the topic of Aging Patrons.
- RUSS is sponsoring several programs at the MLA Annual Conference, including: *What Can BPL Do For You?*; *Readers' Advisory: Using Themes to Connect with Your Patrons*; *The Thrifty Programmer: How to Plan, Market, and Run (Cheap!) Events That Adults Will Love*; *Consumer Health Reference at the Reference Desk*; *Volunteers and Interns: Should You Work with Them?*; *The Accidental Archivist*; *Genealogy 101*; *Simmons @ MLA: Next Generation Projects*.



## **YOUTH SERVICES SECTION (YSS)—ANNUAL REPORT, MAY 2019**

This year YSS visited Worcester, Northampton, and Tewksbury for our meetings. We also held a meeting at our biannual retreat in Duxbury.

MLA's subscription to GoTo meeting has been extremely helpful to YSS, allowing one of our board members to attend as she was overcoming an illness and letting other librarians from different regions join us as we meet across the state. Most recently, we held a virtual pre-conference meeting and we will continue to integrate this software into our meetings, hoping to include even more youth librarians next year. It's an improvement over our Google Chats of yore.

YSS discussions included our successes of summer 2018, program planning, ideas for staying on top of popular culture, and future fundraising ideas. Our biggest task was effectively refunding everyone who registered for last year's Biannual YSS Retreat that was cancelled due to late season Nor'easters. Once this was accomplished, we were able to plan and execute the Biannual Retreat in March 2019.

YSS hosted its third Biannual Retreat in Duxbury in March with a theme of wellness and mindfulness. We find that it is so easy to try to be everything to everyone, especially in the role of a youth librarian. Simultaneously caregiver, teacher, rule enforcer, musician, artist, book purchaser, program and event planner, advocate, and more, it can spread one to the breaking point. We decided to hold the retreat at the Cedar Hill Retreat Center in Duxbury with ten attendees from Massachusetts and one from Rhode Island. Topics included:

Physical and mental health benefits of drinking tea

Energy medicine and incorporating its destressing techniques into your life

Yoga storytime tips and tricks

Emotional and physical literacy, social-emotional learning, and how to include these into your programs

Laughter yoga, what it is, and how it can help you

We also had time to share favorite storytime ideas, connect with other librarians we may not otherwise meet, and understand that the challenges we're facing are not happening in a vacuum.

For FY20, the YSS board is planning to focus on fundraising. Since the very popular "Tattooed Youth Librarians of Massachusetts" calendar of several years ago, YSS has not put out another large fundraising product. We have several ideas on the table that we are going to begin to pursue in late summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Marissa Antosh  
Chair