

# american libraries

July/August 2019

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



**NEWSMAKER**

**George Takei**

p. 10

**International  
Innovators**

p. 28

**PLUS: Exhibit Hall  
Highlights and Battling  
Misinformation**

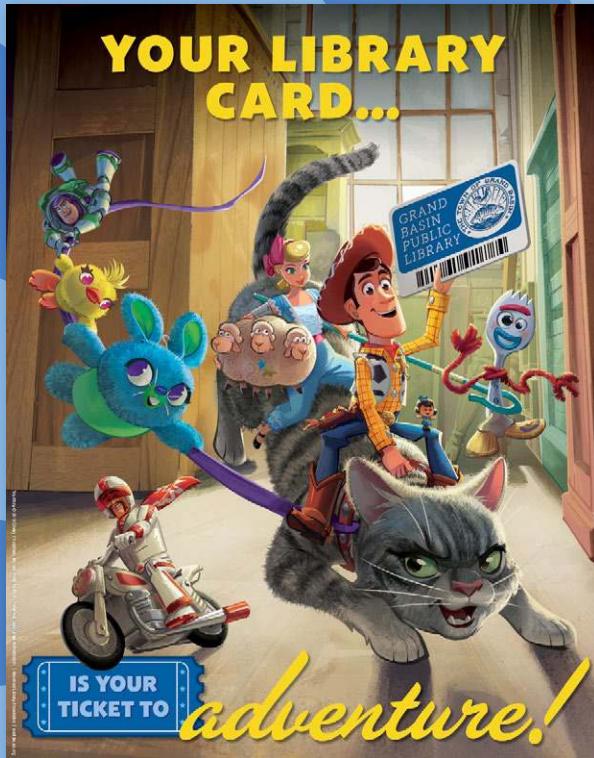
**2019**

**ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
WRAP-UP**

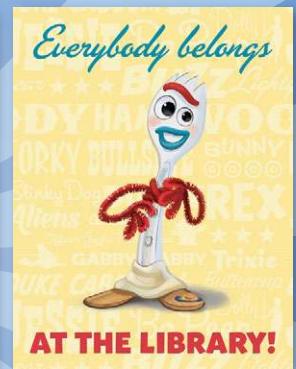
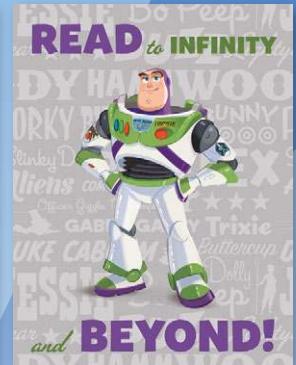
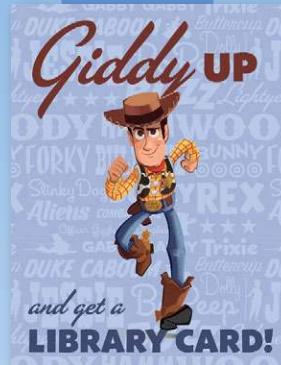
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# September is LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH!

A library card is *your ticket* to adventure! Encourage everyone in your community to get one with the help of Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Bo Peep, and Forky from **Toy Story 4**.



Toy Story Poster



Toy Story Mini Poster Set



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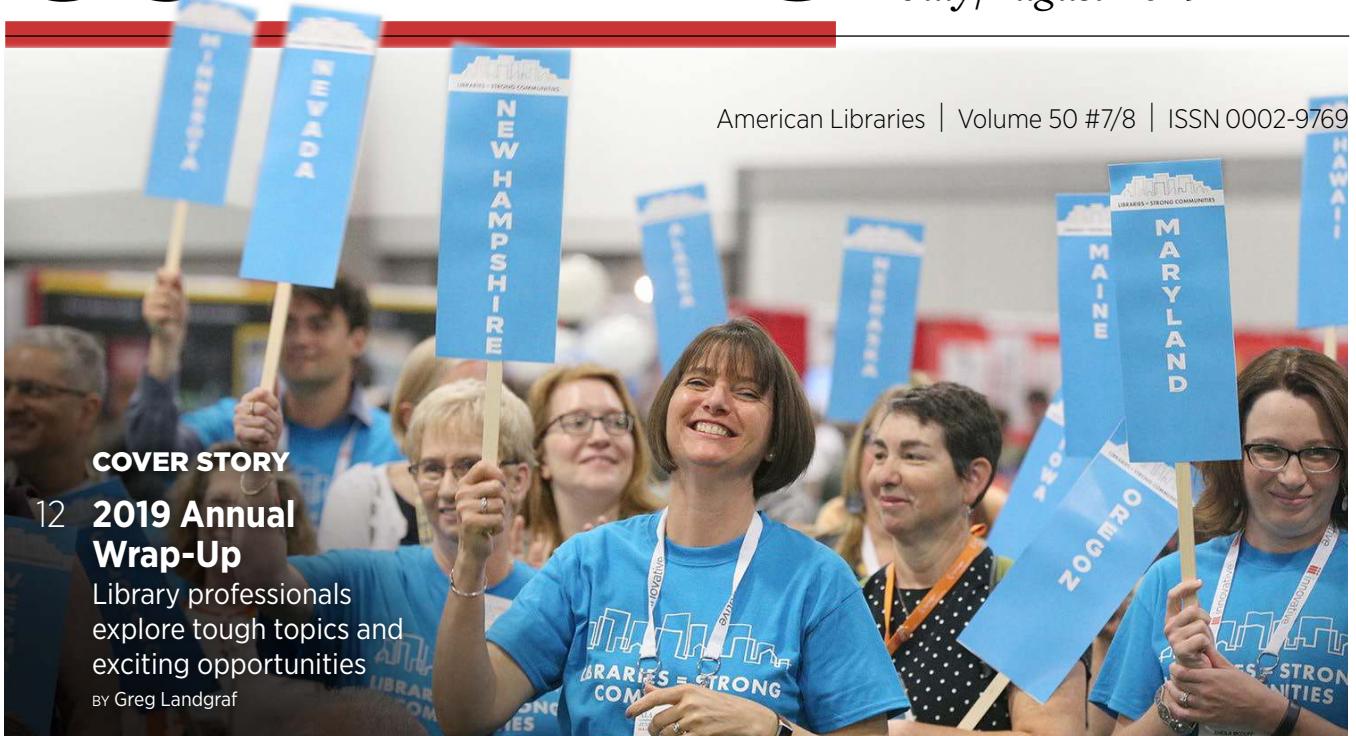
Toy Story Woody Stickers

Place your order  
by **August 19** to  
receive your materials  
in time using  
standard shipping.

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ON THE COVER: George Takei. Photo by Cognotes

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## D.C. Dispatches



Sanhita SinhaRoy

If you weren't one of the more than 21,400 attendees who descended on Washington, D.C., for the American Library Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition last month, don't worry—we have you covered. With the help of four member writers, our team published more than 60 stories and posted a flurry of tweets from conference. You can read all our coverage at [bit.ly/alaac19](http://bit.ly/alaac19), or flip to page 12 for a recap.

For exhibit hall highlights, check out library consultant Marshall Breeding's annual feature on page 22. He describes the floor as "brimming with every imaginable product and service of interest to librarians."

New this conference was our *Daily Scoop* e-newsletter, aimed at bringing speaker, program, and event reporting directly to your inbox. We hope you enjoyed it and, as always, welcome your feedback.

Before his Auditorium Speaker Series talk, former *Star Trek* actor George Takei spoke with us about his childhood internment during World War II. As he says in his interview on page 10, the more he tried to learn about his experience from history books, the more he realized these books "were silent." As a result, he said, the goal of his new graphic memoir is to help make history accessible to a new generation of young people.

Four international libraries are being honored for fostering positive change in the annual Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects, page 28. This year's citations include initiatives that promote sustainable thinking, digital privacy, patron engagement via gaming, and portable access to materials and services. In the latter example, Libraries Without Borders is being recognized for Ideas Boxes—movable libraries housed in metal containers, some of which can be found in refugee camps.

Last but certainly not least, *American Libraries* is celebrating its own award recognition. Please join me in congratulating our art director, Becky Lomax, who recently won an award for best design by a specialty/trade publication from the Chicago chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Becky's outstanding design work consistently brings our content to life. Our team couldn't be more proud.

*Sanhita*

Read our extensive Annual Conference coverage—whether in this digital issue, online, on social media, or in the new *Daily Scoop* e-newsletter.



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# Find Your Place within ALA

Together let's promote the value of libraries and the Association



**Wanda Kay Brown**

Over the course of my presidential year, I will work to promote both the value of libraries and ALA, broadly speaking, through a lens of social justice and inclusion.

Libraries are essential for the health of our democracy, our communities, and our future. But too often we hear from elected officials and regular citizens alike that libraries are relics that are no longer necessary in our modern culture.

The American Library Association's (ALA) strength in representing and advocating for librarians and library workers is likewise critical. However, the feedback we frequently receive is that getting involved in an association as complex as ours is daunting and that our Byzantine structure often leads to exclusion and confusion.

Over the course of my presidential year, I will work to promote both the value of libraries and ALA, broadly speaking, through a lens of social justice and inclusion.

First, I will embark on a project to understand the library's role in addressing social and economic inequity. This is of particular interest to me for two reasons. Forsyth County, North Carolina—where Winston-Salem State University is located and where I serve as director of library services—is one of the least economically mobile communities in the country. If you are born in poverty in Forsyth County, your chances of climbing the ladder of prosperity are dismally low.

I also know that economic advancement is possible. I saw it in my own family. When I was a little girl, I was adopted by a man who could neither read nor write. He worked hard to gain those skills and better himself and his family's life. His efforts inspired me throughout my life, including my career in librarianship.

I will convene selected ALA and external groups to discuss collaborative approaches and strategies to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline that disproportionately affects young men of color. I will create tools for use by libraries to help ensure that they serve as safe spaces for these vulnerable populations.

Second, I believe strongly in the opportunities and obligations inherent in being a member of ALA. I would not be where I am today without the guidance and mentorship of the Black Caucus of the ALA, as well as countless others who have taken time to encourage me along the way. That isn't everyone's experience, though, and I recognize that an association like ours can be overwhelming to new members and intimidating to others.

That's why I've launched Finding Your ALA. This initiative is about including all voices at the table—a role I take seriously as I stand on the shoulders of previous ALA leaders, who, like me, have been people of color. My goal is to connect students and new library staff with ALA and help them find a place within the Association that furthers their careers and their ambitions.

In order to be represented, we must have a seat at the table. My hope is to create a welcoming association that grows with the strengths and interests of its members. At the same time, the staffers who support the work of member leaders like me are experiencing a series of changes—including a new executive director and the possibility of a move from ALA headquarters on Huron Street in Chicago. To ensure they feel prepared to meet the needs of an evolving Association, I'm also using part of my presidential program to establish adequate change management training.

We have a busy year ahead and an ambitious agenda, but I am confident we can tackle big issues and effect real change. Thank you for trusting me to lead the Association during a challenging—and exciting—time for libraries, librarians, and library workers. **ALA**

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**WANDA KAY BROWN** is director of library services at C. G. O'Kelly Library at Winston-Salem (N.C.) State University.

# ALA Endowment Update

Ensuring the Association's financial outlook stays healthy for years to come



**Rod Hersberger**

Over the past five years, the endowment has made roughly \$9.1 million available to ALA units for scholarships, awards, and general operations.

I have been a senior trustee of the ALA Endowment Fund for the past six years. Although my term came to an end following the 2019 Annual Conference, I want to share four important achievements of the endowment over these past several years.

The first is the endowment's investment in private equity. While it is illiquid, private equity generally outperforms most other investment categories. We did not venture into this area lightly. The trustees conducted an extraordinary level of discussion, review, and due diligence before we made our first investment. In July 2015, we invested \$2 million in Blackstone Total Alternative Solutions (BTAS). And in early 2016, we authorized a \$775,000 investment in Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, another well-known private equity fund.

As the BTAS investment has begun to deliver positive returns—10.7% to date—during this bull market, adding money back into the endowment, the seven trustees voted in September 2018 to reinvest an additional \$2 million into BTAS, largely with revenue generated from these returns.

In February, the endowment trustees agreed to make a \$1 million investment in PG LIFE from Partners Group, a private markets investment manager. PG LIFE focuses on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors in its portfolio, and this investment brings the endowment's total commitment to private equity to \$5.78 million.

The second major achievement is the endowment trustees' aggressive search for and investment in these ESG funds—formerly known as socially responsible investment funds. As a result, 34.1% of the endowment portfolio has such socially minded investments compared with 1.3% just five years ago.

The third accomplishment is our strategic review process, which began last November, to evaluate all our business, communication, training, education, and other practices to

improve effectiveness. The trustees drafted a new investment policy statement, which the ALA Executive Board reviewed and accepted at the recent Annual Conference. As we wrap up this process, we will soon make available a new comprehensive policy and procedure manual on the endowment's webpage that will contain several important documents on investments.

The final area worth highlighting is our shift toward making all trustees' activities and documents more transparent and available to members on ALA's website. The content includes agendas and minutes, as well as the forthcoming policy and procedure manual.

Over the past five years, the endowment spending policy has allowed trustees to make approximately \$9.1 million available to ALA units for scholarships, awards, and general operations—an average of \$1.8 million per year. In that time, the portfolio has grown from \$38.7 million to \$47.3 million, as of April. This is nearly all the result of market performance related to asset allocation decisions with minimal contributions. While the market has worked in our favor these past few years, trustees recognize the need to help buffer the endowment from potential volatility. As such, they will begin working with the ALA Development Office to discuss and review a more comprehensive and diversified plan.

I am proud of our achievements; they point to an increasing maturity and investment sophistication of the endowment trustees as we carry out our fiduciary responsibilities. As I close out my role as the senior trustee, I would like to welcome Patricia Wand, an endowment trustee since July 2015, to the role of incoming senior trustee. Her term will run through June 2021. **AL**

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**ROD HERSBERGER** was senior trustee of the ALA Endowment Fund. His term ended at the close of the 2019 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

## Dual Roles, Double Duty

A feature on recent research (“Notable Dissertations,” June, p. 54) led me to examine one of the papers more closely: “A Journey to Improve Collaboration Efforts Between Stakeholders and Teacher-Librarians,” by Jeanna Wersebe at University of California, San Diego, which assigns responsibility for leadership and collaboration to school librarians.

It is asking too much of librarians to have them be teachers, too, beyond instruction on library resources. Librarians are busy people, not superheroes. With the additional duties promoted in our profession and the rise of the catch-all “media specialist” title, librarians must be exhausted.

The role of the school librarian is to select, catalog, and preserve books and periodicals; manage check-in and checkout; and engage in professional development. Teachers and knowledgeable volunteers can help with certain tasks, as well.

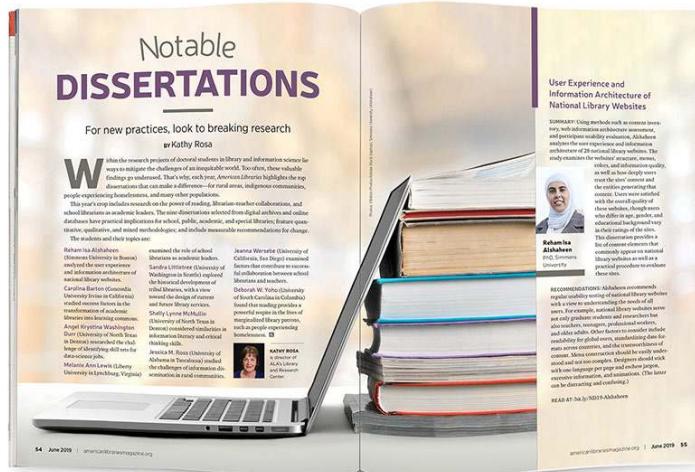
All of these people can work as a team but have distinct responsibilities.

**Mary Hollowell**  
Peachtree City, Georgia

## Record Collection

We are experimenting with Amazon Echo Show but are running into many privacy concerns.

“Your Library Needs to Speak to You” (June, p. 34) suggests that user data can be removed



by the user, but I don't believe this is the case. In fact, by placing these devices in your library you are bound to create permanent records of your library visitors, including what they asked about.

As the world has learned, this data has many long-term implications that are hard to predict. If recent history is any guide, this data will be abused, stolen, and stored by many parties. For us, this means a very cautious and limited exploration of these devices, including a decision never to place them in open public areas.

**M Ryan Hess**  
Palo Alto, California

## Internal Inquiry

In the library at the University of California, San Francisco, we have a policy that all internships are paid at least minimum wage, unless otherwise prohibited by the intern's sponsor organization. We also try to adapt hours to the intern's schedule. Before reading Meredith Farkas's column (“Barriers to Diversity,” May, p. 48), I hadn't considered the potential side effects of paid

internships, such as limiting them to well-funded libraries.

**Chris Shaffer**  
San Francisco

## Supporting Citizen Science

Regarding your “Citizen Science” dispatch from ALA's Annual Conference (The Scoop, June 24): Arizona State University (ASU) and SciStarter deserve credit for the heavy lifting when it comes to citizen science, especially with respect to libraries. I recommend googling the ASU LibGuide on citizen science and the newly published *Librarian's Guide to Citizen Science*.

**George Strawley**  
Salt Lake City

## Saluting Sotomayor

I was sure US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor would be an inspirational speaker [at Annual]. I was not expecting her to be so warm, open, and optimistic. Thank you, ALA, for inviting her and making it possible to hear her speak!

**Jenny Bloom**  
Bainbridge Island, Washington

I've said it before but I need to say it again: If you ever have the chance to hear @JasonReynolds83 speak, drop EVERYTHING and go listen. He is a brilliant storyteller. Guaranteed laughter, probable tears, and your cup will be filled. What a way to start #ALAAC19 🌟❤️

@JENNIFERSHARPTN, in regard to Jason Reynolds, opening speaker at the American Library Association's 2019 Annual Conference, June 21

**WRITE US:** The editors welcome comments about recent content, online stories, and matters of professional interest. Submissions should be limited to 300 words and are subject to editing for clarity, style, and length. Send to [americanlibraries@ala.org](mailto:americanlibraries@ala.org) or *American Libraries*, From Our Readers, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611-2795.

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## ALA, US Library Associations Join in Statement on EDI

The American Library Association (ALA), along with seven other professional organizations, released a joint statement on June 17 promising to uphold the standards of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). The other groups include the American Association of Law Libraries, Association for Library and Information Science Education, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, Coalition for Networked Information, Medical Library Association, Society of American Archivists, and Special Libraries Association.

The statement reads: "Equity, diversity, and inclusion are core values of our associations. We believe that as a profession we must continue to support efforts in building a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive society." It goes on to highlight the efforts these organizations make to advance EDI through best practices, tools, and resources and

emphasizes the importance of collaboration among associations. "Regardless of the type of library, constituency, or region, we stand together to support the efforts of libraries to provide equitable access for all through inclusive collections, resources, services, and programs," the statement concludes.

Then-ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo said in a concurrent statement: "I am thrilled that US library associations have answered my call to affirm our commitment to EDI. As a profession, we have come a long way in creating opportunities to share EDI best practices and resources, but we have a long road ahead of us. This is a significant step in our quest to create the associations we want as part of the society we deserve." ALA adopted EDI as its fourth strategic direction in 2017.

ALA encourages other associations to sign the statement by contacting Raymond Garcia at [rgarcia@ala.org](mailto:rgarcia@ala.org). ●

### AASL Offers Free District Kits for Standards Training

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL), with the support of Bound to Stay Bound Books, is distributing 100 AASL District Kits for the National School Library Standards to support nationwide implementation of the division's *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* (ALA Editions, 2018). Fifty kits will be distributed in 2019, and an additional 50 will be distributed in 2020.

Kits include materials to support the facilitation of seven hours of professional development: a facilitator handbook, all necessary handouts, a National School Library Standards card game, and a \$50 grant for refreshments and supplemental materials.

Priority will be given to districts that provide professional development to a group of solo school librarians, school librarians from combined small school

districts, or larger districts that will incorporate outlying solo librarians or smaller districts. Applicants must be current, personal members of AASL.

For more information and to apply, visit [bit.ly/AASLStandardsKitRequest](http://bit.ly/AASLStandardsKitRequest). Applications will be reviewed and kits distributed on a rolling basis.

### Honorary Member Nominations Open

Nominations are being accepted for ALA honorary membership, the Association's highest honor, which is bestowed on living individuals whose contributions to librarianship or a closely related field are of significant and lasting importance to the field of library service.

Nominations will be reviewed during the ALA Executive Board's fall meeting and presented to Council during the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits in Philadelphia. Newly elected honorary members will be formally recognized at the Opening General Session during

the 2020 ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition in Chicago.

Nominations must be submitted by September 3. Additional information about ALA honorary membership is available at [bit.ly/ALAHonoraryMembership](http://bit.ly/ALAHonoraryMembership).

### Apply to Host Americans and the Holocaust Traveling Exhibit

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the ALA Public Programs Office invite libraries to apply to host Americans and the Holocaust, a traveling exhibition that examines the motives, pressures, and fears that shaped Americans' responses to Nazism, war, and genocide in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s.

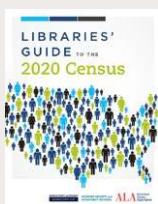
The exhibition will travel to 50 US public and academic libraries from 2020 through 2022.

Selected libraries will be loaned the 1,100-square-foot exhibition for five to six weeks. They will also receive a

## ALA Releases *Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census*

On May 15, ALA released *Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census*, a new resource to prepare libraries for the decennial count of every person living in the United States.

"Next year, when people begin to receive mail asking them to complete the census, we know that many of them will have questions about it. ALA's new guide will make sure library workers have answers," said then-ALA President Loida



Garcia-Febo in a statement. "Working to ensure a fair, accurate, and inclusive census aligns with our professional values and the needs of the diverse communities we serve."

The US Census determines congressional representation; district boundaries for federal, state, and local offices; and allocation of more than \$800 billion annually in federal funding to states and localities, such as grants under the Library Services and Technology Act. Libraries across the country provide access to US Census Bureau statistical data and help businesses, government agencies, community organizations, and researchers find and use that information.

On June 27, ALA issued a statement about the Supreme Court's ruling on whether the 2020 Census could include a citizenship question ([bit.ly/ALASCOTUSCensus](http://bit.ly/ALASCOTUSCensus)); ALA opposes the addition.

To download the *Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census*, visit [ala.org/census](http://ala.org/census), where you will also find links to ALA policy statements about the census and primary data sources. ●

\$2,000 allowance to support public programs, expenses for a library staff member to attend an orientation workshop at USHMM in January in Washington, D.C., publicity materials, and programming support.

Applications will be accepted online through August 9. For project guidelines and to apply, visit [bit.ly/USHMMexhibit](http://bit.ly/USHMMexhibit).

### Public Innovators Lab for Libraries

ALA and the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation will host the 2019 Public Innovators Lab for Libraries October 15–17 at the Loudermilk Conference Center in Atlanta. The Public Innovators Lab is a workshop that explores the practice of

"turning outward," or using the community as a reference point for library choices and action. Librarians, community partners, and stakeholders in libraries of all types can attend.

Discussions, hands-on activities, and breakout groups will help libraries convey their value as centers of community engagement and stewards of public knowledge.

Register at [bit.ly/ALA-PILfL](http://bit.ly/ALA-PILfL) by October 15. The cost of \$995 per person includes a toolkit and other resources.

### Call For 2020 Symposium on the Future of Libraries Proposals

ALA's Center for the Future of Libraries is accepting session proposals for the

## CALENDAR

AUG. 24–30

### IFLA World Library and Information Congress

Athens, Greece  
[2019.ifla.org](http://2019.ifla.org)

SEPT.

### Library Card Sign-Up Month

[ala.org/librarycardsignup](http://ala.org/librarycardsignup)

SEPT. 22–28

### Banned Books Week

[ala.org/bbooks](http://ala.org/bbooks)

SEPT. 25

### Banned Websites Awareness Day

[ala.org/aasl/advocacy/bwad](http://ala.org/aasl/advocacy/bwad)

OCT. 20–26

### National Friends of Libraries Week

[bit.ly/alafolweek](http://bit.ly/alafolweek)

OCT. 21–27

### Open Access Week

[openaccessweek.org](http://openaccessweek.org)

NOV. 1–3

### YALSA's Young Adult Services Symposium

Memphis, Tennessee  
[ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium](http://ala.org/yalsa/yasymposium)

NOV. 3–9

### International Games Week

[games.ala.org](http://games.ala.org)

NOV. 14–16

### AASL National Conference and Exhibition

Louisville, Kentucky  
[national.aasl.org](http://national.aasl.org)

JAN. 24–28

### ALA Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits

Philadelphia  
[alamidwinter.org](http://alamidwinter.org)

FEB. 25–29

### Public Library Association Conference

Nashville, Tennessee  
[placonference.org](http://placonference.org)

APR.

### School Library Month

[ala.org/aasl/slm](http://ala.org/aasl/slm)

JUNE 25–30

### 2020 ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition

Chicago  
[bit.ly/ALAUcomingConfs](http://bit.ly/ALAUcomingConfs)

## New ACRL Research Agenda

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has released a new research agenda, “Open and Equitable Scholarly Communications: Creating a More Inclusive Future.” The agenda was prepared by Nancy Maron and Rebecca Kennison with Paul Bracke, Nathan Hall, Isaac Gilman, Kara Malenfant, Charlotte Roh, and Yasmeen Shorish.

It encourages the community to make the scholarly communications system more open, inclusive, and equitable by outlining trends, encouraging practical actions, and identifying the most strategic research questions to pursue. The full agenda is available for free online at [bit.ly/ACRL2019ResearchAgenda](http://bit.ly/ACRL2019ResearchAgenda) and will be available for purchase in print through the ALA Store ([alastore.ala.org](http://alastore.ala.org)).

The agenda focuses on three priority areas—people, content, and systems—highlighting effective practices currently in use as well as research topics that can help further work in the future. The agenda’s appendices include an essay on issues of social justice in scholarly communications and an annotated list of recommended readings.

ACRL is offering grants of up to \$5,000 for research related to topics addressed in the new agenda. Proposals must be received by September 30. More information is available at [bit.ly/ACRLScholCommGrant](http://bit.ly/ACRLScholCommGrant).



Symposium on the Future of Libraries at the 2020 ALA Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits in Philadelphia.

Over three days, the Symposium will explore the near-term trends inspiring innovation in academic, public, school, and special libraries as well as the long-term trends that will help libraries adapt to the needs of their communities.

The call for proposals at [bit.ly/ALA-SFL20](http://bit.ly/ALA-SFL20) will close August 15. Proposals are sought for information sessions, workshops, and discussions. Submissions should include a session title, format, description, preferred session times, and participants’ contact information. Proposals will be reviewed by the Center for the Future of Libraries Advisory Group.

### Public Policy and Advocacy Office Reorganizes

To provide more integrated services, the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office

(PPAO) has eliminated the Office of Library Advocacy as a standalone unit and shifted its responsibilities to PPAO.

A manager of state advocacy position has been created to perform state and local policy and advocacy activities and assist the Committee on Library Advocacy with the support of PPAO.

### Cultural Communities Fund Reaches Donor Milestone

The ALA Cultural Communities Fund received donations from 130 individuals between 2016 and 2019, surpassing its goal of \$50,000 in individual donations.

The Cultural Communities Fund supports humanities, civic, and STEM programming in libraries of all types. With help from individual and corporate donors, the fund has grown into an endowment of \$1.9 million that supports professional development, grants and awards, and the website

[ProgrammingLibrarian.org](http://ProgrammingLibrarian.org). The Cultural Communities Fund is administered by the ALA Public Programs and Development offices.

To make a contribution to the Cultural Communities Fund, visit [ala.org/CCF](http://ala.org/CCF).

### North Carolina School Receives Disaster Recovery Grant

Jones County (N.C.) Schools have been awarded \$7,060 as part of AASL’s Inspire Disaster Recovery Grant program. Sponsored by AASL member and retired middle school librarian Marina “Marney” Welmers, the grant program supports public middle or high school libraries that suffered damage or hardship because of a natural disaster, fire, or terrorism.

In September 2018, floodwaters from Hurricane Florence destroyed one of Jones County’s two elementary schools and its middle school. All 155 students from the middle school were transferred to the high school.

The grant will supplement the current library collection to include a partial collection of books suitable for the displaced middle school population.

### ALA Selects 2019 Google Policy Fellow

Katelyn Ringrose will serve as ALA’s 2019 Google Policy Fellow, spending 10 weeks with PPAO in Washington, D.C., to explore diverse areas of the information policy field.

Ringrose, a graduate of University of Notre Dame Law School, recently completed an externship at the Computer Crimes and Intellectual Property Division of the US Department of Justice, where she worked on issues related to cyberlaw. Previously, at the Washington State Attorney General’s Office, she analyzed legal implications of the use of facial recognition technologies by law enforcement. In addition to her legal career, Ringrose is founder of Impowerus, an online company connecting juvenile immigrants to pro bono legal aid. [AL](#)

## ALA Concerned by Publishers' Changes to Digital Lending Policies

ALA expressed concern about changes announced on June 17 by Hachette Book Group (HBG) and on July 2 by Simon & Schuster (S&S) to their ebook and digital audiobook lending models for libraries.

Effective July 1, HBG has replaced its perpetual ownership model for libraries with two-year access for ebooks and digital audiobooks. HBG also announced it will decrease ebook and digital audiobook prices for libraries by as much as 25%; however, the discount does not apply if the library renews its access to titles. S&S will replace its perpetual access models for ebook and digital audiobook lending with two-year access effective August 1.

"The elimination of perpetual ownership will reduce long-term access to ebooks and digital audiobooks and increase challenges to the long-term preservation of our nation's

cultural heritage," said then-ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo in a June 17 statement.

"Libraries must have fair and equitable access to resources, regardless of format, that is predictable and sustainable," said ALA President Wanda Kay Brown in a July 2 statement. "ALA will amplify its role in championing the valuable and essential role of libraries in the publishing ecosystem."

On June 25, at the ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., ALA Council approved a resolution to form a working group to address library concerns with publishers and content providers including digital licensing models, content embargoes, fair options for delivering digital content in libraries, and advocacy for congressional action on digital content pricing. The resolution also directed ALA to develop an advocacy and public awareness campaign about the value of library book purchases to publishers. ●



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# George Takei

Actor and activist shares lessons from a childhood spent in WWII internment camps

**G**eorge Takei is best known for his role as Sulu in the 1960s cult-classic TV show *Star Trek*, but the actor has found even more fame later in life thanks to his prolific social media presence and activist work. In his new graphic novel, *They Called Us Enemy* (Top Shelf Productions), Takei details his childhood years spent in internment camps for Japanese Americans during World War II. Takei spoke with *American Libraries* at the American Library Association's 2019 Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., about his book and the profound and lasting danger of not learning from history.

BY Phil  
Morehart

**Why did you choose to tell your story as a graphic novel?** It's been my mission in life to tell the story of my childhood imprisonment and to raise awareness of that chapter of American history. There's a new generation of young people, and we want to target them in the best way.

I thought that a graphic memoir would be an accessible way to reach them, telling the story from the eyes of 5-year-old me and exposing them to the larger reality that my parents were struggling with [while interned].

**The release of *They Called Us Enemy* is timely, considering the current detainment of undocumented immigrants and asylum**

**seekers along the southern border of the US. In the book, your father says that Americans don't teach the bad parts of their history, so they're forced to repeat them. Was that another reason to write this book—to point out parallels with the present?** Indeed, it was. The

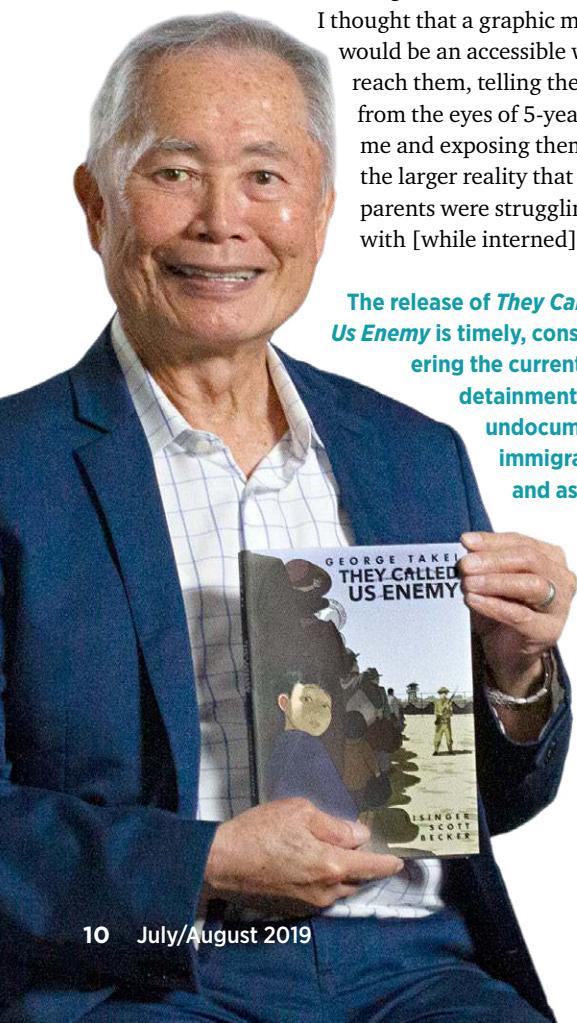
book comments on the humanitarian crisis at the border but also on the first executive order that this president signed—the Muslim travel ban. With one sweeping statement, he [implied that] all Muslims should be banned from entry in the US. That same mentality branded Japanese Americans as potential spies, saboteurs, or fifth columnists. The resonance today is profound and loud. We repeat this chapter of American history over and over again. Today, when I tell my contemporaries about my childhood imprisonment, to people I consider well-read, well-informed people, they're shocked. They've never heard of it.

**When you were a teenager and later in college, you wanted to learn more about your experience, but few books and little scholarly research were available. Have things gotten better in that regard?** I became very curious about my childhood imprisonment

when I was a teenager, so I became an omnivorous reader. I read all the history books I could get my hands on. The books were silent on Japanese internment. I read civics books hoping to find something there; I didn't find anything. But I learned about the noble ideas of our democracy, and I was puzzled. So I had long discussions with my father after dinner, and I learned from him. Sometimes it got heated and I said things that I regret to this day, but I learned from my father who bore the burden, pain, and anguish of American democracy. Later on, other books began to appear. The book that was encyclopedic on the internments was *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* (1976) by Michi Weglyn. But when I needed books the most, they were silent.

**In your book, you talk about Herbert Nicholson, a missionary who would bring books to the camps. Can you elaborate on his story?**

Nicholson was a Quaker, and he strongly opposed the imprisonment of innocent people on the basis of their ancestry. He was an activist, and he brought books from Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena to the Manzanar internment camp in Owens Valley, California. It was a long drive, about two-and-a-half to three hours long. He did that every month, regularly, and apparently some people who opposed him learned about his trips and shot up his car. But he made it through and delivered the books. The people in Manzanar said, "Well that's it. He's not going to deliver more books." And yet, the next month, on the appointed date, Nicholson was there with a carload of books. I learned that he did that with the Arizona camps too. That was his resistance. He was an extraordinary hero. **AL**



FROM THE 2019 ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION



“Rappers were telling the stories when books didn’t. I didn’t read [Walter Dean Myers]’s books until I got to college. Gatekeepers, learn from the mistakes of my gatekeepers.”

**ANGIE THOMAS**, author of *The Hate U Give*, during a live taping of the *Dewey Decibel* podcast celebrating 50 years of the Coretta Scott King Book Awards June 22.

“The library is a place where immigrants can fill out paperwork, job applications, résumés—believe me, I know because I did it.”

**MARIANA ATENCIO**, award-winning journalist and author, during her Auditorium Speaker Series session June 24.

“I love librarians because I am living proof of how you can affect people for the better.”

**SONIA SOTOMAYOR**, US Supreme Court justice and author, during her Auditorium Speaker Series session June 22.

“She chose library science, and I understood why as we were kids growing up. We got the opportunity to see her in action—stacks of books, her hands on them. You couldn’t believe we were that close to all of that magic.”

**HODA KOTB**, journalist and cohost of NBC’s *Today*, on her mother Sameha Kotb, who worked for 32 years at the Library of Congress.

“TO GET IT RIGHT, WE MUST WRITE AND READ ALL OF OUR DIVERSE STORIES.”

**CLAIRE HARTFIELD**, author of *A Few Red Drops: The Chicago Race Riot of 1919*, during her acceptance speech at the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Breakfast June 23.

“Science fiction needs diversity because it is a global think tank. Technologies influenced by science fiction will be limited without diversity. If many different types of people aren’t participating in that think tank, we won’t have a diversity of technology.”

**NNEDI OKORAFOR**, author of *Broken Places and Outer Spaces*, during her Auditorium Speaker Series session June 23.

“I FEEL LIKE I’M AT A *STAR TREK* CONVENTION.”

**GEORGE TAKEI**, actor, activist, and author, on the reception from the crowd at his Auditorium Speaker Series session June 24.

2019

# ANNUAL

## WRAP-UP

Library professionals explore tough topics and exciting opportunities

by Greg Landgraf



Libraries = Strong Communities rally in the exhibit hall

There was no shortage of laughter or conviviality among the more than 21,400 library workers and exhibitors who gathered for the American Library Association's (ALA) Annual Conference and Exhibition, held June 20–25 in Washington, D.C. But the subject matter commanded a sober tone, as speakers and panelists touched on some of the most complex and urgent issues facing the country in 2019.

One News You Can Use session, “Confronting White Nationalism in Libraries,” was inspired by a toolkit published by the Western States Center, an advocacy organization focused on strengthening inclusive democracy, to help schools address the rise in racist extremism. Panel organizer Jarrett Dapier, young adult librarian at Skokie (Ill.) Public Library, applied its recommendations to libraries facing similar

instances: anticipate potential forms of white nationalist activity, prepare for a proper legal response, and represent diverse perspectives across programs, collections, posters, and personnel in the library. Otherwise, he says, “On an unconscious level, you are saying that whiteness is all that matters, and it gives the impression



that you are reinforcing systems of repression that only a small minority of your patrons might support.”

The “Food for Thought” session addressed the scourges of hunger and food insecurity, presenting examples of libraries stepping in to connect patrons to food and resources. Amber Williams, managing librarian of strategic initiatives at Spokane County (Wash.) Library District, paraphrased a preschool parent she’d met:

“My kid’s homework isn’t on my radar when I’m worried about having enough food for dinner.” This exchange inspired the library’s afternoon snack program for kids, which staff have linked to an overall reduction in behavioral issues.

“Scarcity is a myth we need to vanquish,” said Erica Freudenberger, outreach consultant



## RALLY CAPS ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

Then—ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo hosted a rally at The Park @ ALA, a new indoor green space in the exhibit hall, to mark the last mile of the Libraries = Strong Communities national advocacy effort (see photo, p. 12). Attendees wore blue T-shirts emblazoned with the Libraries = Strong Communities slogan as Garcia-Febo described traveling more than 200,000 miles to visit academic, public, and school libraries in seven countries. “It has been a long journey, but a rewarding one that I believe will have a lasting impact on how libraries will connect with their communities in the future,” she said. ●

at Southern Adirondack Library System in Saratoga Springs, New York, which partners with the nonprofit Comfort Food Community in Greenwich to offer weekly deliveries of fresh produce at several of its libraries.

Freudenberger also presented a session on the New Americans Library Project, a yearlong exploration of library programs and services that support immigrant and refugee populations, driven by ALA’s Public Programs Office. These programs often include English-language courses, financial literacy workshops, and opportunities for social inclusion and civic engagement—but a fraught political climate and dwindling resources pose significant challenges. “Moving forward we need to create services with, not for, new Americans, remembering that it’s a complex community with varying needs,” she said.

Several sessions addressed the plight of library patrons experiencing homelessness. Jerome Thomas, peer outreach specialist at D.C. Public Library, recommended the use of peer navigators to help these patrons meet life’s challenges and obtain important documents like birth certificates and identification cards. “Customers want someone to listen and space for them to explain what they are going through,” he said.

Libraries are also employing the peer navigator approach to support patrons affected by opioid addiction. Sharon Streams, director of OCLC’s WebJunction, touched on various

approaches by eight public libraries as she presented the findings of a study by OCLC, the Public Library Association, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services during a session. “Libraries are still overlooked when it comes to city-wide responses,” she said.

At Denver Public Library, for example, more than 500 community members have volunteered to be trained to administer the overdose-countering drug naloxone. “We know we’ve saved about 30 lives using naloxone over three years,” said City Librarian Michelle Jeske. Other libraries offer public awareness campaigns and bystander training to help reduce the panic and stigma surrounding overdose events.

Reed Strege, director of library services at the Braille Institute of America, led “Best New Tech For Readers with Blindness, Visual Impairments, and Physical Disabilities.” The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, for example, is developing interactive displays that link to smartphones and computers and convert text to Braille. The technology, to be circulated within three to five years, counters some of the logistical challenges of producing and maneuvering large Braille volumes. “This is a real potential game-changer, because if a person learns to read Braille and has some aptitude with these devices, what they’ll have access to will increase exponentially,” Strege said.

At a panel hosted by the Association for Library Service to Children called “The Urgency of History,” Coretta Scott King Honor Book author Varian Johnson described historical events and the need for voices and stories from those who are affected by them, particularly voices that have been marginalized. “We are taught that *Brown v. Board of Education* was a great decision in the civil rights movement, and it was,” he said. “But what happened to those kids who were moved to an integrated school?” He also dismissed misguided notions of “balance” as an overrated ideal: “I’m not interested in telling a both-sides story about slavery,” he said.

Where do music and literature overlap? Randallstown (Md.) High School Librarian Joquetta Johnson addressed this question as she presented her research project, “Lyrics as Literature: Using Hip-Hop to Amplify Student Voice and Social Justice.” She argued that lyrics, including hip-hop and rap, should be viewed and taught as literature and windows into history. She pointed to Kanye West’s “Blood on the Leaves,” a song inspired by Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit,” which was drawn from a poem by Lewis Allan protesting the lynching of African Americans. When





she gave the audience a series of verses, most couldn't identify whether they were written by modern hip-hop artists or William Shakespeare.

Anthony Chow, associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's LIS department, and former ALA President Loriene Roy (2007–2008), professor at the University of Texas at Austin School of Information, presented findings from their study of literacy on the Blackfeet Reservation, home to members of the Blackfeet Nation in northwest Montana. "The magic number for one's home library is 80 books or more," Chow said, explaining that that's the number at which literacy levels significantly improve. Approximately three in four surveyed Blackfeet Nation members reported having fewer than 80 books in their home libraries.

Banned Books Week has grown into one of ALA's most successful public-awareness campaigns, but the issue of censorship in libraries encompasses more than just the books on their shelves. ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) Assistant Director Kristin Pekoll led a panel called "Censorship Beyond Books," named for her new book on the subject, citing 531 instances of nonbook resources that came under fire last year, from videogames to drag queen story hours and Black Lives Matter displays.

Another session focused specifically on considerations surrounding controversial speakers. Sukrit Goswami, director of Haverford Township Free Library in Havertown, Pennsylvania, recounted his library's experience hosting drag queen storytime. After an uneventful run last summer, the event this

year drew national media attention, hundreds of complaints, and crowds of protesters and counterprotesters. Goswami spoke with OIF for advice, worked closely with police and fire marshals to ensure safety, and treated everyone with equal respect and attention, making a point to provide water to protesters and counterprotesters alike.

"Everyone needs to be seen and represented in the library, and we can't let one group who disagrees with another group prevent you from performing your duties as librarians in general," said Peter Coyl, director of Montclair (N.J.) Public Library and a member of ALA's Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Reference and User Services Association President Ann Brown, instruction and outreach librarian at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., hosted a discussion on how library service decisions affect marginalized communities. Libraries uphold privilege by planning programs, services, and resources around assumptions about their users, said Nicole A. Cooke, program director for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign MLIS program. Building relationships with community members can help break down biases and lead to more inclusive services.

It's also important for library staff to reflect a community's diversity, or potential users may feel that the library isn't their space, said Michelle Hamiel, chief operating officer for public services at Prince George's County (Md.) Memorial Library. One often-overlooked element is how outreach to certain groups is often left to minority staff members. "Emotional labor and fatigue come with being that person," Cooke said.



Jason Reynolds



Sonia Sotomayor



Hoda Kotb

## SPOTLIGHT ON SPEAKERS

Award-winning YA author Jason Reynolds kicked off the conference with a stirring address, challenging librarians to facilitate understanding and empathy in their communities. “Maybe what librarians really are is architects, and your libraries are warehouses where we build human libraries,” he said. “Imagine a generation of walking, talking libraries, with reference desks here and here,” he added, gesturing to his head and heart. ▶

The Auditorium Speaker Series drew big names from the worlds of literature, media, academia, and even the highest court in the land. US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor spoke with her editor Jill Santopolo about how writing kept her grounded after her appointment to the Supreme Court. Her autobiography *My Beloved World* was the result of thinking deeply about her life as she moved from a relatively anonymous job in New York to her highly visible role as an associate justice.

When she was a child, Sotomayor recalled, New York Public Library’s Parkchester branch was a refuge after her father’s death. “If I went to the library, I could escape the sadness in

my house,” she recalled. The books there also started her on the path toward studying law.

*Today Show* cohost Hoda Kotb—daughter of a longtime Library of Congress staffer—showered librarians with praise: “I can’t tell you how much you matter and how much you mean to your communities, to your states, and to this country.” She also shared how her 2-year-old daughter regularly pleads with her to read a story “just one more time,” which taught her that kids crave books, even with nonstop access to the internet and other media. ▶

Artist Frank Miller and screenwriter Tom Wheeler previewed *Cursed*, a forthcoming YA graphic novel and Netflix series that retells the King Arthur myth with a young girl named Nimue at its center. Interviewed by Young Adult Library Services Association President-Elect Todd Krueger during an Auditorium Speaker Series talk, Miller shared that his favorite childhood stories were Superman and Disney’s *The Sword in the Stone*. To help inspire and empower young girls the way King Arthur inspired them, the creators made a point to hire women as writers, directors, and designers on the Netflix series.

When she was young, science fiction author Nnedi Okorafor found inspiration in the natural world. “From as far

back as I can remember, I've loved bugs," she said in then-ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo's President's Program. "It was something about how within a small patch of grass, there was a whole world happening." That love of bugs was part of the inspiration for *LaGuardia*, her graphic novel about a Nigerian-American woman who goes through airport customs with a sentient alien plant.

Okorafor, who is working on an adaptation of writer Octavia Butler's *The Wild Seed*, addressed the need for diverse voices in speculative fiction. "Science fiction needs diversity because it is a global think tank," Okorafor said. "Technologies influenced by science fiction will be limited without diversity." ▶

"I feel like I'm at a *Star Trek* convention," joked actor and activist George Takei as he took the stage for his talk. His tone shifted as he spoke about the four years he spent in internment camps for Japanese Americans as a child during World War II, which he details in his new YA graphic novel *They Called Us Enemy*. Even though he and his family were US citizens, he recalled, "Suddenly we were the enemy, because we looked like people who bombed Pearl Harbor."

Takei drew parallels between Japanese-American internment and the current conditions experienced by undocumented immigrants along the US border and Muslims facing the Trump administration's travel ban. "This is an American story," he said. "Our past is filled with chapters like mine. There's a continuing cycle of injustice." ▶

During her session, author Tomi Adeyemi spoke with Rose Brock, professor of children's and young adult literature and library science at Sam Houston State University, about

## MORE ONLINE

Be sure to read our full conference coverage at The Scoop blog and check out videos of conference speakers on YouTube.

the importance of representation in art and literature. A huge influence on her novel *Children of Blood and Bone* involved a work of art she saw in Brazil depicting black gods and goddesses, showing her she could be "the god of her own universe." ▶

MSNBC reporter Mariana Atencio danced into her presentation to the beat of "America" from *West Side Story*. The song—performed in the musical by

Puerto Rican characters debating

the benefits and drawbacks of life away from home—set the tone for her talk, which echoed themes from her new book *Perfectly You*, a memoir focused on authenticity in the face of adversity. "When you are a woman and an immigrant from a minority community, you don't feel like you have a glass ceiling over you, you feel like an entire concrete building sits atop your head," she said. "But sometimes, what you least expect or desire is exactly what will prompt you to do something so much bigger than yourself." ▶

Journalist and entertainer Mo Rocca closed the conference by sharing his fascination with obituaries, which he explores in his forthcoming book *Mobituaries: Great Lives Worth Living* and podcast of the same name. "To see a life distilled like that, you get the sweep and drama," he remarked. Even the "forgotten" presidents between Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt have worthwhile stories, he said. Chester A. Arthur



Tomi Adeyemi



Nnedi Okorafor



Frank Miller and Tom Wheeler



Mo Rocca



Mariana Atencio



Marcia Chatelain

(“Who’s probably from Canada, but that’s another scandal,” he quipped), defended an African-American woman named Elizabeth Jennings who had been kicked off a “whites-only” streetcar in New York City in 1854. He won the civil suit, leading to the integration of the city’s public transportation more than 100 years before the Montgomery bus boycott.

### AUTHOR INSIGHTS

Author Grace Talusan, whose family fled a brutal dictatorship in the Philippines when she was 2 years old, addressed “When You Can’t Go Home Again: Refugee and Exile Authors in the US.”

“I learned to be afraid to tell stories and say the wrong thing, because something I say could impact a family member back in the Philippines, or even someone who shares one of my last names,” she said. “I waited until a lot of those relatives died, and that’s when I finally felt comfortable sharing my stories.”

Syrian refugees face similar issues, said Karen Fisher, a professor

at the University of Washington Information School and fellow panelist. Since 2014, Fisher has worked with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to promote literacy in the Za’atari refugee camp for Syrians in Jordan. “One of the reasons you cannot find books by Syrian authors, it has to do with the consequences of the regime,” she said.

“There is so much censorship and oppression.”

At “Wordy to Wordless: How Comics Writers Adapt to Different Genres, Ages, and Artists,” comic and graphic novel writers Julia Billet, Amy Chu, Ezra Clayton Daniels, and Wilfrid Lupano talked about the inspiration for their stories and how they work with artists to bring them to life. Through a translator, Billet said the story in her graphic novel *Catherine’s War* is actually her mother’s story about surviving the Holocaust—with embellishments in parts. “My mother told me the story, but not the whole story,” she said. After conducting research and talking to survivors, Billet reimagined her mother’s story.

At the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services



Karen Fisher (left)



Julia Billet (left)

## COUNCIL MATTERS

Acknowledging that Melvil Dewey's behavior toward women, African Americans, and Jewish people over several decades does not represent ALA's values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, Council approved a resolution renaming the Melvil Dewey Medal (CD#50) to remove his association with the award. Council also passed resolutions on library service for children at migrant detention centers (CD#52) and digital content pricing for libraries (CD#53).

Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, chair of the Steering Committee for Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE), and Jim Meffert, consultant from Tecker International, provided preliminary recommendations from the SCOE project (CD#45). Proposed changes include redesigning the Executive Board and the ALA committee structure. A possible new model for division membership is also being discussed. Final recommendations are expected in September, but timeline extensions can be made with member feedback.

ALA Councilor Tyler Dzuba gave an update on the proposed new division that will combine the Library Information and Technology Association, Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, and Library Leadership and Management Association. The new division's working name is Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures.

Shali Zhang, chair of the Committee on Organization, reported that the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table has changed its name to the Rainbow Round Table (CD#27.1). Zhang also proposed an action item to add representatives from the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services and the Association for Rural and Small Libraries to the Rural, Native, and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds Committee. The motion passed.

Intellectual Freedom Committee Chair Julia Warga proposed several revised interpretations of the Library

Bill of Rights (CD#19.5-19.11 and #19.12-20), all of which passed. Warga coproposed the resolution "Intellectual Freedom Advocacy and Education" (CD#19.20/CD#24.3) with Committee on Professional Ethics Chair Sara Dallas, which passed.

Steve Matthews, chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, proposed an action item (CD#25.1) to clarify language in the ALA Bylaws regarding the status of a councilor of a division or round table going through the discontinuance process. The motion passed. A second action item to insert the phrases *electronic voting* in addition to *voting by mail* passed. A motion to change the majority needed to carry a vote of Council taken by mail or electronic voting passed.

ALA Treasurer Susan H. Hildreth presented the FY20 annual estimates of income (CD#13.3), which was approved.

Former ALA president Courtney L. Young (2014-2015) presented an update on the ALA Executive Director Search Committee (CD#34).

Peter Hepburn, chair of the Eliminating Library Fines as a Form of Social Equity Working Group, proposed a motion to extend its deadline for a final report to Council to August 31, 2019 (CD#43); the motion passed.

DeEtta Jones, founder and principal of the consulting firm DeEtta Jones and Associates, facilitated a discussion among councilors on equity, diversity, and inclusion through a social justice lens.

Ed Sanchez, chair of the Taskforce on Online Deliberation and Voting for ALA Council, reported on its work since its formation at the Midwinter Conference in Seattle (CD#42). A motion to extend the taskforce until Midwinter 2020 passed.

Susan Jennings, chair of the Council Forum Working Group, reported on the results of its survey and next steps for the group (CD#44). ●

President's Program, Georgetown University Professor Marcia Chatelain spoke about the importance of fast-food corporations in African-American culture. Chapters of her upcoming book *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America* detail how students in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, used McDonald's to plan sit-ins at a time when African Americans were banned from other lunch counters, and how white flight led to McDonald's installing black franchise owners in black neighborhoods.

Chatelain also touched on the influence the McDonald's location in Ferguson, Missouri, had after Michael Brown was killed by police in 2014. "McDonald's was, in many ways, the epicenter of the crisis," she said, noting it's where the police

refueled, protesters bought milk to soothe their tear-gassed eyes, and journalists used the Wi-Fi to file their news stories.

## PRACTICAL MAGIC

Success in budgeting talks starts early. That was the message of a panel focused on budgeting processes for libraries. "Talk to your councilpersons, talk to your town supervisors, and have that dialogue so they'll be able to make those decisions come budget season," said Koran Saines, Sterling district supervisor for Loudoun County (Va.) Board of Supervisors. Saines related how Loudoun County Board

of Trustees Chair Mark Miller brought him a surprising idea: eliminating fines on overdue materials. When Miller explained how charges adversely and disproportionately affect lower-income people—many of whom are Saines’s constituents—Saines then championed the proposal to the rest of the county board.

In the “Start Smart Salary Negotiations Workshop,” presented by the American Association of University Women, panelists shared strategies for conversations surrounding compensation. Aliqae Geraci, assistant director of research and learning services at Catherwood Library at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and Shannon Farrell, natural resources librarian at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, gave four main tips: Know your value; know your target salary and benefits; know your strategy; and practice before entering a negotiation.

The session “Accessibility and Creation of Online Library Materials: Applying Universal Design for Learning” introduced attendees to a framework for improving and organizing learning experiences for all people, regardless of background or ability. Liz Johns, teaching and learning librarian at Goucher College in Towson, Maryland, urged the



Koran Saines (right)

audience to recognize that when it comes to making libraries accessible, people are not problems. “There’s no step-by-step guide,” she said. “Taking a proactive and inclusive approach benefits all learners.”

Alicia Lillich, emerging technologies specialist at the National Institutes of Health Library in Bethesda, Maryland, addressed the role of private citizens in scientific research at the “Citizen Science in Libraries” program. “Anyone can

## 50 YEARS OF CSK

Several events honored the 50th anniversary of the Coretta Scott King (CSK) Book Awards, given annually to outstanding African-American authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults that demonstrate an appreciation of African-American culture and universal human values. The award commemorates the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. and honors his wife’s commitment to world peace.

This year’s CSK Book Award recipients—which included Claire Hartfield, author of *A Few Red Drops: The Chicago Race Riot of 1919*, and Ekua Holmes, illustrator of *The Stuff of Stars*—were recognized at the annual awards breakfast. Holmes also participated in a panel discussion marking the anniversary, recorded live for the *Dewey Decibel* podcast.

“I think the first book that I read about an African-American girl was one that I wrote myself,” Holmes said. “To come full circle to this time and have a rich library of sources that I can share with my granddaughter feels like we’ve done something really powerful.”



CSK Book Award-winning illustrator Ekua Holmes speaks at the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Breakfast.

Author Jacqueline Woodson, also on the panel, recognized the award’s practical impact. “What the CSK Awards did was completely change the narrative” at a time when the Caldecott and Newbery committees didn’t see people of color, she said. “Eventually publishers caught on.” ●



Matt Beckstrom (left)



Candice Mack

participate, all participants use the same protocols, the data retrieved helps scientists come to real conclusions, and a wide community of people share the data for the advancement of science and the public benefit.” Librarians can find citizen science projects through sources like SciStarter, which lists more than 3,000 projects, she said. Libraries can also seek funding for citizen science

programming from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, the Foundation Center, state libraries, and government agencies.

The dark web—the section of the internet that isn’t indexed by search engines and requires specialized tools to access—has a negative reputation because of illegal activities that often take place there. The “Casting Light on the Dark Web” program highlighted the many legitimate resources and significant privacy benefits it offers. “The dark web really should be called something more like the hidden web,” said Matt Beckstrom, systems librarian at Lewis and Clark Library in Helena, Montana.

“Are You Going to Tell My Parents?” was the name of a session focused on privacy rights for minors in the library. Interim OIF Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone reviewed relevant federal laws and urged librarians to research local library confidentiality statutes, which vary by state. “Ensuring library users’ confidentiality frees them from fear of retaliation or intimidation as a result of reading a book, visiting a website, or consulting other library resources,” said Candice Mack, senior YA services librarian at Los Angeles Public Library. “This is regardless of age.” **AL**

**GREG LANDGRAF** is web content specialist at Greene County (Ohio) Public Library. Amy Carlton, Regina Carter, Terra Dankowski, George M. Eberhart, Phil Morehart, Sallyann Price, Carrie Smith, Amy Steinbauer, Brian M. Watson, and Steve Zalusky contributed reporting for this story.

# ALA JobLIST

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# ON DISPLAY

## IN THE EXHIBIT HALL

A roundup of content, tech, and services

by Marshall Breeding

The nation's capital was a popular venue for the American Library Association's (ALA) 2019 Annual Conference and Exhibition June 20–25, attracting more than 21,400 attendees and exhibitors. With more than 900 vendors represented, the exhibit hall was brimming with every imaginable product and service of interest to librarians. The 6,827 registered exhibitors comprised an impressive corps of knowledgeable representatives of diverse organizations that share a common interest in supporting libraries. Keeping up with even a fraction of the latest industry developments requires a substantial amount of time on the exhibit floor. Here are some of the products that caught my attention.





## THE ONGOING ALLURE OF BOOKS

Traditional books still dominate much of the hall. Publishers and distributors pull out all the stops to win the attention of librarians, appreciated for their influence in promoting titles they recognize as quality literature. Many librarians schedule their exhibit visits around the times when their favorite authors are present to sign books and chat. The focus on books drives the need for supporting equipment, services, and technology that libraries need to manage these materials, both physical and digital.

The effort involved in managing physical books requires efficient, specialized equipment. Observing the sophisticated sorters and other materials-handling equipment in operation on the exhibit floor is fascinating. Some of the vendors demonstrating materials-handling equipment or RFID technologies include **MK SOLUTIONS**, **P. V. SUPA**, **LYNGSOE SYSTEMS**, **D-TECH INTERNATIONAL**, and **ENVISIONWARE**. Each has also developed integration technologies to enable its products to work with the library's integrated library system (ILS). Most offer complementary services for other library operations, such as supporting lending of laptops, tablets, and other equipment. Managing library materials often involves offsite storage. **IRON MOUNTAIN** was on hand to promote its offsite storage service as an alternative to library-managed facilities.

## TOWERING GIANTS

As the largest exhibition anywhere for library products, the ALA Annual Conference provides a unique opportunity to get a wider picture of the information industry. The continually rising demand for digital content results in a full spectrum of state-of-the-art user interfaces within a broad ecosystem of technologies supporting library services. Digital content requires



sustainable cost and business models, as well as privacy protections consistent with library policies and values.

As always, the lofty booths of the industry giants draw attention to organizations making substantial investments in the conference, often with small armies of personnel at the ready. The mix of supersized exhibition spaces among the more modest booths and tables mirrors the library industry itself. The many organizations with specialized and boutique products and services fill in competitive gaps among the consolidated corporations with ever-expanding portfolios. Longtime conference attendees can't help but notice that the wares of many small or mid-sized vendors have found their way into the big-name islands.

Our tour of the big names begins with **FOLLETT**, a massive company with an interesting array of content and technology offerings. With its Destiny automation system tailored for PreK–12 school libraries well established, Follett has amassed a large body of digital content, delivered through its Titlewave platform, as well as used textbooks and other classroom materials. **BAKER & TAYLOR**, a mainstay of the exhibit hall with its famous cat mascots, became part of Follett in 2016. Its role as one

A rep with mk Solutions demonstrates the mk LibDispenser.



The Baker & Taylor cat mascots tour the exhibit floor.

of the main distributors of books to libraries resonates with the librarians. This year the messaging at the booth emphasized the synergies of Follett and Baker & Taylor as “better together.”

The **EBSCO INFORMATION SERVICES** island highlighted its core products: the EBSCOhost databases, EBSCO Discovery Service, the GOBI acquisitions tool, and NoveList. EBSCO Faculty Select, a relatively new offering, assists teachers and faculty in exploring open educational resources and DRM-free ebooks in support of courses. EBSCO seemed especially enthused to promote its FOLIO Library Services, an open source platform now on the cusp of implementation. FOLIO came about through a broad community of companies and libraries, with EBSCO providing extensive financial backing and leadership. EBSCO also engages in philanthropy and announced the recipients of its most recent Solar Grants: Hedgesville (W.Va.) Public Library, New Port Richey (Fla.) Public Library, and Medicine Hat (Alberta) College were awarded \$100,000 each to pay for the installation of a solar power system to reduce electrical costs.

At the **PROQUEST** booth, content and technology were both given prominence. The new ProQuest One Academic resource provides a unified interface to a diverse assortment of multidisciplinary content offerings. The company showed off an improved interface to its Alexander Street video collections, acquired in 2016. Recently added capabilities include new virtual reality technology with 360-degree viewing for selected video content.

ProQuest’s **EX LIBRIS** products were well represented. With the Alma library services platform as its flagship offering, Ex Libris’s reps were especially interested in discussing the Leganto course resource list application and the new Esploro research services platform—still in development but with early implementations expected soon.

The 2019 conference was unusually quiet on the mergers and acquisitions front, with two recent announcements relating to ProQuest. Though somewhat downplayed as far as its impact on the company, independent investment firm Atairos has acquired minority ownership of ProQuest. Ex Libris’s acquisition of the RapidILL service from Colorado State University Libraries was a livelier topic of conversation. This move accelerates the company’s initiatives related to resource sharing and interlibrary loan, an area of critical interest to its academic library customers.

**GALE**, a division of Cengage Learning, demonstrated its broad portfolio of content products and technologies for libraries. The company has concentrated on making major enhancements to its patron-facing interfaces, incorporating more elegant features and design characteristics. At this year’s conference, the company previewed its soon-to-be-released In Context suite of resources that will assist educators in discovering content appropriate for educational activities aligned with applicable state or national curriculum standards. Gale has also launched a new digital collection on public health, its first installment titled *Public Health in Modern America, 1890–1970*. The company downplayed a proposed merger between its parent company Cengage and McGraw-Hill Education publishers, but more details will likely be available in 2020 once the deal has been completed. Industry observers anticipate that the Gale brand will remain intact and that its library-facing products will draw from a much broader collection of content from the combined organization.

**OCLC**’s booth was replete with the broad range of products and services offered by the nonprofit organization. Although ample literature and expertise were available about its core services for cataloging and interlibrary loan, Wise, a new patron-centered ILS for public libraries, seemed to be more conspicuous, as was the WorldShare Management Services cloud-based platform.

## PURVEYORS OF DIGITAL CONTENT

Libraries continue to make ever-growing investments in digital content. Public libraries maintain a delicate balance between physical and digital content, with the scales continually tipping more toward digital, especially in ebooks and audiobooks, with expanding opportunities for streaming audio and video.

**OVERDRIVE** plays an oversized role in the public library ebook and audiobook space, serving an impressive 44,000 libraries in 70 countries. The company launched Sora, a new reading app designed for K–12 schools, that joins Libby, its main app for digital content launched at the 2017 ALA Annual Conference. OverDrive released a

curated collection of titles from the Indie Author Project, featuring ebooks from self-published authors.

**BIBLIOTHECA**'s towering booth illustrates the reality of the demand libraries face for physical and digital information. This global giant demonstrated its expansive array of self-service circulation kiosks, sorters, and security gates, as well as its cloudLibrary app for digital lending. The company has found synergies and integrated technologies among its products to meet the demand for seamless interfaces and workflows that span physical and digital formats.

Madrid-based **ODILO** demonstrated its platform for the discovery, management, and distribution of ebooks and other digital content. Its presence in this market continues to expand, serving a customer base of 4,500 institutions with titles from more than 5,000 publishers.

**HOOPLA** showcased its diverse catalog of streaming digital content for public libraries, including movies, TV programs, audiobooks, and ebooks. Its cost-per-view business model avoids patron queues for access, with capped amounts to protect library budgets. The service is a subsidiary of Midwest Tape, a longstanding provider of content on physical media for libraries.

**KANOPY**'s booth featured its growing catalog of classic and independent cinema titles and documentaries, delivered through its streaming platform. Its patron-driven acquisition business model, combined with interest by patrons and students, has strained the budgets of many of its library customers.

Other exhibitors supplying streaming and other digital content included **INFOBASE PUBLISHING**, which offers aggregated online databases, ebook collections, and streaming video for schools and libraries. **LIBRARY IDEAS** highlighted its popular Freegal Music and Fread-reading ebook service as well as GoChip Beam, a portable

and lendable hotspot enabling access to movies and TV programs in settings without an internet connection.

The floor was abuzz with grumblings over pricing models. The popularity of digital content, unprotected by the first-sale doctrine, combined with rising popularity and less-than-ideal terms from publishers, has raised alarms. Just prior to the conference, Hachette Book Group changed its terms for library ebook lending by limiting access to two years instead of the previous arrangement for perpetual ownership. Simon & Schuster followed suit in early July. Though the cost per title is lower and embargoes have been eliminated, libraries will need to reselect and reinvest, resulting in greater efforts in collection development and higher costs over time, especially for titles retaining interest beyond two years. ALA has expressed concern about these changes. Demand-driven acquisitions and pay-per-use pricing likewise come with budget challenges.

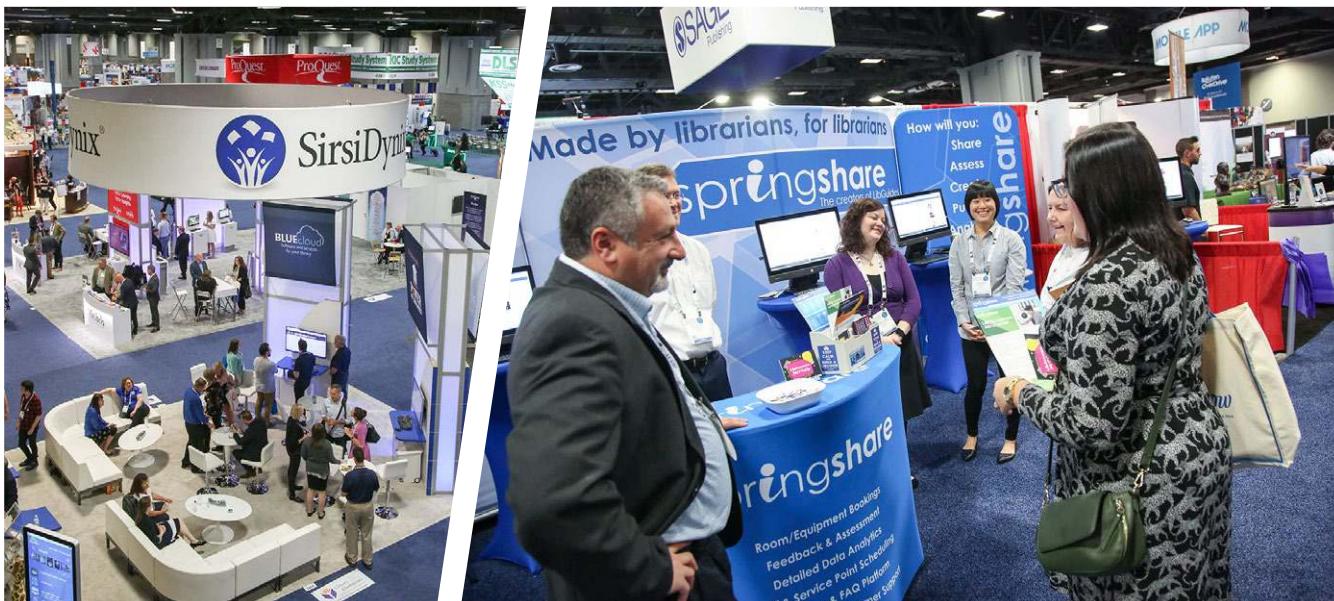
## PATRON ENGAGEMENT

Companies developing products and services for libraries strive to emulate the sophistication and ease of use of tech giants like Facebook, Google, Amazon, and Twitter. Rich user experience and patron engagement have become essential if libraries are to be well regarded by their patrons. The conference displayed a host of products that aim to help libraries strengthen their engagement with their communities.

**BIBLIOCOMMONS**'s BiblioCore discovery service embraces features used by social networks to increase patron participation and guide them to their next library reads. The company commissioned a new study by an independent consultant that suggests that public

From left: OverDrive's Libby app; the towering ProQuest booth.





From left: The Sirsi-Dynix booth; Springshare's booth.

libraries that use their products see more visits than comparable libraries that do not use BiblioCommons services. As the next step in building patron engagement, the company just launched BiblioEmail, which uses email campaigns or newsletter templates for targeted messaging to patrons based on their interests, location, and age.

**CHILIFRESH** targets similar goals, with dynamic content and services layered into a library's existing catalog or discovery service. ChiliPAC, now live at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library, adds cover art, personalized summaries, and reviews to the library's online catalog to enrich patron engagement. Reading lists created by librarians or patrons can be shared locally or throughout the community that uses the platform.

**CAPIRA TECHNOLOGIES** showed off its products aimed at modernizing the patron experience, including mobile apps and location-based services using iBeacon to enable interactive communication with patrons within the library. The company also provides apps for digital library cards, self-service lending and renewal, and issuing passes to local museums.

**SPRINGSHARE** continues to expand its portfolio of products for both library staff and patrons. Its LibGuides platform has moved well beyond a convenient way for librarians to build resource pages on key topics to serve as a library-specific content management system (CMS) that can replace the library website. Recent additions include tools for analytics and customer relationship management. Its LibAnswers service, which supports remote reference and other customer interactions, gained a major feature through the acquisition of OCLC's QuestionPoint virtual service.

Complicated website frameworks such as Drupal have sparked a genre of library-specific CMS options.

Examples seen in the exhibits include **MUGO WEB**, based on the eZ Publish CMS, Springshare's LibGuides CMS, Stacks (now part of EBSCO Information Services), and BiblioCommons BiblioWeb.

## VOICE CONTROLS

This year's exhibits included a variety of voice-activated devices similar to those now commonplace in the consumer market. **CONVERSIGHT.AI** demonstrated its Libro platform for enabling voice control for such library services as online catalogs. Libro uses artificial intelligence and other technologies that use natural language to allow users to perform specific tasks. This appeals to those who use voice commands on their home devices and is especially helpful for patrons with disabilities. The Libro technology operates independently of such virtual assistants as Amazon Alexa, Apple's Siri, and Google Assistant.

Another set of products links library services with these consumer interfaces. Hoopla has enabled its service on Amazon Alexa devices. **PELLUCENT TECHNOLOGIES** lets libraries implement the Alexa Skills Kit and Actions on Google to allow patrons to use smart speakers to make requests addressed to their library's catalog. **COMMUNICO** demonstrated its impressive suite of applications that work together to provide a modern environment for patrons and staffers, integrated with the library's ILS and content services. Its booth this year demonstrated the suite's ability to use Alexa as a voice interface to enable patrons to ask about library events and hours, search the catalog, or request details about their account.

A kiosk at the conference's main entrance provided an Alexa device for visitors to ask for directions, restaurant recommendations, and other information. Though not related to any of the library vendors exhibiting at the conference, the kiosk reflected the prevalence of these devices and sparked conversations among librarians about privacy implications. These products raise concerns about the intermingling of data between library services and commercial advertising networks. First-time exhibitor **LDH CONSULTING SERVICES** specializes in issues relating to the protection of patron data.

## THE ILS ARENA

The usual cadre of organizations involved in ILS products were on hand, featuring the latest revisions to their core products and supplemental products or interfaces. **SIRSIDYNIX** showed off the latest improvements to its BLUEcloud suite of products, and its reps were keen to talk about the success of its virtual events for librarians, such as the Connections Summit: Directors Edition. **INNOVATIVE INTERFACES** came to the conference under new leadership, energized to demonstrate its new Inspire Discovery service and give previews of upcoming components of its next generation Inspire platform.

**THE LIBRARY CORPORATION**, offering the CARL•X and Library•Solution ILS products, exhibited jointly with its subsidiary **TECH LOGIC**, provider of automated materials-handling equipment. **AUTO-GRAPHICS**, offering SHAREit as a web-based inter-library loan platform and the VERSO ILS, showed its latest products based on cloud technologies. **PTFS** and its subsidiary **LIBLIME** showed off the latest version of its Bibliovation platform for managing print and digital resources. Other ILS vendors present included **BOOK SYSTEMS**, **INSIGNIA SOFTWARE**, and **MEDIA FLEX** with its OPALS product for schools and other small libraries.

## THE OPEN SOURCE SCENE

Open source technologies were well represented. **BYWATER SOLUTIONS** emphasized its support services for the Koha ILS and the CORAL electronic resource management system, as well as planned services for FOLIO. The **EQUINOX OPEN LIBRARY INITIATIVE**, now a nonprofit organization, provides services for both the Evergreen and Koha ILS products. Equinox recently launched a new open source software grant program where eligible libraries can receive hosting and support services for Koha. **TIND** featured its

services for its open source ILS and repository platform and its recent placement in the Columbia Law School Library. **INDEX DATA** has been heavily involved in the development of FOLIO, for which it will also provide hosting and support services. The company has also been engaged in the **PROJECT RESHARE** initiative to develop an open source resource sharing platform. **LYRASIS**, a nonprofit membership organization, is involved with a variety of open source projects, including DSpace, Fedora, ArchivesSpace, CollectionSpace, and SimplyE.

## TRAINING AND LEARNING

Another set of vendors provide content and platforms for specialized learning scenarios. Lynda.com, a familiar brand for libraries, has now become **LINKEDIN LEARNING**. The platform provides courses and content across different areas in business, technology, and creative fields and has been adopted by many libraries to provide training for patrons. **BRAINFUSE** provides online tutoring, homework help, and test preparation through its online classroom. It also includes tools and resources to help with writing, interview preparation, job coaching, and résumé writing. **TUTOR.COM** offers an educational platform for online tutoring, homework help, test preparation, and other ongoing educational needs. Google exhibited at the conference again this year, featuring its **GROW WITH GOOGLE** community program to provide training and tools to help individuals learn new skills to advance in the workplace. This program includes workshops, in-person training, and individualized coaching through local events offered throughout the country.

This summary can give only cursory coverage of the vast expanse of organizations, products, and services represented in the ALA Annual Conference exhibit hall. Apologies to the many worthy vendors with interesting and impressive products not mentioned. The exhibits complement the programs and meetings, and vice versa. Hopefully the issues, topics, and conversations that take place in the meeting rooms and hallways of the conference will make their way into the development stream of the products that will populate the exhibits in future years. The ongoing collaboration of vendors and librarians will be essential to ensure each new round of product development addresses our strategic needs and core values. **AL**



**MARSHALL BREEDING** is an independent consultant, speaker, writer for *Smart Libraries Newsletter* and *Library Technology Reports*, and editor of the website *Library Technology Guides*.

# ALA Presidential Citations honor forward-thinking global libraries

**F**our libraries earned this year's American Library Association (ALA) Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects. Their projects included sustainability efforts, portable libraries for refugee camps, gaming apps to increase engagement, and installing Tor browsers on patron computers.

The Presidential Citations began as an initiative of former ALA President Loriene Roy (2007–2008). Presented by the International Relations Round Table (IRRT), the awards recognize exemplary services and projects that draw attention to the potential for library services to create positive change, demonstrate sustainability, and provide a model for others. The four winning libraries for 2019 were commended by then-ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo during the IRRT International Librarians Reception at the Library of Congress during the 2019 ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C.

The winners are:

- Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal in Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico
- Libraries Without Borders in Paris
- Toronto (Ont.) Public Library
- Milton (Ont.) Public Library

Interested in nominating a project for 2020? The deadline is January 1. More information can be found at [ala.org/irrt](http://ala.org/irrt). 

# INTERNATIONAL

# INNOVAT

# Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal: Sustainable Library

MEXICALI, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO



Photos: Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal

Volunteers at Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal collected bottle caps and potted plants as part of the library's sustainability project.

Since 2014, Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal in Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico, has promoted awareness of the environment with its Sustainable Library project. In collaboration with Fundación Hélice A.C., a nonprofit that advocates for environmental issues in Baja California, the library educates the public about the effects of pollution, recycling, and conservation.

Biblioteca Pública Central Estatal: Sustainable Library is being recognized for:

- initiating a program to address environmental sustainability with its patrons through a series of organized trainings, film screenings, guided visits, and events
- training library staffers to encourage patrons to change their thinking about pollution and to teach patrons about resource conservation efforts that can be practiced daily to eradicate pollution in Baja California
- collaborating with a local high school to design a logo for the program
- ongoing efforts to engage 94 more libraries to participate in its program



# Toronto Public Library's Tor Browser

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Toronto Public Library's decision to offer the anonymous Tor web browser on its public computers originated from ongoing efforts to position the library as a place for digital privacy guidance and advocacy. The library developed a multipart "Lock Down Your Digital Privacy" public education course that has run in more than 25 branches across the library system, educating more than 700 residents and training more than 35 staff members in the process



since 2017. Toronto Public Library is the first Canadian public library to provide Tor browsers on its computers.

Toronto Public Library is being recognized for:

- successfully addressing the needs and concerns of its patrons regarding digital privacy and online security through a comprehensive, multitiered digital privacy initiative, which includes Tor browsers
- providing an open source browser that is easy to install and use and effectively protects users' online privacy
- providing a visible service that has generated online and offline debate and new supporters of the library
- modeling sustainability and replicability through the deployment of free open source software available to libraries regardless of their size, location, and technological and financial capabilities ●



Photo illustration: © Tono Balaguer/Adobe Stock (library); Tor Project (screenshot)

# Milton Public Library's Gaming App

MILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA



Quest Milton, an app created by Milton Public Library using open source code, allows the library to engage with its patrons through gaming. Whenever a patron participates in a program or accesses services offered by Milton Public Library, the town of Milton, or the local conservation group Conservation Halton, they can unlock games in the app for 24 hours. As users progress through the games and gain

more points, they can convert game points into a monetary value that can be used to pay fines, offset printing costs, and contribute toward the costs of exam proctoring fees and other library services. Teens were the library's intended audience, but usage has been equally strong among younger children and their parents. The app has resulted in at least 50 new users per month since its launch in February 2018.



From left: Volunteers in Colombia unload a Libraries Without Borders mobile Ideas Box; a child in Dabeiba, Colombia, uses a tablet from an Ideas Box.

## Libraries Without Borders

### PARIS, FRANCE

Libraries Without Borders (LWB) is a nonprofit devoted to facilitating the growth of libraries and expanding access to knowledge in 50 countries around the world. For the past eight years, LWB has served more than 500,000 people via mobile libraries in Burundi, Colombia, France, Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Rwanda, and Tanzania, and in refugee camps in France, Germany, and Greece. These libraries include Ideas Boxes—portable libraries housed in metal containers stocked with books, games, craft materials, and technology, including a server, internet connection, generator, tablets, laptops, and digital cameras. LWB’s focus on

education and culture led to the founding of 80 Code Travelers coding clubs in France—many of which meet in libraries—while a collaboration with Khan Academy in 2013 provided more than 1.5 million people in France with French translations of the academy’s lessons and curriculum.

LWB is being recognized for:

- expanding library services through mobile Ideas Boxes
- identifying and successfully collaborating with partners to sustain and expand its programs
- its ongoing global effort to educate the public about libraries and their services •

Photos: Libraries Without Borders



Milton Public Library is being recognized for:

- developing a gaming app that attracts more patrons to the library and removing financial barriers to accessing library services
- increasing the number of library card registrations and direct usage of the library
- developing a resource that can be shared among libraries and municipalities •

Screenshots: Milton Public Library

# Battling Information Illiteracy

How misinformation  
affects the  
future of policy

BY Paul T. Jaeger and  
Natalie Greene Taylor



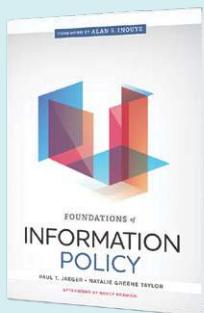
**I**n summer 2018, California was experiencing its worst wildfire season ever. In the midst of the destruction—damage to thousands of homes, evacuations of tens of thousands of people, and deaths of firefighters and residents—President Trump initially addressed the situation with a tweet that did not acknowledge these losses. Instead, he blasted the laws of the state for intensifying the wildfire damage:

“California wildfires are being magnified and made so much worse by the bad environmental laws which aren’t allowing massive amounts of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Must also tree clear to stop fire from spreading!”

This tweet was a statement by a US president about a major event, suggesting changes to existing policies.

It is also not true. Every element of the tweet—other than the existence of California, the Pacific Ocean, and wildfires—is false. And it was not a simple misunderstanding, because a tweet from Trump the next day reiterated these themes and blamed the state’s governor personally for holding back water to fight the fires.

So how does this pertain to information policy, since the tweet is about environmental policy issues? The answer is in the information. The use and misuse of information in governance



This is an excerpt from *Foundations of Information Policy* by Paul T. Jaeger and Natalie Greene Taylor (ALA Neal-Schuman, 2019).

and policymaking may be turning into the biggest information policy issue of all. And as technologies and methods of communication evolve, a large part of engaging with and advocating for information policy will consist of addressing the new challenges of teaching information literacy and behavior.

### **Misinformation literacy**

The internet has made it easy for people to be information illiterate in new ways. Anyone can create information now—regardless of quality—and get it in front of a large number of people. The ability of social media to spread information as fast as possible, and to as many people as possible, challenges literacy, as does the ability to manipulate images, sounds, and video with ease.

Since the 2016 presidential election, libraries have constructed hundreds of online fake news pathfinders and tools, but the scope of the problem is larger than learning aids alone can handle. The future of information literacy stands at the intersection of literacy and behavior. Self-awareness; decision-making processes for what to access, use, trust, and share; and awareness

of potential manipulations of information are central and explicit aspects of information literacy. However information professionals address the spiraling challenges of information literacy and information behavior, that work will be a key part of serving patrons and communities directly and society as a whole. Too much reliance on incorrect information can lead to very poor policy choices.

Confirmation bias is also a serious impediment, even when you are aware of it. When faced with information that contradicts or even disproves what they believe, people tend to resist facts, according to “Misinformation and the Currency of Democratic Citizenship” (*Journal of Politics*, 2000). These limitations are based not just on demographics or level of technological engagement. A 2016 Stanford study of US middle school, high school, and college students described their online

information literacy as “bleak” and noted that they are “easily duped” into believing fake content. Interestingly, a 2018 Pew Research Center study found that 18- to 49-year-old Americans were better than their elders at distinguishing factual news statements from opinions, although no age group did particularly well—less than half of those surveyed could distinguish all the factual and opinion statements correctly.

The cliché about a lie spreading around the world faster than the truth can get out of bed has been attributed to a number of people recently, but the expression has been around at least 200 years. Lies have always spread efficiently. But now, lies can move faster and be disseminated more easily than ever, meaning that political opinions and policy decisions can be shaped and determined by misinformation and disinformation.

### Information policy in a dangerous time

Along with the challenges raised by information literacy, information behavior, fake news, and the information misbehavior of political figures, another challenge for librarians is the lack of a unified governmental approach to information policy. The US has no comprehensive strategy for information policy or an omnibus legal framework for information. This is rare among technologically advanced nations, especially in the age of the internet.

**The ability of social media to spread information as fast as possible, and to as many people as possible, challenges literacy.**

For instance, both France and India have used their national information and technology policies as focusing mechanisms for policy decisions. That has led to huge gains in the information technology sectors of their economies while also encouraging their citizens to work in information and technology. France, for example, overhauled its French Tech Visas in early 2019 to make it easier for international tech business founders, employees, and investors to work in the country.

The lack of a similar policy in the US is more than an issue of education or economic competition. It means that information policy grows and matures or fails to grow and mature in a perpetual ad hoc fashion. Policies do not necessarily link or even make sense together, and preparing for policy developments can be very difficult for fields and professions. For information professions, these difficulties cut to the bone because we need to advocate simultaneously for the people we serve and for the profession. Understanding and engaging with information policy must be central to the career of every information professional.



## Taking action

Information professionals can and should have a voice in the future of information policy, if we are willing to make the effort. We have a great deal to contribute, both by improving current policies to increase their overall benefit and impact and by identifying new areas to be addressed. We have prioritized teaching information literacy and thoughtful information behavior for more than a century. The people drawn to our profession have a service orientation and an interest in improving the common good. Rather than staying on the periphery, we need to put all these pieces together and put them to good use. We need to carry the fire that fuels our focus on education, learning, and service into the realm of information policy. Too often, the good that we do and the help that we provide are known only to those who already benefit.

Our institutions are essential but need to make themselves more visible. We need to be information activists, advocating not just for our own institutions and communities but for information itself and the good it provides to everyone. The most crucial step is putting aside our collective fear of being seen as political. Building an information institution and opening its doors to patrons daily are political statements, statements that emphatically express our beliefs in education, equity, and the common good. We do not need to side with specific political candidates or parties, but we should loudly and enthusiastically advocate for the right to information and the right to be educated about information and all that those fundamental rights entail. We should encourage community members to seriously engage with politicians and policymakers on information policy issues. And we need to seek out and engage institutions in professional fields

that share similar commitments as allies and partners in advocacy.

We need to think about educating as broadly as possible in these areas. That can mean reaching far beyond our current users to those who may not be aware of our institutions but who would certainly benefit from their help. Think about the public battles over health care laws, access to insurance, coverage of preexisting conditions, and related issues that have been central to political debates since the passage of the Affordable Care Act. Many of the institutions in our field—especially public and academic libraries—helped people sign up for coverage, but we collectively could be doing so much more. Imagine if health and medical librarians promoted health information and health policy literacy at the same time by producing guides to understanding information issues raised in political debates.

Our institutions are trusted by the public and have a great deal to contribute to public discourse, if we just learn to trust ourselves. **AL**



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of *Advances in Librarianship*, and associate editor of the *International Journal of Information, Diversity, and Inclusion*. **NATALIE GREENE TAYLOR** is assistant professor at University of South Florida. She is an editor of *Library Quarterly* and has published articles in *Information Retrieval Journal*, *International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age*, and *Public Library Quarterly*.

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# PEOPLE

## Announcements

### ON THE MOVE

Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library appointed **Kristine Cook** adult services manager at the main library effective April 7.



March 4 **Debbie Estrella** joined Tiverton (R.I.) Public Library as adult services and outreach librarian.

**Makiba Foster** was named regional manager for Broward County (Fla.) Libraries Division's African-American Research Library and Cultural Center in May.

**Grace Frenzel** joined Livonia (N.Y.) Public Library as youth services coordinator April 18.

**John Guscott** was named manager of Lorain (Ohio) Public Library System's Columbia branch in April.

**Jay Miley** recently joined the State Library of Ohio's Serving Every Ohioan Library Center in Caldwell as library customer services manager.

March 11 **Katy Miller** joined the University of Central Florida in Orlando as student success/textbook affordability librarian.

**Sonoe Nakasone** joined the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as community archivist for the Southern Historical Collection at Wilson Special Collections Library April 8.



### PROMOTIONS

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Health Sciences Library promoted **Rebecca Carlson** to health sciences librarian and liaison to the Eshelman School of Pharmacy May 13.

### Kudos

The Librarians Association of the University of California, Los Angeles, recognized Scholarly Communication Education Librarian **Marty Brennan** and Curator of History and Special Collections for the Sciences at the UCLA Biomedical Library **Russell Johnson** as its Librarians of the Year in April.

The Maryland *Daily Record* named Harford County Public Library CEO **Mary Hastler** as one of its 2019 Influential Marylanders March 28.



The Mitchell Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle in Blue Earth, Minnesota, named **Heidi Schutt**, director of Muir Library in Winnebago, its 2019 Woman of Achievement. ●

**Matt Jansen** was promoted to data analysis librarian at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill University Libraries Digital Research Services unit May 13.

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse promoted **John Jax** to director of Murphy Library in April.



April 9 **Allyson Morgan** was promoted to manager of Lorain (Ohio) Public Library System's South branch.

### RETIREMENTS

**Marilyn Genther** retired as executive director of Mount Prospect (Ill.) Public Library in June.

March 31 **Alan Hall** retired as director of the Public Library of Steubenville and Jefferson County (Ohio).

**Shirley McDougal**, library associate at Medina County (Ohio) District Library for 37 years, retired in May.

**Meg Scharf**, associate director of communications, assessment, and public relations at University of Central Florida in Orlando, retired May 31.

### AT ALA

**Katie Connelly** joined the Association for Library Service to Children April 15 as awards coordinator.

**Megan Cusick** became manager of state advocacy for ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy Office May 16.

**Tammy Dillard-Steels** joined the Young Adult Library Services Association as executive director April 23.

**Joaquin Falcon**, communications specialist for the Office for Library Advocacy, left ALA May 16.

**Raymond Garcia** joined the ALA Governance Office as communications assistant April 9.

*Booklist* Executive Editor **Keir Graff** left ALA May 17.

The Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services promoted **Briana Jarnagin** to program coordinator for community engagement May 7.

The Public Library Association (PLA) promoted **Samantha Lopez** to manager of marketing and membership April 16.

**Marci Merola**, director of the Office for Library Advocacy, left ALA May 16.

RUSA and ASGCLA promoted **Ninah Moore** to program officer for continuing education in May.

## In Memory

**Eula Mae Anderson**, 97, librarian at Lafourche Parish (La.) Public Library from 1947 until her 1984 retirement, died in March. Anderson was the parish's first black librarian and helped open the Carver branch for black patrons, who were not allowed to use the main library. After desegregation in 1973, she moved to the Thibodaux branch. On her retirement, Thibodaux's mayor declared March 27, 1984, "Eula Anderson Day."

**Shirley Echelman**, 84, former executive director of the Medical Library Association and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), died May 2. She began her library career as director of information services at Chemical Bank New York Trust Company. She served as president of the Special Libraries Association and as a delegate to the White House Conference on Library and Information Services in 1979. After retiring from ARL in 1988, she became a library consultant and took librarian positions at Handley Regional Library System in Winchester, Virginia, and Holy Cross Abbey in Berryville, Virginia.

**Joe A. Hewitt**, 80, university librarian at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 1993 until his 2004 retirement, died December 19. He joined the university as associate university librarian for technical services in 1975. Under his leadership, the library launched "Documenting the American South," a project to digitize slave narratives. He helped to establish the North Carolina Literary Festival, oversaw the renovation of the R. B. House Undergraduate Library, and founded the Carolina Academic Library Associates program.

**Ellen Sikes Johnson**, 77, librarian at University of Central Arkansas (UCA) from 1987 until her 2007 retirement, died April 15. She served as head of the circulation department, as a reference librarian, and as a children's librarian at UCA. She was elected to two terms on ALA Council and also served as Arkansas' state councilor. Johnson was a founding member of ALA's Intellectual Freedom Committee and received the

Arkansas Library Association's 2007 Francis P. Neal Award in recognition of notable service to librarianship in Arkansas.

**Sandra Joy Nailor**, 82, director of Helen Kate Furness Free Library in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, for 27 years until retiring in 2012, died April 23. She modernized the library through computerization and spearheaded a building expansion in the mid-2000s.

**Susan K. Nutter**, 74, who spent 30 years as vice provost and director of North Carolina State University (NCSU) Libraries, died March 25. During her tenure, the award-winning James B. Hunt Jr. Library opened in 2013, while the university's first main library, D. H. Hill Jr. Library, underwent redesign. Nutter embraced technology, beginning the process of building an online library early in her tenure. NCSU Libraries became one of the first research libraries to develop online courses. Nutter received the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award in 1999 and was named 2016 ACRL Academic/Research Librarian of the Year. NCSU Libraries won ACRL's Excellence in Academic Libraries Award in 2000 and the National Medal for Museum and Library Service from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in 2016.

**Nicolette Warisse Sosulski**, 56, business and reference librarian at Portage (Mich.) District Library since 2005, died May 15. Sosulski created a well-used business library and a set of resources for patrons to check out related to specific health conditions. She was a columnist for both *Reference and User Services Quarterly* and *Booklist*, and she received the 2019 Margaret E. Monroe Library Adult Services Award.



**Melissa Tracy**, 31, marketing and program specialist at ALA's Association of Specialized, Government, and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) and the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) since 2016, died April 10. ●

**Sallyann Price** joined *American Libraries* as associate editor April 29.

**Nathan Strong** became e-commerce project manager for Information Technology and Technical Services April 29.

**Shuntai Sykes** became membership and programs specialist for RUSA and ASGCLA in May.

RUSA and ASGCLA named **Melissa Vanyek** marketing communications and web services coordinator in May.

**Symone Villasenor** joined PLA as project manager for strategic initiatives April 15.

*Booklist* Editorial Assistant **Ada Wolin** left ALA April 12. [AL](#)



## Exhibiting Energy

From authors to zines and everything in between, the exhibit hall is the pulse of any American Library Association conference. This year's Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., was no exception, with attendees clamoring for autographs and advance reading copies, testing new products, and lining up for specialty stages. Here are some of our favorite photos, clockwise from top left:

- Shanna Hollich, collection management librarian at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, tries out spectral glasses at the NASA booth.
- Carolyn Long (right), volunteer at STAR Academy Charter School in Memphis, Tennessee, poses with Caylin Louis Moore, author of *A Dream Too Big*.
- Wyolanda Hall, manager at Shreve Memorial Library's Wallethe branch in Shreveport, Louisiana, tries out spectral glasses at the NASA booth.
- Jim Cowen, music reference librarian at University of the Arts Libraries in Philadelphia, takes the Star Wars READ Selfie Challenge.
- Ann N'Gadi, technical information specialist at the Smithsonian's Museum Conservation Institute, gets crafty at the Creativebug booth. [AL](#)



# EXPLORE THE NEW RDA AND RDA TOOLKIT

The English language version of RDA stabilized in April 2019. In July, the RDA Online Orientations, a program of educational events will rollout. These events will provide an introduction and illustrative examples to the many changes to RDA and RDA Toolkit introduced during the RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign Project, also known as the 3R Project.

The webinars will be presented by RDA experts and cover such topics as nomens, aggregates, relationship elements, and application profiles. Be sure you're signed up for our e-newsletter for further information on the RDA Online Orientations: [RDATOOLKIT.ORG/RDALIST](https://rdatoolkit.org/rdalist).

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and [ALASTORE.ALA.ORG/CONTENT/NEW-CONCEPTS-WORKSHOP-SERIES](https://alastore.ala.org/content/new-concepts-workshop-series).

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## Marking the 50th anniversary of the Coretta Scott King (CSK) Book Awards

and spotlighting the work of the author and illustrator winners and honorees since the awards' inception, this unique resource is an excellent tool for collection development, readers' advisory, and classroom use.