

ALSC Matters

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Officially Speaking

Why Don't You ...

One of the most frequently asked questions I've heard this year as your ALSC President is: "How can I get involved in the work of ALSC?" For many people, this is a question about how to volunteer for a committee—and I'm always eager to help folks figure out their next steps toward committee contributions! Just as often, however, the question of "How can I get involved?" is truly an open one—an honest inquiry of how a willing member might channel their energies for the greater good of our shared work. It feels fitting, then, in my last ALSC Matters column as your president, to respond to this question at large, and speak to opportunities for members at every stage of their career and membership beyond the committee volunteer process. If you're looking for ways to get involved, big or small, I hope you find some steps forward here!

If you are a newer member to ALSC, why don't you:

- Sit in on an open meeting of an ALSC process committee. All of ALSC's process committees post notices and agendas for their upcoming meetings in the [ALSC community space of ALA Connect](#), and any members are welcome to sit in on those meetings to observe. It's a great way to learn about the work happening on a committee, especially if you're not sure you want to submit your volunteer form just yet!
- [Submit a guest post for the ALSC Blog](#)—or apply to be a regular monthly blogger! Even if you're newer to ALSC, I'm sure that you have ideas and insights worth sharing with other youth library workers. (Did you know that I first got involved in ALSC writing for the *ALSC Blog*? It was a great way to share my ideas and program successes, but also to connect with other bloggers, many of whom are still friends and colleagues today!)
- Find an [upcoming online learning opportunity](#) you want to participate in, and ask a friend or colleague to join you, so you can discuss afterwards.

If you've been a member for several years, why don't you:

- Reach out to your alma mater—library school, undergrad, or any other program!—and see if they have opportunities for graduates to talk to current students about their career trajectories, libraries, and ALSC. If you talk to current high school or college students about libraries, you could be opening a possibility to a potential future library worker who had never considered a library job. Similarly, if you talk to current college and graduate students interested in working with kids, they may be excited to learn about the opportunities that come with ALSC membership (at discounted student rates)!
- Connect with a more junior colleague at your library or in your local area and make plans to chat about what you're both up to over coffee or lunch. We're all still working our way back

toward connections after the isolation of the early pandemic, and a coffee break idea swap with a colleague can be a great way to get refreshed and support a colleague newer to our work. If your colleague isn't familiar with ALSC, help them connect the dots on what resources ALSC offers that are relevant to the work they are doing.

- [Propose a webinar or online course for ALSC](#). If you've been a member for a few years, you've got both tips and tricks to share from your library work AND some knowledge about what types of resources are useful to other ALSC members. Share the knowledge you've acquired through experience and build your presentation credentials as well.

If you've been a member for longer than you want to count (thank you!), why don't you:

- Reach out to the teachers in your network to share great ALSC resources like our [summer reading lists](#). While many youth library folks think about connecting with other librarians and library workers, no matter the sort of library they're in, we don't always think about the other professionals in the ecosystem of kids and reading. I'll bet you've gathered quite the rolodex of educator acquaintances over your career—let them know what's available to them from ALSC to support their kids.
- Consider asking friends and family to [donate to Friends of ALSC](#) on your behalf next time you're having a birthday or other celebration, but don't want physical gifts. Or put your baking or craft skills to work for a bake sale or craft sale, and donate the proceeds to Friends of ALSC. No matter how you do it, Friends of ALSC support allows us to flexibly fund great initiatives like conference and training scholarships.
- Send me an email sharing some of the highlights of your ALSC membership and what you have been able to accomplish throughout your tenure. At the very least, I love hearing folks' ALSC stories—and if you'd be comfortable with your story being part of a larger testimonial to the value of ALSC membership, that's a bonus!

These are just a few snippets of ideas for ways members can take another step toward engagement with ALSC. This newsletter is full of other examples of ways to get involved and share as well—the opportunities are many to share your gifts and enthusiasm within ALSC!—*Amy Koester, ALSC President*

“Sign Up, Show Up, and Cheer Up!” The Value of ALSC Service

Dear ALSC Members,

Recently, I have been reading various self-care books (e.g., *2 Minutes to Peace: Everyday Self-Care for Busy People* by Corinne Sweet, *Self-Care for Black Women: 150 Ways to Radically Accept and Prioritize Your Mind, Body, and Soul* by Oludara Adeeyo) in the hope of trying to prioritize my mental, physical, and spiritual health while serving as ALSC vice president and preparing to assume the role of president at the end of the upcoming ALA Annual Conference. (Believe me, these are both challenging leadership positions with tons of responsibilities!) Several of the self-care books mention the benefits of service in our lives. For instance, in *Be Happier Now: Simple Ways to Become Instantly Happier*, Jacob Sager Weinstein (2023) wrote, “Volunteering increases life expectancy, reduces the risk of depression, and increases feelings of energy and joy” (p. 123). Similarly, Adeeyo (2022) noted,

Donating our time to an organization will improve our spiritual wellness. When we help other people, we tend to feel better.... The more you volunteer, the more you'll realize there is more to life than your day-to-day activities. As you continue to serve, your worldview will expand—and so will the well-being of your soul. Volunteering is truly the gift that keeps on giving. (p. 171)

When I reach out to ALSC members to make appointments for process committees, I sometimes feel as if I am imposing, but reading these self-care books and thinking about how service is beneficial has led me to rethink my position. I believe that by asking people to serve, I am offering individuals a gift and a great professional opportunity. That being said, self-care books also note that we should not overload ourselves with unmanageable amounts of work and that it is okay to sometimes say no. You know what is best for you, and if you are unable to serve now, ALSC will be waiting when you are ready to do so. However, if you are able to say yes, you will gain much more than an addition to your CV. Serving on ALSC committees has enriched my life and professional career in ways that are difficult to measure: enriching friendships, the opportunity to listen to and learn from a variety of publishing experts (e.g., art directors, editors), and the further development of my leadership skills.

Bearing all of this in mind, I humbly ask that you complete the [ALSC volunteer form](#), if you haven't done so already. Also, over the next few weeks, if you receive an email from me asking you to serve on a process committee, please consider (to borrow from the words of Weinstein, 2023) signing up, showing up, and cheering up!—*In service to all of you, Jonda C. McNair, ALSC Vice President/President-Elect, 2022–2023, Charlotte S. Huck Endowed Professor of Children's Literature, The Ohio State University*

References

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Weinstein, J. S. (2023). *Be happier now: Simple ways to become instantly happier*. Odd Dot/Macmillan.

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ALSC Voices

ALSC Profile

Celebrating colleagues with 25 years or more years of ALSC membership

Susan Lempke

ALSC Membership: 25 years

Where do you currently work?

I am adjunct faculty for Dominican University, and I spent a year at the University of Chicago Lab School subbing, but most of my career was at the Niles-Maine District Library.

What is your position title?

My last title at Niles was Executive Director, but I was head of Youth Services for many years.

Where did you attend library school?

Indiana University School of Library and Information Science

What was your very first library position?

Chicago Public Library, Edgebrook Branch, from 1982-1987. I was the Children's and Young Adult Librarian, plus in a branch you handle whatever needs to be handled. I can't think of a better starting point in a career, especially for a 23-year-old like me.

What do you love most about your current job?

The course I teach at Dominican is Picture Book Illustration, and what could be more fun than that? The students bring so much insight to books I have been looking at for years, and of course there are always new books.

What's your favorite season?

As I write it is Spring, and the flowering trees are gorgeous so that is my favorite today, but probably overall I love Fall the most for its colors, and the chance to stop and take stock a little.

What's your favorite book of all time?

That might be the hardest question, but it might be *Where the Wild Things Are* for its utter perfection in capturing the inner life of a child in text and pictures and book design.

Who is your favorite superhero?

Batman. When I was a kid, we lived near a drugstore, and spotting a new issue of a Batman comic was very exciting. I liked the mystery of it--trying to figure out all of the parts that were left unspoken.

Are you most comfortable in your kitchen or in your living room?

Kitchen for sure. Cooking is soothing and creative and a chance to show someone you love them. My reading chair is not in the living room, or the choice might have been more painful.

Where is your favorite place in the world?

Sitting on the front porch of my family's tiny cabin, which is completely surrounded by pine trees, reading/stopping to watch the silly squirrels and chipmunks and the wee birds swooping in and out of the bird feeder.

Bright Ideas

A Lesson in Yeses: Public Library & School Partnerships

In the middle of fall semester 2022, our public library was invited by a representative from the school PTA to visit the nearby school to host a book club for grades 2-5. As new librarians, we were both enthusiastic about the opportunity to deepen existing relationships with the walkable school where many of our afterschool patrons attend. We'd already welcomed field trips to the library and offered information literacy instruction and a book club seemed like a perfect match to respond to school interest. We decided on a read aloud format where students could opt-in to large group, smaller group, or quiet reading time alone, and we anticipated one of us and a school representative would visit each month to facilitate.

From building new connections with teachers and students who didn't already visit the library, there were a million reasons to try. With tentative hopefulness, we decided to select high appeal books since the kids joining us would be giving up recess for book club. We purchased low-cost stickers, fun bookmarks, and looked into gift book options for those who joined. For recruitment day we created a simple reader's advisory form that inquired about book club name and book suggestions and put together a box of book possibilities so the children could see what kinds of books we hoped to read together. The list included a lot of graphic novels and books that wouldn't look like homework. Our goal was reaching 10-15 students with each session, but we agreed along with our manager that even five each time would be a beneficial reach. We felt lucky for the support despite the uncertainty of program outcomes and the time that would be allotted during an often understaffed lunch timeframe.

We arrived at school on recruitment day and at first, nobody knew why we were there, but after a few quick conversations and hiccups, we connected with the right grade contacts and entered a busy lunchroom to make our pitch. To our surprise, the enthusiasm was contagious (and the stickers were popular): more than sixty children signed up to participate. We left knowing that even if interest dropped by more than 50%, we'd be well in the goal range. We realized we would both be needed at the sessions to allow for the flexibility of large and small group management, and luckily our library was able to accommodate the change. We also realized we'd be keeping book orders to add new class sets rather than creating giveaways every session. We met once a month for five months with an overall attendance ranging from 35 to 76 students! We ended the season in April with a library program in the media lab where participants were invited to craft their first video or audio book reviews, an opportunity that led some of them to the media lab for the first time.

At each session we saw children gaining confidence in reading aloud, helping one another with new words and new book formats and expressions, and building their love of reading. How do we know? Among the favorite responses we gathered from participants, we were asked questions like these throughout: "What will happen in the summer?" "Where can we meet in the summer?" "Why do we only have book club once a month?" We've already begun planning for the summer sessions of book

club, once again unsure if we should expect five or twenty-five participants, but our lesson in “yes” has inspired us to work flexibly with schools, raise expectations about potential, and build meaningful relationships with students, teachers, and volunteers in our community, so they feel welcome at our Library.—*Erika Hogan, youth services librarian, & Angela Clock, youth services librarian, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library*

Reaching for Higher Ceilings: KSU and Pittsburgh MLIS Students Explore Neurodiversity and Disability in Libraries

A spark ignited in the Kent State University’s ALA Student Chapter meeting in January 2023. In one way or another, all of us had a vested interest in the many aspects of neurodiversity and disability in libraries. A few of us identify as neurodivergent and/or disabled. Others have children who fall within these categories. However, every single person recognized that the conversation about these populations within libraries either fell short or didn’t happen at all.

ALA Student Chapter Officers Lynette Seelmeyer, Alison Caplan, Beth Parker, Nicole Clarkson, and faculty liaison Dr. Marianne Martens decided that our Spring 2023 event would be a free, open-to-all webinar in mid-April discussing how librarians can serve, work alongside, or thrive as members of the neurodiverse or disability communities. We called it “Included: Neurodiversity and Disability in Libraries” in hopes of facilitating the eventual inclusion not only of this conversation, but of the individuals it impacts the most.

As our first ever Lunch & Learn webinar, “Included” was an hour-long roundtable discussion with ALA Chapter students and two experts on the subject: Renee Grassi and Dr. Amelia Gibson. In addition to the two speakers, two other student organizations joined forces with us to make this event possible: the ALA Student Chapter of University of Pittsburgh, led by Emily Wood, Liz Quinn, Brittini Linn, and faculty liaison Dr. Rebecca Morris, and the Graduate Student Advisory Council at Kent State University, led by Emily Rebmann and faculty liaison Mary Anne Nichols.

Each speaker spent ten minutes introducing their unique research and experience. After these presentations, speakers and ALA Chapter officers spent forty minutes diving into the students’ questions, all of which extended the presented research, brought in personal experiences, and introduced additional ideas for an even deeper discussion.

The first speaker, Dr. Amelia Gibson, is an associate professor at the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park, and she explored the different models of disability and how librarianship can embrace intersectional disability justice to best serve patrons in today’s society.

“The ADA is not the ceiling here,” she says about institutions setting accessibility standards solely based on the terms of the Americans for Disabilities Act, “It’s the floor. It’s the basic and we would like to set our ceiling much higher.”

The second speaker, Renee Grassi, is the library director at Lake Bluff Public Library in Illinois, and she offered her personal and professional experiences in inclusivity of neurodiverse colleagues and communities.

“I think there is a misnomer that is actually kind of a deterrent to this idea of neurodiversity,” she stated regarding employing and managing those with disabilities or neurodiversity, “which is ‘there’s only one person for the job’...I think that that’s a lie we’ve been telling ourselves for a long time.”

Within the Q&A portion, discussion topics included responsive library policies without excessive disclosure, the necessity of teaching subjects like labor politics and disability justice in library science programs, and an acknowledgment of how advocacy can be exhausting but is never selfish.

Together, we recruited more than 80 participants for the webinar, not including those who reached out to say that they couldn't watch it live but wanted access to a recording to view later.

"We will never be in a finite state of learning in our profession [and] in our humanity," Renee says in her closing remarks, "The more people we know and understand their stories or just listen, the more we can become more full and diverse in our own understanding of this complicated world that we live in."

To join the discussion and learn more about neurodiversity and disability in libraries, please [check out the webinar's recording on YouTube](#).—*Nicole Clarkson, Lynette Seelmeyer, Alison Caplan, and Beth Parker, ALA Student Chapter officers, Kent State University, Ohio*

Competencies in Action

Renew, Refresh, and Find Balance

by **Becky Shaknovich**, administrative librarian, West Philadelphia Libraries, Free Library of Philadelphia, and member of the Managing Children's Services committee

[How Do You Recharge/Refresh Yourself?](#) | [How Do You Find Balance?](#)

Low morale and burnout are currently sweeping the library world. In a post-lockdown work environment, patrons and staff are more vulnerable than ever, and library workers are constantly faced with the effects of their emotional labor. The ALSC Managing Children's Services committee is made up of librarians, supervisors, managers, and administrators focused on library services for children, youth and families. **As supervisors, we strive to embody ALSC Core Competency VI. Administrative and Management Skills, 7. "Demonstrates cultural awareness, critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, mediating, and cultural competency skills."**

When we were children, our generations were not taught how to self-regulate and, as a result, we had to learn this critical social-emotional skill ourselves. In order to be strong supervisors, we must be well versed in self-care, allowing us to remain centered and grounded when faced with daily challenges, as well as modeling balance and self-care for our staff.

Finding unique and individualized ways to renew ourselves helps us create a library workplace culture that centers mental health and well-being over vocational awe, burnout, and quiet quitting, ultimately leading to better service for the communities we serve and support. For this column, ALSC Managing Children's Services committee members were asked about how they recharge and find balance.

How do you recharge/refresh yourself?

"Talking to children in the department and at storytimes helps me recharge. The wonder and excitement of children is very refreshing and endearing. Reading a picture book and enjoying the creative art and/or play of words is another way that I take a quick break at work. A spread in a picture book is like seeing an art piece in the museum. I also enjoy listening to authors talk about

their books and writing process. I love music, reading, board games, and being creative. On my day off, I find it challenging to carve out time for these activities. Yet when I give myself the gift of this time and am creative like coloring, crafting or sewing, it feels wonderful.” ~ **Uma S. Nori**, head, Youth Services, Thomas Ford Memorial Library, Western Springs, Illinois

“I find in-person professional development to be incredibly recharging. I love the exchange of ideas, troubleshooting among fellow children’s librarians, and just commiserating. When I return, I am anxious to try out what I have learned in my work. Also, reading outcome surveys can be incredibly rewarding... when I learn how a program has impacted a child or family in a positive way, it always reminds me of why we (children’s librarians) do the hard work that we do.” ~ **Maria Trivisonno**, family engagement specialist, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library

“As a retired librarian, I find that I still need to refresh/motivate myself. While working, I found that attending professional development workshops and professional organization conferences (such as ALA, ALSC Institute) gave me lots of inspiration and a jolt of energy. They still do!” ~ **Stephanie Bange**, children’s literature consultant, Dayton, Ohio

“I recharge by taking a break. Sometimes it’s a few minutes, sometimes it’s weeks... I have found the best way to refresh is to walk outside, find a way to laugh, take time off, start a new task, reorganize my office, or check in with coworkers. When I distract myself from whatever is consuming me, I will often think of a solution the moment my brain is distracted by something else. It also helps me realize what needs to be tackled and what needs to be let go, which makes me a much more effective department head. Being in a management position can be isolating at times, so finding ways to connect with myself, or others, or nature will always re-ground me.” ~ **Betsy Raczkowski**, head of Youth Services, Rochester Hills Public Library, Rochester, Michigan

“I love yoga and mindfulness! I try to work movement activities, breathing exercises, and meditation into my work day. Sometimes I do this creatively by working yoga and/or mindfulness activities into my programs, like storytime, or the work meetings I lead as a supervisor. I love sharing these skills for regulating emotions, and I get positive feedback from staff and families alike!” ~ **Becky Shaknovich**, administrative librarian, West Philadelphia Libraries, Free Library of Philadelphia

“When a day is feeling long or things aren’t going well, I try to reconnect with what I love about working in a public library. Sometimes I will straighten things in the department and along the way greet the kids and families. Having direct conversations with the kids is a fantastic break from hard or long tasks. Other days, I change books displays, bulletin boards or signage. The creative outlet of those tasks gives me the break I need. Outside of my daily work at the library, I keep myself recharged by being involved in committee work. Connecting with colleagues in-state and nationally keeps me going and seeing the bigger picture.” ~ **Christy Kepler**, head of Youth Services, Oswego (Illinois) Public Library District

How do you find balance?

“I sometimes struggle to switch my brain from ‘work-mode’ to ‘home-mode,’ and can spend time thinking about work when I could be resting and recharging at home. Because of this, I have become very protective of my time away from work. I do not check emails or work chats when I’m at home, and if I have any work-related apps on my personal phone, notifications are turned off. If there’s an emergency, my supervisors and staff have my cell phone and can call or text me, but creating and protecting these boundaries (even sometimes from myself!) really makes a difference in helping me “unplug” from work and enjoy my downtime.” ~ **Megan Jackson**, youth librarian, St. Louis County Library, St. Louis, Missouri

“On my days off, I make time for the things I love doing. Sometimes it is working on a puzzle or sewing or gardening. I love animals and being outside, so I make it a point to go outside for walks on my lunch break, if the weather allows. I am also sure to use my vacation days, even if it is just taking a long weekend occasionally rather than a full week off. I use my sick leave when I am not feeling well. This not only allows me to rest and recover, but prevents me from potentially spreading illness to my coworkers.” ~ **Kristin Williamson**, *children’s services manager, Metropolitan Library System, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

“I try to make a plan for myself at the start of each workday to balance all of my tasks including administrative and programming. I’m a big fan of lists and writing down each task. I also like to balance the type of work I’m doing, so if something requires a lot of focus, I’ll take a break and do something less intensive like cleaning out a cabinet full of materials. I’m also getting better about delegating tasks and asking for help, so I’m not trying to do everything myself. After spending some time in the past being addicted to checking my phone, I now make sure when I’m home to refrain from checking emails or working. I try to be completely free of work tasks from home so I don’t get burned out.” ~ **Chelsea Arnold**, *library director, Bloomfield Public Library, Bloomfield, New York*

“While at work, a quiet meditation or breathing exercise works amazingly. I get to present storytimes and listen to the little ones have fun, giggle, and just enjoy the songs and stories. This always leaves me ready for the rest of the day. When I really need to recharge, I love cleaning my office and supply room, and this quiet time allows me to listen to music and quiet my mind.” ~ **Kerrie Mierop**, *youth services librarian, Calabasas Public Library, Calabasas, California*

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Member News

Karen Lemmons, teacher/librarian at Detroit School of Arts, is retiring at the end of this school year. Over the past 27 years, she has enjoyed working with students and teachers in the Detroit Public Schools Community District. We wish you all the best in your retirement, Karen!

Amanda Jones, middle school librarian, Livingston Parish, Louisiana, is the 2023 recipient of ALA's Paul Howard Award for Courage, which honors individuals who have exhibited courage for the benefit of library programs or services in the face of adversity. In solidarity with her public library colleagues, Jones spoke out publicly against book challenges, which [resulted in her being targeted in a social media hate campaign](#). Jones also won the American Association of School Librarians 2023 Intellectual Freedom Award. Congratulations, Amanda. Thank you for your commitment and courage!

Amy Seto Forrester, youth services librarian, Eugene (OR) Public Library, authored a new book, [Search for a Giant Squid](#) (Chronicle Books, 2023), illustrated by Andy Chou Musser. The first in the Science Explorers series, this title is an ocean-themed choose-your-path STEM adventure for emerging readers. Kudos, Amy!

Emily Mills, youth services librarian, Cromwell (CT) Belden Public Library, is a recipient of a 2023 EBSCO/ALA Scholarship to attend ALA in June. Enjoy the conference, Emily!

Webinar Series on Trauma-Informed Practices

According to a recent [Urban Library Trauma Study](#), nearly 70% of respondents shared that they had experienced violent or aggressive behavior from patrons, while 22% indicated that they experienced similar behavior from their own coworkers.

ALSC's upcoming webinar series, Trauma-Informed Supervision for Library Leaders, led by April Roy and Brandy Sanchez, will address the definition of trauma and its causes, principles of trauma-informed care, trauma-informed supervision, and practical strategies to mitigate compassion fatigue and professional burnout among staff. Both webinars are scheduled for June.

- Part 1: Understanding Trauma-Informed Supervision | Wednesday, June 7, 2023 | 1:00PM CT
- Part 2: Supporting Library Staff through Trauma-Informed Supervision | Tuesday, June 13, 2023 | 1:00PM CT

For complete details and to register, [visit ALA's eLearning website](#).

ALSC Grant Funds Author/Illustrator Visits - Apply by May 17

The ALSC Programs and Services Recognition Committee is accepting applications for the 2023 Maureen Hayes Author/Illustrator Award through May 17, 2023! The award was established with funding from Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, in honor of Maureen Hayes, to bring together children and nationally recognized authors/illustrators by funding up to \$4,000 for an author/illustrator visit to a library. Applications and supporting materials, including an itemized budget and the required signature form, are due by May 17, 2023. [For complete details, visit the award webpage](#).

Reading Recommendations

The [2023 ALSC Summer Reading Lists](#) are here! Compiled by the Quicklists Consulting Committee, the lists are full of engaging and award-winning book titles to keep children reading all summer. For young digital media fans, the committee also recommends a range of apps, podcasts, and websites to help kids discover and develop their interests.

This year's clean, straightforward design makes the lists easy to download and print for distribution in your library and community. [Find the FREE lists on the ALSC website](#).

Annual Conference Updates

Advance registration rates for the ALA conference in June are in effect until June 16. ALSC is offering a robust line up of educational programs, special events, and award celebrations.

[ALSC's education program topics](#) range from free arts programs in libraries and supporting young children's social and emotional development to parent engagement in school partnerships and deepening equity in early childhood learning.

The [Charlemae Hill Rollins President's Program](#) is all about leadership! Featuring Dr. Ling Hwey Jeng, Ellen Oh, and Linda Sue Park, this panel discussion will focus on supporting all library workers in seeing themselves as leaders and encouraging leadership in others. The interactive program will explore ways to identify and activate leadership skills and areas of potential at all levels of library

work, as well as how academia, publishing, and #kidlit all overlap. It will also include space for connection, networking, and reflection.

In a very special event, *We Need Diverse Books and ALA Present: How to Fight Book Bans: Authors on Speaking Up and Fighting Back*, Samira Ahmed, Jerry Craft, Kyle Lukoff, Ashley Hope Pérez, Eliot Schrefer, and moderator Ellen Oh discuss book challenges and strategies and resources for teachers, administrators, and caregivers to fight back!

The [ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition](#) is the world's largest library event, offering countless educational and networking opportunities, inspiring speakers, and informational sessions. Learn more on [how you can make your case to attend](#) and join us for this enriching professional development opportunity.

Tell Congress to Protect the Freedom to Read

Like you, ALA is outraged at the extreme censorship efforts targeting libraries around the country. And we're taking action. We know that the Constitution and our values are on our side – and our polling shows that voters agree. But the small minority of censorship proponents are loud. We need to get loud, too. Take action and tell Congress to reject censorship and defend the freedom to read: <https://bit.ly/RejectCensorship>

Anderson Receives 2023 Sullivan Award

Deborah Anderson is the recipient of the 2023 Sullivan Award for Public Library Administrators Supporting Services to Children. The award annually recognizes an individual who has shown exceptional understanding and support of public library service to children while maintaining administrative responsibilities.

Anderson, assistant director, Education and Engagement, Los Angeles County Library, was selected for her success in leading initiatives that clearly demonstrate what equity-centered programming for children and families should look like. With many years of experience, Anderson's efforts have been both far-reaching and impactful. The programs and services offered by Anderson and LA County Library have been crafted to meet the needs of its constituents, demonstrating a “meet them where they are” approach. While giving voice to those in the community who may have been overlooked or marginalized, they also expertly meet the immediate needs of our youngest library users.

Peggy Sullivan, the award's namesake, was a former ALSC President (1976-1977), ALA President (1980–1981), and ALA Executive Director (1992-1994). For more information about the award, [visit the ALA website](#).

CCBC Choices 2023

In March, the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison released *CCBC Choices 2023*, an annual list of best children's books created by the librarians at the CCBC. Choices has transitioned this year from a print to digital publication. Books in the Choices 2023 edition were published and/or released in the US in 2022 and are listed by category, with images, descriptions, and annotations. Find the [CCBC Choices 2023 on the Center's website](#).

CBC Announces "Favorites"

The Children's Book Council (CBC) has released its 2023 Children's Favorites, Young Adult Favorites, Teacher Favorites, and new this year, Librarian Favorites award lists. Every year young people from kindergarten through grade 12, teachers, and librarians across the country read newly-published books and vote for those they like best. Titles on the Favorites lists are selected from hundreds of works submitted by publishers and represent just that: favorite reads of children, young adults, and teachers/librarians. The lists and additional information about CBC Favorites are available on the [Children's Book Council website](#).

National Film Contest: How Youth Deal with Conflicting Ideas

As proven by the recent uptick in book banning, people often want to silence ideas that they feel are harmful or offensive. Daily, youth are confronted with views they disagree with, from school censorship to online hate speech. How are youth and young adults coping with conflicting viewpoints? The National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) wants to know and encourages filmmakers 19 and younger to participate in its Youth Free Expression Film Contest themed "Speaking with People Whose Ideas You Hate." The deadline for submissions is September 8, 2023.

NCAC encourages young artists to express themselves and share their stories through short 3-minute films that include animation, photographs, music, or other creative mediums. Film genres, such as documentaries, music videos, and narratives, among others, are welcome.

Winning entries will be judged based on relevant content, artistic and technical merit, and creativity. The top three filmmakers (individual or team) will receive a cash prize of \$1,000, \$500, or \$250. Additional contest information, tips on filmmaking at home, content ideas, and copyright tips are available at <https://ncac.org/project/film-contest>.

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