

# Everyday Advocacy Matters

January 2017, Vol. 4, no. 2

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## From the Editor

### Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes

You hardly need me to tell you this, but change is coming to the communities we serve through libraries on January 20—Inauguration Day in the United States.

Since November 9, my husband and I have been working through the uncertainty of what the new presidential administration means for everyone we care about, including the children and families at my library. Personally, I'm doing my utmost to channel the glorious David Bowie as I turn and face the strain of those ch-ch-changes.

As a Youth Services professional, I've asked myself, "What can I do? How can I best support kids and communities as they navigate the changes coming their way?" After countless hours of deep thinking and honest reflection, I've decided to do what I've always done: Be an Everyday Advocate who creates a better future for children through libraries.

That's not oversimplifying it. For me, that means embracing a willingness to be uncomfortable. It means listening to understand, tempering passion with reason, and opening doors wider to cultivate environments of welcome and belonging. Above all, it means those highly actionable Everyday Advocacy tenets: Be Informed, Engage with Your Community, Speak Out, Get Inspired, and Share Your Advocacy Story.

World-renowned autism spokesperson Temple Grandin has said, "I get satisfaction out of seeing stuff that makes real change in the real world. We need a lot more of that and a lot less abstract stuff." This issue of Everyday Advocacy Matters is filled with just the kind of stuff that can help you make real change happen for kids and families.

If you'll be in Atlanta for Midwinter, I hope our paths cross—I'd love to chat and learn more about how ALSC can help you take the next steps in your advocacy journey. If Atlanta isn't in your travel plans, share your story with me [via e-mail](#). Either way, I can't wait to hear from you!

[Jenna Nemec-Loise](#), Member Content Editor  
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## Everyday Advocacy Spotlight

### Taking Post-Election Action with Everyday Advocacy

by Sophie Kenney, [Vernon Area Public Library District](#)

Like so many others across our country, I was deeply affected by the results of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. As a person of color, it felt like a majority of the country was speaking out against me. It was an isolating feeling that left me sad, scared, and at a loss for what to do next. I wanted to overcome this feeling of powerlessness and knew I wanted to actively participate in positive change.

A few days later I saw a Facebook post from Jenna Nemec-Loise, Member Content Editor of the ALSC Everyday Advocacy website. She stated how an election judge at her polling place had noticed her “Creating a Better Future for Children Through Libraries” button and asked her about it. Jenna was able to start a dialogue with the election judge about the value and importance of youth services librarianship, and she was offering buttons to others interested in doing the same.

After hearing Jenna’s story, I was moved to action. If simply wearing a button can prompt a conversation about how libraries are creating a better future for children, then I wanted one. And I wanted all my colleagues to have one, too!

Our Youth Services department staff members have proudly worn their pins and collaborated on how we can further advocate for the important work we do. We have utilized the ALSC [Advocacy Button Tip Sheet](#) to develop elevator speeches highlighting the accessible and tangible outcomes of our efforts. We want our colleagues in other departments, administration, board members, and patrons to recognize the value in the services we provide to young people and their families. Wearing the pin also reminds us that our contributions matter and are worthy of being noted.

From incorporating messages into programming to using social media promotion, we are strengthening our relationships with the community both inside and outside of the library because advocacy happens every day and everywhere.

## **Everyday Advocacy 101: The Everyday Advocate--You**

If you’re new to Everyday Advocacy or just want a refresher, you’re in luck! Each issue of *Everyday Advocacy Matters* helps you dig into the initiative’s five tenets—Be Informed, Engage with Your Community, Speak Out, Get Inspired, and Share Your Advocacy Story—by directing you back to the great content on the [Everyday Advocacy website](#).

This issue invites you to reflect on your advocacy role both within the library community and beyond with this excerpt from the [Be Informed section](#):

Everyday Advocates understand the nuts and bolts of internal and external advocacy as well as ways to “seed the ground” so that advocacy is likely to bear fruit. Here are some things to know as you embrace your advocacy role both within your library community and beyond it:

**The Everyday Advocate mindset.** Instead of viewing “advocate” as yet another role you have to take on, consider it the part you were born to play. When you think of advocacy at stage center of everything you do as a children’s librarian, the hard part is over. Remember, it all starts with you and the things you’re already doing for the youth and families you serve!

**Your advocacy role within your organization.** Do you need the approval of supervisors to contact elected officials, Library Board members, Friends of the Library, or the press? In what situations can you speak on the library’s behalf?

**Legal or policy limitations on advocacy activities.** What are the legal limitations on the kind of “lobbying” or “campaigning” you can do on the job as opposed to as a private citizen? What are your organization’s internal policies regarding formal lobbying or electioneering?

**The value of creating allies throughout the staff.** Everyday advocates create a positive attitude towards service to children among coworkers on a daily basis. They communicate the goals of children's services as well as the details of upcoming activities and their anticipated impact. Everyday advocates explain why everyone is important in welcoming children and families to the library while welcoming input, assistance, and participation from their coworkers. And best of all, everyday advocates involve the entire staff in celebrating successes!

## **From the ALSC Advocacy Committees**

Check out these recent [ALSC blog](#) posts for the latest from Priority Group I:

### **Advocacy and Legislation Committee**

Africa S. Hands, Co-Chairperson

Kendra Lu Jones, Co-Chairperson

[Advocacy Through Stories: Your 3-Point Plan](#)

### **Early Childhood Programs and Services**

Brooke E. Newberry, Chairperson

[Storytime VIPs](#)

### **Intellectual Freedom**

Bruce Stewart Farrar, Co-Chairperson

Laura M. Jenkins, Co-Chairperson

[Representation: What Can Libraries Do?](#)

### **Library Service to Special Population Children and Their Caregivers**

Lesley Mason, Chairperson

[Making Your Marketing Work for Special Populations](#)

### **Public Awareness**

Christy Estrovitz, Chairperson

[Help Parents Navigate the Digital Technology Landscape](#)

### **School-Age Programs and Services**

Robbin Ellis Friedman, Chairperson

[Get Involved with Collaborative Summer Library Program](#)

## **News You Can Use**

### **Library Workers at the Atlanta March for Social Justice & Women #alamw17**

**Saturday, January 21**

**10:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

**Room: Georgia World Congress Center, Hall A3**

Will you be in Atlanta for the 2017 ALA Midwinter Meeting? Are you looking for a positive, meaningful opportunity to engage with other Everyday Advocates from across the country? Then

take up ALA's invitation to participate in a poster-making session immediately prior to the Atlanta March for Social Justice & Women on Saturday, January 21!

The Atlanta March for Social Justice & Women will be a peaceful demonstration of solidarity bringing together members of underrepresented communities, women, and their allies in Georgia and nationally. You do not have to be registered for Midwinter to attend the poster-making session. A limited amount of poster supplies from the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services will be available, so please consider bringing supplies (e.g. poster boards and markers) to share.

Maps of the March route and directions to the Center for Civil and Human Rights will be available at the poster-making session. **People who wish to travel together to the march are encouraged to gather at the poster-making session by 12:15 p.m.**

If you're interested in joining discussions and getting updates about library workers' participation in the march, please join the [Facebook group](#).

If you're interested in ongoing information from the organizers of the Atlanta March for Social Justice & Women, subscribe to the [newsletter](#) at or visit the [official march website](#).

## **ALA Town Hall: Library Advocacy and Core Values in Uncertain Times #alamw17**

**Sunday, January 22**

**9:30 AM - 11:00 AM**

**Room: Georgia World Congress Center, Thomas Murphy Ballroom 3-4**

If you'll be in Atlanta, you're invited to join the ALA Executive Board, ALA Council, and other Everyday Advocates on Sunday, January 22, for a town-hall style conversation immediately following the Council I meeting agenda. Many members have expressed their concerns about the effects of the recent U.S. presidential election on the positions and advocacy efforts of ALA, and this meeting is the perfect opportunity to make your voice heard.

Although it follows the first meeting of ALA's governing council, this is a separate forum intended for all interested conference attendees. Please join this professionally facilitated session to share your feedback, concerns, ideas, and aspirations for ALA. We want to hear from you!

## **Get Involved with National Library Legislative Day 2017**

From May 1-2, 2017, Everyday Advocates from around the country will gather in Washington, DC, to talk libraries and library-related issues with national legislators. The good news? There's more than one way to get in on this high-impact, high-energy event that makes a difference for youth and families!

**Join us in Washington, D.C.** Registration for this year's event is now open! Ask your supervisor, library administrator, or principal about attending [National Library Legislative Day](#) (NLLD) in person. Make your case to be there by stating how federal legislation needs your support through the stories you can tell about your school or public library and the community you serve.

**Take part virtually.** Can't make the trip to Washington, D.C.? You can still be a part of the action! [Virtual Library Legislative Day](#) takes place from May 1-5, 2017, and we'll provide you with all

the details you need to participate from your library or home. Watch for more resources coming your way this spring.

## Get Inspired!

### Take the Winter 2017 Everyday Advocacy Challenge!

Looking for a great way to activate your inner Everyday Advocate and motivate your colleagues to do the same? Then make a bold start to 2017 by volunteering to be a part of our next Everyday Advocacy Challenge (EAC) cohort!

We're looking for participants to take our 4-week Winter 2017 challenge from January 10-31. You'll complete four consecutive Take Action Tuesday challenges, collaborate with your EAC cohort, and contribute a brief reflection for the April 2017 issue of *Everyday Advocacy Matters*.

Interested? Check out the [Take the 2017 EA Challenge!](#) page for all the details.

### Everyday Advocacy Column: "30 Ways in 30 Days"

Did you know there's a regular Everyday Advocacy column in the *Children and Libraries* journal? ALSC member Stacey Hendren sure does! After reading the Fall 2016 column ("30 Ways in 30 Days"), Stacey sent this message to let us know how she's been inspired to take the next steps in her advocacy journey:

"I just finished reading '30 Ways in 30 Days.' Number 28 says supplies are limited, so I would like to request a Creating a Better Future Button!

I really appreciate this article! There are items on the list that scare me a little, but those scary items are balanced with things that are simple. I also like that I just have to do one thing a day—I have a tendency to want to do/learn everything right now.

While I have read several of the Everyday Advocacy articles and visited the website, I see this article being an impetus for me taking action. I am going to make a photocopy and post it on my wall to check things off. Thank you for helping me take the next steps with ease."

### Send Us Your Advocacy Questions and Feedback

As the Everyday Advocacy initiative enters its fourth year, we want to hear from ALSC members about how we can make our resources even better. What are your advocacy questions? What would you like to know more about as you take the next steps on your advocacy journey?

[E-mail us](#) with your questions and feedback about what might help you hone your skill set. We'll do our best to meet your needs through expanded and revised website content.

Helping us take the next steps in building great member resources is Everyday Advocacy in action!

## Calendar

[ALA 2017 Midwinter Meeting](#)

January 20-24

ALA Youth Media Awards  
January 23

Teen Tech Week  
March 5-11

Freedom of Information Day  
March 16

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<http://www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy/>