Building Bridges and Opening Gateways at the 2017 Annual Conference

BY DANA FARABAUGH

Pittsburgh welcomed library professionals to the 2017 Pennsylvania Library Association Annual Conference in October. Drawing inspiration from the many bridges that cross Pittsburgh’s three rivers, the theme “PA Libraries: Bridge to the Past, Gateway to the Future” encouraged attendees and speakers to explore ways to honor library traditions while looking toward what’s next.

Paul Wesselmann, a motivational speaker known as “The Ripples Guy,” kicked off the conference with his keynote speech about how small actions could improve our conference experience, our work lives, and the world.

Monday featured a panel on the opioid epidemic sponsored by PA Forward’s Health Literacy Team. Our PA Forward partners and friends from the PA Department of Human Services and the Center for Rural Pennsylvania joined our librarians to discuss the wide-reaching problem, its impact on libraries, and the role libraries play in providing resources and assistance to community members affected by opioid abuse. Many other conference sessions focused on inclusivity, ethics, and patron-centered service.

The Exhibit Hall also opened Monday afternoon, giving attendees a chance to connect with vendors and see what’s new and exciting in library products.

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Pennsylvania Library Association
Greetings! This is my last column as president of the Pennsylvania Library Association. Next year, Tina Hertel will take up the reins. I wish her and the new slate of officers much success. Serving as president has been a wonderful experience, although it has not always been what I thought it would be. Most of my association work has been behind the scenes and has mirrored my work life — revising bylaws, helping with a community engagement campaign, and striving for sustainable funding. Thanks to our virtual connection, I have attended more committee meetings than I would have thought possible. I can attest that there are a lot of volunteers in our association working hard, alongside our dedicated headquarters staff, to advance libraries and library workers in Pennsylvania.

My May road trips to visit the chapter and College and Research Division workshops and meet many of you for the first time were highlights matched only by having the chance to greet Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden at the Darby Free Library in September. I also celebrate the efforts of PA Forward, the Membership Committee, and all the other units that have strengthened the association and what it stands for, and I was also happy to attend a wonderful conference in the Pittsburgh area and have yet another opportunity to meet and chat with our members.

I was hesitant at first to run for president, and the first time I did, I lost the election. Even though I had been active in Pennsylvania Library Association since the early 90s, I was not sure I wanted the responsibilities that went with the office. I am glad I ran. I have had so many wonderful experiences, and it has stretched me both personally and professionally. So, when someone asks you to step up and chair a committee or run for office, my advice is to say, “Yes.” You will be glad you did, and it will give you experiences and tools that will directly benefit you in your paying job as well as friends to celebrate your successes and console you through hard times.

There are challenges ahead for libraries and the association, but to be honest, I don’t remember a time when that wasn’t true. We still have “miles to go before we sleep,” but the journey is worth it.

Thank you for your support and for the great memories.

Carrie Turner is the 2017 president of the Pennsylvania Library Association. She is currently reading The Girl Who Takes an Eye for an Eye by David Lagercrantz.
You may know that I spent more than a year in Japan working for a youth educational exchange program as the 4-H intern. During that time, I frequently had to ask the question, “What does that mean?” Since I was clearly learning the language, it was no surprise that I didn’t know all the vocabulary. However, it was surprising to me to discover a TV game show where contestants competed to guess the meaning of a short phrase in Japanese, their native language! No, it wasn’t because they were using archaic or scholarly words; the challenge came from the regional dialects and expressions.

The impact of that game show has stuck with me. Regardless of using the same language — slang, regional expressions, and yes, acronyms — communication can still be complicated. In fact, studies have concluded that as little as seven percent of our communication is based on the actual words we use. Most of our communication is conveyed through body language and tone.

I wanted to share these thoughts with you because we sometimes use email, thinking that it is the most efficient method of communication and that our words will be clear enough. Despite the speed and widespread nature of email, I still believe that phone calls and in-person conversations are the best method for ensuring clear communications. Although, even in those instances, miscommunication can occur. But in those moments, you can quickly recover or rectify those instances.

Think about the numerous in-person conversations you had with colleagues and exhibitors as well as presenters during the recent 2017 Annual Conference in Pittsburgh. If you don’t know the meaning of “neby” then you might have missed Rick Sebak, the closing speaker, when he explained the regional variation of a nosy neighbor! How much did you pick up from being physically present rather than trying to infer tone or body language over email?

The Annual Conference theme “Bridge to the Past, Gateway to the Future” was cleverly highlighted by Paul Wesselmann, “The Ripples Guy,” our opening keynote speaker. He repeated this thought in his email newsletter after speaking to us:

“Libraries are SCHOOLS, of course, but they are really temples of knowledge and wisdom, and librarians remain indispensable to our society as educators, technologists, guides, and perhaps most importantly as curators of information and culture that allow us to understand each other, and the world, and ourselves.”

So, as we consider our role in helping to answer the question “What does that mean?” I hope that you will use all your communication tools — emails, phone calls, and in-person conversations — to further your learning and engagement with one another. Our goal is to have clear communications that connect us as colleagues, mentors/mentees, professionals, and members of the community.

Christi Buker is the executive director of the Pennsylvania Library Association. She recently completed How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child by Sandra Uwiringiyimana with Abigail Pesta.
BUILDING BRIDGES AND OPENING GATEWAYS

Continued from page 1

Conference attendees also had many opportunities to explore Pittsburgh during the conference. Attendees enjoyed visits to the Oakland and Strip District neighborhoods, tours of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s main branch and the library and archives at the Heinz History Center, and a ride on one of Pittsburgh’s iconic inclines.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the conference planning committee who spent many, many hours working to make this conference a success. Their insight, dedication, and passion made my job very easy, and fun! I am eternally grateful to Kim, Christi, Brandi, and Cindy at the Pennsylvania Library Association headquarters for all of their help.

The Annual Conference is a success because of the willingness of library workers across the commonwealth to volunteer their time and expertise. Many thanks to all of the speakers, moderators, and volunteers.

Dana Farabaugh is the district consultant for the Westmoreland District and served as the 2017 conference chair. She is currently reading Difficult Women by Roxane Gay.
Looking for Program Ideas?
Check out the PA Forward Commons!

BY SHERRI MILLER

Few industries embrace information sharing quite like libraries do, and the value of this type of collaborative work is highlighted with the PA Forward Commons. The PA Forward Commons is an engaging platform for best practices contributed by libraries across the state. This database is a resource for identifying literacy programs, services, and resources offered by public, academic, school, and special libraries to build PA Forward literacy skills in the communities they serve.

The submissions of programs and services that make up the content of the PA Forward Commons are intended to give insight into the planning and community outreach that others have done to create programs that support PA Forward’s five literacies – Basic, Information, Civic & Social, Health and Financial.

Remember, the more details you include about program planning in your submissions, the more you help others to plan and replicate success. The Pennsylvania Library Association also uses these stories to help elected officials, community leaders, organizational partners, and the public understand the vital role of libraries across the state in a quantifiable, actively-used way.

And did you know that when you submit a program to the Commons, you have already completed one of five core actions for becoming a PA Forward Star Library? For more information about how your library can become a Star Library, visit www.pafowardstarlibraries.org.

By using the PA Forward branding on the programs and services you already offer, you are showing your stakeholders that your library is part of a larger statewide initiative that is powering progress and elevating the quality of life in Pennsylvania. There is influence and credibility in numbers and a shared voice.

Thank you for sharing with us!

Be sure to browse the Commons and see what ideas you may want to consider implementing at your local library or feel free to share a program idea with us! Visit http://www.palibraries.org/members/group_content_view.asp?group=117296&id=670180.

Sherri Miller is a cataloging librarian with Cumberland County Library System. She is also a 2015 PA Library Association Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS) graduate and was part of the group that focused on how to best market the PA Forward Commons. She continues to be involved with oversight of the database. For more information about PALS, visit http://www.palibraries.org/?page=PALS

She’s currently reading The Man with the Golden Torc by Simon R. Green.
When PA Forward launched statewide in 2012, it began with a premise that libraries are ideally positioned to become community centers of information technology, educational and economic opportunities. And in revering them as such, the citizens who visit them are encouraged and empowered to become their best selves. Everyone saw that when our libraries have the tools to work at their maximum potential, they maximize the potential of their patrons and those patrons maximize the potential of their communities. Those communities collectively maximize Pennsylvania’s potential.

Five years have passed since that initial kick-off (I attended the kick off as a representative from one of our PA Forward partner agencies. Funny how things come full circle). And here we are in 2017, connecting more libraries in the work of PA Forward. Not only are libraries seeing the value that the initiative brings but non-library organizations in the work of PA Forward. Not only are libraries seeing the value that the initiative brings but non-library organizations have also begun to see the value our libraries offer. PA Forward has grown its partnerships to more than 35 commercial, nonprofit and state government organizations and there are several more who have expressed interest in becoming a part of the program.

Earlier this year, we took another huge step with PA Forward – launching the Star Library Program statewide. The Star Library recognition offers support to libraries who participate and incorporate PA Forward’s five literacies – Basic, Information, Civic and Social, Health and Financial – in their programming activities. Those libraries are recognized for meeting benchmarks within the bronze, silver and gold star levels of the program. To date, we have awarded nearly 300 stars to libraries throughout the state! (We also recently recognized a bookmobile as a part of the program!)

This year alone, we have led more than 15 trainings resulting in over 400 individuals receiving one of PA Forward’s many trainings in every region of the state. Trainings ranged from a foundational overview of PA Forward to demonstrating how a library can gain their Star Library status.

All of this has been accomplished by a staff of four at the PA Library Association, of which one is dedicated full-time to this effort. We must also recognize our full volunteer structure which comprises the PA Forward Steering Committee, the five literacy teams and multiple sub-committees.

While PA Forward continues to train and develop librarians and library staffs, building institutional capacity, we have heard you when you’ve asked about doing more to educate the public or providing more support to the libraries to implement the program.

A majority of PA Forward’s funding comes through a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant. As many are aware, those funds support librarians and librarianship. Thus, we’re able to provide you with tools and mechanisms to work with your patrons and the communities you serve from the library level. However, we cannot conduct that direct public outreach for you. As donations and sponsorships continue to be received, we can explore opportunities to provide that level of support. With your assistance, we can increase PA Forward’s ability to further extend your reach.

But we need you. For each of the libraries currently involved in PA Forward and the Star Library Program, we ask that you talk with a fellow library who may not be involved just yet. Demonstrate to that library the value you find in the program. Maybe spark the discussion for the change to get them involved. For libraries that want more from this program, help us. Let us know what we can do. Help us identify sustainable funds that will allow us to address the need.

Yes, we very clearly see libraries at the forefront - now more than ever - in providing life-changing programs, access to the global world and safe spaces which celebrate diverse and inclusive thought. PA Forward will continue to help you tell this story. We haven’t peaked yet. There is still more work to do. We need you to be make PA Forward even more of a success.

Thank you for all you do for Pennsylvania’s libraries.
On Sept. 18, 2017, the Reading Public Library hosted an interactive panel discussion on the opioid epidemic. In a room filled with more than 40 people, state officials, advocates, emergency management personnel, and librarians talked about how this epidemic has touched their daily lives and informed their efforts. Below is a brief synopsis of the 90-minute panel. Speakers included Dr. Rachel Levine, acting secretary of health and state physician general; Tom Kemery, a registered nurse and emergency medical technician (EMT) with the city of Reading; Wendy Loranzo, an advocate for families who find themselves in the grip of opioid addiction; and Nathaniel Thomas, Reading Public Library’s head of reference.

Dr. Levine opened the discussion by addressing how the opioid crisis began in the 1990s when federal and state regulations governing the prescription of such drugs for pain management were relaxed. She then discussed instances where patients who had been using prescribed medications such as morphine began seeking that same high elsewhere once the prescriptions expired. Pennsylvania has access to relatively cheap heroin and fentanyl, the latter drug exponentially more potent than morphine itself. The confluence of these factors led to the perfect storm of what has become a true health and social epidemic.

Dr. Levine also spoke about the various initiatives underway at the state level. She specifically noted the newly created Centers of Excellence and their efforts to ensure that people with opioid-related substance issues can stay in treatment and receive follow-up care and support in their communities.

Kemery spoke about what he and his emergency medical personnel colleagues see with opioid overdoses, responding to as many as six overdoses a day. He has seen a marked spike in calls to answer opioid overdoses in the city of Reading, adding that when he began his career as an EMT, the most frequent calls were for motor vehicle accidents followed by heart attacks and allied conditions. Opioid overdoses have taken over as the number one emergency response. Kemery also spoke about the vital role of the drug naloxone, which is pivotal in reviving persons experiencing overdose symptoms; severe overdose situations can require as many as four doses to revive them.

Wendy Loranzo lost her only child, Elizabeth, to a fatal overdose in March of this year. Elizabeth, who had undergone rehabilitation treatment for heroin in 2015, appeared to be in a place removed from addiction. She was developing a clientele for her work as a hair stylist and had a fiancée and an infant son. Since her daughter’s death, Loranzo has become an advocate, hoping that by sharing her story that she can help to remove the stigma of addiction and that Elizabeth’s struggle helps other families and potentially saves someone’s life.

Nathaniel Thomas stated that his library is no stranger to seeing opioid overdoses. Over the past two years, no fewer than five overdose situations unfolded at the Reading Public Library with one resulting in a fatality. Thomas shared that the Opioid Crisis Panel discussion represented his library’s response to this tragedy, making the argument that the library is an agent for positive change. In its role as a resource center, a community gathering space, and a nexus for information sharing, the Reading Public Library is an affective, counter-epidemic presence in its community. Thomas shared the pride he and his colleagues feel in the work they do in the library.

Reading Public Library is already looking to host future community conversations at some of its branch locations.

Nathaniel A. Thomas is the head of reference at Reading Public Library. He is currently reading Thunderstruck by Erik Larson. For more information about PALS, visit http://www.palibraries.org/?page=PALS.
Boarding a plane to leave my son for four nights for the first time wasn’t as nerve wracking as some first-time parents might predict. I was headed to Atlanta to join a group of 49 other emerging leaders in the library field; how could I not be excited?

My current position at Ephrata Area School District is electives supervisor and high school librarian which allows for a lot of daily flexibility. As a supervisor, I am able to take part in many decisions regarding the library department district-wide and be involved in many district-level projects and initiatives such as library renovation, Life Ready Graduate templates, and more. As a librarian in the high school, I get a chance to work with students on anything from science fair projects to individual research and recommendations for personal reading. Along my library journey, I’ve also had the good fortune of working part-time at the Ephrata Public Library as a circulation assistant. Needless to say, my role in the library is unique, and I was excited to be able to meet, connect, and learn from others in unique library roles from across the country.

As any librarian knows, funding is hard to come by, especially for extra budget items such as travel or conference fees. I was fortunate enough to be sponsored by the Pennsylvania Library Association and to be named an American Library Association Emerging Leader, class of 2017. In Atlanta at the ALA Midwinter Conference, I was grouped with school librarians from across the country to conduct research on the ALA/AASL sponsored workshops on ESSA (the Every Student Succeeds Act) and its effects within schools. Although the day-long workshop spent with other emerging leaders and school librarians was wonderful, the conference was overwhelming for a first-time attendee.

Throughout the spring, the school librarian group I was a part of contacted librarians from every state to discuss their state’s opinion on ESSA workshops and to learn more about the condition of school libraries in their state. Despite a lot of hard work and dedicated group members, the amount of information gathered wasn’t representative of the entire nation.

My group continued to work hard compiling what information we did have to create a poster for the ALA Annual Conference in June in Chicago. Again, the group of 50 emerging leaders gathered for a full-day workshop that culminated with a poster session and all groups sharing the project they worked on all spring.

This months-long project that spanned states and school librarians in various roles as well as members from AASL and ALA reinforced my ability to remain determined through pitfalls, but it also gave me a great opportunity to network with other school librarians and librarians outside of schools by attending a national conference. Many of the connections I made at those conferences have remained important as the next school year began.

And those first-time parents jitters? Don’t worry. I was fine in Atlanta (and so was my son while I was gone), but he did join me in Chicago in June.

Samantha Hull is a 2017 participant and a librarian at Ephrata High School.

ALA Emerging Leader Reflections
BY SAMANTHA HULL
Each year the Pennsylvania Library Association asks its members to consider colleagues across the commonwealth, who have contributed significantly to Pennsylvania libraries, for nomination in one of five categories of awards the Association presents. This year it was my honor to serve as chair of the Awards Committee. Librarians who agreed to help me with this daunting task were Martina Soden, Scranton Public Library; Holly Bennett, Memorial Library of Nazareth & Vicinity; Cheri Crow, Quarryville Library; Chris Snyder, Bucks County Free Library; and David Schappert, Marywood University. Association President Carrie Turner and Executive Director Christi Buker served as advisors.

The committee met in August and selected the following worthy recipients, who were honored at the conference in Pittsburgh:

- **Trustee of the Year**: David S. Keller, Franklin County Library System
- **New Librarian Honors Award**: Sarah Fetzer, Free Library of Northampton Township
- **Elected Official of the Year**: Christopher D. Polites, Easttown Township
- **Certificate of Merit**: Jeanie Sluck, Taylor Community Library
- **Distinguished Service Award**: Ivy Bayard, Temple University (retired)

The Elected Official Award will be presented at a post-conference event in Easttown Township.

We congratulate the award winners and celebrate all the wonderful work going on in Pennsylvania libraries every day. I’d like to thank the committee members for their service and for their commitment to the Pennsylvania Library Association.

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Janis Stubbs is the assistant director/district consultant at Delaware County Libraries.
You’ve Reached PA Forward Gold Star Status. What’s Next?

BY ALICE PAKHTIGIAN & DEANNE O’BRIEN

In 2015, the PA Forward Star Library Program was developed and piloted. Since then, this program has gone statewide with libraries throughout Pennsylvania working toward their Bronze, Silver and Gold Star statuses. With excitement about the program building, the PA Forward Training Team thought it was time to give consideration to the next steps of the program – the recertification process.

Through the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS), our team has been assigned to determine what happens after your library reaches Gold Star Status. To begin that process, we recently surveyed all the Star Libraries to get a sense of where they are and to get their thoughts on what they would like to see in a recertification phase of the program. We will share a summary of our findings in an upcoming Bulletin article. Over the course of the year, we will review the Star Library Program and develop the recertification process. We will consider items such as what action steps to include, what the star level looks like once a library has gone beyond the gold, and how long the obtained status will be valid. Working closely with the PA Forward Training Team, our hope is to develop the next generation of the program. Our PALS group feels that our efforts will further the Star Library Program, strengthening libraries throughout Pennsylvania and continuing to spotlight the vibrancy that is PA Forward.

By way of introduction, here are our committee members:

Sarah Fetzer is a reference Librarian at the Free Library of Northampton Township in Richboro, PA. She received her Masters of Library Science from Indiana University in 2011. Her hobbies are reading, knitting and hiking.

Jackie Laick is the systems librarian at Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, PA. She is very excited to be a member of this group as it is an initiative that wants everyone in Pennsylvania to succeed. When she is not hanging out in her favorite library, she can be found reading outside in the sunshine with her English Bulldog, Daisy.

DeAnne O’Brien is a reference librarian at Upper Dublin Public Library in Fort Washington, PA and library assistant at William Jeanes Memorial Library in Lafayette Hill, PA. She enjoys singing acapella barbershop music with The Liberty Bells Chorus, reading, movies and listening to podcasts.

Alice Pakhtigian is the reference librarian at Harcum College in Bryn Mawr, PA. Some of her hobbies include reading, traveling, gardening and exercising. She is very excited be a part of the PA Forward Star Library Recertification Program.

Maggie Savidakis-Dunn is the STEM librarian at Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA. Her interest areas are data management and security, student research programs, library outreach, microbiology, and forensic science. In her free time, Maggie enjoys animal rescue, cooking, baking, and gardening.

Our team’s mentor is Paula Gilbert, the director of youth services for York County Libraries, a past PaLA President, Vice-Chair of the PA Forward Steering Committee and Training Team Chair.

Once our plan is developed, we will present our work to PaLA and the PA Forward leadership for review and finalizing.

Note, the Gold Star Status covers a period of three years. Gold star libraries will not have to begin working through the recertification process until 2020. If anyone has any questions about our project work, feel free to contact the team at pa.star.recertification@gmail.com.

Alice Pakhtigian is a reference librarian at Harcum College, and she is currently reading The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg.

DeAnne O’Brien is a reference librarian at Upper Dublin Public Library and a library assistant at William Jeanes Memorial Library. She is currently reading American Gods by Neil Gaiman.
I was honored to serve as the chair of the Pennsylvania Library Association Scholarship Committee for 2017, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank committee members Heather Welleski, children and youth services coordinator at the Community Library of Castle Shannon, and Catherine (Katie) Greenleaf Martin, county coordinator of the Blair County Library System. They dedicated a significant portion of their time and expertise to help evaluate and select the awardees for this year’s grants and scholarships.

At the beginning of the year, two continuing education grants were awarded to the following applicants who attended the 2017 Evergreen International Conference in Covington, Kentucky:

« Elizabeth Davis, head of digital services, Scranton Public Library

« Sylvia Orner, head of technical Services, Scranton Public Library

In May, the committee reviewed eight extremely competitive and admirable applications for the MLS Scholarship. The following awardees were selected for their dedication to the profession, motivation, civic activity, and compelling letters of support:

« Gwendolyn Gatto, library assistant, Belmont Hills Library

« Tess Wilson, civic information services intern, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

« Abigail Shelton, assistant to the librarian, American Philosophical Society

Most recently, the committee evaluated 12 applicants who demonstrated strong dedication to the field of youth services for the Boyds Mill Youth Services Conference Grant. We feel confident that the following awardees will benefit significantly from their first time at the PaLA Annual Conference this fall:

« Amanda Noblit, children’s programming coordinator, Public Library for Union County

« Stephanie Bragg, children’s librarian, Paoli Library

« Chris Taylor, youth services coordinator, Scott Township Public Library

Marguerite Dube is the director of the Chester County Library & District Center. She is currently reading The Heirs by Susan Rieger.

“Have you read any good books lately?” That’s a question we’ve all been asked many times, and my answer would be a resounding, “YES!”

I’ve read over 40 books lately, all written or illustrated by Pennsylvanians. It has been an honor and a pleasure to first serve as a Carolyn W. Field Award committee member in 2016 and then as the committee chairperson for the 2017 award year. Being a part of this committee has given me an opportunity to read a variety of both children and young adult books during each award period.

This award was first established in 1983 by the Youth Services Division (YSD) of the Pennsylvania Library Association to recognize the best book for young people by a Pennsylvania author or illustrator in a given year. The award is named after Carolyn W. Field, who worked over 30 years at the Free Library of Philadelphia as the coordinator of work with children.

You might be wondering, what are the ins and outs of this committee and how do I get involved with this fabulous opportunity? A call for committee volunteers will be sent out to PaLA YSD members in the spring, and the chairperson will then choose four committee members. Next, publishers will be contacted and the books will roll in directly to the committee members. It’s always exciting to receive a new box of books, right? The committee members will then spend a few months reading all of the selections and evaluating the books based on established criteria and eligibility requirements. The books can be fiction or non-fiction and must be geared towards children preschool through age 16. We had a wide variety of submissions this year ranging from picture books to graphic novels to juvenile fiction and non-fiction. We had it all! Committee members will then narrow the list down to their top five choices, and that final list will go out to YSD members to read and cast their vote.

Serving on the Carolyn W. Field Award committee has been an awesome experience that I would highly recommend to any YSD member.

Annemarie Lamperski is the head of Youth Services at Cranberry Public Library. She is currently reading Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys.
Are you new to the profession and seeking advice on how to get started? Are you a veteran librarian with advice to share? We have a program for you!

Piloted in 2017 by a 2016 PALS group, the Pennsylvania Library Association Membership and Mentor Program is being expanded in 2018. The program pairs experienced librarians with those new to the profession. The purpose is to foster the exchange of ideas between the two librarians and to help new librarians get started. The mentor and mentee decide how best to communicate with each other.

We are currently seeking mentors who have at least five years of professional experience in libraries as well as mentees who are new to the field, whether they are in a new position or new master’s degree graduates. Returning mentors from the 2017 pilot program are welcome to participate again.

All registrations for mentors and mentees are due by Friday, December 1, 2017. The program will begin in January 2018. Please note that membership in the Pennsylvania Library Association is required to participate.

For more information, visit the work group page at https://www.palibraries.org/members/group.aspx?id=199413.

Rebecca Calfe is the assistant career librarian at Penn State University.

Nick Cerroni is the technical services librarian at Community Library of the Shenango Valley. He is currently reading Winter Tide by Ruthanna Emrys.

Shannon Connor is the manager of youth services at Haverford Township Free Library. She is currently reading Running Away by Andrew Powell.

Ann Duffy is the youth services librarian at Warminster Township Free Library. She is currently reading Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen.

John Nelka is the director of the Sinking Spring Public Library. He is currently reading Hillbilly Elegy by J.D. Vance.
The cost of textbooks has become not only a major barrier to affording a college degree, but also a threat to academic success. The 2016-2017 average estimated undergraduate budget for books and supplies is $1200 (College Board).

Libraries want to help, but purchasing one or multiple copies of books for courses across campus in addition to having a well-rounded collection is often not financially feasible. Universities can help students and libraries save money by adopting open educational resources (OERs), and Nicole Allen, the director of open education for the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), explained how OERs can help during this year’s College and Research Division (CRD) luncheon at the PaLA Annual Conference.

In the introduction of her CRD luncheon presentation entitled “Open Educational Resources: Reducing Costs, Expanding Access, Improving Quality at Institutions of All Sizes,” Allen described this issue surrounding the cost of college textbooks and cited the following statistics:

- **2 in 3 students** say they decided against buying a textbook because the cost is too high. (Public Interest Research Groups)
- **1 in 2 students** said that they have taken fewer classes because of the cost of textbooks. (Florida Virtual Campus)
- **Less than 1 in 2 students** purchase a current edition of their textbook. (Book Industry Study Group)

Considering this cost, it is no wonder Allen said buying textbooks is one of the last things students do after paying for a course, but students are already invested in taking the course and need to figure out a way to pay for the books. In some cases, students resort to putting books on credit cards or waiting, borrowing, or just not purchasing the books. Students cannot learn from books they cannot afford. While textbook cost may not be the largest college expense, it can be the “straw that broke the camel’s back.” Allen noted some universities are utilizing “inclusive access” where faculty opt in and students are automatically billed for books that they select for courses; unfortunately prices can rise out of control. According to Allen, we can do better for students. Part of doing better is adopting OERs.

Allen shared the Hewlett definition of OERs: “OER are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others.” What she wanted attendees to take away from this description is “OERs are educational materials that can be freely downloaded, edited, and shared to better serve all students.” SPARC refers to a truly open resource.
as having the “5 Rs” – retain, reuse, revise, remix and redistribute. OERs often have a Creative Commons (CC) license, and the most openCC license allows for the 5 Rs.

Next, Allen gave a tour of the OER space starting with MIT OpenCourseWare. Starting in the early 2000s and becoming one of the leaders of the open movement, MIT OpenCourseWare contains material from thousands of MIT courses covering the entire MIT curriculum and used by millions of learners and educators around the world. Another well know provider demonstrated by Allen is OER Commons, a curated digital library of educational resources. Tide-water Community College was another example she mentioned that offers the Z Degree which is a textbook-free degree relying on quality OER for its students. Eliminating textbooks has reduced the cost of the degree by 20%.

Dealing more specifically with textbooks, Allen shared with the audience Openstax.org. This company provides open textbooks that generally cost a fraction of what is being paid for books from traditional publishers. Openstax sustains its business model by partnering with for-profit companies that provide sophisticated, optional online homework at a low cost. Some traditional publishers like Cengage are marketing open initiatives. SPARC hopes that these publishers continue to uphold the values of open culture.

On a larger scale, Allen said state higher educational systems are moving toward open solutions. Open-NYS.org promotes the adoption of OER in high-enrollment, general education courses at SUNY and CUNY institutions. Open-NYS.org works closely with administrators, faculty, and students to ease the integration of course material. Allen also shared a slide that indicated what states have open policies enacted and those that have introduced open policies. She noted that the Pennsylvania House introduced a bill in the spring of this year but has not made any moves. Deputy Secretary/Commissioner for Libraries/State Librarian Glenn Miller mentioned during the question and answer portion of the program that Pennsylvania is moving toward open legislation. On the federal level, The Affordable College Textbook Act was introduced on September 26th, 2017 but in didn’t leave Congress.

Leslie is the user services librarian at Marywood University. She is currently reading Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro.
The Huntingdon County Library began a new venture hosting Pop Up! Library at the Raystown Lake Visitor’s Center on August 12th to bring services traditionally hosted at the Library out into the community.

Pop Up! Library featured activities that brought the experience of visiting the library to the lake, and a dinosaur theme added fun for both children and adults. The event featured STEM activities like building marshmallow dinosaurs, a kid-friendly flying paper dinosaur craft, and iPads loaded with educational apps, interactive augmented reality books, and a Makey Makey set up to play various games allowing people of all ages to experience maker technology.

“Everyone had a great time,” said outreach coordinator Kahlena Harris. “It was great to see children and parents getting to experience maker and STEM activities together in a fun, new way while they learned together.”

Pop Up! Library was started as a way to continue the library’s mission to serve all county residents by offering a variety of services that can take place anywhere in the county, bringing the library wherever patrons may be. Located in south central Pennsylvania, Huntingdon is a large rural county with no formal public transportation making trips to the library hard for most residents. This new outreach service keeps things portable and simple by bringing a crate or two of books, a bin of STEM activities, and several iPad Minis — all the ingredients for a small library on the go.

“Community engagement is so important in what we do as a library, and part of that is meeting the community where they are,” said Tracy Carey, library executive director. “The Pop Up! Library allows services and programs to be delivered throughout the county in a new and innovative way.”

Claire Williams is the marketing coordinator at Huntingdon County Library. Claire is currently reading The Scorpio Races by Maggie Stiefvater.
On June 13, the Southeast Chapter of the Pennsylvania Library Association (SEPLA) sponsored a workshop on frontline marketing. Duncan Smith, founder and general Manager of the Novelist Division of EBSCO presented.

Smith told the audience that frontline staff are crucial to the successful marketing of library collections, programs, and services. Readers’ advisory (RA) is an important method for engaging library users in conversation, but RA is more than just putting books into readers’ hands.

Listen to the Retelling of the Story

When readers visit libraries, they bring three great hopes with them: 1). that one of their favorite authors has written a new book, 2). that the library has purchased this book, and 3). that the book is available. This is a known-item search, and if this search fails, readers go blank. They might browse shelves, but if nothing jumps out at them, this is when they will turn to staff for RA help.

But asking a reader, “What do you like to read?” isn’t the best way to approach RA. According to Smith, research shows that when readers reads books, they don’t think about what they’re reading in an analytical way. They experience the book, and it becomes part of them.

That’s why asking readers to analyze their reading preferences is difficult. Most readers have four or five favorite authors, and the readers read for the story. To provide RA, we have to help them recover the story. Don’t ask, “Do you like science fiction?” Instead, use open-ended questions and say, “Tell me about a book you read and enjoyed.” Then listen closely.

During this process of telling you about the book, readers return to the story, and this experience changes how they feel about their visit to the library. The conversation you’ve just had with the readers is invaluable, because even if the readers leave without a book, you have provided them with the opportunity to talk about a book that mattered to them. Readers want to have their reading experiences listened to and celebrated, and they want a connection with the library and library staff.

Discovery. Discernment. Delivery.

Librarians are good at delivering books, but should also pay attention to two other “Ds” in the reading landscape – discovery and discernment. Help readers discover books with displays and signage. Include signs such as, “Looking for your next read? Ask a staff person for help.” Aid readers in the discernment stage, and help them answer the question, “Will I like this book?” by using shelf-talkers and staff picks displays.

Different Types of Readers/ Different Types of Staff

According to Smith, readers fall into one of four categories: high-touch readers with lots of time, high-touch readers with no time, low touch readers with lots of time, and low touch readers with no time.

Library staff also can be grouped into four categories: high book knowledge comfortable with RA, high book knowledge uncomfortable with RA, low book knowledge comfortable with RA, and low book knowledge uncomfortable with RA.

Smith advises providing staff with different types of tools tied to their...
RA comfort level so that they can help readers. A library’s RA toolkit should include tools to enhance staff knowledge and help them share knowledge. Libraries should also provide staff with tools they can use to create lists and ready-to-use handouts.

The goal for a library in RA is to establish a solid referral culture no matter the type of reader, no matter the RA comfort level of staff. Put in place procedures to get the reader to the book, whether it’s one-to-one interaction, a handout, a book display, or the library catalog.

Everyone involved should remember that every interaction with a user is an opportunity to communicate what the library does. Users who experience the human connection at the library are more apt to support the library.

Panel Discussion

The workshop ended with a panel discussion on real-life library frontline marketing. Panel members included Christina Snyder, district consultant of Bucks County Library System (BCLS), and Carrie Turner, president and CEO of Cheltenham Township Library System (CTLS).

Snyder discussed how BCLS supports staff in frontline marketing for online resources using a two-month cycle of training and promoting. During the first month, staff engage in an online scavenger hunt that helps them to learn about the various aspects of a resource and exposes them to questions/problems users may have when using the resource. During the second month, libraries place a two-sided flyer at circulation desks promoting the resources. The front of the flyer, facing users, is designed to catch users’ attention so that they’ll ask about the resource. The back of the flyer, facing staff, contains points and scripted questions staff can use to spark a conversation with users about the resource.

Turner stated that everyone at the library is frontline staff and should have knowledge of what the library offers. She discussed “Screen Savers,” a recent campaign of CTLS to raise funds to replace aging computers. Turner described how staff across the system were involved in creating the campaign, including designing publicity materials and promoting it. The campaign was successful, and CTLS is now looking to repeat the success with another campaign that draws on the strength of staff in frontline marketing.

Regina Fried is a marketing and public relations specialist for Bucks County Library System.
Welcome New Members!

PERSONAL MEMBERS
Heather Auman Western
Allegheny Community Library
Jeanne Ball
Greenville Area Public Library
Gwendolyn Barrows
Strasburg-Heisler Library
Eileen Beveridge
Carnegie Free Library-Connellsville
Lee Boyd
Malinda Brown
Sewickley Twp. Public Library
Emily Bryan-Reeder
Green Tree Public Library
Rosa Cella
Barb Connell
Bethel Park Public Library
Danielle Davis
York County Library System
Mary Dawson
Darren DeArment
Pottsville Free Public Library
Lindsay Decker
Neumann University
Jessica DeMarte
Pottsville Free Public Library
Mary Duranti
Heritage Public Library
Barbara English
Jennifer Farmerie
Sewickley Public Library
Dianne Finnegan
Peters Township Public Library
Felicia Gettle
York County Libraries
Matthew Goldyn
Mercer Area Library
Randalee Gross
Corry Public Library
Tracy Happe
Monroeville Public Library
Michele Hunter
Mary Kipling
Peters Township Public Library
Joyce Koert
Spring City Free Public Library
Nadena Kramer
Cochranton Area Public Library
Adrienne Krings
Northland Public Library
Erin Lloyd
Knox Public Library
Michele Loria
Bethel Park Public Library
Autymn Maas
McCord Memorial Library
Raeann MacNeil
Northland Public Library
Amy Moskowitz
Lansdowne Public Library
Melanie Moyer
University of Pittsburgh
Amy Noble
Greenville Area Public Library
Amanda Noblit
The Public Library for Union County
Karen Nootbaar
Northland Public Library
Tracy O’Neill
Brentwood Library
Christina Patterson
Northland Public Library
Cynthia Potter
Northland Public Library
Alice Rathjen
Amy Riegner
Monongahela Area Public Library
Mary Ann Righetti
Elizabeth Scarlett
Bethel Park Public Library
Amy Steele
Northland Public Library
Edwin Thompson
Springfield Twp. Public Library
Julie Tulba
Butler Area Public Library
Annie Welsh
Oil City Library/Oil Creek Library District
Zachary Zimmerman
York County Library System

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBER
Valley Forge Military Academy & College
Moving?

Keep the PaLA BULLETIN arriving promptly in your mailbox by notifying us six to eight weeks before your move. Please return mailing label with address change.

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