



## PaLA Membership Matters: Conference Update

BY SHELI PRATT-McHUGH

I should be sharing what a fun time we had on the lazy river at the Kalahari resort in the beautiful Pocono Mountains. Though an in-person conference was not possible, we did make the absolute best out of a year with many obstacles and challenges! We were able to host a pre-conference Member Mixer via Icebreaker Video platform! Members of the Membership Committee gave updates on why membership matters, what service opportunities are available, and the breakdown of the organization from Round Tables, to Divisions, to Committees, as well as the Mentorship Program!

We had more than 40 members sign up and we had six rounds of games, where pairs were matched and able to network and share what they were looking forward to at the conference.

The Membership Committee also hosted a post-conference debrief directly following the PaLA Business Meeting on October 27th. We had 21 members attend. Members shared their favorite sessions from the conference, biggest take-away that they plan to implement at their libraries, and any special moments they experienced at the first ever virtual conference.

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Post-conference debrief



PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

# Bulletin

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# "Pivot! Pivot! Pivooooooooot!"

BY MICHELE LEGATE



Michele Legate

I am a huge fan of the television show *Friends* and throughout this year, I have often thought back to the episode where one of the characters is attempting to carry a ginormous couch up a cramped staircase with a few of his friends. It is clear to the audience and his friends that there is no way the couch is going to fit up the stairs. However, the character

is desperate to make this happen and he continues to shout "Pivot! Pivot! Pivot!" in a final attempt to get the couch up the stairs. Needless to say, the couch ends up in a broken heap in the stairwell. This year, it seems the world is the one screaming at us to "pivot" while we all try desperately to just to hold onto the ginormous couch.

Along with virtually every other organization, the association has had to pivot many times. One of the most daunting was moving the conference from in-person to a virtual setting. The conference planning committee did an amazing job of handling the stress and extra consideration involved to pull this off. Every effort was made to maintain the same level of quality that past attendees are accustomed to. We were fortunate that our speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors all supported this pivot. They looked at it as an opportunity to try something new and test out new ways of interacting with attendees. The pivot to a virtual setting also made it easier in some ways for attendees. We saw many first-time conference attendees this year due to the increased flexibility and affordability of the virtual platform. Without the usual constraints of travel — we also saw people from far-flung parts of the state be able to attend.


Through planning for the conference, we began to realize that we need to take a strategic look at conference planning in general. I appointed a task force to look at how we currently plan our conferences and consider what the future might hold. The task force has already met several times and plans on making formal recommendations to the board later in the year. Keep an eye out for a survey regarding regional education opportunities in early 2021.

Another pivot was transforming the association's Directors' Institute by PALS (Pennsylvania Library Association Academy of Leadership Studies) into a virtual course known as Leading Thru Challenges. Every Wednesday

*"As I look back on my year as President, it is easy for me to be overwhelmed by the challenges this year has brought. However, I am proud of the things we accomplished and look forward to pivoting into 2021."*

— Michele Legate

throughout the months of July and August, attendees met for an hour and heard from leadership expert David Bendekovic as well as a panel of current and past PaLA presidents. The panelists shared their leadership journeys as well as provided insights in how to be a leader when you're just trying to keep your head above water. There were many positives to this pivot, but certainly two stand out. One was that we were able to increase attendance from the normal 25 to 95. And the other was that we were able to provide more than half of the attendees with a laptop they were able to keep and use to work remotely. We learned in a survey prior to the workshop just how many library directors and staff do not have access to the technology needed to work remotely, including laptops. This was one small step the association was able to take towards rectifying this situation.

As I look back on my year as President, it is easy for me to be overwhelmed by the challenges this year has brought. However, I am proud of the things we accomplished and look forward to pivoting into 2021. 

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*Michele Legate, District Consultant NE Library District, PaLA 2020 President is currently reading "A Knock at Midnight: A Story of Hope, Justice, and Freedom," by Brittany K. Barnett.*

# The State Budget – Is It Done Yet?

BY CHRISTI BUKER



Christi Buker

In Pennsylvania, it is not uncommon for the state budget to be difficult to complete by the June 30 deadline. Indeed, it often comes down to the wire, and in 2015, the budget was multiple months later than the deadline. It should not have been a surprise then, that in light of the coronavirus pandemic, that the General Assembly took a

different approach in 2020. In May, the General Assembly and the Governor passed a budget that flat-funded K-12 schools and higher education for the entire 12 months, but only did a partial budget for all other items. This meant that state aid for public libraries only received a commitment of 5 out of 12 months which equals 41.6% of our normal funds. In essence, they pushed the deadline to complete the budget way back and said we are only going to cover the next 5 months while we figure out the future.

With state income tax payment deadlines extended until July 15, and sales tax revenue reduced by building closures to address the spread of the virus, state revenues were uncertain. The reduction in revenues and extra expenses for safety measures and unemployment created a major budget deficit. Depending on who you ask, the amount of the deficit ranges from approximately \$3.5 billion to \$5 billion. Even with possible extra funding from the federal government, there will still be a deficit to address.

In addition to the complexity of the actual dollars, it is extremely rare to have legislative session days with critical votes after election day. This year is also an election for the entire House of Representatives as well as multiple legislators are retiring at the end of this session. So, the leverage of holding people accountable for their votes on the budget during an election is entirely different after November 3, 2020. Yet, the new deadline to complete the budget is November 30 because the General Assembly only has authority until that date. Even with all of these factors, current conversations seem to indicate that the budget will be completed rapidly after the election in what is expected to be a rapid process.

At the beginning of 2020, the Legislative Committee planned a state-level advocacy day for September 21. The date was selected to be outside of the traditional budget negotiation

window so that our focus could be on building relationships and creating awareness about libraries. Clearly, things have changed, and the priority is to secure the full 12 out of 12 months for public library funding, at an amount that is equal to level funding from last year - \$59.47 million in the public library subsidy line.

Let me highlight that we should all continue thanking state legislators for last year's increase of \$5 million to the public library subsidy! Recently, House Appropriations Chairman Stan Saylor noted that legislators rarely get thanked for anything. He was truly moved by the personal thanks and many notes that libraries sent after last year's increase. Chairman Saylor had planned for multiple incremental increases to restore state aid to public libraries. While we cannot ask for increases right now, last year's increase means that if across-the-board cuts happen, it comes from a higher starting point which is beneficial for libraries.

The Legislative Committee has called on all libraries, staffs, trustees, and volunteers to actively speak up for full, flat-level funding for public libraries. State aid to libraries is one of the more stable sources of funding and helps leverage necessary local municipal funding. By the end of April, more than 73% of public libraries had to cancel spring fundraisers which are essential revenue to cover basic operating expenses. The need for funding is serious. In order to get it, we need to keep talking with elected officials about the importance of public libraries, how they will be essential in the recovery for individuals and communities, their work to support education, reading and literacy, and to providing internet access. NO, the state budget isn't done yet – and NO, we can't stop our advocacy efforts now.

I do hope that by the time this article is published, however, we can see the finish line for the 2020-2021 state budget. If we each do a little bit, we might be able to secure the needed state aid for public libraries. We will need to stay committed in our efforts because by the time the 2020-2021 budget is completed, the Governor will already be deep in the 2021-2022 budget proposal which will occur in early February.



*Christi Buker is the executive director of the Pennsylvania Library Association. You can reach her at [christi@palibraries.org](mailto:christi@palibraries.org). She is currently reading the "Association Law Handbook," by Jerald Jacobs.*

# PA Forward® Commons – Your Recipe Book for Success

BY ROB LESHER



Rob Lesher

Libraries have moved far beyond just being book repositories. They are agile institutions serving real-life needs. Libraries are the key to powering progress and elevating the quality of life in Pennsylvania by fueling the types of knowledge essential to success: Basic Literacy, Information Literacy, Civic and

Social Literacy, Health Literacy, and Financial Literacy.

One way that libraries go beyond their traditional role of lending books is that they develop a rich curriculum of educational programming. This programming is intended to meet the individual and unique needs of each library's particular community, whether that community is a large city, small town, university, small liberal arts college, elementary school, or workers in a corporate headquarters.

As I became the new PA Forward® Program Manager, one of the first tasks I learned was approving and uploading programs into the PA Forward® Commons. The Commons is one of the most important tools our PA Forward® teams have developed to help you use the literacy concepts in your local library. It is a collection of successful literacy programs from colleagues across the state.

Collaborating and sharing are among the foundational values of librarianship. The Commons brings that spirit to the PA Forward® initiative. Browse the collection of nearly 200 programs to gain inspiration and adapt these to fit your unique community needs. Program listings include a title, description, intended audience, literacies targeted, and examples of brochures or posters for advertising your program to your community.

In 2018, the Literacies in Action Recipe Book was published by PaLA and distributed to district centers. The Recipe Book, like the Commons, provides a multitude of programming ideas. This fall, PaLA is publishing a second volume of the Recipe Book. When it is complete, we will be mailing two copies to each of the district centers and

*"One way that libraries go beyond their traditional role of lending books is that they develop a rich curriculum of educational programming. I have been so impressed at how quickly libraries provided virtual programming for their communities. These programs are now almost a new normal for libraries. Continue to reach for the stars and impact your community!"*


— Rob Lesher

one copy to each of the library systems to add to their professional collections.

This has been a challenging year for libraries and I have been so impressed at how quickly libraries provided virtual programming for their communities. These programs are now almost a new normal for libraries.

I have been asked if virtual programs count towards a library's star status. YES! We are asking that you document the program the same way you would document your in-person program. Take a picture of your screen with the program going on, upload the program or brochure, or share the link to the virtual programming room.

If you did virtual programming, share the program with your colleagues by adding it to the PA Forward® Commons. For any additional volumes of the Recipe Book, programs will be selected from the ones submitted to the Commons.

Continue to reach for the stars and impact your community! 

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*Rob Lesher is the PA Forward® Program Manager with the Pennsylvania Library Association. Rob is currently reading "Sure of You," by Armistead Maupin.*

# Racism & White Supremacy in LIS – It Exists. What Can We Do About It?

BY ANDREA PRITT



Andrea Pritt

“Close your eyes. Place both feet firmly on the ground. Now take a deep breath... and let it go.” The College and Research Division keynote speaker Sofia Leung, CEO of Do Better, Be Better LLC asked the audience to join her in a quick meditation to begin her talk during the Lunch and Learn at PaLA 2020. It was a new experience for some, but Leung said the group was about

to begin a difficult conversation, and that taking time to reflect and center themselves may help. After this moment of mindfulness, she acknowledged the indigenous peoples who originally occupied her geographic area using the Native Land website <https://native-land.ca> She also took time to recognize the Black Lives Matter and #BlackTransLivesMatter movements. After this thoughtful and critical start to her presentation, we were encouraged to be active listeners and learners.

Leung’s presentation, “Ordinary Existence of Racism & White Supremacy in LIS,” took us on an exploration of racism and white supremacy in libraries. In recent years libraries have acknowledged that our profession lacks diversity. But what has the profession done to correct this? Leung noted that we do not talk enough about this and cannot move forward as an inclusive profession. While this conversation was going to be uncomfortable, perhaps upsetting, Leung said, it cannot – and should not – stop us from doing the work necessary to make change.

Leung explored the ordinary, everyday racism that exists in our profession and how its existence often stems from our institutions. She specifically addressed discriminatory health and housing institutions, inequitable education systems, and the settler colonialism theory that the United States and other countries were built upon. Leung asked the audience to consider who benefits from these systems, who is left behind and missing from these conversations. She stressed that, to address racism and white supremacy in our profession, librarians first must acknowledge that this is a problem worth solving.

She spoke critically of “vocational awe,” a term coined by Fobazi Ettarh in 2018 which describes how libraries and the profession of librarianship are viewed as sacred and therefore cannot be criticized. She also discussed microaggressions or small interactions, which may be conscious or unconscious, where words or behaviors indicate hostility towards marginalized groups. Leung provided examples of these in our profession and discussed how they negatively impact the work of libraries and archives. Further, she explained white supremacy culture characteristics, as presented by Tema Okun (<https://www.dismantlingracism.org/white-supremacy-culture.html>) and how these characteristics exist within libraries. Leung encouraged white people and other privileged groups in the audience to reflect upon their privileged experiences in libraries.

Leung said that the problem of racism and white supremacy is not one to be solved by Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). This is a problem for white people to solve. She encouraged the white people in the audience to “do the work” and not to rely on BIPOC colleagues to tell us what to do and how to do it. She suggested that beyond reading anti-racist books, it is more important to put what you have learned into your professional practices. White librarians must recognize that they inherently benefit from structural racism and white supremacy. While the conversation was difficult, she said, it was not nearly as difficult as the experiences that our BIPOC colleagues and library patrons have endured. To close her presentation, Leung encouraged all of us to do better in our daily professional activities and shared her thoughts on how we can move forward.

Leung provided three emergent strategies as guiding principles in doing this crucial work. First, “small is good, small is all.” As we begin doing the work, Leung said, we should all remember to start small, start local. Look around at our local communities and local institutions and work to enact the change we want to see. Second, there is “always enough time for the right work.” Our profession must prioritize the work of becoming an anti-racist and more inclusive environment. Lastly, Leung reminded us that, in this work, there is “never a failure, always a lesson.” As librarians, we should not shy away from the challenging road ahead. Inevitably, we will make mistakes and that is OK.

*Continued on page 9*

# Welcome New Members!

## PERSONAL MEMBERS

### **Vicki Aller**

Clarion University of PA

### **Heather Baker**

Grove City Community Library

### **Calida Barboza**

Millersville University of Pennsylvania

### **LaTrobe Barnitz**

Foxburg Free Library

### **Andrea Black**

Harrisburg

### **Elizabeth Blake**

Clarion University of PA

### **Mary Catherine Bluder**

Bucks County Free Library

### **Jane Bollinger**

Prompton

### **Emily Brown**

Kutztown University

### **Rebecca Bruneio**

Lehigh University

### **Meaghann CampBell**

Spalding Memorial Library

### **Rebecca Costa**

University of Southern Mississippi

### **Kelsey Cowles**

Pittsburgh

### **Lindsay Cummings**

Upper Dublin Public Library

### **Eyoel Delessa**

Shippensburg University

### **Dominic DiFrancesco**

Dauphin County Library System

### **Mary DiMaggio**

Parkland Community Library

### **Andrea Dow**

Pottsville Free Public Library

### **Sylvia Drennen**

Quarryville Library Center

### **Nicole Edwards**

Lancaster

### **Lydia Elias**

Drexel University

### **Ashley Famularo**

Dauphin County Library System

### **Jennifer Ford**

Mars Area Public Library

### **Leslie Gaines**

Berks County Public Libraries

### **Linda Gawthrop**

Jean Barnett Trone Memorial Library of East Berlin

### **Sarah Hackenberg**

Harrisburg School District

### **Evan Hrobak**

University of Pittsburgh

### **Shu Hua Li**

University of Pittsburgh

### **Jessica Hutchison**

Drexel University

### **Amy Johnson**

Erie County Public Library

### **Miranda Johnson**

University of Wisconsin - Madison

### **Andrea Kiehl-McKibbin**

Ford City Public Library

### **Jessica King**

Parkland Community Library

### **Kassandra Lacerda**

Florida State University

### **Jing Lin**

Drexel University

### **Suzanne McNally**

Free Library of Springfield Township

### **Amanda Mignogna**

Rebecca M. Arthurs Memorial Library

### **Julie Mozelewski**

University of Pittsburgh

### **Lily Murray**

North Trails Library

### **Danielle Myers**

Clarion University of PA

### **Sean Newton**

Grove City Community Library

### **Grace Painter**

Clarion University of PA

### **Clay Payne**

Yeadon Public Library

### **Jennifer Ryan Fitzpatrick**

University of Nebraska at Omaha

### **Rory Schonning**

Drexel University

### **Janelle Schretzenmaire**

Yeadon Public Library

### **Kristen Seikaly**

Widener University

### **Kirsten Sharpe**

Fulton County Library

### **Jonathan Trice**

Easttown Library & Information Center

### **Brenna Tuel**

Drexel University

### **Linda West**

Tinicum Memorial Public Library

### **Carol Witschel**

Milford

### **Amy Woytovich**

State Library of Pennsylvania

### **Ammon Young**

Columbia County Traveling Library

## INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Boone Area Library

Hawley Public Library

Swedenborg Library, Bryn Athyn College,  
Academy of the New Church

Washington County Library System

Yeadon Public Library

# PaLA Association Awards

On behalf of the 2020 Awards Committee, Carrie Sturgill and Chris Snyder, Co-Chairs, are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2020 awards presented virtually at noon in the weeks leading up to the Pennsylvania Library Association 2020 Annual Conference. Library of the Year and Distinguished Service award were presented at the Annual Business Meeting on October 27. We hope you were able to attend!

## Library of the Year Award

Memorial Library of Nazareth & Vicinity



*Catherine Stewart and Holly Bennett*

## Trustee of the Year Award

Louis LaBar, Wayne County Public Library



*Lou LaBar*

## Elected Official Award

Representative Carolyn Comitta, Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 156th Legislative District, Chester County



*JoAnn Weinberger, Representative Carolyn Comitta, Carrie Sturgill and Joseph Sherwood*

## New Librarian Honors Award

Julie Miller, Warren Library Association



*Julie Miller*

## Certificate of Merit

Joann Eichenlaub, Pennsylvania College of Technology



*Joann Eichenlaub*

### Certificate of Merit

Marissa Guidara, Reading Public Library



Marissa Guidara

### Certificate of Merit

June Houghtaling, James V. Brown Library



June Houghtaling

### Distinguished Service

Janis Stubbs, Delaware County Library System



Janis Stubbs

### 2020 Awards Committee

- Megan Babal
- Carolyn Blatchley
- Marissa Guidara
- Jen Knisely
- Sandy Longo
- Lisa Schmittle
- Martina Soden
- Leslie Wishard

### Co-Chairs

Chris Snyder  
Carrie Sturgill

## It's Academic

*continued from page 6*

The goal is to learn from our mistakes and not allow ourselves to continue working in the status quo.

Acknowledgement of the ordinary, everyday, racist and white supremacist behaviors that exist in our profession is merely the first step, Leung said. We must be courageous and actively pursue anti-racist knowledge. Then we have to put this knowledge into practice if we are ever to become safe and inclusive environments for our patrons and communities. By doing the work now we set ourselves, and the profession, on a path to better reflect our diverse communities. We must make it clear that our profession values the recruitment and retention of BIPOC colleagues. The time is now.

This presentation was made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Tom Wolf, Governor.

Support is also provided by the College and Research Division of the Pennsylvania Library Association. <http://crdpala.org/>



Andrea Pritt is the STEM Librarian and Library Collections and Data Coordinator at the Penn State University Libraries, Harrisburg Campus. She is currently reading "Begin Again: James Baldwin's American and its Urgent Lessons for Our Own," by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.



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# Best Practice Award Winners & Honorable Mentions

Please join the Best Practices Committee in congratulating the following libraries who received a 2020 Best Practices Award or Honorable Mention for an outstanding youth services program.

## David J. Roberts EXCEL Winner

Teens & Tweens with Autism Meet Up Club at Tyrone-Snyder Public Library by Jennifer Powell was announced Monday, October 19 during the Best Practices Award session of the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) Annual Conference.



Lana Conrad and Jennifer Powell

## Design/Display Winner

Delaware County Teen Art Contest at Delaware County Libraries by Theresa Dykes

*Honorable Mention: Food for Thought at Reading Public Library by Nancy Maurer and Julie Ketterer*

## Family/Multigenerational Winner

Fitness, Fun, & Photo Walk at Grove Family Library by Karen Sourbier and Joan Peiffer

## High School Winner

Mock Trials at Robinson Township Library by Gabrielle Bolland

## Infant/Toddler Winner

No Winner Chosen

## Middle School Winner

Teens & Tweens with Autism Meet Up Club at Tyrone-Snyder Public Library by Jennifer Powell

## Preschool Winner

Creative Expressions at James V. Brown Library by Nina White

## School Age Winner

Sewing Club at Wyoming Free Library by John Roberts

## STEM Winner

summerSTEAM at Reading Public Library by Jennifer Bressler

*Honorable Mention: Kids Cooking the Books at DuBois Public Library by Rebecca McTavish and Rebecca Aharrah*

## Humanities in Action Winner

Mats for Those in Need at Taylor Community Library by Loretta Heffernan

Thanks to the Best Practices Committee of the Youth Services Division of the Pennsylvania Library Association for all their time, review, and thorough deliberation to select the winners and honorable mentions!

- Stephanie Bragg, 2020 Chair
- Angie Andre
- Sara Huff
- Ann Duffy
- Gwen Gatto
- Rachel Moore
- Jennifer Roberts
- Catherine Stewart
- Heather Weleski



2020 Best Practices Committee practicing award presentation.



2020 PALS Alumni program

# PaLA Virtual Conference: Not Just Another Zoom Meeting!

BY SYLVIA ORNER, 2ND VICE PRESIDENT, 2020 CONFERENCE CHAIR

The PaLA annual conference is something I look forward to every year. I love the opportunity to connect with and learn from librarians from across the state. I love seeing old friends and making new ones. For me, it's an opportunity to reconnect, recharge, and remind myself why I chose this profession and why I still love it so much after all these years.

When I was elected as chair for the 2020 Kalahari Conference, I would not in a million years have guessed that we would end up trying to create a meaningful virtual experience. I would be lying if I said I wasn't more than a little worried about how a virtual conference would be received.

But, with the 2020 virtual conference behind us, I can safely say that it was a success, and it was not just another Zoom meeting. We may not have had the opportunity to be in the same physical space, but I am grateful for the opportunities we had to connect in a virtual environment. It was a different delivery, but that conference energy was still the same. Every session I attended had the chat buzzing with questions and ideas and people making connections. Every keynote I

attended reminded me how incredible libraries are and what amazing human beings librarians and library workers are.

And we had some fun too. We got to learn some fun facts at trivia and hear from some great Pennsylvania authors. We got to virtually hike the Poconos and cheer for some virtual raffles. And, I don't know about you, but I got to do it all while wearing penguin pajama pants. And that is something I've never gotten to do at an in-person conference.

I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to once more thank the conference planning committee for their continued support, enthusiasm, and for all of their good ideas. Thank you as well to the staff at PaLA headquarters for their tireless efforts to keep things running smoothly. I know it was no easy task. And finally, thanks to all of you who attended. I hope you had a worthwhile experience.

Now on to Monroeville for 2021! 

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*Sylvia Orner is PaLA 2nd Vice-President, 2020 Conference Chair. Sylvia is currently reading "The Stone Sky," by N.K. Jemisin.*

## Carolyn W. Field Award

Please join us in congratulating the winner of the 2020 Carolyn W. Field Award: "Slay" by Brittney Morris.

**The 2020 Honor books (alphabetically listed) are:**

"A Boy Like You" by Frank Murphy

"The Important Thing About Margaret Wise Brown" by Sarah Jacoby (Illustrator)

"Last True Poets of the Sea" by Julia Drake

"Time Traveler's Theory of Relativity" by Nicole Valentine

### 2020 Carolyn W. Field Committee

- Melissa Adams, Chair
- Kate Shaw
- Alana Bubnis
- Marissa Guidara
- Nina White



*Brittney Morris*

# PaLA Mentorship Program: Reviewing the Past, Looking Ahead

BY EMILY REED



Emily Reed

When I think about the people in my life who have most influenced me, I think of family members first followed by my friends and coworkers. I have been incredibly fortunate to have worked with amazing library colleagues over the past ten years who have worked in their own ways to create healthy, productive, and motivational

work environments. We all work in different contexts and experience different career challenges based on external variables (work environment, office space, professionalism, location, etc.) as well as internal variables (mental health, emotional health, work-life balance, etc.). Having someone trustworthy who can provide advice based on years of experience is an incredibly valuable asset, one that the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) has recognized and sought to develop.

## History of the Mentorship Program

In June 2016, I attended the eighth annual Pennsylvania Library Association Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS) where I participated in icebreakers, leadership seminars, and networking activities. Besides receiving training for leadership development, PALS graduates also collaborate on group projects. I was fortunate to be put in a group with three other motivated librarians inspired with creating a mentorship program for PaLA members, with the goal of facilitating leadership growth and potential in library workers across the state. We spent the fall of 2016 researching, planning, and preparing to deploy a mentorship program pilot in 2017.

In 2017, the mentorship program pilot launched with 38 mentor-mentee pairs who promised to provide us with feedback about the program that could be implemented in future iterations. We provided monthly email prompts and an online toolkit that could be used by both mentors and mentees.

In 2018, the original PALS team officially dissolved as planned; we had successfully completed our pilot and

reported the results back to PaLA headquarters. We handed off the mentorship program to a new PALS team who continued to improve and run the mentorship program, no longer as a pilot, but as an officially endorsed PaLA program.

In 2019, the mentorship program continued, but now rested organizationally as an official subcommittee of the PaLA Membership Committee, where it remains today.

## Wrapping Up the 2020 Program

The 2020 mentorship program context has been quite a bit different from previous years as the effects of the pandemic continue to be felt by our 18 mentor-mentee pairs. This year, mentors and mentees alike have reached out to the mentorship program leadership about furloughs, permanent job loss, and other challenges fueled by the pandemic, the closure of libraries, and the nature of remote work. As a result, many of our discussion prompts this year have focused on topics such as mental wellbeing, compassionate leadership, and networking while working remotely.

One new change to the 2020 program was the development of an agreement to be signed by both the mentor and mentee in each pair. The mentors and mentees discussed terms of agreement regarding communication method, frequency, and the sharing of personal contact and social media information as their comfort level allowed.

Much of this year's program has retained similar structure to previous years. The program formally began in January when mentors and mentees were made aware of their match via email. The program ran through the end of September. (We know from past years that some mentees and mentors maintain a professional relationship even after the program officially ends.) Mentors and mentees have access to the online toolkit containing additional discussion topics and links to open access articles (the toolkit gets refreshed at the beginning of each new program year) and each pair receives monthly email prompts with suggested discussion topics. Mentors and mentees participated in two surveys to assess the 2020 program: a midpoint survey in April and a final survey in September.

At the time this article is being written (mid-September), we are preparing to send out our final email to our mentors and

*Continued on page 14*

mentees with a survey link to assess participant satisfaction with the program and to receive qualitative feedback regarding possible improvements for future cohorts. So while we don't have the final results from the 2020 program, I'm happy to share some feedback we received anonymously from our April survey.

The following are quotes shared by mentors:

*"In the years I have done this, I have felt it works very well. Perhaps I have been lucky with the people I have been paired with, but I feel the program is very worthwhile."*

*"This program is very beneficial — I hope it continues — I feel that it has made a difference to the people I have connected with and I have benefited as a mentor."*

*"I enjoy talking with my mentee. I think I've been helpful to her in the ways that she was seeking. Circumstances have prevented us talking as often as hoped. I'm still happy with how things have been going and I'm learning from her too."*

*"Overall, it is going well. Given COVID-19, this is certainly a very different experience and we are focusing on other aspects more. We have a great connection and are working well together."*

*"We have a wonderful connection — have been meeting every two weeks whenever possible and sharing concerns and questions."*

The following are quotes shared by mentees:

*"It started out great! I learned a lot in just a short phone conversation and made plans to discuss more important aspects of being a director. But then COVID-19 hit and it has been crazy. My mentor is still keeping in contact with me and has actually put me in a group of emails with other experienced librarians, and I am gaining so much information from it."*

*"I really appreciate having someone I can go to with any problem or to ask for advice. Someone knowledgeable but not in my chain of command. I think this is an excellent program!"*

*"I feel it is going well. Despite the COVID-19 crisis, my mentor has been active and responsive and we have been communicating fairly regularly. I was able to meet my mentor in person before social distancing was put in place."*

*"I am very glad that I signed up to be a part of the mentoring program. My mentor is extremely knowledgeable and helpful. Touching base with him each week has really helped to keep me focused on my goals and brought up things I should keep in mind and know about."*

## Many Thanks

The mentorship program would not be possible without crediting the hard work of several individuals.

*Continued on page 23*

## ABOUT THE 2021 MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

If you are interested in participating in the 2021 mentorship program, we would welcome you to fill out a registration form! While the program is free, it is a members-only benefit, so you must be a PaLA member to participate in the mentorship program. Not a PaLA member? Learn about joining here: [https://www.palibraries.org/general/register\\_member\\_type.asp](https://www.palibraries.org/general/register_member_type.asp)

The 2021 program will run January through September. All mentors and mentees will be expected to complete two surveys while participating in the program. Registration will close December 1 in order to give program leadership time to match mentees with a mentor. You can view more information by viewing the mentorship program FAQ document.

### To register to be a Mentor, individuals should:

1. Have at least five years of professional library experience at their current position level.
2. Be willing to share their knowledge and expertise with a less experienced librarian, student, or paraprofessional.
3. Be able to communicate with a mentee in accordance with their shared agreement.

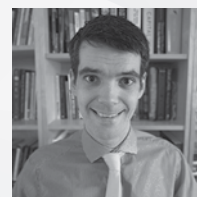
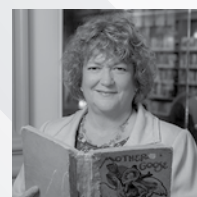
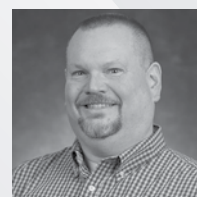
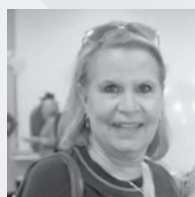
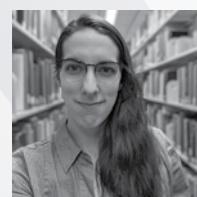
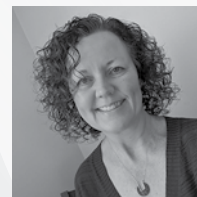
Additionally, mentees from previous PaLA Mentorship Program cohorts who meet the above criteria are highly encouraged to apply to be a mentor!

### To register to be a Mentee, individuals should:

1. Have a desire to grow and further their professional development.
2. Be willing to listen critically and objectively to feedback from their mentor.
3. Be able to communicate with their mentor in accordance with their shared agreement.
4. Be the initiative taker in the mentoring relationship.

If you have questions about the 2021 program, please contact Emily Reed at [emilyreed@psu.edu](mailto:emilyreed@psu.edu).

# Who's missing? — **YOU!**



## **The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

**Committee** is proud of the work that it's doing, but we fell short in recruiting ample representation from Black, Indigenous, and people of color on this committee. We can't accomplish big things as a group without the voices that we most need to hear. If you or someone you know is interested in informing this conversation, helping build diversity initiatives in the Association, and being inclusive and equitable in our programs and activities, we want to hear from you. You'll be joining an enthusiastic group of colleagues who are eager to do the work that is needed, but want to make sure that lived experience and perspectives are at the center of what PaLA does.

Reach out to the 2020 Chair of the EDI Committee, Robbin Degeratu, at [rdegeratu@centrecountylibrary.org](mailto:rdegeratu@centrecountylibrary.org) to express interest, or simply to learn more.

# The Role of Librarianship Within the Social Justice Movement

BY AIMEE JOY GRILLO



Aimee Joy Grillo

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are terms many of us have come across in our careers. For me, these three words were synonymous with basic human rights, and I was comfortable with my thought process because I am a white woman and I am not exposed to the daily injustice experienced by marginalized groups. The murder of George Floyd


in May pushed me to face my privilege and determine what I can do to actively fight for change. Spreading awareness on social media was never going to be enough. I committed myself to finding a way to be an active part of the solution and advocate for real progress. Just 10 days later, I received an email with an opportunity to pursue equity, diversity, and inclusion on a state level.

Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) affirms their commitment to “actively and intentionally pursue, promote, and champion equity, diversity, and inclusion within the organization and within the profession” in its adopted diversity statement. President Michele Legate was ready to take action and on June 3 released a statement to members addressing the racial inequities prevalent today. Reflecting on her personal feelings on the widespread injustice throughout the country, Legate pledged her commitment to champion equity, diversity, and inclusion within the organization and within librarianship. Her statement inspired several PaLA members to join the 2020 committee that was created in part to identify and remove the barriers experienced by people of color in our Association and in the field of library science. The PaLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee was created after a year-long task force considered and put forward recommendations on how to tackle this important work.

The committee was formed to build awareness of systemic inequality; encourage conversations; and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within PaLA. Each month, committee members meet virtually to discuss and develop action plans. Members identified eight objectives for the committee:

(1) increase diversity within the membership and within PaLA leadership; (2) develop improved data collection and analysis strategies through statewide partnerships; (3) provide recommendations for future conference committees to assist in the planning of an inclusive, accessible PaLA conference; (4) prepare strategies, tools, and support for Pennsylvania libraries in their efforts to develop a more diverse staff, and empower libraries to support their staff; (5) develop more opportunities to pursue librarianship through the establishment of scholarships, the creation of outreach programs, and the promotion of equitable practices within PaLA divisions and chapters; (6) develop continuing education opportunities that focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion; (7) incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion in the upcoming PaLA Strategic Plan; and (8) build productive partnerships with Pennsylvania organizations in an effort to continue advocating for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Committee members are dedicated to identifying the barriers and deterrents experienced by people of color within the field of library science. These obstacles will be identified through discussions with PaLA members, nonmembers, and colleagues. Our initial findings will provide a better understanding of the areas underrepresented librarians and library support staff encounter on a local, state, and national level that may discourage participation in PaLA or the field of librarianship. Change will begin within our committee. We are committed to the examination and development of equitable, inclusive strategies; however, there are voices within the association that are not currently represented within the committee.

These overdue changes cannot be implemented without your help. Now is the time to make a significant impact on any racial injustice within PaLA, within our libraries, and within our communities. We call on all PaLA members to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in our profession. Together, we can join forces to change library history! 

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*Aimee Joy Grillo is Adult Services Librarian Trainee at Parkland Community Library. She is currently reading “Runaways: Find Your Way Home,” by Rainbow Rowell and Kris Anka.*

# Libraries in 2021: Looking Ahead

BY JACOB SIMONE

The annual PaLA Conference provides librarians across Pennsylvania with the opportunity to collaborate, grow, and share ideas. Libraries serve as pillars of our communities. They inspire lifelong learning, educate and empower students and patrons, and serve as places for community gatherings. Libraries have also evolved in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. As people have moved online for work, school, research, and entertainment, libraries are making efforts to highlight their ability to support their patrons with online resources and support.


At EBSCO Information Services (EBSCO), we have seen many public libraries and schools collaborate to enhance the remote learning experience for students, teachers, and parents. Databases such as *LearningExpress Library*® provide students with access to test prep materials and skill-building resources. Libraries can also leverage audiobooks, e-books, and online research databases to help students, researchers, and teachers access much-needed educational content.

Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) integration with platforms like Canvas and single-sign-on platforms such as OpenAthens can help users easily obtain the information anywhere, at any time. Student research platforms such as NoodleTools support students in collaborative and individual research assignments which remote learning has made even more necessary.

Public libraries are also looking to support the professional development needs of their patrons, whether they are working remotely or looking for employment and economic resources. EBSCO's new Entrepreneurial Mindset Training

Course, *LearningExpress*™ resume-building resources, and *Small Business Reference Center*™ provide the tools and skills that job seekers need in this post-pandemic economy. Resources including *Accel5*®, an online accelerated learning tool, and *LearningExpress Job and Career Accelerator*™ enable patrons to work on their professional development skills.

Libraries have historically provided resources to support their patrons' personal and professional skills development. As patrons look for sources of entertainment and continued learning at home, resources such as *NoveList*®, a reader's advisory service, *Hobbies & Crafts Reference Center*™, and the digital magazine platform *Flipster*® provide patrons a variety of ways to keep busy, to learn more about areas of interest and to stay productive. *NoveList* also supports the needs of library staff with *LibraryAware*™ which makes it easier to engage with and patrons and inform them about collections, programming and other initiatives and services.

In 2021, EBSCO will continue to look for ways to help libraries provide patrons and students with the resources they need, when and where they need them. We have seen librarians do inspiring work and rise to the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to continuing to support Pennsylvanian libraries with the tools they need to succeed in the coming year. 

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*Jacob Simone is Regional Sales Manager for Schools & Public Libraries, EBSCO Information Services. He is currently reading "Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself: How to Lose Your Mind and Create a New One," by Joe Dispenza. He is also listening to "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," by Betty Smith.*



# EBSCO

[www.ebsco.com](http://www.ebsco.com)

The Pennsylvania Library Association would like to acknowledge and thank **EBSCO** who has generously sponsored the virtual platform for this year's conference.

## VIRTUAL PLATFORM SPONSOR

# Technical Services Round Table Creating an Experts Directory

BY MICHELE G. ANFUSO

With practically all of the Pennsylvania Library Association's in-person conferences and gatherings moved to virtual platforms this year, it may seem distressing for the association's divisions, chapters, and round tables to find constructive means of coming together to collaborate on projects. Without the benefits of face-to-face contact to feed off of one another's energy, laughter, and critiques, projects have had to be mulled over and refined through an endless parade of Zoom or BlueJeans meetings and emails. Nonetheless, we have proven time and again to be a resilient association that has often faced its fair share of stumbling blocks and hurdles, only to surmount them. To that end, I am pleased to announce the latest project in development among members of the Technical Services Round Table (TSRT).

Librarians and library associates who have technical services skills -- acquisitions, collection development and management, systems management, cataloging and classification, preservation and archives, continuing resources, etc. -- will soon have the opportunity to share with other members of the association that they are knowledgeable about details of these practices through the Technical Services Round Table Experts Directory. Our round table will be notifying the association of a survey tool, where members can indicate the skills they possess and become a part of the resource directory. This will make it easier for other librarians and library associates to reach out to a technical services 'expert' should they be faced with a question, challenge, or just good old curiosity about this aspect of our profession.

The Technical Services Round Table would like to especially thank Megan Babal, the Public Service and Outreach Librarian with the Henry Buhl Library at Grove City College. With her direction and assistance, we are creating a template for the survey, which we will gather the information and create content for the directory. Babal has also been instrumental in guiding us through the components of Google Data Studio, which will allow for interactive use of the directory once placed on PaLA's website. It is my sincere hope that those of you with technical services skills/knowledge will consider completing and submitting the survey to be included in the directory so that your contact information will be readily available for those who need a helping hand or a question answered. While our annual conference was

much different this year, the TSRT is aiming to have more information ready to present to our fellow PaLA members at that time. 

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*Michele G. Anfuso is the Information Services and Interlibrary Loan Librarian at Lehigh Carbon Community College's Rothrock Library and the Vice-Chair of the Technical Services Round Table. She is currently reading "The Telomere Effect: A Revolutionary Approach to Living Younger, Healthier, Longer," by Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn and Dr. Elissa Epel.*



A graphic with a dark blue background featuring a blurred image of bookshelves. At the top center is a yellow circle containing a white lowercase 'i'. Below this, the words 'LIBRARY' and 'INCIDENT REPORTING' are written in large, bold, sans-serif font. 'LIBRARY' is yellow, and 'INCIDENT REPORTING' is white. Below the title, there is a list of four bullet points in white: 'DIGITAL REPORTING', 'AUTO NOTIFICATIONS', 'TRENDING', and 'SUSPENSION GALLERY'. Under the last bullet point, in smaller white text, is '(For All Locations)'. At the bottom of the graphic, a yellow horizontal bar contains the website address 'www.incident-tracker.com' in black text.

**LIBRARY  
INCIDENT  
REPORTING**

- DIGITAL REPORTING
- AUTO NOTIFICATIONS
- TRENDING
- SUSPENSION GALLERY  
(For All Locations)

[www.incident-tracker.com](http://www.incident-tracker.com)

# PALS: Leading Thru Challenges: A Virtual Experience

BY ANGIE ANDRE

The call came in early Monday morning. The library will be closed for an undetermined time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. What does this mean? What do I do? How do I serve my community? How will we lend out materials? What is safe? How can I be an effective leader? Many questions with few answers. The Pennsylvania Library Association responded to the needs of the library community and created a virtual program to support library leaders through these challenging times.


From July 15- August 19, the Pennsylvania Library Association's Academy of Leadership Studies (PALS) hosted a six-week virtual leadership program for eligible library leaders, called Leading Thru Challenges. There were 95 participants, including directors, assistant directors, branch managers, and top library leaders. The hour-long sessions, based on the book "Strengths Based Leadership" by Tom Rath, were led by David Bendekovic. There were also keynote presentations by accomplished library leaders. Prior to the first session, everyone took the Strengths Finder Assessment and downloaded their results. The results of the assessment were discussed throughout the sessions. To meet the needs of many who did not have access to a laptop for offsite use, laptops were awarded to those who applied and qualified. After the program the laptops became property of the attendee's library.

The live virtual format allowed participants to see and hear past Pennsylvania Library Association Presidents Mary Garm,

Tina Hertel, Denise Sticha, and current President Michele Legate speak about their personal struggles and successes when leading in challenging situations. These powerful stories and self-reflective studies gave participants tools to help them make their way through new times and Lead thru Challenges.

After Leading thru Challenges, all of the participants were invited to join in the PALS Alumni Reunion at the 2020 Virtual Conference. PALS Alumni had the opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues and hear their PALS stories. Watch out for these recorded stories where alumni shared how PALS has had an impact on their lives personally and professionally.

The PALS Leadership Committee is in the process of planning events for next year. Stay tuned on [palibraries.org](http://palibraries.org) for 2021 dates.

This program is made possible, in part, by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Tom Wolf, Governor. 

*Angie Andre is head of children's services at Tredyffrin Public Library. She is currently reading "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes," by Suzanne Collins.*

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The Pennsylvania Library Association would like to acknowledge and thank **Pennsylvania Integrated Library System** for their generous donation sponsoring this year's conference.



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# Virtual Conference Experience from an Attendee's Perspective

**Who:** PaLA Member, Robyn Vittek, Mt. Lebanon Public Library Director

**What:** Article for Mt. Lebanon municipal publication, *Mt. Lebanon Magazine*, regarding attendance of the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) Annual Conference

**When:** October 19-21, 2020

**Where:** It was supposed to be in the Poconos, but I attended from my kitchen at home.

**Why:** I presented as part of two panels, and I am very active in PaLA, so I always support the association by attending and networking with my colleagues. This year, one of the panels I participated in was supported by grant funding, and it covered the cost of my attendance.

**How did it work:** This was an all virtual conference, using the platform Pheedloop. It included an "exhibit hall" complete with prize drawings, learning sessions, networking opportunities, and poster sessions.

## THE ITINERARY

### Day One:

**Conference 101:** Our first day opened with a session called "Conference 101." We always start our conferences with this session available, and I usually don't attend because I am an old hand. However, this year was new and different enough that I joined the first session. The Executive Director of PaLA gave a tutorial about how to use the platform and answered questions. It was foreshadowing for the rest of the conference, as many of the questions and concerns were to do with technical issues such as streaming, lagging audio, etc. It really highlighted the differences in access to reliable broadband across the commonwealth, which is an ongoing huge concern in the areas of education and library service. This is true now more than ever as so much learning at all stages of life takes place online. The Deputy Secretary of Education/Commissioner for Libraries, Glenn Miller, is part of a task force to help improve broadband access.

**Opening Keynote:** The opening keynote speaker, Professor Andrea Jamison, spoke on "The Courage to Change." Libraries are constantly reinventing ourselves to serve our patrons better, but there continues to be an issue with

diversity in the profession. It is important that residents relate to and feel understood by the staff of their local libraries, so equity in staffing and services is essential for our improvement and growth. The digital divide was discussed once again; as more and more of life's essentials are moved to the virtual realm, we must make sure we are supporting all members of a community, and all communities, to participate and be successful.

**The Exhibit Hall:** Bookending lunchtime I explored the exhibit hall. I am usually a volunteer in the exhibit hall during conferences, so I wanted to make it a point to visit all the vendors and thank them for participating. Vendors help greatly in subsidizing the conference and making it affordable for library staff to attend. Our vendors include book distributors, publishers, software companies, equipment vendors, and educational institutions. To visit a vendor, you could click on their page. There you could watch videos, view live demonstrations, download pamphlets and brochures, or chat or video chat with representatives. It was a really exciting new way to interact. At each 'booth,' you could collect a raffle code which would give you points towards prize drawings for the raffle that occurred at the end of the conference. The prizes include books, gift cards, and other items donated by vendors.

**Sessions:** After lunch on the first day, the sessions began in earnest. I attended sessions about making library collections more inclusive and reducing unconscious bias in selection; maintaining star status in the PA Forward Star Library program (did you know that Mt. Lebanon Public Library has been designated a Gold Star Library?); and media relations. Our speakers are not just from the library profession; we bring in experts from other fields to make sure that attendees receive the best possible information about a given topic.

### Day Two:

**Virtual Side Trip:** Because our conference was supposed to be in the Poconos, a lot of side trips to local nature spots had been planned. Unfortunately, we weren't able to be there in person. However, a wonderful feature of the virtual conference were video tours, including this wonderful scavenger hunt at Cherry Creek National Wildlife Refuge. This is available on YouTube, so you can watch it too! It is only fifteen minutes long and was a great way to unwind and relax; I've actually played it in the background while doing other things a couple of times since the conference.

**State Library:** Glenn Miller opened the second day with leading an update on what is happening at the State Library of Pennsylvania and other library organizations throughout the state. The State Library is in temporary quarters while their beautiful marble building is renovated, and they are getting to know the new Secretary of Education, Noe Ortega.

**My First Presentation:** After that, I presented a live session with a member of the PaLA staff and an academic library director about using data effectively in determining library services and measuring success. Librarians are very good about collecting data, but not always good about using it. At Mt. Lebanon Public Library, we analyze our collection and circulation data to help determine where to spend our collection dollars, and evaluate programs to make sure the people attending enjoy and learn from the presenters. Most importantly, we occasionally hold community conversations to get input from the residents about what they want to see in their library and their community.

**Sessions:** That afternoon I attended sessions on aligning operational and strategic goals of the library while maintaining a work-life balance, and using your “Library Story” to empower advocacy efforts. Talking about the library to elected officials and fundraising entities is an important part of modern library service. Despite rumors to the contrary, we do not run the library on late fees. They make up a very small part of our revenue! Most of our funding is from tax dollars, and we maintain that by sharing with legislators how we support our community and residents.

### Day Three:

**State-level Advocacy:** Day three opened with another meeting led by the Commissioner for Libraries, Glenn Miller. We discussed the state budget and how state, public, and academic libraries will be affected. Currently the state has not approved our budget past Nov. 30, and we are advocating for level funding for the rest of the budget year.

**My Second Presentation:** I next presented with two other public library directors and the State Library’s School Age Services Advisor about Summer Programming at the Library, and how it has changed since toeing up to the desk to give a book report to the librarian! Our summer library services are augmented by amazing partners such as Matt’s Maker Space that allow us to offer metalworking, podcast recording, robot building, and other STEM-based programs. This year, our summer program continued online with several hundred participants reading, doing take home craft kits, and attending virtual programs from community partners like Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. This was a pre-recorded session, so I was able to read the comments in the sidebar and respond to questions in real time. I did not like watching myself however; I talk with my hands a lot!

**Library Branding:** During lunch we listened to a special guest speaker who talked about library branding and how important it is as a marketing and informational tool. In 2013 former Library Director Cindy Richey spearheaded our library’s branding campaign, “MORE at Your Library.” We have a distinct color scheme, font elements, and “MORE” tags on much of our flyers and newsletters. It is an important part of relating a library’s identity to the public.

**Sessions (including going Fine-Free):** In the afternoon I attended sessions on monitoring social media to ensure that all users’ First Amendment rights are protected, and that we are not inadvertently censoring anyone. I also sat in on a session presented by my peers, other directors in Allegheny County, about their experiences as their libraries piloted eliminating late fines from borrowed library materials. The closure of all libraries in the state in March forced the hand of many libraries to go fine-free at least temporarily, and though it slightly impacts library revenue, the reduction in stress and positive implications for patrons make it seem like an idea worth exploring on a long-term basis. Most major metropolitan libraries across the country are now fine-free, and several libraries in the county have adopted the practice as well.

**Closing Keynote:** Our closing keynote speaker was Melanie Townsend Diggs, a Branch Manager at Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore during the 2015 riots. Diggs helped her patrons shelter in place during the riots and stayed open to offer local residents a safe place to gather, use resources, and maintain a sense of normalcy. Libraries are often considered a hub of their communities, and we all strive to offer services in any way we can to help local residents get through the worst of times as well as the best. Although we can’t offer services in the same way we would normally do, our library is still offering programs, materials, and services to all ages and abilities.

**Conclusion:** While this conference was definitely a departure from the usual, and I very much missed getting to see friends and colleagues in person, I felt as though the platform was very user-friendly, there were a wide variety of relevant topics, and the speakers did well in adapting their presentations to the current reality (we all submitted our presentation proposals in January and February, so coronavirus wasn’t really a consideration for us then). I am glad I attended and am looking forward to next year. We have planned the conference for Monroeville (I am Chair of the Exhibits Hall), and we are keeping our fingers crossed that we will be able to meet in person, but if not, we now know the drill and will hold another successful virtual conference.



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*Robyn Vittek is director of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library. Robyn is currently reading “The Bear,” by Andrew Krivak.*

# PaLA Membership Matters: Conference Update

*continued from page 1*



## Author Event

Everyone shared positive experiences with the virtual conference and the presenters.

The conference also featured the annual Trivia Night! The event was hosted by Jeanne Clancy and featured 66 questions on general trivia. It was fast paced and competitive! Jessica Pratt, Northeast Chapter Membership Chair and chapter representative on the Membership Committee, came in first place! Emily Reed, Mentorship Subcommittee Chair, and Sylvia Orner, 2nd Vice-President and Conference Committee Chair, came in second and third! Congratulations to Jessica, Emily and Sylvia!!

On Tuesday evening, we welcomed authors Chuck Wendig (*Wanderers*) and Megan Angelo (*Followers*) for a discussion with librarian Rose Chiocchi. Both books feature pandemics, post-apocalyptic events, and societal change. Wendig and Angelo were funny and engaging, and Chiocchi asked

thought-provoking questions in this time of a global pandemic, racial reckoning, and environmental changes.


While we were not together in-person, it was wonderful to connect and share these experiences with members and conference attendees from across the state. I hope we can be together in Monroeville in 2021! 📖

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*Sheli Pratt-McHugh is the PaLA 3rd Vice President/Membership Chair and the Assistant Dean at the University of Scranton's Weinberg Memorial Library. She is currently reading "People Like Us," by Dana Mele.*

# PaLA Mentorship Program: Reviewing the Past, Looking Ahead

*continued from page 14*

The 2017 pilot was initially developed and tested by 2016 PALS graduates: Adam Haigh, Matt McNelis, Joyce Platfoot, and Emily Reed; Carrie Turner and Tina Hertel served as project mentors. It was continued by 2017 PALS graduates: Rebecca Calfe, Nick Cerroni, Shannon Connor, Ann Duffy, and John Nelka; Barb Zabarowski served as PALS project mentor. Currently serving on the mentorship program subcommittee are Rebecca Dzikowski, Amy Geisinger, Adam Haigh, Sheli Pratt-McHugh (2020 Membership Committee Chair), and Emily Reed (2020 Mentorship Program Subcommittee Chair). And many thanks to PaLA Executive Director, Christi Buker, for continuing to advise the mentorship program leadership. 

*Emily Reed is Reference and Instruction librarian, Penn State University Libraries, Harrisburg Campus. She recommends the book, "Still Alice," by Lisa Genova.*

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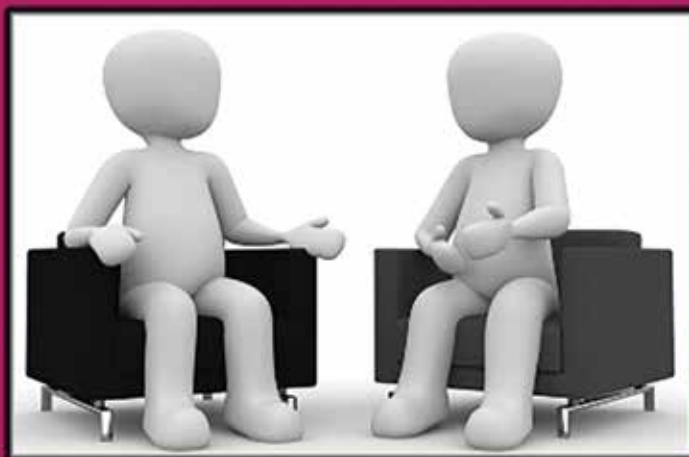
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## MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

**You must be a member  
of the Pennsylvania  
Library Association  
to participate.**

**Mentors and Mentees  
must Register by:  
Tuesday, December 1, 2020**



**NOTE: Please check the website event calendar for the most current information.**

## OCTOBER

1	PaLA - South Central Chapter - Mental Health First Aid Workshop/Adult	Virtual	15	PaLA - Youth Services Division Meeting	Virtual
2	PaLA - South Central Chapter - Mental Health First Aid Workshop/Youth	Virtual	19-21	PaLA - 2020 Annual Conference	Virtual
6	PaLA - Long Range Conference Planning Task Force Meeting	Virtual	26	PaLA - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting	Virtual
7	PaLA - Public Relations and Marketing Committee Meeting	Virtual	27	PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting	Virtual
14	PaLA - Public Library Division - Annual Business Meeting	Virtual	27	PaLA - 2020 Annual Business Meeting	Virtual

## NOVEMBER

4	PaLA - PALS Committee Meeting	Virtual	16	PaLA - Legislative Committee Meeting	Virtual
5	PaLA - Long Range Conference Planning Task Force Meeting	Virtual	16	PaLA - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	Virtual
6	PA Forward Steering Committee Meeting	Virtual	17	PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting	Virtual
10	PaLA - Coffee with Christi; Chapters/Council	Virtual	17	PaLA - Rural & Small Libraries Round Table Meeting	Virtual
11	PaLA - Office Closed for Veteran's Day	Headquarters	20	PaLA - 2021 Conference Planning Committee Meeting	Virtual
11	PaLA - Public Library Division Meeting	Virtual	24	PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting	Virtual
12	PaLA - Teaching, Learning & Technology Round Table - Fall Webinar	Virtual	26 & 27	PaLA - Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday	Headquarters
13	PA Forward Training Team Meeting	Virtual	30	PaLA - Southwest Chapter Meeting	Virtual

## DECEMBER

2	PaLA - Public Relations & Marketing Committee Meeting	Virtual	15	PaLA - Leadership Orientation - Session #2	Virtual
4	PaLA - SAVE THE DATE - Southeast Chapter Workshop	Virtual	17	PaLA - Youth Services Division Meeting	Virtual
7	PaLA - Board Meeting	Virtual	21	PaLA - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting	Virtual
8	PaLA - Leadership Orientation - Session #1	Virtual	24 & 25	PaLA - Office Closed for Christmas Holiday	Headquarters
9	PaLA - Public Library Division Meeting	Virtual	29	PaLA - Juniata-Conemaugh Chapter Meeting	Virtual
15	PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting	Virtual	31	PaLA - Office Closed for New Year's Holiday	Headquarters

## JANUARY

1	PaLA - Office Closed for New Year's Holiday	Headquarters	19	PaLA - Intellectual Freedom Committee Meeting	Virtual
12	PaLA - Leadership Orientation - Session #3	Virtual	29	PaLA - Board Meeting	Virtual

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