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A Note from Cathy Farley, TLA's New Executive Director

Hello everyone! My name is Cathy Farley and I am your new Executive Director of the Tennessee Library Association. I came on board in October and worked with Annelle Huggins until her retirement in December. I have been a member of TLA since 1997. Prior to this position, I served as the Conference Coordinator, President (05-06), and chaired many committees along the way.

I am the Director of the White County Public Library in Sparta and have served in that capacity since October 1997. We are a Level Four Public Library that serves a population of over 27,000. We have eleven employees and are open 60 hours weekly.

I am originally from Sparta, although I moved away after college

and worked overseas and stateside with the Department of Defense as a General Services civilian employee. Although I enjoyed seeing the world and meeting new people, I decided Tennessee was the best place to be and returned home, much to my parents' delight (and my sister's dismay).

My husband Tim works at TTI in Cookeville and manufactures Oreck vacuum cleaners. He frequently tries to pass off a vacuum as a birthday or anniversary gift. Our daughter Drew is eleven and is in middle school. She enjoys music, playing piano on her own and percussion with the school band. She's on the Student Council and the Lego League. We share our home with two Siamese cats, Welkie who is seven and a jerk and Willow who is one and still into everything.



In my free time, I drive carpool, read mostly novels, and am try to perfect my Fortnite skills—which according to Drew, are embarrassing.

I look forward to working with you all!

—Cathy Farley

Library Science Program Thriving at MTSU

Middle Tennessee State University's online Master of Library Science Program continues to thrive in 2020. Two students, Cara Brown and Christy Schwab, were chosen as interns for the 2020 TLA Annual Conference, and although the conference was canceled, they are invited to the conference in 2021. In June 2020 the MLS Program was granted pre-candidacy status by the Committee on Accreditation of the American Library Association. This is an exciting first step forward towards ALA accreditation. Our summer 2020

enrollment grew by nearly 20% over summer 2019, and for Fall 2020, the MLS Program is expecting its largest influx of new students ever, with 23 new MLS students accepting admission. The MLS program, accredited by NCATE and CAEP eligible, currently has four tracks: the Master of Library Science; non-degree Library Media Specialist endorsement for those who already have a master's degree and teacher's license; non-degree Library Media Specialist for those who already have a master's degree but need a teacher's license;

and, the Master of Library Science with initial teacher licensure. Several new courses were added this year: Public Libraries and Librarianship and the new core course, Information Technology for Information Professionals. Other new courses that have been approved for design and delivery in the coming year include Academic Libraries and Librarianship, Instructional Strategies for Information Professionals, Library Services for Special Populations, and Advanced Metadata Management of Library Resources.

—Holly Hebert

President's Corner

When first I entered the president's office, it seemed a daunting task and a year seemed so long. Yet, here we are a year later and the adventure we've undertaken together has been unlike anything I could have imagined. In our annual board retreat, I laid out a list of goals I hoped to accomplish for this organization by the time my tenure ended. However, the only thing I came close to actually seeing to fruition was the effort to bring our annual conference online for a wider audience of our membership. But, as we all know, COVID-19 had another agenda and we weren't able to see how our grand experiment would work. Nonetheless, the plans were made and fully in-place, thanks to our conference committee and the wonderful members of the continuing education committee. Now we know that it is possible, what the costs entail, and how to plan. The other items on my to-do list completely fell to the wayside as we entered the legislative battle none of us saw coming.

With the help, wisdom, and guidance of so many of you we navigated those difficult waters within the legislature and came out victorious. However, we know that this fight is not over and that for the foreseeable future new angles will be attempted, and a new fight ensued. As difficult and stressful as that experience was, I cannot fully express what an honor it was to be the person at the front of the line. The outpouring of support and confidence you all had for the board and me to lead the way was humbling. Thank you all for trusting me. As I would have said in my remarks at the conference and awards ceremony this year, I absolutely could not have done this without Sharon Kay Edwards. The amount of time she spent in Nashville talking to legislators, which at times was not a fun experience, the

phone calls, emails, late night therapy sessions with me—I would have been lost without her dedication and friendship. In addition, I must give special thanks to our state librarian, Chuck Sherrill, for his intimate knowledge of, well, everything and his guiding wisdom throughout this experience. And of course, the executive board, the members of which dropped everything and attended last-minute, special-called meetings to put the needed touches on medial statements, and other decisions. Then, there is you, the membership. You took to social media and spread the word of our cause like wildfire. Thank you as well to those that made the drive to Nashville to personally advocate. I know some of you drove long distances to personally represent your own libraries as well as TLA. Whether you all agreed with every decision or not, you offered nothing but pure love and support. Never once did I receive negativity or criticism. The pressure of potential failure was crushing at times, as the love I have for what we stand for runs deep. But all the encouragement and kind words kept my fighting spirit alive. Unfortunately, our vigilant watch has not ended, and we continue to monitor for any signs at the legislature that library issues are on the horizon.

This year the board was tasked with another vital endeavor—the search and hiring of a new executive director. Replacing Annelle Huggins, who has led for so many years, was a scary prospect. Our efforts resulted in the hiring of Cathy in this new position, and her intimate knowledge of TLA has proven effective. Cathy has held nearly every position there is to hold in this organization, and now we are able to bring conference coordination and executive leadership together. During our legislative ordeal, Cathy



was invaluable in making phone calls, delivering food, arranging meetings, and so much more. And, let us not forget that she and the conference committee had an absolutely wonderful annual meeting prepared for us. You guys are the unsung heroes, in my opinion. Putting together a conference is no easy task, and a special thanks goes to Dr. Cindy Welch and Missy Dillingham for their leadership in conference planning this year as well. Thank you to all the members who worked to make this year a great one indeed. I'm sorry we weren't able to be together.

Through all of the year's chaos, we still managed to hold elections and carry out business. I would like to throw out a great big welcome to all our new board members, as well as those that have time left to serve. I worried that the work ahead, knowing the potential battles we may face, would deter people from volunteering for leadership roles and accepting officer nominations. Yet, I was wrong. I believe that our organization has a renewed dedication to our collective passion, and we had no shortage of accepted officer nominations and numerous volunteers for committee positions and the like. As I leave this office, I (digitally) passed the gavel to Erika Long and I could not be more thrilled. With Erika's election to the president's office, TLA brings school

librarians back in with renewed vigor and vision. I look forward to serving with her yet again. Then, in our most recent election, the membership brought in Sharon Kay Edwards as VP and future president. What can I say? We have a few years ahead of us under the leadership of two people whose passion and big ideas even exceed my own! We are in such good hands.

To wrap it up, it has been an honor of a lifetime to serve you all in

this capacity. I look forward to the day that we are settled into a “normal” life—whatever that may look like. I eagerly await the day we can all be together again at conferences, meetings, and board retreats. But until then I wish you all the best of luck as you navigate uncertain times. From the beginning of quarantine, I have been awed at the creativity and dedication you have expressed in finding new and innovative ways to maintain your commitment to serving your commu-

nities. Libraries big and small implemented all kinds of remote services and continue to implement fresh ideas as many of us prepare to educate our children at home. Keep it up and keep notes...we need your ideas presented at future conferences and webinars! Thank you again for this opportunity, it truly was an honor.

—Sincerely,
Jillian Rael
TLA President

Meet Erika Long, Your New TLA President!

Greetings TLA Members!

It is with great honor that I introduce myself as your 2020-2021 TLA President. I am thrilled to lead this association over the next year. Over the last few years, our association has faced some weird and unforeseen circumstances. We met these challenges head on and with an unwavering commitment to our profession. While I know the universe cannot guarantee this year will be free of obstacles, I am confident that we can meet any challenges that come our way. This year will be unique to say the least. With the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing, libraries are still going through reopening phases and school and academic libraries are navigating a new normal. Our work in our individual communities and as an association will look a little different. But as with any other instance, we librarians will remain flexible and work through ambiguity. I look forward to seeing how we reach success this year. But, before we begin the work ahead, it is fitting that I share a little about myself.

- Native of Memphis, spent 15 years in Knoxville before moving to Nashville 3 years ago
- Undergrad and MLIS degrees from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

- Pursuing a master's in instructional leadership at Tennessee State University
- Middle school librarian in Metro Nashville Public Schools (with high school experience)
- Other leadership roles: Secretary/Treasurer of American Association of School Librarians, UTK SIS Alumni Advisory Board, ALA United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Task Force

Over the past few years, I have worked to increase the representation of school librarians in TLA. This year, I hope to build on the small success from the past and create more sustainable collaborative partnerships between all types of librarians represented in our association. I also plan to work with the Legislative Committee to reorganize Library Legislative Day in an effort to strengthen our advocacy. Finally, I would like to consider ways in which our association might create tangible actions regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion as it relates to demographics in the profession. I hope that you will join me in these efforts by sharing how you would like to contribute to the work, for we can only do this together. I encourage you to share your ideas, concerns, and questions with me via email at erikalong.lib@gmail.com.



Additionally, I invite you to connect with me on social media on Twitter @erikaslong and Instagram @notyomamaslibrarian. I am excited to see all the ways we move our profession forward.

—Be well,
Erika Long
TLA President



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Volunteer State Community College Hires New Director

On April 1st of this year, Rebecca (Becky) Frank became our new director at Thigpen Library at Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, TN. Originally from Illinois, Becky received her MLIS from Dominican University in 2011, then a Master's in Education from the University of Illinois in 2018. Before joining us, Becky was the Assistant Library Director at Trinity International University in Deerfield, IL for four years.

Becky and her husband Bradley have a son, Charlie, who just turned two years old. Becky and Bradley



Becky Frank,
Director at Thigpen
Library, Volunteer
Community College

will celebrate their ten-year wedding anniversary in December. In her spare time, Becky enjoys trivia games, crocheting, long-distance running and, of course, reading.

Becky started her directorship during an unprecedented time at our college due to the CoVid-19 Pandemic. She had the daunting task of learning her new job and getting to know her employees as she was working from home during the shutdown of the college. Becky impressed the library staff with her bubbly personality, friendliness, knowledge and willingness to listen to suggestions and concerns. The staff looks forward to working with her for many years to come.

Becky can be reached at rebecca.frank@volstate.edu or 615-230-3412.

—Lynda Vincent and Ann Kirkpatrick



Photo credit: University of Tennessee

Congratulations to Diane Kelly

We are proud to announce SIS Director Diane Kelly (University of Tennessee) has been appointed the new Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. She has served our community so well and we are excited to see how she continues to represent librarianship and information sciences on a larger platform. Please be sure to send congratulatory praise Diane's way. Congratulations, Diane!

—Erika Long