

NJLA NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

September 2022

Vol. 20 Issue 4

Important Dates

NJLA Executive Board Meetings

Tuesday, October 18, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, November 15, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, December 13, 10 a.m.

Youth Services Forum

Monday, October 17, 8:45 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Reference & Adult Services Forum

Thursday, October 20, 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Diversity & Outreach Unconference

Thursday, November 17

View the [NJLA Events Calendar](#) for all meetings and events.

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NEW JERSEY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

SUSTAINABLY
FORWARD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: SUSTAINABLY FORWARD IN A TIME OF CHANGE



by JESSICA TRUJILLO

All that you touch you change. All that you change changes you. The only lasting truth is change.

— Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*

Hello to another exciting year of NJLA programs, plans, and activities. I am already thrilled with the work our sections and committees have begun for the upcoming year.

This year's theme, "Sustainably Forward," is inspired, in part, by the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI), which uses the triple bottom line framework – that programs and initiatives are environmentally sound, economically feasible, and socially equitable – to ensure long term feasibility. I would like to add that framework, staff time, and personal capacity as we plan for the future.

During these last two years, it felt like the only constant was change. Plans were made and altered often without a long lead time, and we all did it with aplomb and were praised for our resiliency. Being able to adapt quickly and successfully has served us all well, but it often came at a cost in the form of staff burnout and the loss of time and capacity for long term planning and thinking. As we prepare for the future of NJLA and within our individual libraries, planning for staff capacity and having the flexibility to scale up or down as capacity changes are necessary to ensure that we are not sacrificing the individual for the whole.

The other constant I experienced in recent years was the fact that none of our work happens without the passion, caring, and support of our staff. Not only have front-line staff responded and provided service to our public, but I have witnessed colleagues offering advice and support to each other on a personal level, and have seen library workers rally around school librarians facing backlash for upholding intellectual freedom. But I know there have been countless instances of the New Jersey library community coming together during these challenging times. What I am most excited about this year is assisting you in any small way that I can. Like my karaoke game, my work for NJLA this year might not be perfect, but it will be delivered with enthusiasm, and if I get distracted or lose my place, just sing the chorus and I'll pick up the threads.

Jessica Trujillo is the current NJLA president and enrolled in a Ph.D. program at Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management because why wait for life to impose changes on you when you can do it yourself? Her research focus is on EDI, leadership, and education. Email her at president@njlamembers.org.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by **CINDY CZESAK**

The New Jersey Library Association is the largest, and oldest, library association in New Jersey. It was started in 1890 and the first President was Reverend William Prall; he was a Reverend in Paterson, New Jersey, an Assemblyman from his district, and wrote the legislation that allows communities to vote to create a municipal library. Paterson was the first library that adopted this legislation, in 1895.



Why am I offering a history lesson in this space? Because I am aware of and feel the weight of history. From 2000 to 2017, I was the Library Director of the Paterson Public Library and took the position somewhat unaware of the historical significance. As I became aware of the depth of history, I was moved by the vision of Reverend Prall and the future vision of the people of Paterson. It is a legacy that I tried very hard to support.

Now I am jumping from Paterson to NJLA; this is an association to which I have been dedicated for at least 35 years. I have worked in so many different capacities – committee membership, section participation, Board member, President. I have made friends, helped to move initiatives forward, debated difficult issues, and had some fun.

I am so honored to be in this position, even if it is temporary and part time! I genuinely care about this association, the people who are involved, the libraries of New Jersey, the issues we support. And, as the association searches for a new Executive Director, I feel confident that we will find someone who can both lead and support us all; we have challenges and I know that, together, we can continue to move libraries forward.

Cynthia Czesak is the retired Director of the Paterson Public Library, working there for 17 years. Prior to that, she worked at the Clifton Public Library for over 20 years; for 13 of those years, she was Director. Since retiring, Ms. Czesak has formed a consulting firm and has served as interim Executive Director of BCCLS, Demarest Public Library and Parsippany Public Library. She now works for Library Crossroads Consulting.

Ms. Czesak has been very active in various library organizations in the state of NJ, including serving as NJLA President, and was selected as a NJLA Librarian of the Year. She has also served on several ALA committees, including on ALA Council for 9 years.



NJLA Newsletter

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OTHER NJLA NEWSLETTERS:

**Use these links to access
the latest newsletters from
other NJLA Sections.**

[Professional Development](#)

[College and University](#)

[History and Preservation](#)

INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING?

For all inquires please contact

newsletter_editorenjlamembers.org

Proposals for the Winter 2023 issue are due on NOVEMBER 14TH

YOUTH SERVICES FORUM RETURNS

Registration is open!



We're back!

Libraries make shhh happen.



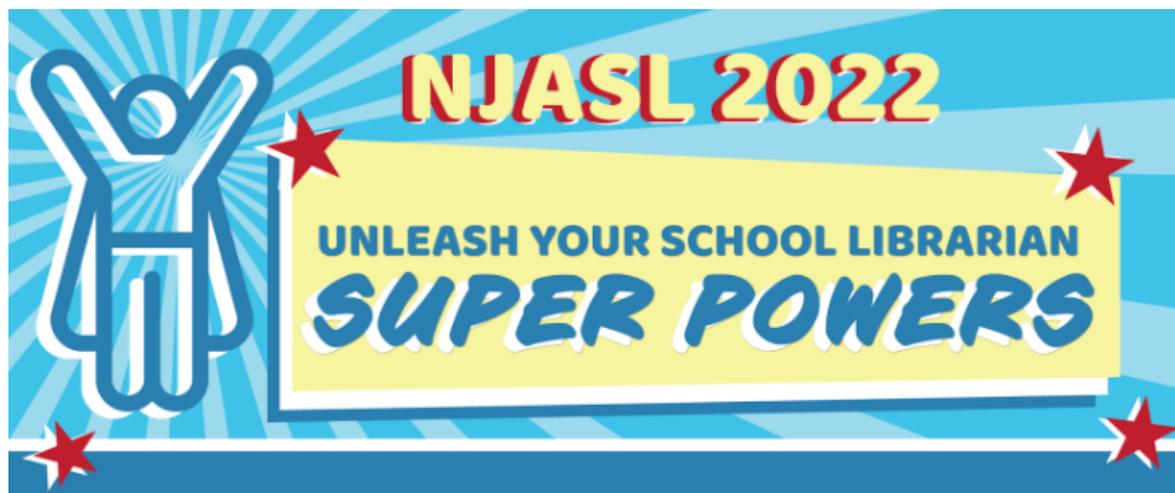
NEW JERSEY
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

NJLA

The members of the NJLA Youth Services Forum planning committee are pleased to announce the return of this valuable full-day workshop after a two-year hiatus. Mark your calendars for Monday, October 17th to gather with other youth services librarians at Monroe Township Library from 8:45am to 3:00pm for NJLA Youth Services Forum 2022 - We're Back: Librarians Get Shh! Done. **Registration** is limited and closes on October 7, 2022. Don't miss out on this opportunity to participate in this collaborative experience and connect with colleagues old and new!



REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR NJASL 2022 CONFERENCE



The New Jersey Association of School Librarians is pleased to announce that Registration for the NJASL 2022 Conference, Unleash Your Librarian Superpowers, is now open. The event will be held at the Hard Rock Hotel in Atlantic City from December 4-6, 2022. Our featured keynote speakers include author/illustrator Jarrett Lerner and Printz Award-winning author Malinda Lo. There will be a multitude of professional development sessions, opportunities to connect with authors and illustrators, and an exhibitor hall to meet our vendors. Join us to make new connections and learn with your school library colleagues.

Check out our [conference website](#) for registration, hotel, and more!



The Nominating Committee for the 2023 ALA election is soliciting nominees to run on the 2023 spring ballot for the offices of **ALA president-elect** and **councilor-at-large**. For more information, including answers to frequently asked questions for either role visit the [ALA Election Website](#).

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NEW JERSEY LACK THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO ADDRESS COVID-19 MISINFORMATION

A new study by Assistant Professor Britt Paris shows a lack of resources, institutional resistance, and the inability to target library practices around misinformation impeded the ability of New Jersey public library staff to address pandemic misinformation.

by **CAROL HEHER PETERS**

Is it true that chlorinated pool water is less likely to spread COVID than salty ocean water? Can dogs and cats become infected with COVID and spread it? Is it dangerous to get too many booster shots?

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, misinformation has continued to swirl around every aspect of the disease; its spread, and its impacts on humans and the world around us. But where does the American public seek trustworthy information about the pandemic? Certainly much of this fact-finding happens online and is motivated by a number of factors, which has exacerbated the situation. Some have suggested that trust around verified public health information might be built by looking to public libraries and librarian practice around information literacy as models. But have libraries and the people who work in them been able to squelch misinformation surrounding COVID and other topics?

Assistant Professor of Library and Information [Britt Paris](#) and her co-authors [Kathleen Carmien](#) 'M122, a circulation assistant at the Franklin Township Public Library, and [Michelle Marshall](#) 'M122, launched a study during 2020 and 2021 seeking to understand these issues. They presented their findings in the paper, "["We want to do more, but...": New Jersey Public Library Approaches to Misinformation](#)," published by Elsevier in the *Journal of Library and Information Science Research*.

This study fills a gap, Paris said, while other recent academic studies have discussed the nuances surrounding different types of libraries' ability to address misinformation, few have focused on how public libraries, who interface with the broadest swathes of the public, might remedy misinformation around public health issues.

The goal of the paper, the authors wrote, "is not to place the burden of responsibility on library patrons, or on already overworked and underfunded libraries, but to better understand how libraries engage with misinformation and, where applicable, to draw out what support they might need from other actors and engaged stakeholders in these endeavors."

Article continues on next page.

COVID-19 Misinformation cont.

Their findings show, Paris said, that a lack of resources, the perception that libraries are, can, and should be a neutral arbiter in these discussions, even when neutrality doesn't match the needs of their patronship, and that library staff members feel they are "speaking to the choir" when they share verified information about the pandemic, are all impediments to the ability of public libraries in the state to address misinformation about COVID-19. The study's findings also reveal the tactics employed by the libraries to combat misinformation, ranging from active to passive interventions, and literacy-driven to topic-driven tactics.

Their findings can be useful to librarians or those interested in library practice, in evaluating existing methods of addressing misinformation within public libraries, as they sort through methods of addressing misinformation while developing new tactics and partnerships that can be leveraged to meet this goal, Paris said.

"Perhaps unsurprising," Paris said, "is that librarians are operating on small budgets and are often overworked, suggesting the need for better funding and support for these public information institutions. If anything, it suggests to academics that public libraries are eager for partnerships with those who have expertise in different areas, including health and medical expertise, as well as expertise in information practices, social epistemology, political science, and history to assist them in developing resources, programming, and practices around misinformation and information literacy."

To conduct their research, Paris said, they examined library websites and ephemera to see what types of events, services, links, and library guides the 295 public libraries in New Jersey hosted online in the time frame from November 2020 through May 2021. They then surveyed library staff with a series of questions on their approaches to misinformation. Finally, they talked to library staff members across the state to understand how they personally respond to misinformation as well as how they understand their library's stance and responses to misinformation. Paris said her research team primarily conducted their research online due to the guidelines around pandemic distancing as vaccines were first becoming available to the wider U.S. public.

She and her co-authors (one being a New Jersey library staff member) were motivated to conduct this study, Paris said, first because they are New Jersey residents and information science researchers and second, to critically question wider discourse to focus on library

Article continues on next page.

COVID-19 Misinformation cont.

practices and codes of professionalism as a way out of the post-truth crisis; and third, to better understand the nuances of how local, New Jersey public libraries respond to misinformation.

Britt S. Paris is an Assistant Professor of Library and Information Science at Rutgers University. Paris is a critical informatics scholar using methods from discourse analysis and qualitative social science to study how groups build, use, and understand information systems according to their values, and how these systems influence evidentiary standards and political action.



This article originally appeared on the Rutgers School of Communication and Information Website.



The Library of Congress Federal Credit Union is a supporter of the NJLA Newsletter.

More information can be found [here](#).



NJLA SECTION SPOTLIGHT: HISTORY AND PRESERVATION SECTION PRESERVING HISTORY TOGETHER

by **BETH ZAK-COHEN**

Anyone who enjoys history and preservation is welcome in the History and Preservation Section! Our members include everyone from librarians to archivists to educators. We work at libraries, but also, at museums, private businesses, and hospitals.

The Section meets 4-5 times per year, which is a great opportunity to network with other people working in the field and discuss issues. We always end the meetings by sharing what's happening with each member.

The Section sponsors and cosponsors programs throughout the year. In the past year programs included several great talks from historical institutions, as well as four conference sessions on local history topics.

To promote work in the field, we sponsor two awards and have displays at the conference and events throughout the year. This year several members served on a Task Force about NJLA's own Archives and were instrumental in creating the Archives and History Committee, to help preserve NJLA's own history.

If you're interested in being part of H&P our member website is updated frequently and includes our quarterly newsletter and minutes, which are a great record of the work we do. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Feel free to reach out to me at szakcohen@npl.org with any questions. Please encourage your history colleagues to join. We're always looking for new members and we'd love to connect with more people in the field!

Beth Zak-Cohen is President of the H&P Section and works in the Charles F. Cummings NJ Information Center at Newark Public Library. Photos by Fred Pachman and Joslyn Bowling-Dixon.



ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

by **KIMBERLY PAONE**



After a two-year hiatus, many were excited to return to an in-person conference in D.C. this June. Unfortunately, COVID continued to leave its mark with some conference-goers opting out due to infection concerns, some contracting the virus before or en route- which led to many canceled programs, smaller panels, and last-minute changes- and the mask mandate that kept the rest of us safe, but struggling to hear our colleagues in the noisy exhibits hall.

There were bright spots, of course - the show went on despite the challenges and there were wonderful author talks, informative programs, celebratory gatherings, and time to chat with old friends, pet bunnies, and collect swag just like in the old days (okay, the bunnies were new!). I personally took advantage of canceled panels that were on my schedule and used that time to speak to vendors--some new, some with which my library has long-standing relationships, and some for whom I had complaints or concerns or suggestions. I'd never spent that kind of time in the exhibit hall--actually making deliberate eye contact, not just grabbing a cool pen and making a fast getaway. It was time well spent.

It was a strange and difficult time to be in our nation's capital, since the Roe v. Wade announcement came just as the conference was getting started, but it also gave many attendees the opportunity to participate in demonstrations and have their voices heard if they chose to do so.

Not a normal conference, by any means, but a memorable one, for sure!

Kimberly Paone is the Director of the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library and the current President of the LMxAC Executive Board. She is a longtime member of NJLA, having served in many different leadership positions over the past 22 years.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: EILEEN PALMER



With plans to retire from full-time library work at the end of the year, I have been reflecting on the many opportunities and experiences I have had since getting my library degree in 1983. I have worked in three states (PA, MI, and NJ) and met many wonderful people who share my belief in the powerful impact that libraries, and the people who work in them, have on the people we serve. Libraries have been a perfect fit for me. I loved every job I have had, although LMxAC holds a very special place in my heart.

A common thread throughout my career has been engagement with state library associations. It did not start out that way, though. Early in my career my boss came up to me at one of those opening receptions at a PA Library Association conference. "Come meet some people," he said. Twenty minutes later I was co-chairing the upcoming Library Legislative Day in Harrisburg. Thus began my love affair with library associations. Throughout all my jobs in all three states, association work has added a richness to my career that I could not have imagined. I am grateful for the impact of our work, for the people who have become my friends and role models, and for the camaraderie that provided the renewal and rejuvenation we all need from time to time. If anyone were to ask me for advice, it would be to engage with NJLA. Do what you can to make it better. While you are doing that, I promise you the rewards you will receive will last a lifetime and pay dividends through the people you meet and the work that you share. I am deeply grateful to NJLA and all of its members, and look forward to new opportunities to serve the association.

Eileen Palmer has served as the Executive Director for the Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium for over 16 years, and will retire at the end of 2022. She is a Past President of NJLA (2012-2013).

Eileen Palmer at a rally to reopen the Orange Public Library in 2013, while she was NJLA President.



FEATURED PARTNER**NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION****by JANET ROYAL**

NJEA is the largest union and professional organization for public school employees in New Jersey. Along with over 194,000 members, we work to ensure that New Jersey's public schools are strong, that public school employees are treated with professional respect and that every New Jersey public school student has access to a great public education.

Public schools are at the heart of every community. We know that when our communities thrive, our students thrive. Therefore, we strive to be a justice-centered union that advocates for the rights of educators, students and parents and the wellbeing of all communities. That includes standing up for academic freedom, and for making sure that New Jersey students have access to the books, curriculum and instruction they need in order to become successful, engaged citizens.

We believe that one of the most important life skills for any child growing up in the 21st century in America is to learn how to analyze and evaluate information. In a world where the volume of information – not to mention misinformation and disinformation – grows daily, understanding how to determine what information is reliable and true is critical. New Jersey's school librarians are at the forefront of preparing our students to be careful, informed consumers of information.

We are proud to represent New Jersey's school librarians, and even prouder to work side by side with them to uphold our nation's core democratic values of free speech, free access to information and high quality free public education available to every child.



ENHANCED INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP: A MOMENTOUS STEP FORWARD FOR NJLA

by **WILL PORTER**

Beginning in January, NJLA Institutional Members will have the opportunity to choose our new Enhanced Institutional Membership (EIM) option. The EIM will give member institutions the ability to treat all of their employees as NJLA individual members, with the ability to vote, participate in committees and sections, and attend continuing education programs—even Conference—at member rates.



The EIM came about following the planning process that ultimately produced the 2019–2022 NJLA strategic plan. During that process, the Strategic Planning Committee discussed that several state library associations had begun moving from individual memberships to an institution-based membership model, with good results for the stability of their organizations. However, we did not have a fully-formed vision of how NJLA could implement such a model, and there was no will to leave behind the individual membership model NJLA has long relied upon.

In the years that followed, NJLA leadership discussed institution-based membership models many times, without settling on a final configuration. The need for a method for institutions unable to reimburse staff for individual memberships to facilitate broader participation in NJLA and access to NJLA resources remained constant, while individual membership numbers fluctuated.

Finally, as the 2021–22 fiscal year rolled around, the Finance Committee, taking a ‘both/and’ approach to the question, was able to settle on what the structure of an optional enhanced institutional membership would look like for NJLA, and how it could coexist with, and even complement, the individual membership structure that has seen NJLA through so much. We are very excited to roll out EIM. For my part, I cannot wait to see all of the ways it facilitates my library system’s participation in NJLA.

Many thanks to the NJLA office staff, who are working hard to smooth the transition for organizations and individual members who find their status changed by EIM. Instructions for institutions wishing to take advantage of EIM in 2023 will be coming soon!

For more information on the EIM option, see [this flyer](#).

Will Porter is Director of the Sussex County Library System, headquartered in Frankford Township, NJ. He holds an MLIS from the University of Texas at Austin in Austin, TX. He is the current NJLA Finance Committee Chair. His email address is wporter@sussexcountylibrary.org.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Jennifer Elliot is the new Head of Adult Services at the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library.

Sara Figueroa is a Children's Librarian at the Margaret E. Heggan Free Public Library in Sewell, NJ as of September 2022.

Bonnie Lafazan is the new Assistant Library Director at the Springfield Free Public Library as of May 9, 2022.

After 16 years of service, **Eileen Palmer** will retire from her position as the Executive Director of the Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium on December 30, 2022.

Eric Schwarz is the new Research Librarian at the New Jersey Department of Transportation as of July 7, 2022.

Laura Shiber is the new Children's Librarian at the Cherry Hill Public Library as of August 2022.

Jen Sulligan is new Adult Services Department Supervisor at the Somerset County Library System's Hillsborough branch as of May 1, 2022. She was formerly the Civic Services Supervisor of Home Borrowing and Volunteerism for SCLS.

As of July 1, 2022, Union County College will be **Union College of Union County, New Jersey, and the abbreviated name is Union College.**

Have a job change, retirement, or announcement to share?

Email newsletter_editorenjlamembers.org
to have it included in our next issue!