

UTAH LIBRARIES

UTAH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION | NOVEMBER 2023





Utah Library Association

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ABOUT

The Utah Library Association advocates for libraries and cultivates leadership development to promote library excellence for the Utah library community.

We hope you find the Utah Library Association to be an organization that makes a difference for you, for Utah librarians, for Utah Libraries, and for the citizens of Utah.

Utah Library Association

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President's Message

Migrating South

In September, I had the good fortune of heading south for ULA's Fall Workshop in Cedar City. Merrily Cannon and Carla Gordon, the continuing education chairs, put together a delightful workshop. The most obvious benefit of workshops are the educational opportunities. It's a great chance to learn from others. And that was on full display this year. But my favorite part about workshops, and ULA in general, are the informal learning opportunities, those times when you just talk to your colleagues- about what's going on at their libraries, where they're struggling, and where they're succeeding. Sometimes that doesn't look so serious. It's circling up chairs and sharing library ghost stories (I learned Cedar City's library is haunted, by the way) and sometimes it's talking about the gender dynamics of making employees comfortable talking to their supervisor. Either way, I often find those moments can exceed even the highest quality presentation.

I drove to Cedar City on September 28th. That same evening [The Cornell Lab's BirdCast website](#) estimated 546,200 birds crossed through Utah on their migration paths. Further, an estimated 1,459,200 were in flight that night. Many birds take multiple nights to cross the state, so the number in flight is typically much higher than the number that fully cross. Like those one million plus birds in flight, I broke my trip up into a few stages. I landed first at the Provo Library, then later the Manti Library, before finally roosting in Cedar City for the night.

Joella Bagshaw invited me to stop by the Provo Library and I think she introduced me to every single librarian in the building that day. It was interesting to see some of the same

struggles I face at my library reflected in theirs- libraries as makeshift social service providers, behavior issues, children's access to computers. At least I thought access to computers was a shared issue, until I found out that it was primarily about adults who didn't want children to access computers.

I stopped in Manti as well. Manti has a beautiful old Carnegie library right on Highway 89. I immediately found it familiar, because it reminded me a lot of Salt Lake City's Chapman Library (as an aside, [Chapman is suuuuper haunted](#)). The Manti director, Cynthia Lopez, one-upped Joella and introduced me to all the staff in the building, all three of them. They face a lot of the same struggles, plus small town budget woes. Cynthia also reiterated how important it is to continue to emphasize DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) initiatives.

One of my favorite migratory birds that crosses our state is the Western Tanager. They are beautiful yellow song birds with a black back and a bright red head. Some summer as far north as the Northwest Territories in Canada before traveling all the way to Mexico or Central America for the winter.



President's Message

Migrating South

Sometimes when you're weary from the journey, it's easy to overlook all the things going well. And I saw so much going well! The Provo Library is a vibrant place, colorful enough to put a tanager to shame. Joella took particular care to show me her department, the children's section, and I was so impressed with how they do displays. She makes sure that at least one of the display cases in children's changes each week, so that people get in the habit of looking to see what's changed. What a great way to keep displays fresh!

Seeing the way that Cynthia has adapted her 100 year old building to provide her community with what it needs showed me what "Just Winging It" looks like in the best possible way. The perfect example is their "Zoom Room," a space remodeled during the pandemic that gives them the flexible space they need. I was so impressed with the STEM programming they do there too. I want to stop by again when they have their next big water program.

Canada Geese flying in a V formation is one of the iconic sights of fall for me. Hearing that chorus of honks and the explosion of wingbeats almost makes me shiver as I'm so perfectly transported to a crisp fall morning. The geese don't fly in a V just because it looks good, they fly that way because it makes flying easier. It's easier to make it as a flock.

I hope that all of you have found your flock in ULA. Part of ULA's strategic plan is focused on connection and engagement. Two of our goals are:

- ULA has extended reach throughout the state by engaging new Members.
- Current members feel deeply connected to other members and increasingly engaged with ULA.

If you're reading this message, you're already more connected with ULA than most. But are you as connected as you want to be? ULA is a volunteer organization that relies on the whole flock to be successful, and whatever your expertise, ULA can use your help. And if you're already helping as much as you'd like to, have you let colleagues know about the positive impact ULA has had on you? Have you told them about ULA so they can find their flock? Let's make sure we're all working together to make ULA the connected, collaborative, and inclusive organization that we want it to be, because it's a long way to Cedar City when you're all alone.

Patrick Hoecherl

Patrick Hoecherl
ULA President
Salt Lake City Public Library



Librarian Spotlight

AnneMarie Hatch



This issue I had the pleasure of interviewing one of my favorite co-workers, AnneMarie Hatch, from the American Fork Library. AnneMarie has worked at the library for 14 years. She started out as a volunteer, was hired on as a part-time clerk, and now works full-time as the Digital Services Librarian. I first met AnneMarie when I was hired as the Children's Services Librarian, and I remember how helpful and welcoming she was. Since that time, she has not only been an inspiration for her dedication to librarianship, but she is always willing to go the extra mile, is an excellent sounding board, and has become a great friend. I'm glad I get to introduce you to her.

Where are you from? (Where did you grow up and where have you lived?)

I was born in Utah, but grew up in Arizona. I attended college in Utah and moved back to Arizona while my husband attended graduate school. We then moved back to Utah for his job and I've lived in American Fork for nearly 30 years. We also lived in London for 6 months as one of the faculty families for BYU Study Abroad.

Interesting! Tell me more about living in London. What are some of the things that you did while you were there?

Each week we would take the students on day trips. We also went on some longer trips, so we were able to go to Scotland, Ireland, and all over England. The students had a class where they had to go on different walks around London and I would take my kids on walks with the students. We became very experienced at riding the Tube and going up and down lots and lots of stairs with a stroller. It was hard having little kids with me but it was a great experience.

What was your favorite thing that you saw?

That's hard. One of my favorite places in London to go was

St. Paul's Cathedral. There's a crypt underneath, that at the time, had a temporary exhibit with some sculptures that I really liked. Stonehenge was amazing. I got to go with a group of the students to France, and that was my first time visiting Paris, so that was awesome. Where we spent most of our time, besides our flat and the Center, was probably the children's library.

What is one of your favorite memories from working at the library?

There was an older gentleman that came in and wanted help with Libby. I helped him get it set up and talked him through how to use it. He came back a couple of weeks later needing some more help, so I helped him. Then about a month later he came in again and asked for more help with Libby. He told me how old he was, in his eighties, and he thanked me for all of my help. I told him that he was my poster child and that I was glad that he was willing to try out something new and make it work. I didn't see him again after that. It made me happy that he was willing to try it; he knew he could come to the library to get the help he needed, and that the help we provided was working for him.

I don't see what I do as having an impact on the entire world. What I see that I do is having an impact on someone's world.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

My co-workers truly are a highlight in my day. They are amazing people who are so creative. They are so willing to help those who come into our library. I also really enjoy helping people with whatever brings them to our library—whether it's finding a book for their avid reader child (or themselves!), showing them how to navigate the Libby app, giving them directions to a local site, or just sharing a smile and hello.

What is a project you are most proud of?

In my personal life: raising 3 children who are productive members of society who are now providing me with delightful grandchildren. In my work life: earning my Paraprofessional Certificate very quickly after becoming a full-time employee.



Tell me more about earning your Paraprofessional Certificate and what that experience was like.

I was hired full-time in March of 2014 and in July applied for the Paraprofessional program because I felt like it was something that I wanted to accomplish. It made sense. It was nice that I was able to use the time that I had already worked part-time and the experiences that I had, like programming and educational opportunities, towards my certificate. I appreciated that. Also, the mentor that I was assigned to was very helpful. I was able to finish the program in August of 2015 and I was awarded my certificate at the ULA Conference in 2016. It gave me a huge sense of accomplishment.

So would you recommend getting a Paraprofessional Certificate to someone where it might not be feasible for them to get an MLS?

Absolutely! It helps you focus on librarianship and also is a way to show what you do. And ULA's Paraprofessional Program is well put together. Everyone was super helpful and it was a great experience.

What do you love about libraries?

SO MANY THINGS! I love that we have books for everyone, no matter their experiences. I love that we are more than books too! We have a variety of items to check out, programs and classes for patrons of all ages to attend, English classes for those who are new to our country, and spaces for studying or gathering, just to name a few.

What impact do you want to see your work have on the world?

I don't see what I do as having an impact on the entire world. What I see that I do is having an impact on someone's world. So when they come to the library, whether I'm helping them with books, with Libby, sending out newsletters for what's happening at the library, they're connected to our library and that can make a difference. It may not have a global impact but it can make a difference in someone else's day.



What are some of your favorite things?

Books! Regular Coke (no diet for me!), dark chocolate, Mexican food, Italian food, sea turtles, traveling, Disneyland (I'd been 13 years in a row before COVID), crocheting, and my grandkids. 😊

You are a world traveler and I am in awe of all of the places you have been. What would you say is one of your favorite memories?

I went to Cambodia for a service learning trip to offer humanitarian aid. We built houses for several families in a village. With the pre-work done by local trades people, we were able to build ten houses in a day. The homes are small, humble dwellings, but will improve the quality of life for those families immensely. While we were there, we went to an elephant sanctuary. We knew that we were going to see elephants, but at one point our guide pulled over to the side of the road and told us all to get out of the vehicle. Walking down the road was this elephant, Lucky, and her keeper. She was super tame and has lived with humans her whole life, so they arranged to have her come and meet us. We got to have pictures taken with her and feed her. It was a pretty amazing experience.

So elephants are right up there with sea turtles?

One day I hope to go help with the baby sea turtle release. I've read lots of books, fiction and non-fiction, where they release the sea turtles. So, someday I'm going to be able to do that.

AnneMarie, thank you so much for sharing part of your story with us. As always, it's a delight talking to you.

Erin Warnick
President-Elect
American Fork Public Library

IT'S WORTH IT! STARTING A TEEN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

"I need service hours for school."

"I'm 14. Can I volunteer here?"

"My teen needs something to do. Can he work a few hours each week?"

If you've been hearing these questions at the librarian's desk and it's got your gears turning about starting a teen volunteer program, you're in the right place. I'm not going to mince words - teen volunteer programs are a lot of work. However, I truly believe that this work is important, worthwhile, and yes, worth it! I believe in the power of teen volunteers for a number of reasons:

- It gets teens involved in your library. They have a voice and a presence, and it gives them a sense of ownership of their library.
- Teens get hands-on experience that will help them thrive in school, college, careers, and more.
- It helps you get work done!
- Teens can add expertise and provide programs for the community that you may want to do, but don't have the knowledge or planning time for (i.e., math help, D&D, etc.)

So if you're excited about starting a dedicated teen volunteer program at your library, or even just on the fence, here are the things to think about as you navigate the wonderful world of getting teens truly involved in your library.



First Step: Go over your library's policies

In between brainstorming tasks and roles that teens can have as volunteers in your library and daydreaming about having a dedicated group of teens bursting with ideas and enthusiasm, don't forget to go over your library's policies for volunteers. There is often an age limit for how young a volunteer can be. Background checks can be required for volunteers that are 18 but still in high school. Once you know the policies, then you can build the framework for a great teen volunteer program.

Getting the Word Out

If there's a phrase I've heard over and over again working with teens, it's "Meet them where they are" and it rings true every time. If you already have teens in your library, talk to them. If they're not there,



throw up some flyers and posters anyway! Maybe their parents are browsing the library and will help spread the word. Contact your schools! Ask your school librarians to help you. Dropping off flyers is a great start; you can inquire about clubs and classes that have a service hour requirement, too. If your library has a social media presence, ask the person in charge of it if they can do a few posts. I've gone down most of these roads and I've been surprised that flyers in the library have been the most effective method - after all, another phrase we hear a lot is "People don't read signs." With that in mind, I didn't just put one flyer up in our Teen Area - I placed one on every aisle, on our front display of programs, and included a blurb on our monthly calendars. Was it a little obnoxious? Yes. Did it work? Definitely! I kept the flyer simple and bright, and included examples of what teens could do as a VolunTeen. Including these examples seemed to be helpful for prospective VolunTeens, since I've had multiple teens inquire about starting Chess Clubs and D&D. So if you're dreaming of starting a program but need a little help, scoot that program in as an example and see if teens answer the call.

To interview or not to interview

I have worked in library systems that require teen volunteer interviews and in those that don't. Deciding whether or not to require interviews can depend on a few different things. You may work in a community where teens want and/or need a jumpstart into the workforce. By going through an interview process (even if it's just a formality), teens can practice interview etiquette in a gentle, nonjudgmental space.

My current teen volunteer program does not require interviews, only an application and a brief meeting. I typically speak with prospective teen volunteers before they fill out the necessary paperwork, but if I'm not at work when they come in, I make sure to contact them and schedule a meeting to go over where and how to sign in, where our volunteer locker is, and (most importantly) what they'd like to do at the library. Sometimes they know exactly what they want to do - they want to be a Reading Buddy or start a D&D program. Other times, they're not sure. That's when I explain each role to them.

It's important to make sure your teen volunteers will be happy and comfortable with their roles at the library. A potential teen volunteer may inquire about volunteer hours without knowing exactly what they'd like to do just yet. Asking questions can help you both figure out the most successful path:

- What age groups do you like to work with?
- Why do you love, or what do you love about, the library?
- What's your availability? Does this change throughout the school year?
- What are you passionate about? What do you love to do in your spare time?
- Do you already have an idea of what you'd like to do at the library?
- Do you already have an idea of what your career or college goals are?

By getting the answer to these questions both you and the teen will be able to identify where the teen will be most successful.

The heart of it: What can teens do as library volunteers?

Here's the number one rule of any volunteer program: Don't waste a volunteer's time. Always have something for your teens to do when they report for volunteering, and always have a backup task in case a program finishes early or a homework help student is a no-show. Another very important rule: Make sure your volunteers know what to expect. In my own personal experience with volunteering nothing has thrown me more for a loop than signing up for a specific task only to show up the day of and get assigned a different task. Yes, we want our teens to learn flexibility and adaptability, but swiftly reassigning an introverted teen from shelving DVDs to assisting with Kids Craft Time is a recipe for disaster. There's a difference between going out of your comfort zone and being shoved out of it.

That being said, here are a few examples of the roles I've had teen volunteers fill in the past:

Program Helper

Program helpers assist with teen & tween programs, and can help with larger branch programs as well, such as Lego Nights, Craft Time, etc. They can also help with children's programs if they like kids *and* your children's librarians are open to it. Teens arrive early for set up and instructions, help out during the program, and stay after to help clean up. My teen volunteers have been more than willing to provide program ideas and feedback as well.

Program Leader

Chess Club, Dungeons & Dragons, and Anime/Manga Club are just a few of the programs I would love to have at my library, but lack the knowledge and time for. Enter teen program leaders, who have both the knowledge and the passion for these activities. These programs can take place either out in the library, where staff can keep an eye on things or (if you have the staffing levels for it) in your meeting/study room(s) with an employee present. Program Leaders do require a little more meeting time than other roles. Be prepared to go over and clearly explain your library's programming policies and expectations.

“
| **Make sure your
volunteers
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between going
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and being
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—”



Homework Helper

Teen volunteers at my library help run two homework help-type programs: Reading Buddies and Math Buddies. Reading Buddies has teens sitting with a younger reader and helping them practice reading out loud. Math Buddies skews a little closer to tutoring, with teen volunteers helping kids with math basics. Be prepared to set expectations with parents for these programs - teens are there to help, not guarantee straight A's.

Displays/Book Bundles

For more creative-minded and/or bookish teens, planning and designing book displays can be rewarding and fun, especially in your teen area. With great but short celebrations such as National Library Week or Shark Week, teen volunteers can help your library keep up. Book bundles for little readers, which are picture books bundled together according to theme (dogs, back to school, rhyming, etc.), are a great opportunity to teach teens catalog searching skills while providing a cool resource for kids and parents.

Circulation Helper

Some teens come into library volunteering assuming they're going to be in the stacks shelving or pulling books. For more introverted teens looking for that quiet library experience, being a circulation helper might be their idea of the perfect day. If your circulation department is overflowing with volunteers already, ask your librarian staff (and yourself!) if help is needed with weeding lists or other collection management tasks. Just be prepared to tackle a full cart of grubby books by the end of your shift!

Checking In

It's also important to continue checking in with your teen volunteers. Are they still happy in their role? Are they looking for a change? Will they be more successful in another role? Maybe they're looking to add more to their volunteer plate and would like to be involved in additional roles. For teen volunteer programs that have more of a career prep vibe, these can be scheduled as akin to performance reviews. It's a great opportunity to go over what makes your teen volunteer special, what their strengths are, and what you appreciate about them. And if you are having challenges with them, it's a good place to go over volunteer expectations again.

Conclusion

Teen volunteer programs are a lot of work, but they can also be one of the most rewarding parts of your job. They can bring creativity and fun into your library branch, provide important skill-building for young volunteers, and allow you to build deeper relationships with the teens in your community. By going over your library system's policies and procedures, ruminating on the current service gaps in your community, and talking with the teens and parents inside and outside of your library, you will see that a thriving teen volunteer program can happen anywhere! Throughout everything, remember that what you're doing is for the teens. Get to know them, ask questions, check in, and make sure their experience is one they'll always remember...in a good way.

Kaitlyn Gundlach
Salt Lake County Library
World's Okayest Librarian



How Art Enhances Libraries

Many libraries display art. Is it to enhance the environment? Add beauty to the lives of patrons and employees? Give opportunities to community members to display their work? Provide unique opportunities for communicating important ideas and messages?

In fact, art in libraries can serve many functions. Cassandra Belliston, Art and Design Librarian at Brigham Young University, noted “the art that the library has purchased . . . helps the library be a more pleasant and comfortable place to study in than if it were just white walls.”

Additionally, since the art department at Brigham Young University is temporarily located in a facility that is remote from the main campus, many university members would miss the opportunity to see their art. Ms. Belliston described that displaying their art in the library “provides an opportunity for students and faculty to display their work in a nice space and to the broader campus community.” Further, “the artists/curators and their respective departments forge a deeper connection to the library and are more likely to use it, and the exhibits provide an enrichment opportunity to our patrons.”



The power of art as a communication tool fits nicely within the mission of libraries. According to the American Library Association, “the arts play a vital role in our ability to communicate a broad spectrum of ideas to all people. Developing an understanding and appreciation of visual and performing arts promotes artistic literacy. Libraries should offer opportunities for the community to experience art.”

(<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/arts>)

Art’s ability to promote creativity also fits right in with what libraries do. According to PC Sweeney, libraries “support local artists, curate spaces that encourage art, and contribute to building an awareness and appreciation of the arts. Many libraries serve as incubators for creative minds.” (<https://medium.com/everylibrary/how-do-libraries-expand-access-to-the-arts-b666b1652540>)

Finally, art’s ability to bridge divisions and promote understanding is another natural connection to what libraries do. Archivorum describes how “libraries and archives are often perceived as public spaces, and art as the universal language is the perfect tool to broadcast ideas and ignite discourses and engagement in those spaces.”

(<https://www.archivorum.org/post/art-in-the-library>)

Take time to enrich your life by enjoying the art in your libraries!

Dan Broadbent
Physical and Computer Sciences Librarian
Brigham Young University





GROW

WITH INTENTION

ULA 2023

Scholarship Impact Statements



JOSEPH N. ANDERSON

I was very grateful to receive a scholarship to attend the 2023 Utah Library Association annual conference. I'm proud to have been a ULA member since my first year of professional work and to have attended every annual conference since that time. I have gained so much that has helped me in my career - whether it be information from the presentations of my colleagues or from conversations surrounding them. I always come back to my library refreshed and carrying new ideas.

I have had the opportunity to present at the conference several times over the years and I presented twice in 2023 ([A Natural Partnership: How a Cache Valley Literary Institution was Successfully Planted at the Logan Library](#) and [The Climate Crisis and Utah Libraries](#)). I learned a lot and grew professionally and personally through the process of planning and executing my presentations, including working with my three co-presenters on [A Natural Partnership](#) from outside the library field.

This year, I attended many sessions which have stuck with me. Salt Lake County Library staff's presentations about how they handle challenges to materials, how they use geographic data to plan, and how they use statistics in collection management were helpful. The Q & A with representatives of OverDrive and Shadow Mountain Publishing about eBooks was enlightening. Liz Gabbittas' presentation on digital inclusion got me thinking about the subject and discussing it with my adjacent colleagues and friends, Vern, Shawn, and Jenn. Provo City Library staff's presentations on their outreach efforts and management philosophy gave me a vision of how things could be, as did Carrie Valdes' session about removing institutional barriers to service in Grand County. Despite their brevity, the presentations of each of my fellow lightning talk presenters were truly memorable and inspiring.

Thanks to the ULA Scholarship Committee for giving me this opportunity.

Joseph N. Anderson
Logan Library Assistant Director
& Adult Nonfiction Librarian



KAREN BOWLING

Firstly, I want to thank the ULA scholarship committee for awarding me a ULA scholarship to attend this year's conference in Layton. This was my first year attending a ULA event and I was very excited to have this professional experience. I've been working in libraries for 25+ years and really love it when I have opportunities to connect with my library colleagues. My experience was so positive and I hope to attend often going forward.

Last fall I became the interim director of the Smithfield Public Library when our previous director retired. As I've taken this on, along with duties as the children's librarian, I've realized how important a happy library staff is to a library's well-being. I've been working hard to change the culture of the Smithfield Library staff because I believe when communication among the library staff is broken that our service to the community becomes broken as well. One of the first presentations I attended on Thursday was about mindset and addressed some of those concerns. I was able to take several of the key points from that presentation and present them in a staff meeting.

My personal favorite workshops spoke to my love of children's programming. The picture book art evaluation that Rita Christensen gave was absolutely delightful. I also got so many great ideas for future library programming and plan to add a children's book club, outreach to local daycares, preschools, and learned some new storytime transitions and activities which I'm excited to incorporate into my programs.

I loved the opportunity to talk with librarians around the state and reconnect with colleagues I've met at state library trainings over the years. I will soon be stepping back from the interim director position to my role as Miss Karen, the children's librarian. I'm so grateful for ULA making it possible for me to learn more about myself in my various library roles. I feel continued learning and training is a very important aspect of serving the public and I have been able to add a training budget to our next fiscal year. I hope to encourage my co-workers to take advantage of being part of ULA.

Thank you again, so much!

Karen Bowling
Smithfield Public Library



EJ CÁCERES

I attended several inspiring sessions at the ULA conference, and during the event, I found hope in various ways to improve the services we offer and access to those services.

As a storyteller, attending *Stories Teach!* with the renowned Author and Storyteller Carmen Agra Deedy filled me with a renewed excitement for telling stories. It was a dream come true for me to meet and learn from her. Applying the techniques she shared during my storytime has transformed not only my storytelling technique but also the children's experience during the programs. Moreover, listening to her share her story during the luncheon inspired me that I can make a difference with my individual interactions with the patrons of all ages. Her story planted a little seed of hope that has helped me see through challenging times at the library.

Other sessions that I attended that stood out to me were the *Club K2: Adventures in Reading and Tinkering for Early Elementary Age Children* by Mackenzie Woolf, Robyn Green, and Jessica Muhler, and learning about yoga for kids at the library during a presentation by Tami Austin.

Realizing that my institution lacked programs for the K-2 age group sparked a new vision, inspiring me to propose the idea of launching *Big Kid Adventures Storytime*. I am excited this program will be starting in the fall of this year. I will be targeting *Big Kid Adventures Storytime* to Kindergarten to 2nd grade, but will welcome 3rd graders as well. I will be rotating themes between *Yoga Storytime* and *STEAM Storytime*, always focusing on literacy. These sessions will empower attendees to make discoveries through playful activities that strengthen the mind-body connection.

During the conference I had the wonderful opportunity to connect with Kathryn Newman, Communications Manager at Vineyard City, the driving force behind Vineyard Children's Library. Together, we have started a 6 week *Summer STEM Storytime* program in Vineyard that will conclude next week. Children, together with their special grown-ups, gather for the STEM-themed storytimes I've curated. Each session features a story that aligns with the theme, followed by hands-on exploration stations where they can engage in the prepared experiments and activities.

I also connected with American Fork's Spanish Outreach Specialist, Sergio De Chazal. I extended an invitation for him to participate in upcoming community events focused on engaging the Hispanic community and promoting his mental health class taught in Spanish. Additionally, I am looking forward to taking his class myself in August.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to attend the ULA conference. The sessions I participated in have provided invaluable instruction, shaping me as a human, a library worker, and a public servant. It has left a profound impact, offering the encouragement needed to set ambitious goals and persevere through challenges. Thank you for the scholarship that made this enriching experience possible. This conference has been a turning point, and I extend my heartfelt appreciation for your support.

EJ Cáceres



MOLLY CLUFF

This year's ULA conference was just what our team needed to reinvigorate our programming plans. I had the immediate chance to implement techniques learned from the Book Clubs for Tweens and Teens in the Public Library panel (since my summer book club for kids was less than a month away at the time!). Right away we used their tip of having a digital visual for discussion guides. The kids loved getting the chance to show off what they remembered from the book during the trivia section, and it was a great refresher course to quickly review the story. We were impressed at how confidently the kids recalled information and how it set the tone for the rest of the event. Now that we're aware of the book sets available through Book Buzz, too, we'll have many more title options as we plan for future events.

Carmen Deedy's *Stories Teach!* gave us excellent tools to use in our storytelling programs. We benefited from her suggestions on how to find the backbone of a folktale by comparing two different versions. Our staff often has the need to find public domain stories when we provide storytimes in digital formats, so we are now utilizing this strategy for our storytime podcast episodes.

Feedback from caregivers in our community shows significant interest in storytimes that discuss big feelings and emotional regulation. I think this is especially relevant in a post-COVID world where many children had fewer opportunities to develop in social environments. Thanks to the *Supporting the Social-Emotional Development of Children With Picture Books* session, we now have a wonderful booklist of selections specifically geared for the younger age ranges that attend storytime. I particularly enjoyed the *Alphabreaths* book highlighted as it easily lends itself to a participatory reading that simultaneously guides children through coping skills. Also, I instantly added *Annie's Cat is Sad* to a purchase cart too—what a sweet story for helping kids learn to recognize emotions in others (and themselves!) that's a great fit for my storytime crowd.

Attending the conference equipped me with fantastic ideas to benefit the children's and tween's programs at my library. I was thrilled to attend and look forward to future events!

Molly Cluff
Assistant Librarian
Orem Public Library



EMERALD FOX

I attended the ULA Conference as a student intern on the cusp of graduation, just days away from leaving my position as Archival Metadata Assistant at the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah. My purpose for attending was to present the results that my supervisor, Original Cataloger Allison McCormack, and I compiled at the end of a 5-month metadata & archival remediation project. Being a presenter at the conference served as a capstone for my work and underscored the value of what we had undertaken. At the conference, Allie was also able to announce that she had received funding to create a 2-year full-time remediation & archival metadata position at the Marriott Library based on the work we had done for my internship. This was momentous news.

My attendance at the conference was colored by the bittersweetness of having accomplished so much, but at the same time, knowing that I would soon be leaving my position at the library. I decided to participate in the sessions I attended with the frame of mind that I would apply my learning to my upcoming position as an Administrative Assistant in the Department of English, Linguistics and Writing Studies at Salt Lake Community College. I learned how to integrate community in the processes of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity work from two sessions with Emma Houston and Amy Fulton. I learned some quick and dirty basics on grant writing from Rachel Cooke and Faye Fischer. Most of all, I learned that Utah librarians may be scattered across the state and working in vastly different institutions, but there is a long-established community of camaraderie and shared interest in learning and growth that I will take with me and share in my new work environment.

Emerald Fox
Special Collections
J. Willard Marriott Library



HOLLY GRIERSON

Attending the Utah Library Association's annual conference has been a goal of mine since I started my first full-time library position in 2019. With the timing of summer reading, vacations, and the interruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2023 was the first year that it was feasible for me to attend. Since the city of Orem was not paying employee membership and conference fees at the time of the conference, financially I was prohibited from attending, and thought I would, as in years past, be unable to attend. I am indebted to ULA for awarding me the scholarship which enabled me to attend this year.

I was able to attend the conference on Friday, May 19 with a few of my colleagues, and I had an amazing experience. I enjoyed seeing old colleagues, making new connections with librarians in my area, and being enriched by all the sessions I attended. Two of the highlights for me were getting to hear Tracie Hall's rousing keynote address on belonging and watching Carmen Agra Deedy work her entrancing storytime magic in her storytelling workshop. I also enjoyed attending sessions that directly related to my professional role at the Orem Library, such as a session on teen and tween book clubs and a session on emotionally intelligent picture books. I was able to order some of the picture books on the book lists I received, which have greatly improved our collection of picture books. I also took tips like involving teens and tweens more in the planning process from the book club session and applied them to our monthly book club meetings. Thanks to the ULA scholarship committee, again, for making this unforgettable opportunity possible!

Holly Grierson
Associate Librarian
Orem Public Library



JULIE HECKERT

If I had to describe my conference experience in a single word, that word would be connected. More than any other conference, I really felt connected to my fellow librarians, united in our mission to serve and provide access and committed to working with our communities. At my library, 2022/2023 was a challenging year and the ability to attend the conference to talk and network with others was a huge personal and professional strength to me.

I attended several beneficial sessions but the two that will have the greatest impact on my library were *Trends in eBooks: Publishers & Platforms* and *Digital Inclusion: The New Core Service*.

As a digital services manager, both classes offered insights that strengthened my understanding. Trends in eBooks helped me to understand purchasing models, ways to improve my content curation and how to educate patrons regarding the Overdrive service. I have used some of the information I learned to write several blog posts to help patrons get the most out of their Overdrive experience.

The Digital Inclusion class was particularly helpful. The grant that has provided funds for our circulating Wi-Fi hotspots ended on June 30, 2023, and administration was interested in providing options for our patrons. From the content shared in this session, taught by Liz Gabbitas, I was able to provide information about the Affordable Connectivity Program, explain it to our staff and spearhead creating a group of trained city employees who can assist residents navigate the sign-up. Without attending ULA, neither I nor anyone at my library would have had ready knowledge of this program or how to use it to benefit our patrons. This session was tremendously beneficial to me as it exposed me to new programs and ideas.

Thank you to the ULA Scholarship Committee for the opportunity to attend the conference and have the chance to learn, grow and connect with others.

Julie Heckert
Associate Librarian
Orem Public Library



RACHEL HUNTSMAN-PETERSEN

This May, I attended the ULA 2023 Conference, which focused on “Growing with Intention.” I only got my first library job this last August, and I have loved learning so much about this field. Being so new, the theme “Grow with Intention” felt very appropriate for where I am in my career, and I chose the classes and workshops I went to accordingly.

I work at a public library and at an elementary school. As such, I am often asked by both parents and teachers about books based on certain social skills. I was so happy to learn about a variety of books that help children’s social-emotional development and to hear from Carmen Agra Deedy about how to use storytelling to engage children. I have already used the list of books I was given to make suggestions to several teachers based on the behavior issues they’re experiencing in their classes.

I also attended a presentation on how to use collection statistics. I haven’t touched the study of statistics since high school, but using them in a library fascinates me, and I am so excited to use them more effectively, especially as I am weeding and trying to add to the collection of a new-to-me elementary library. There’s so much to know on this front, but the charts and different statistical calculations you can run are so useful to make sure you are creating the collection your patrons want and need.

Overall, my time at the ULA Conference was so helpful. I never thought as a part-time employee that I’d be able to have access to this kind of professional development. The classes and keynote speakers were engaging, the chance to engage with the library professional network was enlightening, and I am so grateful to have had the chance to attend.

Rachel Huntsman-Petersen
Orem Public Library



MARY JENSEN

I am grateful to the Utah Library Association for granting me a scholarship to renew my membership and attend the 2023 ULA conference. As a younger member of the library community in Utah, these opportunities for professional development are vital for me as I lay a foundation for my career. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to co-present a session on evaluating art in picture books, as the experience of preparing and presenting helped me actively engage with my own professional development more fully than if I had simply attended. As I work in a children's department of a public library, preparing this presentation helped me develop expertise in my field and subject matter, making me a more knowledgeable and skilled reference librarian.

I also greatly appreciated the opportunity to attend conference sessions and meet fellow librarians. I often feel that working in the same place with the same people every day can silo my vision, keeping me from seeing the bigger picture. Attending the ULA conference afforded me the opportunity to step outside my bubble and gain perspective. I was inspired by the varied and interesting projects ULA members are undertaking, as well as the countless examples of service-minded individuals who have quietly contributed to making Utah libraries rich and vital community spaces.

Most importantly, participating in ULA has helped me feel that I am part of an amazing network of library professionals who deeply want to help me succeed. Because I belong to a community of passionate and kind individuals, my future is bright and full of possibility.

Mary Jensen
Associate Children's Librarian
Orem Public Library



KATHRYN NEWMAN

Thank you very much for the scholarship to cover the registration fees for my attendance at ULA's Conference in May. Without the scholarship, I would not have been able to attend the conference which provided excellent opportunities for education and networking.

As a director of an emerging library, I was very interested in many of the classes that were offered.

I especially enjoyed the passive programming class offered by Taylorsville Library. From that class, we've implemented several ideas this summer, including purchasing a sticker mosaic, hosting a pop up exhibit courtesy of the Bean Museum and providing a 'guess the character' poster activity. This passive programming has helped increase the time our patrons have spent in the library. We especially coordinated our pop up BYU Bean Museum with the end of our summer reading program as an extra incentive for patrons to pick up their prizes.

The 'teens in the library' class was also helpful as we are trying to target this age group. I appreciated the ideas presented by the Foothill Branch. I was inspired by their diverse reading list. I also really enjoyed the Lightning Round session.

As a new manager, I found Carla Gordon's class *Managing Effectively with Compassion* very helpful. Her thoughts on communicating, caring, providing a supportive culture, setting boundaries and avoiding emotional decisions gave me some good ideas for supporting my employees.

In addition, I appreciated the keynote sessions, especially Tracie Hall's advice about how libraries improve the quality of life of patrons. I loved hearing from our storyteller/author Carmen Agra Deedy.

Networking was especially valuable as I got to interact with other directors and employees especially in my area of Utah County. One of those employees even arranged for us to take a vendor's surplus furniture back to our library for our small expansion!

Again, thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to implementing all I learned in our library in the coming months.

Kathryn Newman
Vineyard Children's Library



NICOLE PERKINS

First, thank you again for the scholarships, for renewing my ULA membership, and for attending ULA Conference in Layton at the Davis Conference Center Wednesday, May 17th – Friday May 19th.

My desire in attending was to come back to our Library System in San Juan County better equipped and motivated to continue implementing changes to improve the patron and staff experience, as well as being accountable to both the ULA Scholarship Committee and the County for the funds expended for me to be able to attend ULA.

From the moment I stepped into the Davis Conference Center I felt welcomed with a warm greeting from the front desk personnel. After not attending ULA for some time I was a little apprehensive and this was an important part of allaying those jitters. I was also greeted by USL staff that I have worked with closely over the years and was able to have a few short brainstorming sessions with several of those staff members in-between workshops.

Although I found worth in every workshop I attended, the following are highlights from 3 of the workshops that impacted me the most:

- CHIS – *Supporting Health Literacy Across Cultures – Communication is the Key* by George Strawley, Lee Whiting, Anni McKinnon, Katie Larsen, Manny Cabrera, and Lasana Trawally.

This workshop interested me because we serve a multicultural community where almost 50% of our population is Native American, mostly Navajo but a significant amount of Ute and Piute as well, and a small percentage of Hispanic descent.

Although the “Across Culture” focus was on refugees, immigrants, and asylees, the majority of the information presented was helpful for supporting health literacy across any culture as well as implementing better communication with staff and everyday life.

The concept presented was utilizing and equipping libraries to be a quality resource giver of finding reliable sources of health literacy which in turn could lead to fewer visits to the ER, being more proactive in preventative care, understanding the importance of needed tests, and correctly administering medications. If a patron understands the information that is provided they are more likely to have a positive outcome.

We were taught that you can’t tell just by looking at someone that they have sufficient health literacy skills and in fact only 10% of adults have sufficient health literacy skills. Everyone is at risk of misunderstanding so communicating in a manner that everyone can understand – using layman terms – colloquial language – is incredibly important. This information, again, can be used in the library world and everyday life.

The information and tips given on communication were easy to comprehend. Because of that I have become more cognizant of using them with staff and patrons alike. The health literacy resources given were valuable as well and I am putting together a training based on this workshop for my staff in August.

- *Grants Crash Course* by Rachel Cook, Faye Fischer

I felt this workshop was important for me to attend since we are becoming more reliant on grants in order to better serve our patrons and the need for me to branch out to apply for the more competitive grants is something that has been on my “bucket list” to help me improve as a Director.

Rachel and Faye worked very well together as a team and gave solid information and advice on not only finding the right grant “fit” but many tools on how to write a successful grant proposal. One thing that stood out to me as I was listening was the importance of planning 6-12 months ahead of the anticipated grant opportunity and understanding the assignments and research that can be done before the grant actually opens up.

Doing the homework of library and community needs, gathering statistics ahead of time, considering who to have write letters of recommendation, formulating your grant idea, considering the expenditures and organizational capacity, having an organization description that is brief and instills confidence, a focus on our mission and community, and reading guidelines can thoroughly help get a jump on the process and alleviate the stress of applying for the grant.

I also found out that Niche Academy has a grant writing course that I am planning on taking and will encourage, where applicable, for staff to take as well.

This workshop was well worth the time and my only complaint was there wasn't a follow-up workshop at the conference to attend.

- *Managing Effectively and with Compassion* by Carla Gordon – Provo City Library

I was drawn to this workshop because of the title and am so glad that I attended, not because we have an issue with having a supportive culture throughout the staffing community of our library system (although there is always the desire to improve), but because most of us need to learn the boundaries we have as staff members towards our patrons. Living in a community of high poverty often presents opportunities to serve along with the challenges of personal limited resources both financially and emotionally.

Learning the difference between having compassion and empathy without feeling the need to take on the burdens of patrons in an unhealthy manner and bringing that back to my staff was important and valuable.

This is some of the information that really hit home with me:

- Empathy – not a promise to problem solve but recognizing the burden and being present there with them. It also means extending grace and understanding that everyone's experience is different
- Insert myself LESS and ask more questions
- Compassion doesn't eliminate accountability
- Compassion does not = enabling
- Be authentic
- Change the culture and you change the game
- Talk with and not about each other
- Share each other's failures and successes
- Model behavior you want to see in others
- Active Listening – people feel more respected and respond more readily

I have ordered several of the recommended books and am looking forward to reading and basing a training for my staff on these resources and this workshop before the end of the year.

The last highlight that I feel is important to mention was one of the speakers during one of the luncheons, Carmen Agra Deedy. I thoroughly enjoyed her presentation and have ordered several of her books for my own personal collection.

I really could go on and on but I have already exceeded the recommended amount of words but want to reiterate the gratitude I have for these scholarships so that I could attend this year. As much as I appreciate the convenience and value of modern technology and being able to meet digitally, those conveniences can't take the place of nourishing connection in the library community and the value of face to face human interaction.

Nicole Perkins
San Juan County Library Director/Blanding Librarian



RACHEL SCHUMANN

I just wanted to first start off by expressing my gratitude for the scholarship that allowed me to come to the conference this year. Without it there was no way that I would have been able to go to it. This was such a unique experience for me, since I had never gone to any form of library conference before. I genuinely loved it!

It was so nice to be surrounded by people who understand what I do and feel just as passionately about libraries. There were a lot of connections I made, and I got so many new ideas from various panels. The *Grant Writing Crash Course* gave me a starting place to hopefully help my director out with grants, and Carmen Agra Deedy's *Stories Teach* panel blew me away and made me want to go out and create a storytelling event in our library.

All in all, it was an amazing experience and I am so grateful for the opportunity to go to it.

Rachel Schumann
Library Clerk
Santaquin City



MELISSA SNOW PRINCE

Attending the Utah Library Association Conference proved to be an enriching and transformative experience for both my job skills and inspiring my library's growth. The conference not only reinforced my knowledge but also provided a platform to network, collaborate, and gain insights into emerging trends and best practices in library services. The exposure to different library goals, missions, new technologies, and innovative programming expanded my personal goals along with the vision I bring to my work and my library.

Receiving a scholarship allowed me to attend a significant amount of the ULA 2023 Conference. I was able to attend many sessions related to personal interests and my current job. The three following examples illustrate some of the different areas in libraries I was able to learn more about and gain skills for my library positions.

From the session *The Neighborhood Indie Arcade* by Ben Swisher and Marcus Koncar, I was encouraged by how libraries are transforming into vibrant community hubs and offering diverse programming and learning opportunities. The session *Evaluating Art in Picture Books* by Rita Christensen and Mary Jensen demonstrated how gaining vocabulary and skills empowers librarians to curate a tailored and well-informed collection that deepens the connection of the reader to the book. Christensen discussed how improved evaluation skills help librarians find diverse and enriching books that contribute to education, inclusion, and diversity, and allow a librarian to match the interests and developmental needs of patrons.

I particularly enjoyed *Digital Inclusion: The New Core Service* by Liz Gabbitas. Digital inclusion, like all DEI, is critical at this juncture in time. Libraries have long been at the forefront of providing equitable access to information and resources, making them uniquely qualified for this role. Gabbitas reemphasized how commitment to professional values, like promoting information dissemination, fostering lifelong learning, and serving diverse communities, forms a solid foundation for digital inclusion initiatives. Libraries have already been offering basic digital services, but to make a meaningful impact, personal enthusiasm, training, a clear vision, and diverse technology resources are vital. These themes were echoed in the other sessions I attended and helped to inspire and reorient my focus after a challenging year for the Orem Public Library and libraries in general.

By embracing change and implementing the knowledge gained from professional development at the Utah Library Association Conference, our library can evolve into a thriving center of learning and engagement, enriching the lives of its patrons and leaving a lasting impact on the community it serves.

Melissa Snow Prince
Orem Public Library

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Special Libraries in Utah

Hello from the ULA Special Section committee! We are conducting a search in order to create a directory of special libraries in the state of Utah. Are you a part of, or know of, any special libraries in Utah? If so, we would love to hear about them, what they specialize in, and where they might be located.



TAKE SURVEY



New ULA Members!

The ULA community, Executive Board, and staff are pleased to welcome our newest ULA members. We are looking forward to seeing what new ideas and contributions you bring to ULA and hope you thrive here.

Charlene Brewer
Annabel Carroll
Amy Crockett
Dana Dillon
Karrica Egbert
Natalie Fjeldsted
Melissa Jensen
Douglas Lai

Sy Maestas
Katherine Miller
Savannah Ream
Makayla Rheinhardt
Eva Sanchez
Denae Sportsman
Shannon Terry
Brenda J Williams

Renew Your Membership

Remember you can renew and pay for your ULA Membership renewal online by logging in to ula.wildapricot.org.

Click on "Join Us", then select your Membership Category. Your receipt will be sent to the email you list in your membership.

What's On at Your Library?

Utah Libraries is happy to publish announcements of library-related exhibits, lectures, open houses, tours, and other events.

Send announcements to Mindy Hale at mhale@ula.org. We publish issues in September, November, February, and April (Annual Conference Issue).

Strategic Planning

November Strategic Plan Update

Fashion designer and filmmaker, Tom Ford, once said, “*The most important things in life are the connections you make with others.*”

I once read that building connections is a librarian's superpower. We not only create connections with our communities through the books and services we provide but we also create connections with other librarians through our love of our profession. Part of the mission of the Utah Library Association is to help cultivate those connections among library professionals. As one of their strategic plan goals, the Mentoring and Networking Roundtable hosted their first meet-up in October. I had the opportunity to attend the meet-up in Utah County. We discussed various aspects of our different libraries, job responsibilities, and had a great time getting to know one another. The Mentoring and Networking Roundtable is hoping to host another meet-up in the new year; however, if you are looking for other ways to connect with other librarians be sure to check the Utah Library Association calendar [here](#). The Continuing Education Committee has some Year of Learning events coming up and the Youth Services Roundtable is hosting their annual Winter Workshop in St. George and I hope to see you at the Annual Conference in Salt Lake City. It is a joint MPLA conference this year so there will be lots of exciting things going on.

Erin Warnick
President-Elect
American Fork Public Library



Strategic Directions

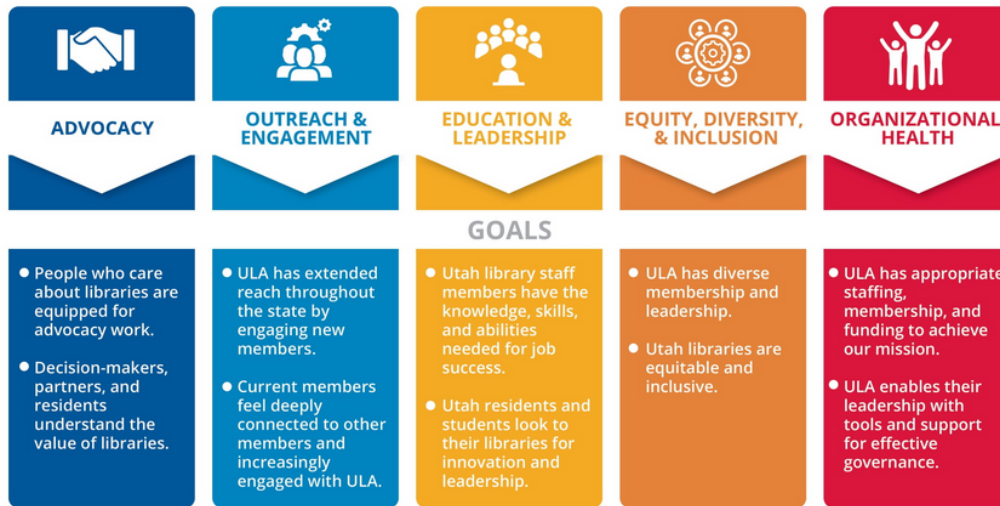


Utah Library Association
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2025

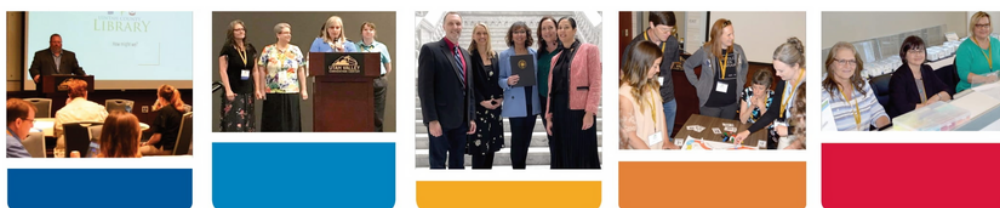
MISSION: ULA Cultivates professional development, connections, and inclusivity to promote strong Utah libraries.

VISION: We are the heart of our profession, circulating knowledge and creating connections.

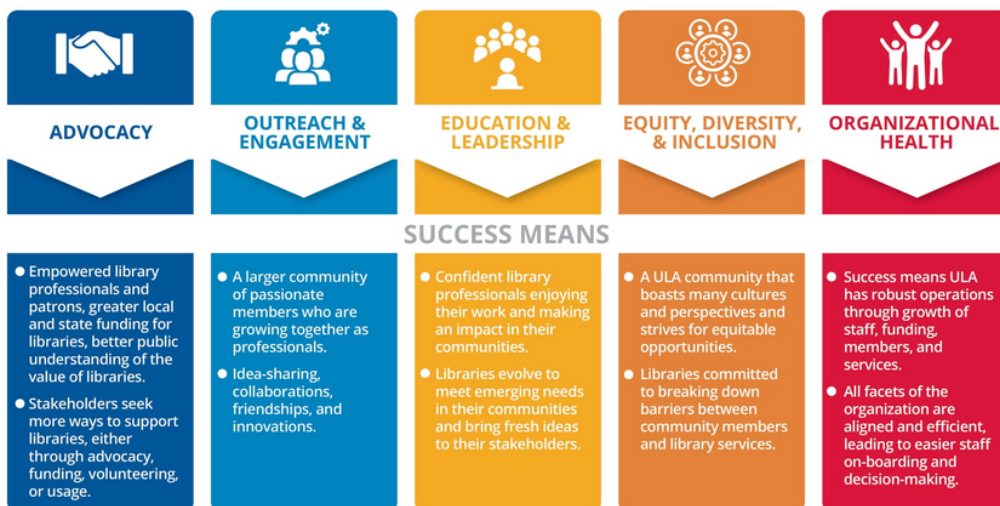
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



GOALS



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



SUCCESS MEANS



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2024 Joint MPLA Conference

More information
Coming Soon!



KEYNOTE



Emily Drabinski
ALA President



Sy Montgomery
Author and Naturalist

LAST WORDS

"Libraries
always remind
me that there
are good things
in this world."

Lauren Ward