

UTAH LIBRARIES

UTAH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION | FEBRUARY 2024





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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Contents

- 04** President's Message
- 07** From the Editor
- 09** Librarian Spotlight
- 12** Food in Academic Libraries
- 13** Special Libraries in Utah
- 14** Utah Public Library Statistics
- 15** United for Change: The Journey of Unionization at the Salt Lake City Public Library
- 18** New ULA Members
- 19** Support Utah Libraries
- 20** Strategic Plan Update
- 22** Read-In at the State Capitol
- 23** 2024 YSRT Winter Workshop
- 24** 2024 ULA Conference

President's Message

Navigating the River of Change: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at ULA's Transformations and Future Plans

I work at the Glendale Library in Salt Lake City. It's just a few blocks away from the Jordan River parkway, and I often spend my lunch walking the trail. The river is an incredible little ribbon of nature wending its way through the city. I'll often see different birds and animals along the trail than I see in the neighborhood. Spotted Towhees in the trees, muskrat swimming in the river, but my favorite of all are ducks, Hooded Mergansers. I see them floating peacefully in the center of the river, seemingly without a care in the world. I always find them relatable, because I know that while they appear to be swimming peacefully, beneath the water their little legs are kicking furiously against the current. So it is for ULA as well. Even when everything is going well, beneath the surface there's a lot of work happening that isn't always clear to an outside observer. Today I'd like to give you all a little peek beneath the surface so you can understand some of the changes that have taken place to ULA this year and also explain why I believe those changes to be important for ULA's future.

If you've been paying close attention, you probably noticed we raised our prices for the 2024 annual conference. If you attend the full conference this year you will pay \$50 more than last year. We will also raise membership prices next year and implement a new tiered fee structure based on income

level. It wasn't an easy decision to raise prices, but last year the conference barely made a profit due to increased costs from the convention center. Our annual conference is the primary way that ULA is able to cover the costs of running an association. Costs like an Executive Director (Mindy Hale) who works 10 hours a week to manage all the details necessary to keep ULA running, or a Treasurer (Allen Arnoldsen) who works 5 hours a week to track our finances and navigates keeping our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. We also hired a conference planner who has the inside expertise to

get us the best deals possible when working with convention centers, not to mention an incredible amount of planning help and advice. Finally, this year ULA contracted a lobbyist of our own for the first time, more on that later.

ULA Membership Costs

	Previous	New 2024
ALA Student	\$22	\$22
Retirees	\$30	\$30
Tier 1 (Part-Time Less Than \$30,000 Annual Salary)	\$30	\$30
Tier 2 (\$30,000-\$60,000 Annual Salary)	\$60	\$75
Tier 3 (\$60,000-\$90,000 Annual Salary)	\$60	\$90
Tier 4 (Greater Than \$90,000 Annual Salary)	\$60	\$105
Trustee	\$0	\$0
Friend of ULA	-	\$15

Whenever I tell someone my conference theme for 2024 is Just Winging It, I have a moment of worry. It's easy to conflate "winging it" with spontaneity necessitated by a lack of planning. For me it's the opposite though. I like to plan as much as I can. However, no matter how much I plan there are always elements I couldn't anticipate. All of the planning helps give me the tools I need to improvise in the face of a new situation. Budgeting is an area where I'd never recommend going in unprepared. In spite of that, each year I've found myself winging it as I helped prepare ULA's annual budget.

President's Message

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Last year a new line item was suggested for ULA's budget. A \$10,000 membership to Utah Cultural Alliance (UCA). As a full member ULA would gain access to UCA's lobbyist. \$10,000 is a big ask as a last minute addition to ULA's budget. The last couple years have seen a significant increase in legislation which has the opportunity to negatively impact libraries, so I felt it important that we have a more effective voice during the legislative session. As a result we coordinated a fundraiser so we could afford the UCA membership. This year UCA's lobbyist left their organization to start her own business. She

offered ULA her services for \$15,000 (and twice that next year). Once again it was a big financial ask at the last minute, but one that felt necessary. Many state associations hire a lobbyist (including significantly smaller state associations like Idaho and

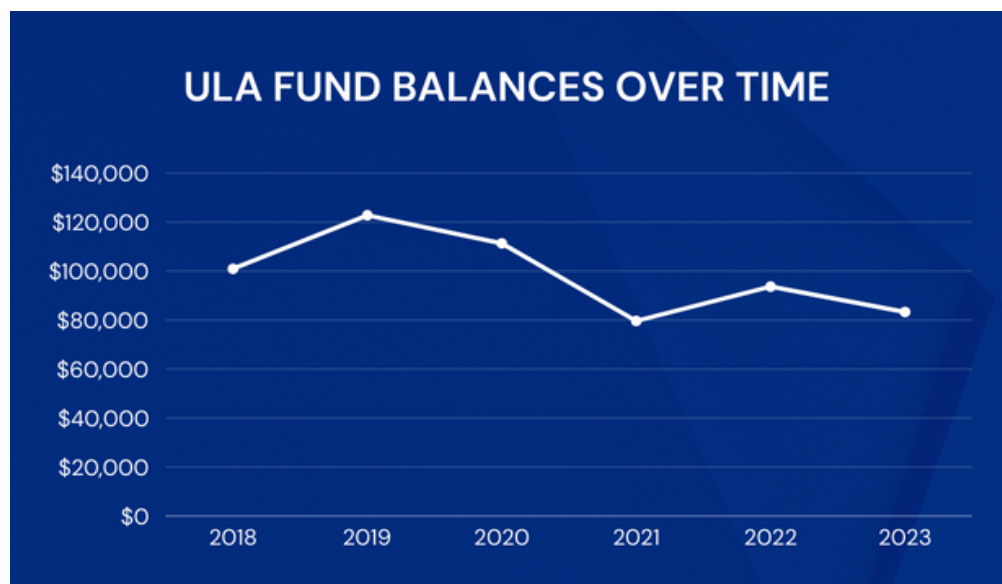
Wyoming) so if they can fund a lobbyist so can ULA. Unfortunately it didn't work out with the lobbyist this year, but we're going to try again next year. This year we need to focus on creating a financially sustainable funding plan.

It's my experience that many birders get into the hobby based on interest in a single bird. For me that bird was our local blue jay, the Western Scrub Jay. I love the way their feathers glint metallic blue in the sun, I love their raucous calls, but more than anything else I love watching them cache food. If you put out a stack of peanuts a jay will happily take every

single one and hide them around the local area. The jay stashes the nuts in trees, or on top of telephone poles, under leaves and in bushes. The jay might even push them down into the dirt. Jays have developed an incredible memory as an adaptation to make it through the winter when food is scarce. They spend the months when there is abundance dutifully storing food so they can find it again during times when there is nothing.

Much like the jay, ULA has times of abundance and times of

scarcity. It's important that ULA maintains a "cache of peanuts" so that we can keep the organization running through the hungry times when we don't have as much revenue coming in. Traditionally ULA has aimed to maintain a \$100,000



fund balance. That gives us enough money to cover some surprises and to pay the upfront costs we need to cover to get a conference planned. Over the past few years maintaining that balance has been difficult. You see in 2020 that we had to cancel the conference entirely. Just like that our primary revenue source was gone. In 2021 we hosted a virtual conference, which we took a loss on. Surprisingly it's a lot harder to turn a profit on a virtual conference than an in-person one. Here's a look at our fund balance over time in recent years.

President's Message

Navigating the River of Change: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at ULA's Transformations and Future Plans

So that's why ULA has raised our prices as well as put a lot of energy into fundraising this year. All of that doesn't really speak to the value of what ULA provides though, the reasons why ULA is worth that extra cost we're adding on. Let me speak to that for a moment.

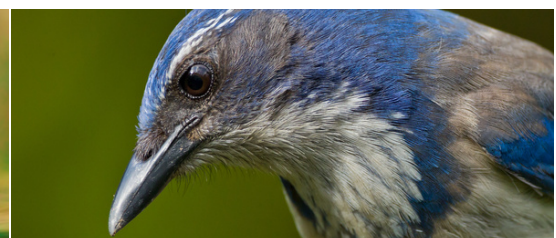
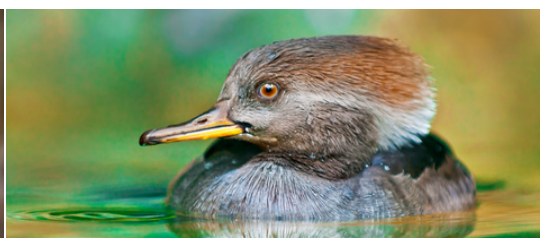
ULA's most obvious benefit is the annual conference that we host. It's a great professional development opportunity for librarians of all levels. In addition to the conference ULA provides learning opportunities in the form of leadership positions. I've learned a lot in my eight months as President (enough that I wish I'd known more when I started...). Beyond that ULA supports advocacy efforts on a statewide level. We track legislation as it is drafted and debated and attempt to influence it such that it works for libraries. I could mention the great newsletter we create, but you're already reading it, so I'm not sure that's necessary.

But more than anything else ULA provides the value of being part of a "flock." Since I started volunteering with ULA I have met so many people who mentored me, inspired me and made me a better person. It's given me a network to share ideas, ask questions and talk through my successes and failures. It's nice to have access to a group of people who face similar challenges, but in different settings with fresh perspectives.

If you made it all the way through this long article, you probably aren't someone that needs to be convinced of the value of ULA. But if you know someone who is on the fence about it, consider sharing some of these points to win them over to ULA. A personal invitation can make a big difference. If everyone that reads this brings one new member into ULA think about the positive impact that has on the whole organization. Thanks for reading.

Patrick Hoecherl

Patrick Hoecherl
ULA President
Salt Lake City Public Library





Seed Libraries and the Meaning of Spring

We may think of seed libraries as a modern practice though this is hardly the case. Indigenous societies in North America, for example, were harvesting and storing seeds 10,000 years ago as part of the food system they relied on. In 1999, the first contemporary seed library, as we envision them now, was established at the Berkeley Ecology Center in Berkeley, California. The first seed library at a public library was instituted in 2004 at the Gardiner Public Library in Gardiner, New York. Today there are seed libraries at public libraries and other institutions that seek to maintain a collection of heirloom seeds and make them available to the public. In most cases, the purpose of a seed library goes beyond preserving and providing access to seeds. Seed libraries afford a level of education on the importance of seed preservation and an occasion for all people to cultivate a connection to nature. In a time of increasing poverty

***If you have a garden and a library,
you have everything you need.***
—Cicero



and food insecurity, a seed library can provide individuals and families an opportunity to grow their own food, work with the soil, and engage in a meaningful activity.

For context, a seed library functions much like any library—the idea being that the public can take seeds, grow vegetables, fruit, herbs, and flowers in their own garden space, preserve and store seeds from their harvest, and return a portion of those seeds for the benefit of the next person. The seeds that are donated back help to create an eventually self-sustaining program.

The value of seed libraries is exceptional in terms of cost and impact, and can transform your local community in multiple ways not limited to promoting sustainability, healthy eating, caring for the environment, and a hands-on education in caring for a garden. Because public libraries were envisioned to provide a means of self-development for all, a seed library aligns well with this mission. Philosophically, a seed library reminds us of our fundamental

connection to the soil and our dependence on cultivation. Working with the earth is a fundamental part of what it means to be human. Seed libraries function with an elegant simplicity that is both beautiful and meaningful to many people and is carried forward by the kindness of strangers. Seeds and what they provide are integral to our health as individuals and as a society; it is proven that the act of cultivating a garden comes with physical, mental, and emotional benefits, thus contributing to greater human flourishing.

Specifically for libraries, a seed library is a great opportunity to provide a relatively low-cost program that has the potential to impact hundreds if not thousands of lives. A seed library is also a great vehicle for tie-in programs such as gardening for

pollinators, honey bees and beekeeping, honey tasting, composting, a plant exchange for the gardening season, and more. The theme and meaning of spring is a great means of promoting the growth and development of those we serve during a season when we observe the renewal and swell of life all around us.

If you have any questions about implementing a seed library as a program offering, please feel free to get in touch. I have overseen seed libraries at multiple branches over the past few years and continue to do so every March and April. You can reach me at cbray@slcolibrary.org.

Christopher Bray
Public Services Librarian
Salt Lake County Library



Librarian Spotlight

Cindy Brightenburg



This month I had the pleasure of interviewing Cindy Brightenburg, Special Collections Reference Specialist at Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University. She grew up in Tremonton and now lives in Lehi, a Utah native through and through. Cindy has been a librarian for 11 years and holds a Bachelor of History degree from Utah Valley University and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from University of Southern Mississippi. Cindy also serves as the Chair for the ULA Outreach Committee.

How did you become a librarian?

It all began when I was a high school student who volunteered in the high school library. I found that I could find things no one else could find and without a computer or card catalog. But I didn't decide to be a librarian until I went back to school in my late 30's. I was able to blend my love of history with my love of libraries to become a Special Collections librarian!

What libraries have you worked in?

I first volunteered in the Pleasant Grove City library where I learned how to shelve books when there was no more room on the shelf. I then worked at the BYU Salt Lake City library helping students with their research and teaching library instruction classes. After that I found my perfect position at the BYU Harold B. Lee Library working in Special Collections Reference, where I have been ever since.

Special Collections is a unique part of librarianship. Would you mind giving me a basic understanding of what it entails?

My experience is in an academic library setting. Some of the collections at Harold B. Lee Library contain rare and old

books, archives of the history of BYU, manuscript collections, Utah history, Western history, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints history. One thing that's nice is that you don't have to be a student to access the collection. I had one patron who came in that was researching information on an old mine in Price, Utah, and we had the records.

What are some highlights from your library experience?

Teaching library instruction to college freshmen is fun as you see the lightbulb go off when they discover scholarly articles for the first time. I have had some great experiences planning and coordinating outreach events for Special Collections. They usually include a chance for people to see Special Collections treasures. One was called 'Hold an Oscar' where we brought out 6 of the Academy Awards in the collection and let people hold them. Another event was when the Candy Bomber Gail Halvorsen came to meet people, sign autographs and take pictures with them. He had donated his collection of photographs and papers to the HBLL Special Collections and we wanted to highlight his work. There was a line out the door and up the stairs of people wanting to meet him! Outreach is the best!

“It is also a pleasure when patrons share with me interesting things they have discovered in the collections. I learn so much from the patrons who tell me stories about their lives and their research interests.”

That’s fantastic! I love the ‘Hold an Oscar’ program! Could you tell me more about the Academy Awards that are in your collection?

Sure, Ken Darby was an American composer that had won several Oscars, his estate donated them to the library. That was before the Academy decided that winners aren’t allowed to donate their awards, so we are really lucky to have them. An interesting thing is that during WWII, due to the shortage of metal, the Oscar was made out of plaster and finished with a bronze-metal flake lacquer.

That is so cool. What are some other fun outreach activities that you do?

We have curators who are in charge of certain collections and they display some of their favorite things. Special Collections has a collection of documents with signatures of famous people, so we have had events where we displayed documents that have the signatures of people such as Thomas Jefferson and Isaac Asimov.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Helping patrons with their research by finding just what they need. It is also a pleasure when patrons share with me interesting things they have discovered in the collections. I learn so much from the patrons who tell me stories about their lives and their research interests. For example, we recently helped a researcher with the location of an old Spanish fort located in New Mexico. They were needing the exact location so that the historical society could put up a plaque.





What is a project you are most proud of?

I am currently working on a project to digitize diaries and journals from our collections that were written by women. With the help of a curator and our digital team, this project will allow more women's collections to be accessed online.

That sounds fascinating.

It's really interesting because there aren't as many women's voices in historical documents as there are of men. Maybe that's because they didn't have as many opportunities to write. A lot of what they wrote about was their day to day life whereas men would write about the grand adventures that they would go on and write about them.

What do you love about libraries?

I have always loved that idea of free information. When my children were young, I would take them into the public library and tell them that they could borrow as many of the books they wanted to, for free! Libraries abound with collective knowledge on almost any subject a person can name.

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

It is important to be a good steward of the historical records that are in my care. I am only a caretaker for a short time and hope that I can do my part to make them available while also keeping them safe for the next generation to enjoy.

How has your ULA membership and participation been valuable to you?


Being a member of ULA is to be part of a group of amazing people who are dedicated to providing information and services to everyone, including the underserved. I am especially grateful to librarians who are committed to showing children the beauty of reading.

Can you tell me about a funny library experience you've had?

I once received an email from the Oxford Dictionary asking for a copy of a page from one of our rare books. They needed to provide a printed example of an author using the term 'lard can'. The email was very formal and serious. I still have it.

Thank you so much Cindy for sharing your stories with me. It was great getting to know you. I look forward to seeing you at conferences and workshops and hearing more about the amazing things that you do.

Erin Warnick
President-Elect
American Fork Public Library



FOOD IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

The Library at Brigham Young University recently updated its food policy to allow patrons to have food in many more places than it used to. It also opened a café that serves bagels, boba, tacos, rice bowls, etc., right on the main floor of the library.

Does convenient access to food have an overall positive or negative effect on a library's environment, and ultimately on patron learning?

Well, the presence of food definitely introduces the risk of causing damage to valuable library resources as well as promoting a casual environment that can lead to noise issues.

However, there are reasons to hold out hope that allowing easier access to food in academic libraries can be a net benefit.

First of all, some acknowledge patrons have been [sneaking snacks anyway](#) despite policies against food.

Also, deliberately providing convenient access to healthy and nutritious options is beneficial to patrons who otherwise might have to rely on what they could get from vending machines, or to stop their work and walk across campus to refuel.

Further, the Urban Libraries Council has described the positive role libraries (public libraries in particular) can play in meeting needs with the "[food is a right](#)" approach.

Finally, considerations such as the connection between nutrition and student performance as well as the ability to foster better collaboration are strong motivators for academic libraries to consider revisiting their approach to food in their spaces.

Dan Broadbent
Physical and Computer Sciences Librarian
Brigham Young University

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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



UTAH PUBLIC LIBRARIES

2022 FISCAL YEAR



1.65 MILLION
Utahns have a library card



25,469 people
visit a Utah library each
day, which is equal to
9,296,401
visits annually

Nearly
33,000
programs were
offered for all ages
by Utah Public
Libraries

Utah Libraries provide access to millions of items:

6,102,889



Books

7,949,711




E-books

13,776,862



Audiobooks

+ thousands more via online databases



The number of programs
offered has increased

51%
over the past 5 years

**1.27
MILLION**

accessed databases for
research and learning
resources

34.4 MILLION

items were loaned last year.
That's nearly 10 items per resident.


Total collection use has increased
8.5% since last year!

144

library locations
statewide that are open

123,736 hours a
year and employ

2,134
full-time equivalent staff



Library staff answered

1.3 MILLION
reference questions

2,174

library computers
were used nearly
872,723 times



Wi-Fi usage jumped
141%

2.1 million
internet sessions



UNITED FOR CHANGE

The Journey of Unionization at the Salt Lake City Public Library

In May 2022 a group of Library workers from across the city gathered with a shared vision to improve what it meant to be a Salt Lake City Public Library worker. We shared stories of our experiences and frustrations about working at the library, while sharing snacks and tea. As we shared about our grievances, a collective narrative emerged. We all had concerns about how our wages weren't adequate for the rising cost of living in Salt Lake City, lackluster healthcare, and lack of frontline staff voices in system wide decisions. These shared struggles underscored the urgent need for change. We chose to pursue unionization to be able to advocate as a whole through collective bargaining with all the legal protections that unions can provide. We hope through collective bargaining we can address internal library issues, advocate for fair compensation and responsive leadership, as well as improve benefits.

Unionizing has been a steep learning curve for us all and we knew we also had to help educate all of our fellow workers throughout the process. We created an online zine using Canva that we could distribute through text or QR code. The zine had links to articles about the basics of unionizing, our timeline as a union and who to contact for more information. We also kept up a Discord server to connect members, discuss issues, and keep everyone updated. These online resources were critical for being able to recruit more members and get people involved.

From the beginning of our organizing, we knew that there were many existing parent unions that we could work with. One of these options was AFSCME - the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal employees. AFSCME 1004 is Salt Lake City's local chapter and represents all city workers. In August of 2022, one of our members contacted AFSCME, they were happy to meet up with us and tell us more about their union. Working with AFSCME, the largest trade union of public employees in the United States, has given us the knowledge and tools we have needed to streamline our process. This also connected us with a representative from AFSCME



International, who has helped organize multiple libraries in the past with AFSCME's dedicated national program to support cultural workers. Through this connection we have learned about the processes other organizations went through to unionize. Having these examples has been invaluable in helping us succeed.

As our numbers grew, we needed an organizing committee with representation from each branch and department in the Library system to helm the effort to achieve unionization. With a strong organizing committee, we were able to hold meetings to make decisions, disseminate information, and plan socials to connect with workers across the system. We set the goal to go public as a union during National Library Week in April 2023.

Once the committee had set a date to go public as a united group in April 2023, we needed to push for an undeniable majority before we presented ourselves to the Library Board and Salt Lake City community. This meant collecting as many signed union cards amongst our colleagues as possible to reach over 50% of our estimated eligible staff. Through the diverse set of skills shared between the organizing committee, we were able to account for over 300 library staff members and determine eligibility, level of interest, and number of signed cards in a spreadsheet littered with filters and automated equations. The months between December 2022 and April 2023 became the most intense and challenging period of organizing for the group. We had hundreds of conversations with colleagues across 8 branches and over 15 departments to acquire our strong majority. While doing so, we were continually met with the challenges of a library system that spread across the city, cultural barriers, social

differences, language and communication gaps, as well as generational divides. We still face challenges in maintaining our numbers as we deal with continuous turnover.

Entering the public sphere in April 2023 was a pivotal moment. With a solid majority of our staff having already signed their union cards, a few of us spoke directly to the Board of the Salt Lake City Public Library, boldly conveying our hope in the future of the library and decision to unionize. After spending months organizing in secret, we shifted into the spotlight—participating in podcasts, radio shows, and catching the attention of local and national news outlets.

Our Library Board committed to recognizing us in August 2023 - another momentous occasion - and we were able to demand the library board to assign legal counsel to start the union recognition process. The past few months have been a holding period as we await the onboarding of our new Executive Director, Noah Baskett on January 8th, 2024.

Our push to unionize is a historic effort, as we are the first library in Utah to seek recognition. We have spent nearly two years on this campaign; we continue to speak truth to our cause and organize amongst each other. We share our frustrations with a job we take pride in as a way to advocate for our beloved library system. The pathway to unionization is a constant push for collective action, and it continues to introduce new challenges constantly, but it is worth it to continue to fight for the community that has united under this shared cause.

In Solidarity,
SLCPL Workers United



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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.

Annika Carlson

Christine Clark

Kathryn Crapo

Madison Golden

Tia Haycock

Haylee Humes

Jenifer Jessen

Isabelle Moats

Sarah Muller

Iysha Perry

Lori Schwartz

Sarah Shreeves

Michele Ulrich

Noah Wakeland

Jesse Walker

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).



SUPPORT UTAH LIBRARIES

ULA Supports Strong Libraries for All Utahns by:

- Advocating for the freedom to read, learn, discover, and create for all Utahns
- Promoting appropriately funded and staffed library services across the State
- Contributing to standards and principles for libraries
- Providing continuing education and staff development programs for library workers

Your tax deductible donation will help to ensure that ULA has the resources we need to effectively advocate on behalf of our shared values as Utahns, and on behalf of libraries, librarians, and those that we serve.

DONATE



Strategic Planning

February Strategic Plan Update

The new year is a time to reflect on the year that has passed and a chance to start fresh with a new perspective and re-focus on our goals. So, I wanted to take this opportunity to talk about some of the exciting goals and activities that ULA has coming up this year.

The Advocacy Committee is taking part in Utah Cultural Industry Advocacy Day at the Utah State Capitol on February 2nd. This gives us an exciting opportunity to connect with legislators to showcase the importance of libraries and how they enrich the lives of Utahns. If you haven't had an opportunity to participate in the past, please consider joining in the future.

Mark your calendars for the Youth Services Round Table's Winter Workshop in St. George on March 8th, featuring guest speaker, Christian McKay Heidicker. This is a fantastic way for Youth Services Librarians to network, learn what other librarians across the state are doing, and pick up a few tips and tricks.

The Conference Committee, Program Committee and the Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) have put together a great joint conference in May in Salt Lake City. There will be opportunities to hear from American Library Association President Emily Drabinski, bestselling author, Sy Montgomery, and President of InclusionPro®, Sara Jones. Additionally, there will be presenters from not only Utah but Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and more. Don't forget to join the fun at MPLA's famous hot tub roundtable, bid on items at ULA's silent auction, and make new friends at the networking social. You won't want to miss it.

I am looking forward to this year with ULA and all of the amazing opportunities that this new year will bring.

You can find a more comprehensive look at ULA's Strategic Plan [here](#).

Erin Warnick
President-Elect
American Fork Public Library

Strategic Directions

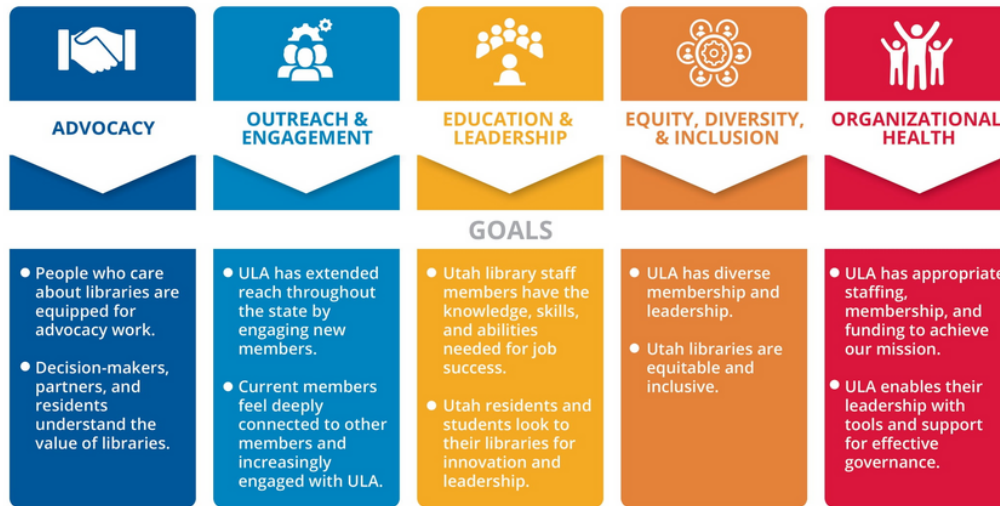


Utah Library Association
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2025

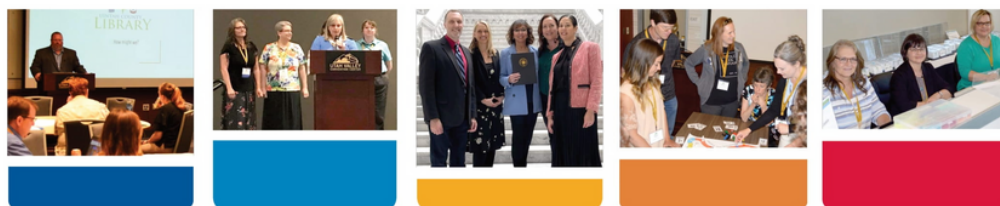
MISSION: ULA Cultivates professional development, connections, and inclusivity to promote strong Utah libraries.

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

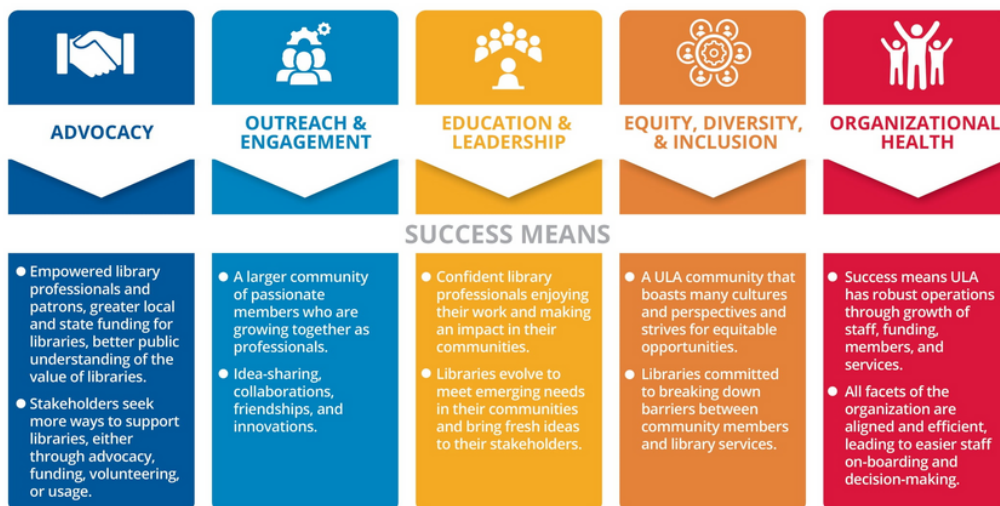
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



GOALS



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



SUCCESS MEANS

LET UTAH READ

Read-In to Celebrate the Freedom to Read

RSVP



February 22



3-6pm



Utah Capitol Rotunda

Speakers, arts and crafts,
BRING YOUR OWN BOOK



LET
UTAH READ

YSRT WINTER
CONFERENCE

Adventures in Winging It

*Choose to attend
either in person or
virtually!*

MARCH 8, 2024
ST. GEORGE UTAH

Keynote speaker
Chris Heidicker



Join us as we learn how to use
our library skills on the fly!

Interested in joining the YSRT Board?
We are looking for members!

REGISTER HERE



ULA and MPLA
2024 Annual Conference

MAY

8-10



Just Winging It



ALA President

**EMILY
DRABINSKI**



Author

**SY
MONTGOMERY**



Keynote

**SARA
JONES**





LAST WORDS

“A good library will never be too neat, or too dusty, because somebody will always be in it, taking books off the shelves and staying up late reading them.”

-Lemony Snicket