

FLORIDA LIBRARIES

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Conference Proceedings Issue

Florida Libraries

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FROM THE EDITOR

MARY DANIELS



I'm so happy to be able to present our Conference Proceedings issue. The Florida Library Association conference is an amazing gathering, and I want to be sure we include as much as possible in this issue to refresh the memories of attendees, and to include our colleagues who were unable to attend.

Conference opened with Jaena Rae Cabrera, President of the [Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association](#), journalist, and Branch Manager at San Francisco Public Library. The breadth of her work and focus on engaging communities creatively and with equity was inspiring, and it was a privilege to hear her address to the Florida library community. Author [Kris McGuigan](#) was the conference's keynote speaker, and she spoke to attendees about the concepts of personal courage and tenacity highlighted in her book, *The Requisite Courage*.

Breakout sessions, panels, poster sessions were presented on a wide array of topics, covering everything from programming to mental health and everything in between. This was an excellent opportunity to hear from our coworkers in the field and gain new insights about new ideas that might work for our own communities.

The exhibition hall is always a great space to network with vendors, organizations, authors, and others who so generously support our work. This year's conference also had a "networking lounge," which featured large coloring sheets for attendees to collaborate on while decompressing between sessions and getting to know each other. FLA also had a merchandise booth this year! If you didn't grab the merch you wanted at the conference, you can always shop their [online store](#).

FLA Conference is an incredible opportunity to meet other Florida library workers, reconnect with colleagues, make new connections, further our educations, get fresh insights and ideas, and return to our jobs invigorated. I always leave the conference feeling refreshed and revived, and am reminded of all the reasons I got into the field in the first place. Incoming President Jorge Perez has made keeping those reasons in focus his message for his year as FLA's President. In a moving [speech](#), he encouraged us all to take time to celebrate our successes, to lean into our silliness, and recapture the joy that spurred so many of us to join the field.

To quote another beloved library icon, LeVar Burton, "You don't have to take my word for it." First time conference attendee, Jasmine George, shared her thoughts on the conference in an article featured in this issue.

I hope everyone who attended had a fun, fulfilling time at the conference. And I hope those who didn't feel that they got to see what was offered after reviewing this issue. I encourage you to reach out if you have questions, and I hope to see all of you in Orlando for the 2025 conference!

MARY DANIELS, MLIS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT DOUGLAS CRANE



This past week was the annual conference of the [Florida Library Association](#). At the end of the conference, my term as President of the association concluded. It was a bittersweet moment as I enjoyed leading the organization but was also ready to pass along the responsibilities.

Looking back over the past year, I am proud of the work that our members accomplished to advance Florida libraries. Given the political pressure targeting the association, and local issues impacting many of our members, we still had robust participation across our committees. Each one had a highlight for the year:

- The Advocacy Committee completed another successful legislative day at that Florida Capital in January, seeing funding for new library construction grants for the second year in a row.
- The Communications Committee launched our [first online shop](#), selling t-shirts, magnets, and more!
- The Professional Development committee held events including a get ready for conference webinar.
- The DEIA Committee put on successful and highly attended webinars and issued an informative monthly newsletter.
- The Membership Development Committee did the important work reaching out to lapsed members to encourage them to renew and identified ways to recruit new members.
- The Intellectual Freedom Committee tracked the many book challenges across the state and the county to keep our members informed.
- The Awards and Honors Committee ranked and recommended the winners for our many awards and three MLIS scholarships.
- The Conference Planning Committee completed a huge amount of work behind the scenes to make our annual conference a great success, from scheduling breakout sessions to recruiting vendors.

The opening session featured two great speakers. Jaena Rae Cabrera – APALA President, joined us all the way from San Francisco to talk about the [Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association](#). Our keynote speaker was [Kris McGuigan](#), who shared her inspirational story and the importance of courage in the face of fear.

Thank you to all of conference [sponsors and exhibitors](#). We could not have done it without your support. My deepest appreciation goes to the outgoing [FLA Board of Directors](#). Their dedication to the association was very much appreciated throughout our many discussions.

FLA could not operate without the tireless work of its staff. My sincere admiration goes out to our Executive Director Jenny Abdelnour and office assistant Niall Williams for keeping FLA running day-to-day.

Finally, I wish all the best to our new President, Jorge Perez. I look forward to serving with him on the Board as the Immediate Past President.

If you want to support Florida libraries, [please consider joining FLA](#). Membership is reasonable and goes a long way to ensure the success of our profession in Florida.

DOUGLAS CRANE

FLA PRESIDENT 2023-2024



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JENNIFER K. ABDELNOUR, CAE



#FLACON2024, “Florida Libraries: Fundamental to Freedom,” was a hit! Thank you to all who attended, exhibited, or sponsored items and events. We appreciate your support of our annual conference.

Thank you also to FLA’s Conference Planner Jeanice Caskey and her staff as well as the Conference Planning Committee members for their extraordinary work each year.

And thank you to the Conference attendees and exhibitors for your survey responses. The Conference Planning Committee takes your feedback seriously in order to improve your conference experience.

I am looking forward to FLA 2024-2025 President Jorge Perez’s theme: “Overdue for Joy: Celebrating Libraries and Ourselves” being lived out during the next year. If you haven’t had a chance to read Jorge’s President’s Message, look for it in this issue.

Planning for #FLACON2025 has already begun! In fact, 2025 Conference Breakout and Pre-Conference session proposals are due September 7, 2024. Make plans now to attend our Conference May 14-16, 2025, once again in Orlando.

In early August, FLA will hold a retreat at the University of Central Florida (UCF) for the Board of Directors and Committee leadership, to include a facilitated strategic planning session. We’ll also hold a Meet-up on August 2, starting at 1 pm at the John C. Hitt Library at UCF, with an FLA Information Session and Library Tours, and ending with a Networking Social from 4 pm at [Island Wing Company](#) across from the university. Check your email for the registration form, and [register now!](#)

I hope you are having a wonderful summer.

As always, thank you for supporting Florida libraries!

JENNIFER K. ABDELNOUR, CAE
FLA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OVERDUE FOR FUN

by Jorge Perez, Presented on May 17, 2024 at the conclusion of the 2024 Annual Conference



Now is the perfect moment to unveil our theme for this upcoming year: "Overdue for Fun: Celebrating Libraries and Ourselves." Picture extending the joy you're experiencing at this conference into the next year. It's a time for us to rejoice in both us and our profession. Joy is long overdue, and it's time to embrace it.

I've achieved significant milestones in my personal professional journey. With over two decades of experience as a librarian, I reflect on my early days as a newbie librarian attending my inaugural FLA conference around 2006 or 2007. Back then, the idea of becoming FLA president seemed beyond reach. Yet, here I stand, indebted to the guidance of numerous mentors and colleagues within FLA who have propelled me forward. Today, as I celebrate this achievement, I urge you to contemplate your own victories and celebrate them. Let's infuse this year with a spirit of celebration and enjoyment.

My time as Vice President has offered profound lessons, particularly in navigating challenges. It's easy to become trapped in adversity, fixating on the negatives propagated by distressing headlines and narratives affecting our colleagues and profession. Yet, amidst the chaos, I've discovered moments of invincibility, contentment, and security, even in the absence of solutions. This revelation is simple yet profound: we can embrace joy amidst our fears, coexisting with our struggles.

“ I'VE DISCOVERED MOMENTS OF INVINCIBILITY, CONTENTMENT, AND SECURITY, EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF SOLUTIONS. ”

Our keynote speaker this year imparted a powerful message about our shared human response to fear and failure, emphasizing our innate capacity for connection, healing, and revitalizing our creative energies. We possess the resilience to stand united.

- Here's what I know to be unequivocal truths:
- Librarians and library workers embody strength and resilience.
 - Our passion for our work is unwavering.
 - We are here to stay, committed to serving our communities.
 - Our profession possesses a rich history and a robust association.
 - Fun is integral to our culture.
 - We deserve to revel in joy.

Let's affirm these truths and continue to uphold the values that define us, embracing the joy inherent in our journey.



OVERDUE
for **FUN**
celebrating libraries & ourselves

Incoming President's Message

Coinciding with our challenges, we can reconnect with our joy—the joy of celebrating our awesome profession, and the joy of finding comfort in our community of peers. It's in our selfless nature to seldom pause and acknowledge our accomplishments and the profound impact of our work on our communities, whether we serve as public or academic librarians. Rarely do we take a moment to say to ourselves, "I deserve to celebrate." I firmly believe that if we embrace this time for reflection with joy and lightheartedness, our mindset of 'surviving' will evolve into 'thriving'. While there's still much to accomplish, let's remember to infuse our efforts with fun. This is our year!

I want to share five action items for us to consider and guide us in our self-celebration going into this year:

1. Revisit the foundations of our profession. It can be easy to get lost in the noise; I'm the first to plead guilty here. However, staying grounded in our professional ethics and values is crucial, especially during challenging times. When the world around us seems chaotic or uncertain, maintaining our strong moral compass will provide the best guide for our actions and decisions. Revisiting the foundations of our profession can bring clarity, purpose, and direction to move forward in a centered way.

2. Let's reflect on our Successes. Reflection is usually something that we skip over or rarely mindfully integrate into our daily lives. Have a conversation with a colleague about tough topics and experiences. Journal. Create a list of projects and techniques that have been successful. Reflecting on what has worked brings us balance. These practices create distance from negativity and assist in bringing out the best you in any situation.

3. Tell Your Story. Many people do not fully understand the breadth of responsibilities that librarians undertake, or the educational background required to enter the profession. We know that we play a vital role in society, far beyond simply organizing books. We have a calling to make folks aware of this. During library events, presentations and orientations, let's highlight what we do. Share your story. What made you go into librarianship? Share the why of what you do to enlighten elected officials and community members.

4. Become Involved. Getting involved in professional library organizations can take many forms, from attending conferences and workshops to volunteering on committees, contributing to publications, or participating in advocacy efforts. By actively engaging within our professional community, you can stay informed, expand your network, and contribute to the advancement of the library profession. Please consider becoming more active with FLA.

5. Mentor and Build Relationships. We all have something to offer others from our experience, regardless of the length of our career. Seasoned librarians can pair with recent graduates to provide mutual fresh perspectives, insights into emerging trends, and opportunities for learning and growth for both parties. Reach out to a new hire. Create an internal program that fosters connection and growth. Building a strong support network strengthens the fabric of our professional community and creates a sense of belonging for our colleagues.

I invite you to have fun! Be corny. Goofy. Let's lean into our stereotypes. Wear your hair in a bun with a pencil sticking out. Wear a cardigan. Show those cats. Read more books. Shush people randomly. Shush people that annoy us. Geek out please! I know we are more than books but for today let's laugh while we do our good work.

FLA Committees will be spearheading interactive activities throughout the year. Please look out for those.

We are committed to our craft and assisting our communities. While current times bring challenges, our passion also provides strength and purpose to persevere and make a difference, no matter the obstacles we face. Our determination is stronger than ever. I invite you to celebrate yourself, your colleagues, your association, your profession, and your communities. It is time to tell your story. It is time to tell *our* story.



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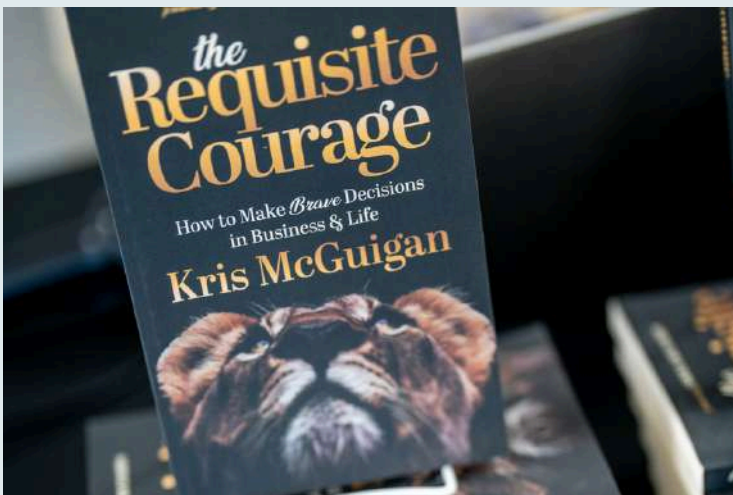
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OPENING SESSION



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

KRIS MCGIUGAN

The conference started off strong with keynote speaker and author, Kris McGuigan. The session was titled, “Break Free From Fear—Making Brave Decisions in the Face of Disruption,” and McGuigan spoke on lessons from her book, *The Requisite Courage*.

To watch a recorded Q&A session with Kris McGuigan and FLA President, Douglas Crane, [click here](#).

Sponsored by: Brainfuse 

15 FLORIDA LIBRARIES

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

JAENA RAE CABRERA

Conference attendees also heard from Jaena Rae Cabrera, President of the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, (APALA), journalist, and Branch Manager at San Francisco Public Library.

Jaena discussed APALA’s mission, core values, and recent accomplishments, along with the organization’s programming and a call for members





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OVERDUE for FUN

celebrating libraries & ourselves

Florida Library Association 2025 Annual Conference

Hilton Doubletree Seaworld,
Orlando, FL
May 14-16, 2025

CALL FOR BREAKOUT SESSION PROPOSALS

Click here for guidelines and submission form.
Deadline is September 7.

LIGHTNING ROUNDS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER
<p>Traveling Exhibition: 19th Century African American Female Physicians</p>	<p><u>Kelsa Bartley</u> and <u>Ms. Erica Powell</u> Louis Calder Memorial Library, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine</p>
<p>Dungeons and Dragons 2.0: Theater of the Mind Gameplay Meets 3D Scanning and Printing Technology</p>	<p><u>Montgomery Lopez</u> Miami-Dade Public Library System</p>
<p>Engaging Patrons on Constitution Day</p>	<p><u>Sarah Erekson</u> University of Florida, George A. Smathers Libraries</p>
<p>Enhancing Chat Reference Services with Graduate Interns</p>	<p><u>Ms. Rachel Cooke</u> Florida Gulf Coast University</p>
<p>Freedom's Foundation: Impact of Answering Inmate Reference Letters</p>	<p>David Hildenbrand, MLIS Miami-Dade Public Library System</p>
<p>Libraries and Girl Scouts: A Sweet Collaboration</p>	<p>Nora Morales, Ed.D. Miami-Dade Public Library System</p>
<p>Moderation Through Dissent</p>	<p>Charles Hill Orange County Library System</p>
<p>Transformational Leadership in the Academic Library</p>	<p><u>Richard Hodges, Ed.D.</u> Florida Southwestern State College</p>
<p>How DEI and Critical Librarianship Have Become Threats to Free Speech in Libraries</p>	<p><u>Mr. Brian Erb</u> Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative FALSC/FLVC</p>

NETWORKING LOUNGE

New to FLACon this year was the Networking Lounge, a fun space for attendees to color, chat, and chill between sessions.



POSTER SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER
Empowering Minds, Fostering Freedom: Implementing a Personal Librarian Program	Suzanne Odom and Kristin Heifner, Florida Institute of Technology
Libraries are a Place to Destress: With Therapy Dogs	Rebecca Greer, Manatee School for the Arts
Open Access for All: Spotlight on a Community Resource Fair	Debra Robbins and Erica Davis, Volusia County Public Library
Presenting Festivals for Your Community	Amber Waters Suwannee River Regional Library
The Freedom to Tell and Share Stories: Starting an Oral History Project at a Public Library	Amy Marie Cantley Seminole County Public Library
Akwesasne & Ayamara: Gender Identity through Sports	Sarah J. Hammill Florida International University
Flexibility, Creativity and an Evolving Approach to Healthcare Literacy in the Public Library	Catherine Worthington Port Orange Regional Library
Mind the Gap: Determining the Transactional Distance of Academic Libraries in Florida	Christine Woods and Viki Stoupenos, Saint Leo University
Chapters from the Library	Edward Velez Florida International University
Micro Learning: Research Skills Toolkit (Enhanced Engagement-Research Workshop Series)	Jossie Amador-Gonzalez and Kellie Pait, Stetson University
Exploring Worlds Through Words: Children's Book Club	Mary Renee Galloway Volusia County Public Library- Daytona Beach Regional Library
Preserving Freedom: Navigating Copyright Challenges in Florida Libraries	Hillary Arieux Florida Southern College
Renewing Networks: Rebuilding Bridges Between the Library and Composition Instructors	Rachel Tait-Ripperdan and Amy Craig, Florida Gulf Coast University

POSTER SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER
St. Lucie County Libraries: Equal Access for All	Katarzyna (Kasha) Barska and Thalia Sanchez, St. Lucie County Library System
Ranganathan's Laws in Action: Helping a Small Monastic Library Become Accessible	Renee Gould Saint Leo University
Read 'Em and Eat	Sheyenne Scott and Lindsey Trammell, Sarasota County Public Libraries
Faculty Library Champions	Jessica Daly AdventHealth University / R.A. Williams Library
Cornerstones in Collection Building: From Foundation to Fulfillment	Alice Eng Florida Virtual Campus-Library Services
Dungeons and Dragons 2.0: Theater of the Mind Gameplay Meets 3D Scanning and Printing Technology	Montgomery Lopez Miami Dade Public Library

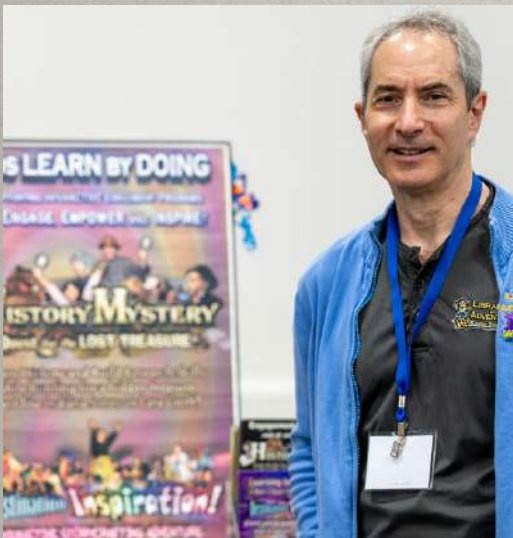


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PERSPECTIVES FROM A FIRST TIME CONFERENCE ATTENDEE

FLA CONFERENCE 2024

JASMINE GEORGE, MLS

RECENT GRADUATE OF FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY,
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION

This year, I took my first steps toward growing a fulfilling career in librarianship: attending the 2024 Florida Library Association (FLA) Conference. When I was in my last semester of library school at FSU, I received an e-mail from the university about the upcoming conference. At the time, I had only heard of the FLA from my time as a volunteer at Largo Public Library and occasionally in my graduate courses. In earnest, I didn't even know librarians had a conference just for them. I quickly did further research on the FLA and whether I should attend the conference. I soon found that the association and the conference were excellent opportunities to build upon my knowledge and experience in the library field. As well, I couldn't pass up the chance to meet and connect with hundreds of librarians and information professionals from around the state! After making the decision to join the association, I registered for the conference and knew that an exciting experience awaited me.

THE INS AND OUTS

As a recent graduate at the conference, I was in a position that afforded me an opportunity for self-discovery, deeper exploration of the library field, and professional growth. In the week I spent in Orlando, I surrounded myself with several intellectual and personable librarians who provided depth to my understanding of the field. Initially, I was somewhat apprehensive about interacting with professionals that had much longer and more successful careers than mine. I felt as if I could not contribute any new ideas to conversations and that others would not care to connect with me. Thankfully, that could not have been further from the truth!

I was pleasantly surprised by each person's high level of generosity with their time, their service-oriented mindset, and their willingness to spend time with me even for just a few minutes. Truly, I found that engaging with the conference attendees, speakers, and association leaders was not a daunting challenge but simply an open invitation to strengthen the ties between our collective of information professionals.

With networking, I also learned how to stretch beyond my comfort level and take the oft scary first step in networking: being the first to reach out. It is no secret that for many, meeting new people can be challenging and nerve-wracking at times. Especially in a professional setting, there sometimes arises a level of vulnerability that seems too uncomfortable to face. Luckily, I have learned that this is the very feeling that we must embrace in order to succeed in those first steps of networking. Once we remove that barrier for ourselves, we are that much freer to chat and network with anyone no matter their position or years of service. Plus, if this experience has taught me anything, it is that librarians of all levels of experience are exceedingly friendly and open.



Jasmine George; photos provided by the author

Perspectives from a first time conference attendee

Another aspect of the conference that led to an enjoyable time was the positive attitude each conference leader, speaker, and attendee possessed. The speakers of the main and breakout sessions were not self-important lecturers or gatekeepers of knowledge. Instead, they used their platform to spark new interests and encourage conference attendees to lead in their own ways. One of the first breakout sessions I attended was about urban fiction and adult literacy. I enjoyed hearing from a St. Petersburg Library System Librarian as she discussed the tenants of urban fiction, how the genre can connect to audiences that may not typically see themselves in literature or media, and how librarians can promote their collections to include titles from this genre. The librarian graciously made sure that the attendees of her session were aware that she approached her presentation from the point of view of a fan of the genre, not a high-brow expert in urban fiction. This admission was well-received and reassuring. Despite being the person to deliver the presentation and conduct the breakout session, she maintained that she and the conference attendees were equals and simply learning from peers. From this, I came to understand that we are not simply practitioners of our field. Librarians are ardent enthusiasts of the world and all of its pockets of information. Our work uplifts and celebrates each and every corner of our community not simply for the sake of our field, but for the existence of the greater good.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Reflecting upon my time at the conference, there is a certain throughline that has had a lasting effect on me. I found that every person's career began from humble means. I chatted with several librarians with impressive careers, and they did not hesitate to regale me with stories of their first few years in the field. Even those in management and leadership positions also willingly shared their long career journeys, never choosing to inflate their own egos or paint an inaccurate depiction of the field. Every conference attendee—whether a graduate student or an award-winning library director—treated each other with high regard and genuine interest in lending their knowledge and experiences to lift each other up. I am so grateful that I had the privilege to spend my week with such an inspiring and endlessly curious group of librarians.

WAS IT WORTH IT?

To those that are new to the field of librarianship, curious about joining the FLA, or considering attending the next FLA conference: go for it! I can say with verity that I had never smiled and laughed more than I did in a room full of strangers-turned-connections. The FLA Conference promises a diverse array of topics and sessions to engage with, an elite selection of leaders and experienced professionals to learn from, worthwhile networking opportunities, and a wonderful spirit of collaboration and camaraderie that you will take with you once you leave the conference space.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In all, the 2024 FLA Conference allowed me to further develop my professional career and equipped me with the tools necessary to support others through innovative and empathetic information service. I am eager to use my new findings to enrich the lives of those around me. Here's to continually broadening horizons, redefining the outlook of librarianship, and championing libraries as vital pillars of our community.



PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

One of the highlights of FLACon is the President's Reception. This year was no exception, with a Hamilton theme, dueling pianos, dancing, games, the annual Wine Toss to raise money for scholarships, and a great time. We work hard but enjoy the time to play hard TOGETHER, too!

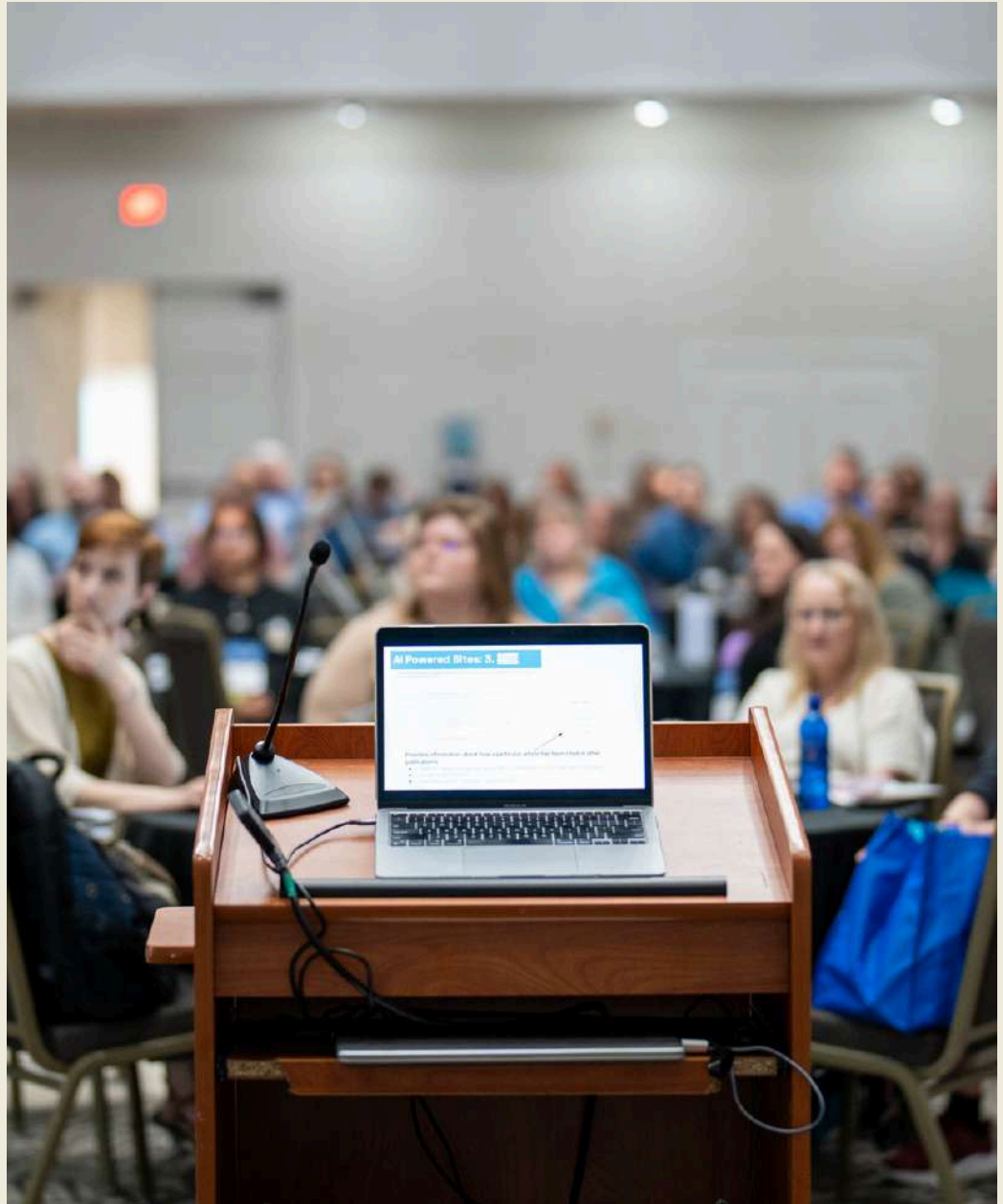


PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>Empowering Libraries: Equity of Access with Florida Electronic Library Resources</p>	<p><u>Tammi Burke</u> Gale in Partnership with the Florida Electronic Library</p>	<p>Explore a wealth of content, including scholarly articles, e-books, reference documents, periodicals, multimedia, and more. Discover innovative tools to engage diverse communities, promote understanding, and ensure equal access to information resources.</p>
<p>Lunchbrary and Nightbrary: New Methods for Student Engagement</p>	<p><u>Morgan Tracy</u>, <u>Jason Anfinen</u>, and <u>Nicole Sotak</u> Seminole State College of Florida</p>	<p>Come learn about Lunchbrary and Nightbrary, a weekly student engagement program series that intentionally fuses games, music, e-sports, performance, research, and the arts, focusing on the academic library as a space where students are invited to meet, play, wonder, create, and learn with librarians.</p>
<p>Partnering Academic Libraries with Campus Post-Secondary Education Programs to Create Equal Access for All</p>	<p><u>Leah Plocharczyk</u> Florida Atlantic University Libraries, John D. MacArthur Campus, Jupiter <u>Matthew Conner</u> University of California at Davis</p>	<p>This presentation will describe the state of Post-Secondary Education (PSE) in the US and the level of engagement with university libraries. The presenters will discuss special education principles behind current library programming and will illustrate best practices for library instruction of those with intellectual disabilities (ID).</p>
<p>A Light in the Dark: Why Kids and Teens Need Dark Stories to Help Them Through Dark Times</p>	<p><u>Ginny Myers Sain</u> Author</p>	<p>People have always loved scary stories. Today's young readers also need them, not only because it's fun to be scared, but because dark stories make them feel stronger and show them the light. Learn more about the importance of dark stories and get tips for sharing them with young readers.</p>

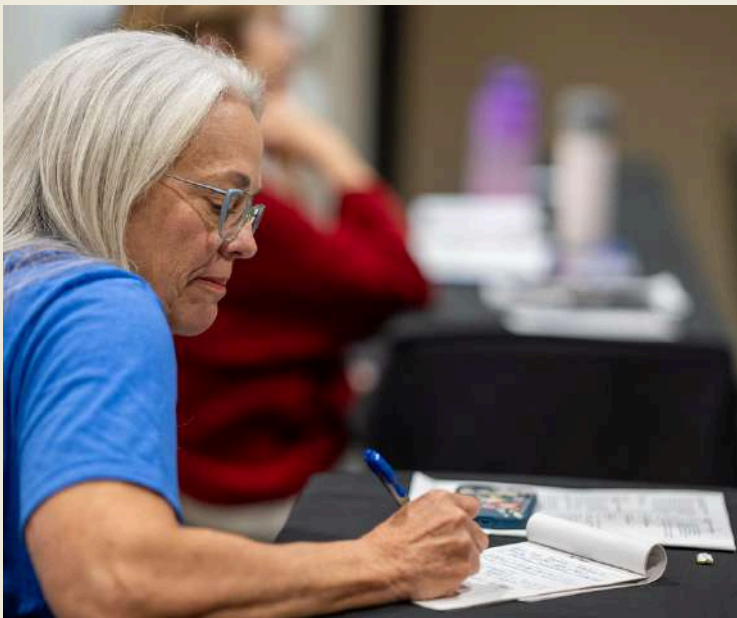


BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>Increasing Access to Ebooks Without Increasing Budgets</p>	<p><u>Valerie "KAV" Kavanagh</u> Lyrasis</p>	<p>In this session, we will discuss the impact of ebook licensing on budgets and explore the creative methods in collection management, engagement, and licensing models that help libraries increase access without increasing their budgets.</p>
<p>Collection Audits to Reflect Your Community</p>	<p><u>Hannah Duff</u> Largo Public Library</p>	<p>In this session you will learn why an audit is worth doing and how to bring staff, including front line staff, librarians, and administrators, on board with your vision. Get some tips and tricks on developing an audit rubric, what your audit is focusing on and how to find it.</p>
<p>History of Library Services to African Americans in Florida</p>	<p><u>Kayla Davis</u> University of South Florida - School of Information</p>	<p>The presentation offers insight into how socio-political contexts such as de jure segregation and integration impacted access to knowledge resources. Participants will learn about research methods and ethical considerations in historical reconstruction of minority experiences.</p>
<p>Programs for People with Diverse Abilities</p>	<p><u>Jennifer Shipley</u> and <u>Carmen Baker</u> Miami-Dade Public Library System</p>	<p>This break-out session will include a description of innovative programs that appeal to audiences with low vision, arthritis, hearing loss, autism and cognitive and mobility challenges.</p>

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>DEIA & Your Library System</p>	<p><u>Amelia Zimmerman</u> and <u>Sam May</u> Saint Petersburg Library System</p>	<p>Do you want to support Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility within your community? Learn how library workers within the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative created and grew a DEIA committee while overcoming challenges.</p>
<p>Freedom to Curate a Diverse Library to Foster Empathy and Promote Global Citizenship</p>	<p><u>Ana Siqueira</u> Florida Virtual School <u>Lynne Marie</u> Seymour Agency <u>Becky Greer</u> Manatee School for the Arts <u>Danielle Joseph</u> Author <u>Sita Singh</u> Author <u>D'Ann Burrow</u> Organization Teacher in Orange County Public Schools</p>	<p>This panel will explore how books can help children develop global citizenship skills such as critical thinking, empathy, respect, and appreciation of different experiences and perspectives about the world. We will discuss the importance of curating diverse books, and provide mentor books, strategies, and activities that can be applied to lessons and to promote discussion.</p>
<p>Working with the Mega-Source: Research in the Age of AI</p>	<p><u>Sylvie Daubar-San Juan</u> Belen Jesuit Preparatory School</p>	<p>A deep dive into the manner in which generative AI is transforming the role of librarians will be the focus.</p>



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>Don't Freak Out! Handling Negative Reactions to Weeding</p>	<p><u>Jessica Daly</u> AdventHealth University / R.A. Williams Library</p>	<p>Leave this session with insightful methods you can use within your own library and library team when the time comes to weed your collection.</p>
<p>That would never happen at our library!: Developing book challenge policies and procedures for an academic library</p>	<p><u>Susan Mythen</u>, <u>Lea Cason</u>, and <u>Amber Arroyo</u> Florida State College at Jacksonville</p>	<p>In this session, we will outline our reconsideration process and possibilities to consider when drafting such a system. Additionally, participants will leave the session with an understanding of practical strategies for creating their own reconsideration process and gaining approval for such a system within their academic institutions.</p>
<p>Intellectual Freedom as Fundamental to Florida Libraries: A Roundtable Discussion</p>	<p><u>Erin Collier-Plummer</u> <u>Chris Jimenez</u> Florida International University</p>	<p>The Intellectual Freedom Committee will facilitate breakout sessions for librarians to discuss key issues including: handling display challenges, crafting policies to address potential problems, and brainstorming strategies to handle community concerns.</p>



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>Leading with Style</p>	<p>Moderators: <u>Joleen Wielkie</u> (Boca Raton Public Library) and Adam Chang (Director, Citrus County Libraries)</p> <p>Panel: Doug Crane (Director of Palm Beach County Library System, FLA President), Sarabeth Kalajian (Retired Director of Sarasota County Libraries and Historical Resources), Shane Roopnarine (Subject Librarian – UCF; Immediate Past President, FLA), and Autumn Dec (Community Library Manager, North Lauderdale Saraniero Branch, Broward County Library System)</p>	<p>Freedom for libraries and the people they serve can be achieved when strategic decisions are made by capable leaders. Join us for a discussion of the helpful and not so helpful traits of different leadership styles and how you can discover and form your own style.</p>
<p>Empowering English Language Learners with Financial Literacy</p>	<p><u>Paolo Melillo</u>, <u>Selina Raghunath</u>, and <u>Emmie Bileau</u>, Orange County Library System</p>	<p>"Making Cents: Your Money in English" has effectively empowered English language learners with essential financial literacy skills in the U.S. Discover valuable insights from the Orange County Library System's experience and gain practical guidance on how fellow libraries can implement similar projects tailored to the unique needs of their communities.</p>
<p>Fostering Diversity in Children's Storytimes (Panel Discussion)</p>	<p><u>Lisa Jones</u>, <u>Elizabeth Correale</u>, <u>Kaitlin Martinelli</u>, <u>Sharmel Bhiri</u>, and <u>Rachel Morrison</u> Osceola Library System</p>	<p>Discover how the Osceola Library System actively includes diverse and inclusive literature and themes in storytimes, helping to foster empathy and cultural awareness in our youngest patrons.</p>

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
Using Urban Fiction to promote freedom in libraries and enhance adult literacy	<p><u>Charleen Bryson</u>, St. Petersburg Library System</p>	Gain valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics of urban fiction's influence and history, and leave with the tools and knowledge needed to harness its potential within their communities.
Libros Libres: Freedom to Read Latino Books	<p><u>Freda Mosquera</u> Broward County Library</p> <p><u>Alicia K. Long</u> University of South Florida</p>	Session will explore censorship and book challenges in Florida with an emphasis on books by and about Latinx, and how this affects Florida's communities, where more than 1 out of 4 inhabitants has Latino-American or Hispanic origins.
Find Freedom From Email - Three Steps to an Empty Inbox	<p>Doug Crane Palm Beach County Library System</p>	Is there a way to get email under control short of mass deleting your entire inbox? Yes, there is! Learn how to celebrate the joys of an empty inbox!
Unlocking the magic of person to person connections	<p><u>James Songster</u> James Songster Emerging Leader Training</p>	Discover The 5 Keys to Unlocking Magical Customer Service. By adopting, training, and modeling the correct tools and customer service standards, teams and organizations are empowered to improve person to person connection and to exceed customer experience expectations.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>Free Programming For All: A Reevaluation of Adult Services Programming</p>	<p><u>Kathryn Pase</u> and <u>Ray Lennard</u> Volusia County Public Library</p>	<p>Libraries provide patrons with one of the few places in society where all are welcome to participate in activities without a fee. Library professionals will learn how to reevaluate adult programming, evaluate branch and personal resources, and gain insight into community and patron needs.</p>
<p>Telling Your Own Story: Sharing Library News when Traditional Media Can't or Won't</p>	<p><u>Erin Sullivan</u> and <u>Jenn Schock</u> Orange County Library System</p>	<p>The presenters will talk about the elements that make a compelling story, how to find those stories in your libraries, and how to turn them into engaging pieces that can be shared in library newsletters, fundraising campaigns, social media posts and more.</p>
<p>Cooks & Books: A Delicious Community Partnership</p>	<p><u>Heather Webb</u> and <u>David Freudenburg</u> Marion County Public Library System</p>	<p>Learn about a tasty and adaptable program which brings together local authors, professional chefs, and health organizations to offer a popular patron pick on the programming menu.</p>
<p>Full STEAM Ahead: Presenting Youth Art & Sci Programs</p>	<p><u>Christine Culp</u> and <u>Renee Stokes</u> Manatee County Public Library</p>	<p>Participants will learn how to create a successful Art series or a Stem based program geared for Tweens, an often-overlooked age group. The concepts could also be adjusted for younger or older students.</p>

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SESSION NAME	PRESENTER	DESCRIPTION
<p>The Psychological Contract and The Library Worker: When Mental Health, Workplace Safety, and Intellectual Freedom Collide</p>	<p><u>Dr. Amy Helfritz</u> Controlling Chaos, LLC</p>	<p>Presentation attendees will examine three interrelated topics impacting today's library employees: the psychological contract, workplace violence, and mental health. Compassion fatigue and self-care techniques will also be discussed.</p>
<p>Let's Talk Mental Health: Beyond Self-care</p>	<p><u>Beatriz De La Espriella</u> Bea Mindful Coaching, LLC</p>	<p>This workshop goes beyond conventional self-care, empowering staff with actionable strategies through interactive sessions. Participants will identify mental health signs, build personal resilience, and create customized action plans.</p>
<p>Gamifying Literacy: Combating Summer Learning Loss with Fun and Interactive Programs</p>	<p><u>Mayra Hassan,</u> <u>Raelyn Wiirre,</u> and Amy King Jacksonville Public Library</p>	<p>Learn how to create a high-impact, low-resource summer enrichment program for your library. Discover how to plan a program that meets specific outcomes, select a fun theme, establish a consistent format, and deliver it with minimal resources.</p>
<p>Storybook Adventures: Exploring Downtown with Tales by Florida Authors</p>	<p><u>Crystal Hamrick</u> Osceola Library System</p>	<p>Embark on a literary journey that merges reading, local culture, community engagement, and support for downtown. Immerse yourself in the imaginative worlds of Florida authors through beautifully illustrated pages displayed in shop windows.</p>



CLOSING CEREMONY

The conference's Closing Ceremony both concludes the annual conference, and gives attendees a chance to reflect on the previous days. Awards and scholarships were given, new FLA Board members were sworn in, FLA business was attended to, and we welcomed our incoming President, Jorge Perez.





2024 FLA AWARD WINNERS



Every year, the Florida Library Association bestows awards to outstanding libraries, librarians, library workers, Friends groups, volunteers and more. To learn more about all of this year’s winners, [click here](#).

AWARD	WINNER
Library of the Year	Miami-Dade Public Library System
Adminsitrator of the Year	Allison Grubbs, Broward County Library
Lifetime Achievement	Gene Coppola
Outstanding New Librarian	Daniel Jones, Miami-Dade Public Library System
Outstanding Paraprofessional	Chandra Thornton, Palm Beach County Library System
Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award - Ages 12 and Under	Joseph Dellosa and Jazmin Jimenez, South Bay Library
Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award - Teen	Sara White, Seminole County Public Library



2024 FLA AWARD WINNERS

AWARD	WINNER
Intellectual Freedom	Broward County Library
Excellence in Marketing and Public Relations	Miami-Dade Public Library System
Library Innovation	Michelle Mosley, Osceola Library System
Library Web Presence	Citrus County Library System
Maria Chavez-Hernandez "Libraries Change Peoples' Lives" Award	Alyssa Rudinsky Mandel Public Library and the City of West Palm Beach
Outstanding Citizen	Debbie Selsavage, Coping with Dementia, LLC
Outstanding Business or Media Partner	ZooTampa at Lowry Park
Friends, Foundations, and Boards Special Projects	Kimberly Doyle, Palm Beach County Library System



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 FLA AWARD WINNERS!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 FLA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!



Madeleine Wiggins

Bernadette Storck

University of South Florida Graduate
Scholarship

"This scholarship means so much to me. It will help me achieve my professional goals and give back to my community as a librarian. I am honored to receive the Bernadette Storck University of South Florida scholarship, and I am so grateful to my family, friends, co-workers, and everyone who has supported me and my professional goals. I could not have received this honor without their support."



Briana Thomas

Minority Graduate

Scholarship

"As an African-American, winning the FLA Minority Scholarship really solidifies the support that the Florida Library Association has of people of color that are in the information profession. The funds from this scholarship will be a huge help towards my last stretch of classes this summer of 2024. I am very excited to start my library career with Palm Beach County Library System and it means a lot that the Florida Library Association saw value in me as a future librarian."



Michael Coby

Florida State University

Scholarship

"I am incredibly grateful to the Florida Library Association for offering me this very generous scholarship. During my undergraduate years, I struggled to find a career path that would enable me to adapt my love of music and collections into something that could afford me an honest living. Being a librarian and working toward a specialization in music librarianship has brought me more joy in a career than I ever thought possible, and this scholarship provides me with resources to follow those dreams and a renewed confidence that libraries are exactly where I am meant to be."

YOU'RE INVITED

to submit for *Florida Libraries!*

We're seeking submissions including articles, peer-reviewed pieces, editorials, book reviews, and position papers.

If you are interested in submitting a manuscript for the Fall 2024 issue, you may begin submitting it now.

Submission deadline is September 1.

Full details, guidelines, and submission form can be found on the Florida Library Association website.

www.flalib.org

