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**NICOA MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY, COSTA RICA FELIPE DIAZ VIDAURRE**

Grethel Delgado

The Nicoya Municipal Public Library opened its doors in the 1950s, where it was the schoolteacher Felipe Diaz Vidaurre who began providing his library services to the community from his home for at least two years. Together with him, two more people were present as collaborators, reaching out to the community. After that time, Don Felipe Diaz presented to the Municipality of the Canton of Nicoya, the proposal that the municipality be in charge of continuing the service of lending books to the community, since the space in his house was becoming smaller and smaller. This is how, for more than 65 years, the Library has been called the Municipal Public Library of Nicoya Felipe Diaz Vidaurre.

**Nicoya, a Special Place in Costa Rica**

When the Spanish arrived in Nicoya in 1522, it was governed by the Nicao cacique, who had a constant fight with Chira, cacique of the islands in the Gulf of Nicoya, in the Pacific Ocean. Nicoya was a town in
constant struggle for dominance of the area, which is known as La Gran Nicoya, because it included not only the population, but numerous neighboring towns throughout the peninsula and with incursions on the islands and the other side of the Gulf. Its cultural legacy from the Chorotega culture makes it have many similarities with the Mesoamerican culture that is reflected in Central America, this being the last outpost of said cultural area. Nicoya also is home to the oldest colonial buildings, a recently restored church from the 1500s in the central square.

Nicoya, whose name means "Way of the Warriors" was always managed with great autonomy until 1824, when it proclaimed its annexation to Costa Rica, already in the independent era. Nicoya has a population diversity of the towns of Santa Cruz, Hojancha, Nandayure and the peninsular portion, these towns share similar characteristics in terms of ethnicity and longevity as well as cultural roots. It has a land area of 1,333.68 km² and is divided into seven districts: Mansion, San Antonio, Quebrada Honda, Samara, Belén de Nosarita, Nosara and Nicoya.

Nicoya, known as one of 6 blue zones of the world for being one of the areas where people have a long life, often having full productive lives, many at the ages of 100 or more. Many still work as farmers in the mountainous areas breathing fresh air and growing organic coffee, oranges and other agricultural products. The farmers have several cooperatives within the province/peninsula of Guanacaste that Nicoya is part of.

Nicoya is truly the cultural heart of the country ever since Mayan times and many of the jade and gold artifacts found are from Nicoya's and many are in the collections of Costa Rica's Gold and Jade museums in San Jose. It is not that unusual that after rains, some artifacts, mostly pottery are found. Nicoya and surrounding cantons are the cultural capitols of the country and many folk dances feature young girls in long flowing skirts that twirl and young men as cowboys, or as they are called in this area, sabaneros, The sabanero life is reflected by various TOPEs or horse parades throughout the year when you can see horses dancing in place, as well as an annual rodeo, celebration of the annexation of Gunacaste and an annual tortilla festival, and oxcart parade.

**Library Collections, Resources, & Outreach**

The Library is usually open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is supplied with bibliographic material that it receives from the National Library System (SINABI) in addition to donations made by the community. The library is located in the heart of the city of Nicoya, 150 meters east of the corner northeast of Recaredo Briceno Park; it has a collection of around 3,500 copies including general books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, magazines and local newspapers.

Some activities that the library has promoted are an exhibition of artisans from the canton, an exhibition of entrepreneurial people, gatherings with the Elderly, talks, workshops, digital literacy courses, a course in the use of Tablets for the Elderly, Promotion of reading in schools of the canton, awareness program for the developed by retired Older Adults with school children. Currently, the Library develops a program for early stimulation and development of life skills called "As a child I like to read.", music and poetry events, and chess courses. These and other important events and
announcements are posted to the library’s Facebook Page for Biblioteca Public Municipal Nicoya.

Most public libraries fall under the umbrella of Sinabi (sinabi.go.cr) and the website provides digital resources publicly available. According to librarymap.ifla.org, there are a total of 1088 libraries of all sizes, 1416 staff. There are over 1.3 million visits per year and over 500K registered users. The library association, that focuses most on career development is the Costa Rican Association of Librarians known as COPROBI

Challenges and Opportunities
Being the only person directing the services and activities of the Library is quite a challenge and hard work that has been supported at times with students doing community work and university practices, we have little budget to supply all the needs they present, but it is works in search of human resources through invitations to the community to become a friend of the Library. The library has a very large space and one can imagine the number of new kinds of activities, collections, technology integration, and services that go beyond the library. All that’s needed is more money and more staff.

Costa Rica’s advanced economic indicators no longer can gain access to millions of dollars worth of full text journals and texts through the Research4Life suite of products from various United Nations agencies. It also means that Costa Rica is not eligible for grants from USAID, the US Agency for International Development. Regardless, the US Embassy Information office has created educational opportunities, funding of some libraries through the American Corner project and helping to introduce some new technologies such as makerspaces in a few libraries.

The changing population dynamics will provide more challenges and opportunities. It becomes more difficult to serve so many populations through a very large canton that spans urban, rural, suburban, farms, and more businesses. This area also continues to become diverse with a growing Asian population that own an enormous number of Chinese restaurants for a small city and increasingly more supermarkets. It is also a very accepting and tolerant area and in spite of the cowboy culture that exists has the first openly gay mayor in the country.

Most Americans, Canadians and Europeans go to many of the paradisaical beaches of Guanacaste. It is necessary to go through Nicoya and that makes it an important supply and service center within the reach of visitors and residents. Today many Americans, Canadians, and Europeans stop and experience the true Costa Rica in Nicoya and some have settled, but mostly in the coastal areas and more and more have become modern growers purchasing large farms or fincas, but not so much in the old city.

To strengthen capacities and abilities, the library has managed to have a presence in other decision-making bodies at the inter-institutional level. These stakeholders are led by the municipality in conjunction with public institutions, participating in environmental, cultural and social economy commissions of the canton, as well as coordination with other public and private institutions to do the work of community engagement.

Martin Kesselman, a librarian living part time in Nicoya province provided some assistance with this article.
Greetings!

Welcome to a new year and to the March issue of International Leads! We hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and winter breaks.

In this issue, you'll read about ALA’s 2023 LibLearnX Conference, the Fourth National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC 2023), and the International Indigenous Librarians’ Forum (IILF). You’ll also read about the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Nicoya Public Library, the winners of the 2023 Modern Library Awards, the IFLA Libraries for Children and Young Adult Section’s webinar, “Sister Libraries”, and other topics of interest. In addition, IRRT Chair Safi Safiullah and Chair-Elect Mark Mattson each share news and updates regarding IRRT in their respective columns.

And as always, if you have stories, news, and events to share, please do not hesitate to send them to us.

Happy reading!

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Reysa Alenzuela

Reysa is the Head Librarian of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences in the Czech Republic. She has over 20 years of experience as a librarian and has been working as an international librarian for almost a decade. She is a Member of ALA IRRT.

Julia Gelfand

Julia is the Applied Sciences & Engineering Librarian at the University of California, Irvine. She has been a member of IRRT most of the 45 years she has been involved in ALA and has been working with international colleagues most of her career.

Michele Fenton

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International Leads (ISSN 0892-4546) is published quarterly by the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association in March, June, September, and December. IL is indexed by Library Literature and Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) and ProQuest. The IRRT mailing address is: International Relations Office, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

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Do you have news or stories about international library activities, people in international librarianship, upcoming international conferences?

Submit them to International Leads.

Email us at alaintl.leads@gmail.com
THE RENAISSANCE OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF FRANCE (BNF) RICHELIEU

Reysa Alenzuela

The Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) is a utopia for bibliophiles and lovers of art. BnF’s collection dates back to the 2nd century BC and holds over 40 million objects and documents of all kinds spread across a number of sites: the François Mitterrand site in Paris, the symbol of the modernity of the institution since 1996; Galerie de la bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra, home to the Department of Performing Arts; the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, which specializes in the history and literature of the 16th to 19th centuries; and, the historic site on rue de Richelieu which has opened to the public in 2022 after more than a decade of renovation.

A centre of excellence for research

The BnF I Richelieu houses unique collections of six specialised departments: Manuscripts, Music, Prints and Photography, Performing Arts, Maps and Plans, Coins, Medals and Antiques – more than 22 million documents. Four reading rooms reserved for researchers have been created, restored or completely renovated. They offer the best conditions of physical comfort as well as efficient research tools and working facilities. The scientific and cultural project of the Richelieu site is in line with the missions of the BnF: preserving and developing the national heritage, bringing its collections within reach of the widest possible audience, conducting research programmes, accommodating researchers and cooperating with other research and documentation centres and libraries. While strengthening its interaction between the various BnF sites, mainly the François-Mitterrand site, the complete renovation of Richelieu has created a new offer: the collections of the BnF, the library of the Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA) and that of the École nationale des chartes (ENC) were brought together, in synergy, in this unique location, as of 2017, to allow for the development of a major international research centre, focused on written and graphic heritage, art history, archaeology, and sciences ancillary to history.

The BnF, the ENC, and the INHA pursue a scientific policy of excellence that brings the Richelieu quadrilateral to life with their complementary and collaborative research activities. The three partners are involved in several collective projects, such as the "Richelieu. Histoire du quartier" (Richelieu: History of the neighbourhood) programme. This project aims to trace the urban, architectural, economic and cultural history of the district between the Louvre, the Opera, the Place des Victoires and the Grands Boulevards. The projects "Couleurs : artefacts, matière et cognition" (Colours:
When it comes to the space open for all, the majestic Oval room invites audiences of all ages. This emblematic space of the BnF I Richelieu, has returned to its original purpose as a room for all audiences, 86 years after its inauguration. More than 20,000 volumes are displayed which serves as an introduction to the major fields covered by Richelieu's departments (manuscripts, prints, photographs, coins, medals and antiques, maps and plans, music, performing arts, digital arts etc.

Apart from the public library, an area of the building has been turned into a museum. The new BnF I Richelieu museum has seven fully restored rooms: The Column Room, Leon Levy Foundation Room; The Precious Cabinet, Sisley d'Ornano room; the Luynes Room, the Barthélemy Room, the Louis XV Room, the Rotunda and the Mazarin Gallery.

Each room is a gem but one important aesthetic to point out is the ceiling of the Mazarin Gallery and its magnificent painted embellishments, which have been fully restored by the teams from Alix Laveau and the Mariotti workshop, are a prominent feature of this crucial area of the new museum. The 22 restorers who worked on this extensive undertaking gave the frescoes their original freshness, transparency, and lightness. As a result of the restoration of the murals and the camouflaged canvases, this display of the Library's holdings has become one of its most famous historical sites.

The restoration of the jewels of the Richelieu site

The reopening of the historic site of the National Library of France coincides with the tercentenary of its first installation in the former Palais Mazarin, in 1721-1722. The story of the Library is that of a perpetual quest for space because of the constant growth of the collection. The BnF had the chance to completely remodel and rethink the original structure for the first time in its history. This massive undertaking was made possible through the Ministry of Culture's support, a sizeable financial expenditure, and project management assistance from the Oppic (Operator heritage and cultural real estate projects).

The challenge for the architects was to improve the historical aspect of the structure while ensuring overall coherence and incorporating modernity. The minds behind this initiative came up with concepts that balance the essence of the library as a space dedicated to research while also being accessible to a larger audience.
Beyond the exquisite structure: digital mediation possibilities for all audiences

Innovative and fun digital devices allow visitors to take full advantage of the resources made available in the Oval room. Eighteen digital mediation terminals, which line the museum’s tour pathway, invite visitors to discover the works on display in a different way. Visitors can play around a 3D globe, discover the history of a jewel commissioned by a queen, enter the workshop of a medieval copyist or an ancient potter.

Intended for all audiences, these terminals put the collections in their historical context, provide keys to discover them, invite visitors to play games and investigate, bring in an expert or tell stories about the works. These attractive forms are nevertheless based on rigorous scientific discourse. These terminals with trilingual content (French, English, Spanish) are accessible to persons with disabilities, including videos in sign language. Six touchscreens present 3D resin reproductions of objects (Ptolemy's cup, Louis XIV's medal, Mesopotamian cylinder-seal, binding of the Sainte-Chapelle Gospels, etc.).

In addition, two devices designed with the Japanese sponsor DNP (Dai Nippon Printing) allow visitors to discover the spectacular restoration, financed in part by sponsorship, of two of the most emblematic spaces of areas in the new museum in terms of heritage: the Mazarin Gallery (focus on the painted ceilings) and the Louis XV Room.

This is only a glimpse of the lavish, elegant, and convivial BnF i Richelieu flourishing in history, heritage, and content. The regeneration of the site now provides the opportunity to tell the future while drawing inspiration from the past.

Acknowledgments:
Thanks to Service de presse de la Bibliothèque nationale de France - to Hélène Crenon and Fiona Greepe for providing the original photos and the Press Kits and the input.

Sources:
BnF Press kit (EN)
La BnF i Richelieu: Dossier de presse (FR)
were reduced in many libraries is of great interest.

b. What can libraries learn from the COVID-19 pandemic to be better prepared for the future? How can libraries ready themselves for the next crisis that may strike our communities? How can libraries increase emphasis on digital services? How can libraries build relationships outside of the physical space with refugees and people experiencing homelessness, as these marginalized populations are rising all over the globe? As institutions, libraries must be forward thinking to be able to support our communities through future adversities.

c. During the pandemic many school libraries were closed. Librarians shifted to support their schools in other capacities. After the pandemic, budget reductions brought on closures or reduction of staff in school libraries. Budget cuts also affected many public libraries. As issues surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) came to the forefront of our societal consciousness, libraries were encouraged to diversify their collections. Some libraries received pushback from their local governments and SchoolBoards and were pressured to remove titles from their shelves. In some cases, local governments went as far as to eliminate library positions. We need to continue to work to gain support from local legislation to support libraries’ staff, missions, and budgets.

d. Historically, libraries have been resilient and flexible to change. Libraries should be proactive in ensuring that they are accessible to all patrons, while continuing to be more mindful of employee well-being.

e. The Pandemic is not over. We have a lot that we can learn from the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to evaluate the weaknesses we had and improve on this for the future.

The IRRT Board is also working to address some of the housekeeping issues to make IRRT’s function better. Last September-2022, the IRRT’s Executive Board formed a Task Force (TF) to reexamine the functions of some of the IRRT’s committees to improve their workload. The TF found that some of the committee’s work descriptions do not fit with the current need of IRRT’s activities. The TF is working with committee members to achieve efficiency, accountability, and remove confusion. The TF’s will be ready to present their recommendations at the ALA’s annual Conference, if accepted by the co-chairs and the IRRT’s members, will support alignment, improve results, and may be increased functionality.

Currently, we have an opportunity for the IRRT members to be involved with IRRT’s quarterly...
newsletter, International Leads, as we are recruiting editors for the International Leads. It is a good opportunity for those who love to write about challenges and developments from libraries around the globe. It is a fun and thought-provoking job that helps to practice writing skills. If you are interested in writing and editing, please contact Dr. Whitney Bevill (email: bevillwl@appstate.edu) as you have seen a recent announcement about this in the ALA Connect. Feel free to reach out to our current editors if you have any questions about these positions.

I also encourage all my fellow IRRT library colleagues to plan on attending the ALA Annual in June 2023, either in person or online. For international librarians, please include IRRT events on your schedules. Until then, remain healthy and safe and I hope to see many of you in Chicago.

MESSAGE FROM THE IRRT CHAIR-ELECT

Mark Mattson

Email: mam1196@psu.edu

While IRRT did not have any official programming at the recent ALA LibLearnX in New Orleans, I was delighted to have a chance to catch up with many IRRT colleagues and attend some interesting and relevant sessions! I also attended a couple of the ALA Council sessions, as an observer, where some business related to roundtable dues and Association bylaws were being conducted. Happily, the outcomes of this Council work aligned with the goals of IRRT and will continue to support the mission of our round table.

The two items of relevance for IRRT and its members were the approval of new Association bylaws and the vote for a standardization of dues across roundtables. The approval of new association bylaws was passed by council and will now move to a ballot measure for the full membership vote. There would not be much impact on IRRT based on the approved bylaws draft language. The result of the vote for the dues standardization was also in line with the position advocated for by IRRT. There will be a small price increase for corporate and organizational membership for the roundtable, but all individual membership rates will stay at their current rate with the approved standardization model. This includes the continuation of free and automatic IRRT membership for all ALA international members. Having served on the Round Table Bylaws Standardization Task Force and represented IRRT in the Round Table Dues Standardization Task Force, I am pleased with the results, and I look forward to the new Association bylaws being officially adopted so that we can move forward with the IRRT bylaws revision for potential vote in the spring of 2024.

Another exciting development tied to LibLearnX is the formal start of the ALA Emerging Leaders who will be working with IRRT this session! Erica Saito, IRRT Secretary/Treasurer, met with the cohort at LibLearnX and they have already started digging into their project to help us evaluate and improve the popular IRRT International Librarian Networking Program (ILNP). The ILNP has once more received quite a large number of applications from all around the globe and will soon be finalizing selections and launching the program for this year. This program is one of the many examples of IRRT’s impact for librarians and libraries at a global scale.

Speaking to IRRT’s impact, I have also been enjoying attending some of the recent IRRT online programming, reading IRRT publications, and seeing the many calls for proposals for upcoming IRRT programs at ALA Annual come across ALAConnect and other international listservs. I am often struck by just how far the impact of IRRT reaches within the global library community, and it seems that that engagement and outreach is slated for even further growth in the years to come.

Finally, this leads us to ALA Annual 2023 to be held in Chicago. As mentioned above, our committees have been working hard since last July to prepare the programs, projects, and reception for the upcoming conference and I can hardly wait! In Chicago we will officially kick off our preparations for the celebration of IRRT’s 75th anniversary and will use the year to both reflect on IRRT’s legacy and envision its future. If you would like to contribute to that work through joining an IRRT committee, now is the time to let us know! You can fill out the interest form through the website or, if you want more info before you decide, reach out to me directly at mam1196@psu.edu!
FOURTH NATIONAL JOINT CONFERENCE OF LIBRARIANS OF COLOR

Originally scheduled for October 2022, the Fourth National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color splashed into action February 8-12, 2023 at the Tradewinds Island Grand Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Held every four years, the conference is a gathering of librarians, students, and staff representing the five National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCOs): American Indian Library Association (AILA), Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA), Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), and REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking.

Rachel E. Cargle, author of A Renaissance of Our Own: A Memoir and Manifesto of Reimagining and founder of the Loveland Foundation, was the opening keynote speaker. Past ALA President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr. moderated the session.

The conference had a wide variety of sessions and workshops covering various topics of importance to libraries. Some sessions of interest included:

- Researching Library Leadership Development Programs for BIPOC Populations presented by Natasha Johnson, Nicholas Lacy, and Mark Puente.
- Decloaking Wakanda: Creating Space for BIPOC Nerdspresented by Christina Taylor, Jean Darnell, and Deimosa Webber-Bey.
- Paving the Journey with Intention: Curating Our Pathway to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion presented by Carrie McClain and Tracy Scott.
- BIPOC Memory Keepers, Solidarity, and Collective Power presented by Alexander Soto and Jessica Salow.
- Identifying Your Super-Power: Developing Self-Compassion and Grit When Faced with Workplace Turmoil presented by Charmaine Ashby.
- Transform Your Library on a Dime Using Patron Centered Design by Mary Lopez and Yvette Garcia.

Between sessions, attendees took advantage of conference swag, refreshments, and other goodies in the exhibit hall. Numerous vendors, associations, institutions, and publishers were on hand to answer questions, provide resources, offer services, and giveaway books and other publications.

Attendees also had the option of attending conference tours of Ybor City, the Carter G. Woodson Museum, Salvador Dali Museum, and the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library of the University of South Florida-Petersburg.

In addition, there was a daily Call-to-Action session held at the end of each day. Prior to attending the sessions, attendees were asked to complete a survey on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The first 100 attendees who took the pre-survey, were eligible to receive a free copy of The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story by Nikole-Hannah Jones. The Call-to-Action sessions provided a space for attendees to discuss and share their thoughts, hopes, frustrations, experiences, and solutions to issue relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the library field. The sessions were well-attended, well-received, and greatly praised by those in attendance.

On Saturday evening, attendees enjoyed dinner, music, and dancing while honoring and recognizing the achievements of librarians during the JCLC Conference Reception and Awards Celebration. Award recipients were:

- Advocacy Award: Carrie Cornelius, Amy Breslin, Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, Wenli Gao, and Dr. Camila Alire.
- Legacy Award: Elayne Silversmith, Miriam Tuliao, Em Claire Knowles, Fu Zhuo, and Elizabeth Martinez.
- Rising Leader Award: Allison Waukau, Jamie Kurumaji, Olanike Olaniyi, Jennifer Woo, and Abigail Morales.

On Sunday morning, was the JCLC Call to Action Panel Discussion. Leaders from the five NALCOs answered questions and shared their thoughts on equity, diversity, and inclusion. Keno Catabay moderated the discussion. Following the panel, the conference closed with keynote speaker Reyna Grande author of Across a Thousand Mountains. Jacqueline L. Ayala moderated the session.

Overall, the Fourth National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color was a wonderful, engaging, enlightening, and empowering experience. To learn more about the Joint Council of Librarians of Color, Inc. and its past and future conferences, please visit: https://www.jclcinc.org.
This year’s Forum theme is **Ea: Indigenous Agency and Abundance** where we will be looking at how we as librarians reclaim and reaffirm Indigenous sovereignty, in all its forms, within libraries and librarianship. The sub themes for our Forum include:

**Kuleana: Understanding and Actualizing Relational Accountability**
What does accountability look like in libraries/archives? How do we hold our libraries/archives accountable to Indigenous peoples? How do we sustain our kuleana in the work we do for our communities? What does it mean to work with a community?

**Hoʻihoʻi Ea: Reclaiming Indigenous Land, Sovereignty, Knowledge and Repositories**
How are libraries/archives contributing to the ea/liberation of Indigenous people? How do we reclaim traditional ways of knowing and doing within our institutions? How do we sustain our ea as information professionals in the work we do?

**Piko: Centering Indigenous Protocols in Libraries as Main Practice**
What are the best practices to create, support, and normalize Indigenous protocols in libraries/archives? How do we make Indigenous protocols and broadly 'Indigenizing' libraries the center of strategic plans and resource planning for our 'new normal'?

**Pilina: Cultivating Indigenous Spaces and Networks**
What can we learn from each other, through sharing and listening to our unique experiences and expertise? How can we build deep relationships with each other and our communities? How can this time be a healing experience that reaffirms our kuleana as Indigenous information professionals?

Our Indigenous colleagues in the Information Science Profession are invited and encouraged to submit a proposal. We encourage stimulating, high-quality papers on any topic related to the Forum theme, subthemes, and/or possible topics. Papers will be presented on a panel or as a poster and will inspire the Forum discussions and deliberations on collective next steps. This year’s Forum will feature some truly breath-taking special events in addition to the physical Forum which is slated to have compelling presentations and keynote speakers representing a variety of Indigenous communities and topics. Mark it down on your calendars, we’d love to see you there! For more information about the Forum, proposals or accepted presenters’ information visit our website. The deadline to submit a proposal is March 31, 2023.

*Mahalo nui loa,*
Thank you very much!
Member Glenn Soco, who represented Governor Gwen Garcia. Dr. Angie M. Ceniza-Canillo, the Department Chair of Computer Information Sciences and Mathematics at the University of San Carlos, served as the keynote speaker.

During the opening ceremony, Fr. Narciso A. Cellan, Jr. SVD highlighted the critical role of librarians in advancing a knowledge-based society. At the same event, Senator Win Gatchalian discussed his involvement in Senate Bill No. 477, which aims to create the Philippine Online Library and digitize required textbooks for elementary and secondary education. This will make learning materials more accessible to students, support learning continuity, and address learning gaps caused by school disruptions.

Keynote speaker Dr. Angie M. Ceniza-Canillo stated that the pandemic has increased libraries’ importance as a crucial community resource, and several libraries have partnered with local social service organizations to aid their clients. The future of libraries will be influenced by technology, with augmented reality and artificial intelligence playing significant roles. As more people seek assistance from chatbots online, libraries are expected to integrate real robotics into their systems.

Following the keynote speech, Mr. Joseph M. Yap, MLIS, President of the Special Libraries Association - Asian Community and Overall Conference Chair of ICOASL 2023, delivered the opening message. Mr. Bryan Boy C. Cortez, Ex-Officio of the Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines and Head of the ICOASL 2023 Local Organizing Committee, gave a presentation on the mechanics of the conference. During the event, CD Technologies Asia, Inc., and Electronic Information Solutions, Inc. both provided product presentations. The booths and poster exhibits were opened for viewing after the opening ceremony.

Six paper presentations were presented during Breakout Session 1, which was moderated by Mr. Kevin Conrad Tansiongco from Electronic Information Solutions, Inc. and Ms. Alma Mila Prosperoso from the World Health Organization - WPRO. Six paper presenters from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India participated in Breakout Sessions 2, which was moderated by Ms. Maria Theresa O. Javier from the Development Academy of the Philippines and Dr. Labibah Zain from UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.
During the welcome dinner, Mr. Raven Lester Esperanza of the Filipinas Heritage Library served as the host. The event began with an acknowledgement of the participants, followed by a cultural performance from the USC Dance Troupe. Speeches were given by the Associated Partners, and Ms. Maria Teresa M. Cabance, ASLP President, and Ms. Marciana R. Marin, CLAI President. Hon. Michael Rama, Mayor of Cebu City, also attended the event, making it memorable. Participants proudly wore their national attire during the dinner.

Ms. Irene Alis-Brillo of the Department of Science and Technology - Science and Technology Information Institute hosted and moderated the second plenary session of the Conference on day 2. She introduced Dr. Steven Witt, Director of the Center for Global Studies and Head of the International and Area Studies Library at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, who served as the keynote speaker. Dr. Witt delivered a talk on the "Future of historical research with Fifth Industrial Revolution Librarianship," challenging librarians to use their expertise to guide their users and institutions in adopting and creating technologies. Following Dr. Witt's speech, Mr. Ian Christopher B. Alfonso, Supervising History Researcher from the National Historical Commission of the Philippines, shared his insights on the same topic. Mr. Alfonso discussed the importance of accessibility and the potential use of AI in deep search. He emphasized that AI would not replace historians and that a democratized special library could help advance Philippine history scholarship. He also highlighted the need for more relaxed copyright laws.

During Breakout Sessions 3, six paper presentations covering diverse topics were featured, including the integration of information literacy curriculum through the National Information Literacy Agenda (NILA), Bibliometric Analysis of Lecturers’ Scientific Publications at SCOPUS, and knowledge sharing practices among library and information professionals in Pakistan, among others.

The Poster Presentations showcased several research studies, mostly focusing on library utilization and services. The final breakout sessions were conducted on the same day, with two moderators: Mr. John Louie T. Zabala from De La Salle University moderated one session, while Dr. Shiva Kanaujia Sukula from the Dr. B R Ambedkar Central Library moderated the other.

During the ICoASL 2023 awarding ceremony, the best papers and posters were recognized, sponsors were thanked, and the announcement for ICoASL 2024 was made. On behalf of Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman, President of the Library Association of Bangladesh, Dr. Debal Kar accepted the challenge of hosting the next ICoASL. The Best Poster award was given to Hannah P. Alayon, Crisol Ann S. Berganio, Manuela R. Losañes, Elra Di M. Madologdog, Regin A. Cabacas, Ma. Beth S. Concepcion, and Stephen B. Alayon for their work entitled "Information Seeking Practices and Preferred Places to Study of ICT Students in a State University in West Central Philippines.”

The 3rd Best Paper Award was awarded to Yazid Ibrahim, Nor Shamsinar Baharom, Shamila Mohamad Shuhidan, and Nor Edzan Che Nasir for their paper that addressed the "Integration of Information Literacy Curriculum Through the National Information Literacy Agenda (NILA)." Amira Orizia Wanda Sasmita and Iis Dewi Ratih were also recognized for winning the 2nd Best Paper Award for their study on "Bibliometric Analysis: Scientific Publications of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya-Indonesia Lecturers at SCOPUS." Finally, Ma. Theresa O. Javier was honored with the 1st Place - Best Paper Award for her critical reflection on "The Paradox of Digital Technologies and its Implications to Human Rights and Archives.”

The closing remarks were given by Mr. Kevin Conrad Tansiongco, the ICoASL organizing secretary and Vice President of the Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines. He provided reminders for the cultural tour and closed the conference with a message. The conference’s third day, February 24, 2023, featured a cultural and city tour for the attendees. They were able to take advantage of this and tour Cebu City’s historical sites.

The 8th ICoASL 2023 was a success, with 134 attendees, 11 sponsors, 30 paper presentations, 4 poster presentations, and 8 partners. It was a great platform for exchanging ideas and exploring innovative approaches in special libraries, attended by approximately 200 people from various countries. The sessions were informative and engaging, and the award ceremony recognized outstanding papers and posters. The cultural and city tour on the last day added local flavor and was memorable. Congratulations to the organizing committee for putting on such an amazing event, and we look forward to the next ICoASL.
SISTER LIBRARIES WEBINAR FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

IFLA Sister Libraries working group: Anton Purnik, Maria Alekseeva, Maria Alexiussion, Emiko Goeku, Razina Akhter and Tone Larssen Rogne

On February 9, 2023 the Sister Libraries working group of the IFLA C&YA Section organized a webinar about the Sister Libraries Programme. Sister Libraries is a programme of the IFLA Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section which unites libraries working with and for children and young users and helps them building partnerships, exchanging views and experiences, collaborating and developing joint initiatives for children’s and YA’s reading.

The webinar presented successful joint projects of past years, current and future planned, and showed the range of possible projects and activities for participants of the programme.

The first presenter was Desiree Thomas, Youth Services Librarian in Columbus Libraries, Ohio, United States. She has been working as a young adults’ librarian for 24 years, and communicated with teens to know what they are interested in, and four most popular topics (food, school, sports and dating) and carried out several programs according to them. Her main summary was to connect with the young people at your library via conversation. Connect with the talented staff at your organization for programming ideas. Partner with you administrative departments for success and create a mix of in reach and out reach programming for young people.

The second speakers were Maria Alekseeva, Russian State Library for Young Adults, Moscow, Russia and Britt-Marie Ingden-Ringselle, Stockholm City Library, Stockholm, Sweden. Their libraries - Youth Library PYNKTmedis, Comics Library Serieteket and RSLYA have been collaborating since 2010. Together they presented various programs they carried out together. They started with a photoblog over 365 days where they shared highlights of a day from their libraries to get to know each other better. They also did staff exchanges, YA book exchanges, book exhibitions and workshops, and kept communication virtually during the pandemic.

Their connection also brought a good side effect; as they built a strong connection and have good knowledge of the staffs of each other's library, they can always find speakers or experts for international events. ‘Being a sister library is like a never-ending story’ said Britt-Marie. ‘And the first step could be a small step’ answered Maria, and encouraged the participants to start to build a partnership with other libraries as Sister Libraries.

The third presenter was Jasna Brkic, Senior Librarian, Children’s Department, Belgrade City Library, Belgrade, Serbia. She introduced her library and various programs and activities collaborating with other organizations/associations of the community, volunteers, and other libraries in the country.

For example, when her library started a makerspace, they invited specialists from citizen association and university students for tech programs for children. Other activities were like; theater play for kids collaborating with young actors, inviting authors and writers via the connection with publishing house, carry out children’s picture exhibition after they had a program with institute for public health, invite library user’s mom who is a cray artist for children’s art class, and so on. She also introduced ‘online poet-recitation competition’, a collaborating program of 10 Serbian libraries.

Jasna concluded the key is ‘to find a right person’ and said now she would like to collaborate with libraries of other countries as sister libraries.

The last speakers were Robin Gibson, Youth Services Manager, Westerville Public Library (earlier), Early Literacy Center Manager, Fairfield County District Library (since January 1, 2023), Ohio, United States and Maria Alexiussion Director, Gislaved Library, Deputy Head of Culture in Gislaved, Sweden. They have been working together as Sister Libraries since 2011 and have presented their collaboration at the WLIC in 2016. They introduced several recent activities they have done together. One of them is Virtual Book Club, which is for 11-18 years old children, and the teens of both libraries got together via Zoom and talked about their daily life, and about two graphic novels.

For younger children, they came up an idea of ‘Story Trail’ together. They each picked up a wordless picture book, and put them page by page on the sidewalk, so that children can follow the story by seeing the pictures, and find out the difference between their cultures.

Robin also explained there was a good effect on the collection building of her library by visiting Maria’s library; she got a hint from how they display and promote the world language books and improved her own library’s world language books collection.

They conclude to say that it takes time for these partnerships to build. Sharing of ideas for programming & services happens over time. Those involved gain fresh,
different perspectives on library issues & beyond. There will be surprises but it will be rewarding, fun and strengthens relationships.

Who can you join?
1. Register: fill in and send the online Registration Form.
2. Find libraries that interest you in the List of participating libraries and make connections with them via email. (New website to be launched soon).
3. Once the partnership is decided, inform the Information Coordinator (The List of participating libraries will then indicate that the libraries have been “paired”)

2023 MODERN LIBRARY AWARDS WINNERS
LibraryWorks recently announced the 2023 winners of its Modern Library Awards. Held annually, the Modern Library Awards recognizes vendors for their achievements in delivering exceptional products and services to libraries.

The Product of the Year Award went to the Crowley Company for its Zeutschel Scan Studio Cultural Heritage Scanner. Overton and Associates, LLC won Service of the Year Award for its library moving consultant services; and Book Page received the Platinum Award for its publication Book Page. Other vendors received awards as well and to view the full list of winners, please visit: https://www.libraryspot.net/MLA/MLAIssue2023.pdf

Congratulations to all award winners!!!

LIBRARIAN PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST


ALA PROVIDES MEDIA LITERACY WEBINARS FOR KAZAKHSTAN LIBRARY COMMUNITY

Michael Dowling

Email
mdowling@ala.org

ALA has been pleased to be part of the project supported from the American Corners program of the Bureau of Cultural and Educational Programs of the U.S. Department of State to provide a series of webinars to the library community of Kazakhstan on Media Literacy. The project is administered by the Kazakhstan AmCorners Network and the webinars are organized by East Kazakhstan Regional Library.

It is for the more than 1100 employees from public libraries of different levels, national libraries, as well as libraries of schools, colleges and higher educational institutions of Kazakhstan. 90% of participants in the webinars said they have not previously been trained in Media Literacy.

Media Literacy empowers people to be critical thinkers, effective communicators and active citizens within a complex, ever-changing digital environment. Media-literate adult and young adults should be able to access, share and create media across multiple formats and platforms while utilizing critical thinking skills to evaluate the purpose and potential impact of the material.

"Media Literacy is one of the critical topics that should be well developed in every community. This is not just in Kazakhstan, it is problem worldwide," says Perizat Chairman of the Kazakhstan AmCorners Network. “People get lost in the big waves of information from different sources. They don’t know how to analyze and evaluate information, or how to find credible information.”

She went on to note American Corners in Kazakhstan year by year organizes Media Literacy workshops. This time they picked the librarians as a target audience because they work with the local community. It is important to teach librarians first, so they will be confident to distribute their knowledge to others.

Working closely with Bibigul Shagiyeva, Director of East Kazakhstan Regional Library, who pushed for this series, ALA has created a set of six webinars modeled on a similar ALA Public Programs Office initiative for the U.S. library community in 2021 funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Through that project ALA created the “Media Literacy in the Library: A Guide for Library Practitioners” which contains information, program ideas and conversation starters on topics like misinformation and disinformation; architecture of the internet; civics; media landscape and economics; and media creation and engagement.

The first webinar for Kazakhstan which took place on December 7, 2022, gathered a record number – more than 800 participants from different regions of Kazakhstan. At the opening ceremony Amber Ora, Cultural Attache of the Department of Public Diplomacy of the U.S. Embassy in Astana welcomed everyone. The webinar was entitled “Media Literacy Education in Libraries for Adult Audiences” was presented by Kristen Calvert, Head of Erik Jonsson Central Library of the Dallas Central Public Library System (Texas) and Amber Conger, Deputy Director of the Lexington County Library (South Carolina).

The presentations are simultaneously translated from English into Kazak and Russian and with the eleven-hour time difference the presenters are up early in the morning in the U.S. for an evening presentation across Kazakhstan. The organizer of the project – the East Kazakhstan Regional Library named after A.S. Pushkin- makes a video recording of each webinar and places them on its library account in YouTube. This allows librarians from rural regions with low Internet connection to view the presentations. To date the videos of each webinar in Kazakh, Russian and English languages have collected, on average, over 450 views.

The second webinar “Media Literacy: Understanding the Architecture of the Internet” was presented by Natasha Casey, Professor of Communications at Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield, Illinois) on January 26th. Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, Augusta Baker Endowed Chair and Professor, School of Library Science at the University of South Carolina (Columbia, South Carolina) on February 22nd provided an in-depth look at the topics of misinformation and disinformation in “The Urgency of Media Literacy.”
about the importance of social justice and standing in solidarity against racism, hate, and oppression.

Sessions of interest:


• Beyond “Fake News”: Updated Strategies in Digital Literacy, Misinformation, and Bias Instruction presented by Rebekah Cummings and Davian Southoff.

• Civic Imagination Stations: Libraries Partnering with Artists to Create New Approaches to Building Literacies presented by Willa Taylor, Michael Rohd, Sara Sawicki, Amanda Raiche, Sandra Kern Mollman, Melissa Taylor, Jasper Logan, Deloice Holliday, and Dr. Margaret E. Hamilton Abegunde.

• Inclusivity in Entertainment: Uplifting Black Voices presented by Carell Augustus, Eriq LaSalle, Jorge Redmond, and Ali Biko Sulaiman Kamanda.

In addition to conference sessions, there were author talks by Cory Doctorow, Carell Augustus, Eriq LaSalle, Jorge Redmond, Ali Biko Sulaiman Kamanda, Willie Mae Brown, Carole Lindstrom, Steph Littlebird, Clint Smith, and Brian Selznick. There was also the announcement of the winners of the I Love My Librarian Awards, the Youth Media Awards, the Carnegie Medals Excellence in Fiction and Non-Fiction, and the RUSA Book and Media Awards.

On Sunday, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observation and Sunrise Celebration convened at the New Orleans Marriott. Held annually, this event honors the work and legacy of Dr. King. Light refreshments were served, and attendees joined together in singing “We Shall Overcome.” Sheryll Cashin, Georgetown University law professor and author, was the keynote speaker. Cashin spoke about King’s work to dismantle poverty and housing discrimination. Afterwards, she signed copies of her new book, White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding and Segregation in the Age of Inequality.

Closing the conference, was singer, songwriter, and activist Ani DiFranco. Sitting in conversation with ALA President-Elect Emily Drabinski, DiFranco discussed her music career, activism, and upcoming book, The Knowing.

Overall, the 2023 LibLearnX Conference was a refreshing and rewarding experience. The next LibLearnX Conference will be January 19-22, 2024 in Baltimore, Maryland: https://2024.alaliblearnx.org/.
Listed below are upcoming international library conferences, meetings, book fairs and events. Check out the Library Conference Planner for ongoing updates for USA, Canada and International Meetings.

**MARCH**
- 13-17 March 2023 – IATUL Conference, Dubai, UAE
- 13-17 March 2023 (virtual), 27-29 March 2023 – iConference, Barcelona, Spain
- 15-18 March 2023 – ACRL National Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
- 28-30 March 2023 – Research Data Access and Preservation Association Summit – Virtual
- 28-30 March 2023 – Computers in Libraries Conference – Arlington, VA, USA

**APRIL**
- 18-21 April 2023 – Art Libraries Society of North America, Mexico City, MX
- 26-29 April 2023 – Evergreen International Conference, Worcester, MA, USA

**MAY**
- 4-5 May 2023 – International Conference on Library and Information Science, Rome, Italy
- 12 May 2023 – Library Paraprofessional Conference, Greenville, NC, USA
- 14-16 May 2023 – Next Library 2023, Aarhus, Denmark
- 16-19 May 2023 – Joint Meeting of the Medical Library Association and the Special Libraries Association, Detroit, MI, USA & Hybrid
- 17-18 May 2023 – National Libraries Conference, Virtual
- 22-25 May 2023 – NASIG Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
- 24-27 May 2023 – LIDA Biennial Conference, Osijek, Croatia
- 30 May – 3 June 2023 – QMIL International Conference, Heraklion, Crete, Greece
- 31 May – 2 June 2023 – Society for Scholarly Publishing, Portland, OR, USA

**JUNE**
- 4-5 June 2023 – International Conference on Library and Information Science, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 12-15 June 2023 – 18th Open Repositories Conference, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 19-22 June – Association of Jewish Libraries - virtual
- 22-27 June 2023 – ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition, Chicago, IL, USA
- 25-28 June – American Society for Engineering Education, Engineering Libraries Division – Baltimore, MD, USA
- 27 June 2023 – International Conference on Library & Information Science, Virtual from Sri Lanka Library Association

**JULY**
- 5-7 July 2023 – LIBER 2023 Annual Conference, Budapest, Hungary
- 11-16 July 2023 – National Conference of African American Librarians, Indianapolis, IN, USA

**AUGUST**
- 3-4 August 2023 – International Conference on Library Science, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- 21-25 August 2023 – IFLA World Library and Information Congress, Rotterdam, Netherlands – Hybrid

**SEPTEMBER**
- 13-15 September 2023 – ALPSP Annual Meeting & Awards, Manchester, UK

**OCTOBER**
- 9-12 October 2023 – European Conference on Information Literacy, Krakow, Poland
- 19-21 October 2023 – American Association of School Librarians, Tampa, FL
- 23-26 October 2023 – SciDataCon 2023, Salzburg, Austria and virtually
- 24-25 October 2023 – International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries and Museums, Oklahoma City, OK, USA

**NOVEMBER**
- 6-10 November 2023 – Charleston Conference, Charleston, SC, USA
- 13-14 November 2023 – International Grey Literature Conference, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 27-30 November 2023 – International Indigenous Librarians Forum, Honolulu, HI, USA
Igor: Funnystory. One of my comics, Gokitomo, my friend the cockroach (http://gokitomo.com), was about a boy who was deathly afraid of cockroaches. He falls in love with a girl who keeps cockroaches as pets. When I was writing my second series Nopperabo (http://nopperabo.com), my mom asked me if I had realized that I was the boy in Gokitomo and then she told me the scenes I wrote there happened to me. Turns out I was blattophobic (having a phobia of cockroaches) when I was young and somehow blocked it from memory only to be unearthed in the comics. This leads me to the conclusion that probably most of my work is somehow rooted in my personal experiences. I also have a penchant for naming and designing characters after people I know.

Reysa: How do you find time both for your passion and your career?

Igor: I don't really know. Actually I take on graphics duties (particularly of the SLIS) like pubmats and journal layout as a form of stress release.

Reysa: As an LIS professor, what advocacies are you into right now?

Igor: Independent/indie publishing, artists' rights, digital platforms for comics, open access comics, komiks (Philippine comics), and open source software are the usual suspects.

Julia: Any other last words you wanted to share to our readers of International Leads?

Igor: I do hope everyone enjoys what we have in store for every quarter. See you around.

Check out Igor's comic illustration on page 15.

Johann Frederick "Igor" Cabbab: We started to have a new section for IL in September with the comic illustration. So, we formally introduce the person behind this column—Johann Frederick "Igor" Cabbab. We interviewed Igor to get some bits of information about his job and his passion.

Reysa: Thanks for speaking with us and for joining our team! I was not expecting you will accept our invitation without batting an eyelash knowing that you have a hectic schedule. Can you tell us more about yourself as part of the LIS Profession?

Igor: I graduated from my BLS (Bachelor of Library Science) in 1994 from the University of the Philippines School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS, back then known as the Institute of Library Science or ILS) and was recruited into the faculty. I eventually graduated from MLS (Master of Library Science) in 1999 as well. Being a young faculty member I was usually assigned to teach the subjects the senior faculty didn't want to teach (since they would want to focus on their specializations and research). So I ended up teaching ICT subjects, Collection Management, Reference Services, and Literature for Children and Young Adults.

Julia: How did you get into cartoon illustration? Did you always draw from childhood or discover this talent more recently?

Igor: I have always been in awe of graphic and comics works since I was a child. So I was very glad that these were tackled in the curriculum as part of the subjects dealing with the School Library, and Literature for Children and Young Adults. Eventually I decided that I wanted to learn more and pursue graphic and editorial work. I believed that the only way to learn would be to immerse myself in the publishing industry. I resigned from my tenured post after 9 years of teaching and joined the publishing industry via a managing editor position at an anime magazine. (ironically I wasn't able to escape library work since the position came with the responsibility of caring for the print and digital assets of the bullpen, e.g. photographs, developed film, color separation film, press releases, ad material, slides, etc. as well as stock management of printed issues). The magazine eventually expanded from features to comics content which I participated in as writer, letterer and colorist (and on occasion artist). I eventually ended up doing lettering and touch up art work for Japanese manga translated and set for North American release. When the internet started killing print (it led to the demise of the magazine as well as 2 other publications which I took on managing editor duties for) I returned to the academe.

Michele: How do you develop ideas for your cartoons?

Igor: 19
IRRT Executive Board
The 2023 ALA elections open on March 13, 2023! Take a moment to vote for your new IRRT Executive Board members. Here are your candidates for this year’s election:

**VICE CHAIR/CHAIR ELECT**
- Carol Brey
- Janet Lee

**MEMBER-AT-LARGE**
- Peter Bae
- Kay Ann Cassell

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**
- Érica Saito
- Jennifer Anne Wood Stubbs

Polls will close on Wednesday, April 5 at 11:59 p.m. CDT. An electronic guide to the 2023 ALA election is available to inform members about the candidates and the election process. It contains general information about the ALA presidency, recent ALA presidential initiatives, and biographical information about the four presidential candidates. If you have any questions, please contact the ALA International Relations Office at intl@ala.org.

2023 Spring Election
The American Library Association (ALA) Nominating Committee has selected two nominees to contend in the upcoming election for ALA president. The candidates vying for the 2024-25 term are Cindy Hohl, director of policy analysis and operational support at Kansas City Public Library (Missouri), and Eric D. Suess, director of Marshall Public Library (Idaho).

Hohl is past president of the American Indian Library Association and is an active member of other ALA affiliates, including the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, Black Caucus of ALA, Chinese American Librarians Association and REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking. As a member of the Public Library Association, a division of ALA, she currently co-chairs the Membership Advisory Group, and was a member of the PLA Strategic Plan Review Team. Hohl is also a member of several round tables: Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT), Library Research Round Table (LRRT), and Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT).

Hohl holds a Bachelor of Science in Organization Management and Leadership from Friends University, a Master of Library and Information Science from Wayne State University, and a Master of Business Administration from Baker University.

Suess is an active member of the Idaho Library Association, a chapter of ALA, where he previously chaired its Intellectual Freedom Committee. He was also a member of the ALA Council for more than 10 years and was involved in several council committees, including the Policy Monitoring Committee, Committee on Legislation and the Committee on Organization. He is currently a member of the following ALA divisions: Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), Core, PLA and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). He also belongs to several round tables, including International Relations Round Table (IRRT), IFRT, Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table (GNCRT) and Games and Gaming Round Table (GAMERT).

Suess holds a Bachelor of Arts in Government from the University of Notre Dame and a Master of Library and Information Studies from the University of Michigan.

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