

## President's Corner

As I'm standing on the shoulders of some great leaders of ALA's LSSIRT, I am truly honored to now hold the position of LSSIRT's President. I look forward to working with the organization in all earnest efforts in recognizing the Support Staff. In today's workforce, there is a great need of team spirit. As support staff, we are front line workers and the support from all components of the organization is needed. We are seeking new members for our round table and the continued support and recognition of the work that the support staff performs daily. As Libraries evolve, so does this amazing organization. As I strive in making improvements within myself, we are striving to improve ALA's awareness to those of us that are very active Library workers.

I have been a support staff member of the New York Public Library for the last 36 years. I truly enjoy working with the staff and public. I have been a member of ALA for over a decade. The need to be recognized by all, as part of this Dynamic Organization is still being worked on. When sending out correspondences or acknowledgments, ALA should use a title that will cover all Library workers.

We welcome you to join, support, or become involved with LSSIRT. We are the voices of the support staff. **We matter** and with your support we will continue to be heard. American Libraries Association is an amazing organization that I am proud to be part of, especially with so many different components. Careers, education, memberships, bylaws, leadership development, public and culture programs, public awareness are just a few areas of interest and development. I highly recommend joining a 'kitchen table' discussion. The kitchen table is a great place and opportunity to discuss areas of concern, make suggestions and have one on one (if the timing is right) dialogues.

As we plan for next year's annual conference, we are going to build on growing our membership and becoming a more visible roundtable. You don't have to wait to the conferences to join our roundtable. Greater is coming!!

Nina E Manning



**LSSIRT President**  
**Nina Manning**

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# Report on Ohio Library Support Staff Institute by Laura Birkenhauer

The Academic Library Association of Ohio (ALAO) Support Staff Interest Group holds an annual conference each summer for library staff, the Ohio Library Support Staff Institute (or OLSSI, pronounced “Ole See”). The theme for OLSSI 2015 was “Past, Present, & Future,” encouraging attendees to think about “where we are” and “where we are going,” centered by the ‘conscious “present” that we carry around in our minds.’



This year, the conference was held July 26-28 in Berea, OH, near Cleveland, at Baldwin-Wallace University. As a relatively new Ohioan, this was my first time visiting Cleveland. I was charmed by Baldwin-Wallace University, which boasted a comfortable dorm experience, a beautiful campus and delicious dining hall meals. The conference, though jam packed with activities and courses during the day, also offered the flexibility to sightsee Sunday morning and in the evenings Monday and Tuesday. For those less fond of wayfaring in a strange city, OLSSI also boasted fun evening activities for attendees, including games, movies, a crochet/knit circle and white elephant bingo.

OLSSI offered four (originally 3) \$275 H.W. Wilson Scholarships this year after receiving the H.W. Wilson Library Staff Development Grant. Staff from academic, public, school and special libraries in Ohio were invited to apply for a scholarship. I was thrilled to earn this scholarship, along with Benjamin Cottom, Reference Librarian at Grafton-Midview Public Library, Sue Smith, Serials Assistant at Westerville Public Library, and Rachel Mathie, in Local History/ Genealogy at Loudonville Public Library.

In addition to your choice of courses on topics ranging from “Engaging Tweens & Tweens Through Successful Programs” to “Absolutely Free (and Practically Unknown) Online Tools You Didn’t Know You Needed,” scholarship recipients were guaranteed spots in the four H.W. Wilson Award classes offered:

“Keys for Becoming an Effective Supervisor”  
“It’s the Law, Even in the Library”

Both taught by Luren Dickinson, Director, Shaker Heights Public Library

Past,  
Present,  
and Future

# Report on Ohio Library Support Staff Institute by Laura Birkenhauer

## Continued

“Building User-Centered, Flexible Teams”

“Collaborate for Success”

Both taught by Cathi Cardwell, Director, Ohio Wesleyan University Library

Dickinson’s classes were packed with information that I will continue to study. Bringing his 40 years in libraries to the table, I particularly enjoyed how he was able to speak from experience in his first session to those in the room aspiring to supervisory status.

Cardwell’s courses were peppered with audience-speaker interaction and group activities. My takeaways from her courses? The key to flexible teams is employees who are creative, communicative collaborative and critical thinkers. Reflect and be flexible!

All H.W. Wilson Award classes were held on Monday. I ended the day with a tour of Baldwin-Wallace’s Ritter Library and Rare Book Room. My interest was piqued by a partnership the university library has set up with the local public library system to loan leisure reading, non-academic titles. The Rare Book Room was a treat; it was shocking to learn that, until recently, many of the items we were able to view that day had been locked away, inaccessible to the public, and even library staff, for years. Visit if you can.

Tuesday’s schedule included opportunities to attend two classes. I chose “Engaging Undergraduates: Programming in Academic Libraries” taught by Katie Hutchinson of Walsh University. I took away numerous ideas for creative, engaging programming on a tight budget. Some examples: Food for Fines, International Games Day, a selfie contest during Banned Books Week, an “art corner” and therapy dogs for relaxation during finals week, and “life skills” training at the library (i.e. how to change a tire, clothing repair, credit scores and investing). I also learned about Padlet.com, a cool way to collaborate on a virtual chalkboard.

Next, I attended “Teambuilding Exercises” with Dr. Paul Heintz. Through word of mouth, I learned that Dr. Heintz is a favorite presenter of OLSSI attendees. Of course, hearing this, I had to

**“The key to flexible teams is employees who are creative, communicative collaborative and critical thinkers. Reflect and be flexible!”**



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## Continued

attend! His course was very interactive. Based on the tables we were seated at, we worked in groups on an “End of the World” decision making scenario. In this activity, we were told that an asteroid is hurtling towards Earth and we had to decide which 10 individuals (of a list of 20 people) were going to be allowed to board the one autopiloted spaceship that will arrive at the moon space station. Another teambuilding exercise was the “Blindfold Maze.” We were divided into pairs and half of the participants were blindfolded. With the help of our partner, using only their voice, we were guided through a maze of obstacles. My takeaway from these exercises: it’s all about good communication!

**“My takeaway from these exercises: it’s all about good communication!”**

Bringing local color to the conference, the closing OLSSI speaking was Terry Pluto, sportswriter and “Faith and You” columnist for the Cleveland Plain Dealer. In addition to discussion of his own writing career, his message was one of encouragement to those who would like to write professionally. As I began this article, I remembered his words: “The essence of writing is to begin writing!”

If you’ve not yet attended OLSSI, I not only encourage that you consider attendance next year, but apply for a scholarship! This is an invaluable experience to not only gain practical knowledge but network with library support staff and librarians from Ohio and beyond. Information about the 2016 scholarship contest will be available on OLSSI’s website in early 2016: <http://olssi.org/scholarships/>







(Left to Right) Nina Manning, LSSIRT Vice-President; Val Colon, LSSIRT President; Kareen Turner, LSSIRT Past President; Kerrie Stramler, LSSIRT Treasurer

(Left to Right) Miguel Magos, Member at Large and JP Pendleton, LSSIRT Secretary



(Left to Right) Valeria Fike and Jennifer Dale, LSSIRT Members at Large

A big thank you to City College of San Francisco for it's wonderful welcome gifts!



LJ's Paraprofessional of the Year, Tamara Faulkner Krause, at her reception at ALA Annual in San Francisco

Passing the Gavel—Val Colon passes the LSSIRT President's gavel to incoming President Nina Manning



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Our mission is to provide an arena within ALA for programming, communication and networking for library support staff.

### **Join us on Facebook!**

You can ask to join ALA's Library Support Staff Interests Round Tables Facebook site at...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/130614890392261/>



### **Sign-up for the LSSIRT Members-Only E-list!**



For timely updates and for networking with LSSIRT colleagues, be sure and sign-up for the very low volume LSSIRT e-list.

To sign-up, send an e-mail to Lorelle Swader at...

[lswader@ala.org](mailto:lswader@ala.org) with your ALA membership number and ask to be subscribed.