

NJLA NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

June 2022

Vol. 20 Issue 3

Important Dates

Professional Development Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 29, 2 p.m.

NJLA Office CLOSED

Monday, July 4

Monday, September 5

Young Adult Services Section Meeting

Friday, September 23, 10 a.m.

View the [NJLA Events Calendar](#) for all meetings and events.

HAPPY
Summer



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ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE NJLA STORE

Didn't make it to the conference and you really need a gift? Or do you have buyers remorse? Regret that you didn't buy something and now you really, really want (or need) it? Even though the store doesn't have an online presence, it is always available, and store chair Cheryl McBride is happy to work with you to take care of your gift needs.

Contact Cheryl at cherylmcbride@comcast.net and she'll be happy to do all she can to take care of your book themed gift needs.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: THANK YOU

by **KATE JAGGERS**

Closing out the NJLA year with an in-person Conference is one of the things I always look forward to the most. Often, the weeks leading up to our signature annual event are chaotic, exhausting, stressful, and full of anticipation and worry that all will come together--and it always does, in fact, come together in such an amazing, beautiful, and seemingly effortless way. I am so proud of this year's Conference Committee and the NJLA staff for pulling off our first large-scale in-person event in three years, navigating through a reinvention of logistics, processes, and relationships. This group of people define professionalism and commitment, and I'm honored to be among them as members of NJLA.



What a tremendous turnout of attendees, speakers, scholarship winners, vendors, and sponsors this year! We saw greater levels of engagement from our sponsors than perhaps ever before, and are thrilled to consider them partners as we continue to strengthen our association, and explore the mutual benefit of relationships between our commercial and institutional members. Thank you for your ongoing support of libraries and library workers across our state!

This year has been exciting, challenging, and probably one of the greatest learning curves of my career. Leading an Executive Board of dedicated and passionate colleagues has pushed me to diversify my perspective, rely on my support systems, stand firm and persistent when it's important, and let go when it's time to let go. As an association, we have accomplished so much, particularly since 2020. NJLA is YOU (I'll keep saying it forever) and you are wonderful. Thank you for your contributions, your patience, your enthusiasm, your big ideas, and for getting out there to embrace all of the opportunities to give back to NJLA like the heroes you are.



Kate Jagers is the Director at the Highland Park Public Library. She is also the 2021-2022 NJLA President.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by **JULIET MACHIE**

Greetings NJLA family, and welcome to Summer 2022!

I hope that you are energized and ready to take on exciting summer adventures. I want to give a special shout out to all our young adult and children's services providers. Summer is a busy time at many of our libraries, and a special time for our young people, who embark on so many educational, creative and fun adventures through their libraries. Thank you to all our library workers for the amazing work you do in the summer.

Congratulations to all of us for a highly successful NJLA Conference. It was a joy to see our NJLA Nation in Atlantic City. It was inspiring to connect with you, learn with you, and most importantly, see you face to face! Thank you to all of you who attended the conference, presented, or volunteered in different ways to support our NJLA Conference.

I also want to appreciate our NJLA partners, sponsors, and vendors for their contributions in making our conference a huge success. Thank you to our conference planning committee, especially our conference co-chairs, for a job well done. Thank you to the NJLA Office, for all the work behind the scenes.

June marks the end of NJLA's fiscal year, and July 1 ushers in new leadership of the NJLA Executive Board, Committees and Sections. I want to say a special thank you to our outgoing NJLA Executive Board president, Kate Jagers, for a job well done. Thank you to our outgoing Executive Board members, committee chairs, and section leaders for serving and investing in NJLA. Thank you to all of you who served on committees, sections, and task forces. You are the engine and brain behind NJLA!

Congratulations to our incoming leadership at the Executive Board, Committees, Sections, and Task Forces and thank you for your willingness to serve this great organization.

Article continues on next page.



I encourage you, if you have never volunteered for a committee or section, to please sign up. The networking and learning are impactful when you volunteer to serve. In addition, through service, we cultivate friendships and relationships that last a lifetime. It is my honor and privilege to serve you and to represent your interests. Thank you so much for trusting me to lead this amazing organization. I am eternally grateful.

Juliet Machie, Ed.D., is the Executive Director of the New Jersey Library Association.

NJLA Newsletter

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**Use these links to access
the latest newsletters from
other NJLA Sections.**

[Professional Development](#)

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INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING?

For all inquires please contact

newsletter_editorenjlamembers.org

Proposals for the Fall 2022 issue are due on AUGUST 15TH.

MAKING HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES: Summer Projects and Planning in the Academic Library

by **NICOLE POTDEVIN**

Finals are over. We have celebrated our most recent class of graduates. Far fewer students and information literacy instruction requests are coming into the academic library, so we can all finally kick up our feet and relax until the school year begins again in the fall. Well...not exactly. Our reference and instruction duties may be lighter, but for those of us who are year-round employees in academic libraries, our work doesn't stop; it rather changes focus to projects and planning for the next academic year.



Projects of all sizes are a never-ending aspect of library work, however there are some necessary tasks that we are unable to carry out during the academic year, either because our staff are too busy handling rigorous instruction responsibilities or the projects themselves would be too disruptive to our users. Summer, therefore, is the perfect time to tackle them. Our projects can include overhauling research guides and webpages, compiling and analyzing assessment statistics, taking inventory, weeding our collections, shifting or rearranging our stacks, clearing out our academic reserve collections, or even engaging in our own professional research and writing. The successful completion of these projects is necessary for our libraries to function well and our profession to flourish, so we truly benefit throughout the year from the special work done during these three short months.

For most academic libraries, the fall semester is our busiest time of year – new student orientations, endless information literacy classes, library tours, committee work, the list goes on – so advanced planning is crucial. For example, during the summer, it is common to plan our marketing and outreach efforts for the academic year, including brainstorming display ideas, scheduling programming, drafting newsletters, even creating graphics for future social media posts. We also frequently plan for future information literacy instruction by participating in professional development, including attending summer workshops and webinars, reading professional literature, and holding in-house training sessions, to ensure that our staff are staying current with best practices as well as local protocols. All the advanced planning done during the summer guarantees that we can best serve and engage with our users come the fall.

Article continues on next page.

While summer is the season for projects and planning in the academic library, it is also imperative for us to do things *outside* of the library, namely take our well-deserved vacation time and unplug for a bit. Although the work that we undertake during the summer is crucial for our successful operation during the academic year, it is equally important for us to take time away from the library. After all, it doesn't matter how many projects we have completed or how great our planning was if our staff are exhausted or burnt out. I hope that all of you have a safe and productive summer, but I hope even more that you take the time to refresh and re-energize yourselves. While we should make hay while the sun shines, we should also get out of the library and simply enjoy the sunshine as well.

Nicole Potdevin is the Associate University Librarian for User Services at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Florham, NJ. She holds an MLIS from Rutgers University-New Brunswick, NJ and an MA in Art History & Archaeology from New York University - Institute of Fine Arts in New York, NY. She is the 2022-2023 President of NJLA-College & University Section/ACRL-NJ Chapter. Her email address is potdevine@fdu.edu.

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INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS

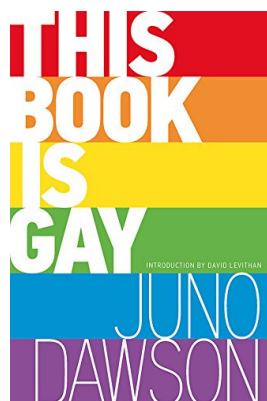
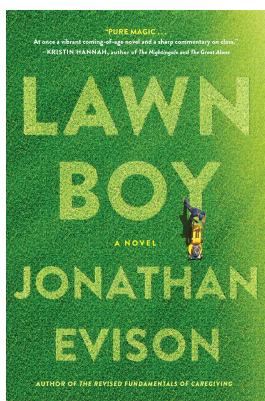
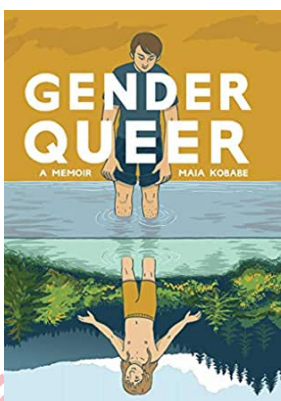
by JUDITH PISSANO

It has been a challenging year for intellectual freedom in both school and public libraries in New Jersey and across the country. This includes requests to remove books from school shelves, challenges to materials in public libraries, and accusations from news outlets that libraries are purveyors of pornography. The number of reported book challenges topped 700 in 2021 according to the American Library Association's (ALA) annual **State of America's Libraries 2022** report. This represents the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling the information 20 years ago. Most of the targeted books were by or about Black or LGBTQIA+ individuals.

In September, 2021 during the North Hunterdon-Voorhees High School district's board of education meeting, protestors called for the removal of *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe and *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison from district libraries. Over the next several weeks, the challenges at North Hunterdon-Voorhees High School spread to include three more books: *This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson, *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson and *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel. Media Specialist Martha Hickson received hate-filled emails from angry parents, was shunned by some co-workers, and some even attempted to file a criminal complaint with the local prosecutor's office against her. Some students began hiding books on LGBTQIA+ topics so others could not find them. Although Ms. Hickson received support from the New Jersey Education Association, she started to suffer from stress-related issues that included sleeplessness, anxiety, and weight loss.

Word spread and students from the school's Gay-Straight Alliance went to Ms. Hickson's office and asked for her help. She encouraged the students to express their concerns at the next school board meeting and share personal stories about how much the challenged books meant to them and the potential harm to students if the books were removed.

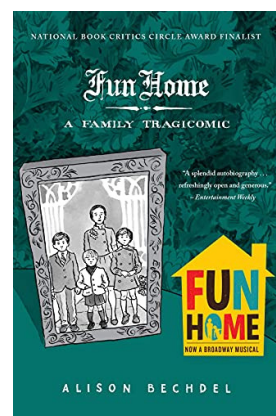
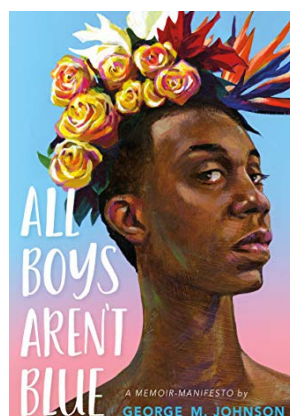
During the October and November school board meetings, crowds came out to oppose the removal of the books. Parents, educators, and other representatives attested to the importance of the challenged material. However, the most compelling voices were from the LGBTQIA+ students who spoke passionately about the need for a school library that



Article continues on next page.

Intellectual Freedom Fighters cont.

represents their lived experiences. Max Moore, a transgender student in the district said he read *This Book is Gay* and did not understand why the book was deemed too explicit for students. “*This Book is Gay* is more or less a gay sex education,” Moore said. He continued, “It does an amazing job filling in the gaps that the school’s curriculum fails to in Sex ed.” During sex education class, students talked



openly about the topics being targeted in these books, e.g. wet dreams and masturbation, with language centered around heterosexual students. As such, Moore challenged the Board to convene a committee to write a sex education curriculum for queer students.

On January 27, 2022, the North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School District Board of Education passed a resolution keeping all five books on the shelves. In recognition of their passion, bravery, and commitment to standing up for intellectual freedom, the North Hunterdon-Voorhees High School Gay-Straight Alliance was awarded the 2022 New Jersey Library Association Intellectual Freedom Award, and Martha Hickson and several students, including Max, were at the NJLA Honors & Awards Ceremony to receive it.

In response to the numerous book challenges and personal attacks on librarians, NJLA and the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) joined forces to form the Regional Rapid Response Team. The goals of the team are to lend support to librarians and library workers, and formulate a 4-pronged proactive approach to standing up for intellectual freedom in New Jersey. This approach includes coalition building, legislature, outreach and monitoring. If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to the team at rrt@njasl.org

The NJLA Intellectual Freedom subcommittee encourages school and public libraries to report book challenges. The reporting form is located on the NJLA website, at njla.org/fight-censorship. The subcommittee additionally recommends that libraries be prepared by periodically reviewing their collection development policies, having a Reconsideration of Library Material form available for patrons, and training front line staff how to respond. If you have any questions or suggestions, contact the NJLA Intellectual Freedom subcommittee at Intellectual_Freedom@njla.memberclicks.net.

Judith Pissano, MLIS, is an Assistant Library Director at the Gloucester County Library System and the NJLA Intellectual Freedom subcommittee chair.

NJLA SECTION SPOTLIGHT: SMALL LIBRARIES SECTION

SMALL LIBRARIES UNITED FOR BIG IMPACT

by JANET TORSNEY



Is your library a small library?

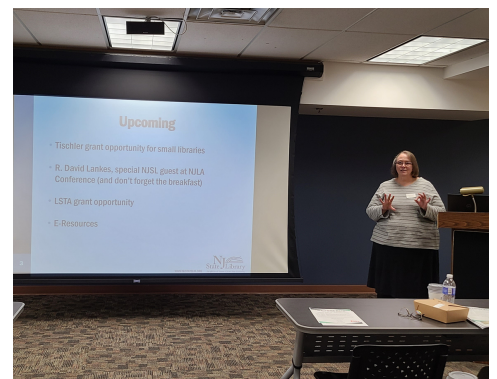
- Officially, is your population under 25,000 people?
- Professionally, is your job really two (or more) jobs?
- Personally, do you sigh at conferences when large amounts of staff, space, and money are mentioned?

You're not alone. Of New Jersey's 298 public libraries, 211 are considered small. The New Jersey Library Association's Small Libraries section is for you!

"We understand the limitations of small libraries, but we also understand the joy of working so closely with your community," says current President Tanya Finney-Estrada, "Our meetings reflect the creativity, openness, and good humor that are characteristic of small libraries."

The Welcome Back Small Libraries Unconference at the Clark Library reflected that. Along with solid presentations on the Children's Internet Protection Act and Jersey Connect, there was plenty of time to exchange views and ideas with other librarians and with NJ State Librarian Jennifer Nelson. The monthly meetings are similarly open and directed by the members.

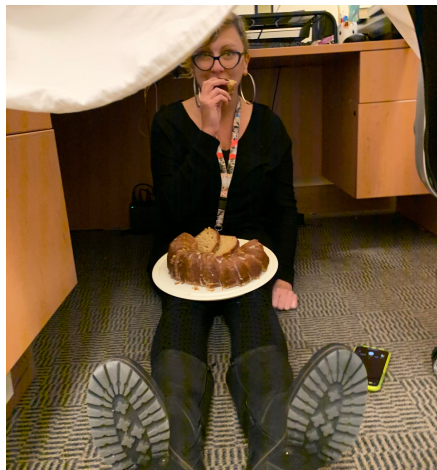
Don't forget to sign up for Small Libraries today. It's free. It's important. It's fun.



Janet Torsney is currently the interim Director of the Montclair Public Library. Janet is an admirer of all libraries, especially the small ones.

I LOVE ADULT SUMMER READING!

by **CLAIRE THOMAS**



When I started working at Cherry Hill Public Library as an Adult Services Librarian in 2015, one of my first major responsibilities was running the Library's Adult Summer Reading program. Before 2015, adult summer reading at CHPL was...not very exciting. Participants would read three books, write three book reviews, and then get entered into the end-of-summer raffle for one prize. I decided to completely rebuild the adult summer reading program to encourage participation all summer long. I did this by creating a prize wheel that only adults get to spin!

Participants could earn spins and raffle entries into the grand-prize drawing by engaging with the Library in different ways: reading, attending summer events, completing missions, and finding secret codes hidden in the Library. Making certain tasks- like reading books and writing reviews- encouraged higher participation by providing flexibility. Over the years, I've discovered that adult patrons are more likely to sign up *and* participate when the program is extremely flexible.

One of my favorite things about adult summer reading is how much creativity I can inject into the program. I love creating badges on ReadSquared that patrons can earn by completing certain tasks. I can get silly with the badges and tasks! I love creating themed suggested reading lists and decorating the Reference Desk. I love when teens graduate from high school and sign up for adult summer reading for the very first time. Most of all, I love it when patrons start asking about adult summer reading in late spring.

If your library doesn't have an adult summer reading program, consider adding one! They're lower maintenance than kids and teens programs and will provide a valuable experience for your adult patrons.



Claire joined the Cherry Hill Public Library's Adult Services department in early 2015. She holds an MA in American History from Rutgers University-Camden and an MLIS from Rutgers University-New Brunswick. In her free time, Claire knits complicated sweaters, plays open-world video games, and watches horror movies.

A sample task badge from the CHPL Adult Summer Reading Program.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: KATRINA ZWAAF



Katrina's path to librarianship started when she was a child: her mother was a school librarian in Princeton, NJ, and Katrina's first job was barcoding books in her high school library; she went on to hold student library jobs while in college. Katrina worked at Rutgers University Libraries for eleven years, where she developed an interest in technical services and cataloging. She works presently at Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) as a Cataloging and Metadata Librarian, cataloging children's materials as well as digitizing and creating metadata for historical items.

Katrina first joined NJLA as an LIS student at Rutgers, but only came to be truly active when a colleague at SCLSNJ encouraged her to attend a meeting of the Technical Services and Collection Development Section. She eventually became an officer and will be section President for 2022/2023. She participated in the Emerging Leaders program in 2021 and was recently a session panelist at the 2022 NJLA Conference. Through the activities and opportunities afforded her by NJLA, Katrina has built wonderful relationships with individuals from across the NJ library community.

Katrina Zwaaf is the Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at Somerset County Library System of New Jersey and will be President of NJLA's Technical Services and Collection Development Section for the 2022/2023 year.

NJLA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Honored at the President's Inaugural Luncheon at Conference, this year's scholarship recipients include those who will receive the NJLA Course Scholarship and the new NJLA Equity Scholarships, sponsored by NJLA, LLNJ, NJSL, and Rutgers.

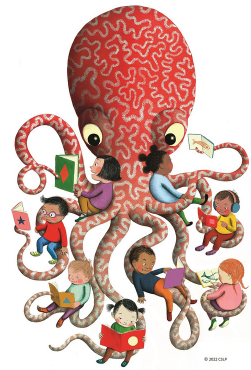
A digital program about the scholarship winners can be found [here](#).

L to R: Stephanie Nesmith, Jetzarel González-Valentín, Alyssa Rivera, Jennifer Amorese, Sloane Kazim, Layla Abdallah, Lilliana Villalobos, Christine Oania.

FEATURED PARTNER

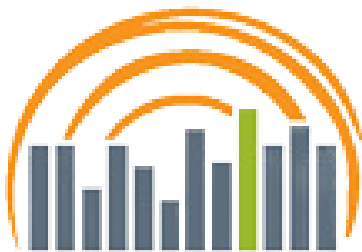
COLLABORATIVE SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAM (CSLP)

by **SHARON RAWLINS**



NJ public libraries' membership in the national Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) is funded by the NJ State Library. CSLP assists public libraries in fostering community by providing an inclusive literacy-based program for all ages that offers a unified theme, sharable resources, and professional support for its members. An online manual provides activity and programming ideas for library patrons of all ages – from early readers (including in both English and Spanish) to adults. A customizable English/Spanish PSA is available to help you promote the program. Nationally renowned illustrators create the artwork, like Sophie Blackall's art for "Oceans of Possibilities." You can also help create the content for the manual by suggesting programming ideas. CSLP is soliciting adventure-themed program ideas for 2024 now.

CSLP is composed of volunteer virtual committees of public library staff throughout the U.S. NJ library staff are currently represented on the adult & children's manual idea committees; the inclusion; vendor; and child & community well-being committees; the teen manual review committee; and the CSLP Annual Meeting Steering committee. The sign-up period for the 2023 calendar year is the end of August through early October. Check out CSLP's [website](#) to see how you can get more involved!

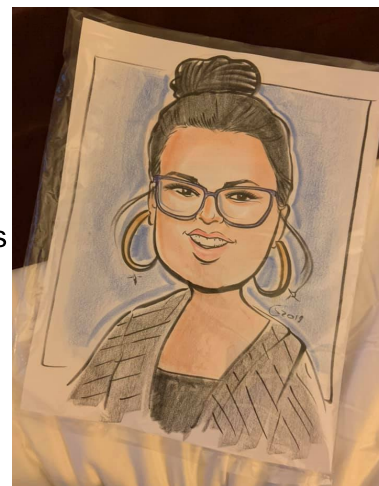


collaborative
summer **library program**

NJLA ANNUAL CONFERENCE MAKES A TRIUMPHANT RETURN

by PHAM CONDELLO

This year, for the first time in two years, the NJLA Annual Conference was held in person at Harrah's Resort in Atlantic City. After a canceled conference in 2020 and a virtual one in 2021 (NJLA's first virtual conference in its history!), NJLA members were excited to return to an in-person event. The Conference Committee worked tirelessly to ensure everyone's experience at the event was a safe one.



The Coronavirus was like that book series with twists and turns that you didn't see coming; a book that made you so irritated you wanted to throw it against the wall at times, but you had to finish it because you NEEDED that happy ending.

Although Covid hasn't ended, we still saw a high number of exhibitors and vendors in attendance. We also watched many Conference attendees (and their smiles!) when they finally saw their friends and colleagues for the first time in a few years. We ate our ice cream in the exhibit hall. We learned new ideas to bring back to our workplaces. We embodied that saying that pops up on inspirational wall art everywhere: "Live. Laugh. Love."

After Conference Housekeeping:

- We would love to hear your feedback about the Conference. We do this for our organization. We do it because we love our libraries and library workers. So please take [this survey](#) and let us know how you feel.
- Presentation slides are now on the Conference site: njlaconference.info
- Join the Committee! Being on the Conference Committee has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my library career. When the call comes to join a committee, consider signing up!

Thank you to the everyone on the Conference Committee, the vendors, the exhibitors, and especially the attendees. We couldn't have done it without you. The Conference Co-Chairs appreciated all the patience and gratitude that you have shown us.

Pham Condello has spent many years on the Conference Committee. She is currently the Managing Librarian for Patron Services at the Old Bridge Public Library, and she thinks she's very funny.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Amy Behr-Shields is the new Director at the Summit Free Public Library, as of April 4, 2022.

Sharon Clarke started as a Youth Services Librarian at Cherry Hill Public Library in May 2022.

Janice Perrier, Director of Mendham Borough Library, retired on March 25. **Trish Hall** will be the new director.

Elisabeth (Liz) Sann also known as "Miss Liz" has retired after nearly thirty years from the Roxbury Public Library in October 2020. She spent 25 years in youth services the rest in Circulation.

Jenise Sileo, formerly at Sussex County Library System, is now a Librarian 1 at the Parsippany-Troy Hills Main Library

Embracing
Opportunity →

Have a job change, retirement, or announcement to share?

Email newsletter_editors@njlamembers.org
to have it included in our next issue!