SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Governors Advisory Council (GAC) Meeting
TRACK: Meeting

The Governor's Advisory Council on Library Development, established by the Library Code, offers advice and recommendations to the Governor, the Secretary of Education and the State Librarian in areas relating to general policies and operations of the State Library and the Commonwealth's library program. Council members represent library trustees, librarians and lay advocates.

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Sierra Club Partnership Hike at Presque Isle State Park
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Fawn Contreras, Head of Youth Services, Valley Community Library
Dean Eichen, Lake Erie Sierra Club Volunteer, PA Sierra Club Outing Leader

Join members from the local Sierra Club on a casual hike at Presque Isle State Park to network and discover more program ideas centered in nature, and enjoy the beauty of one of our State Parks. Promote your own health literacy by getting some fresh air and low impact exercise on this easy mile-long walk. Enjoy the shores of Lake Erie while hiking through the unique wooded wetlands of the Isle. Participants will learn how similar outings and partnering with the Sierra Club in their area could work.

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Governor's Advisory Council on Library Development Open Forum
TRACK: Meeting
Mary Garm, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Library Development
Dale Hamby, Vice Chair of the GAC
Allison Mackley, Executive Committee of the GAC
Susan Banks, Deputy Secretary & State Librarian

The Governor's Advisory Council (GAC) Open Forum is a chance for the twelve-member appointed group to communicate with the library field. Attendees can use this opportunity to ask questions and engage with the GAC about the work of the Council and its Committees.

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Facilitating Successful Visual Arts Programs for Adults at Your Library
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Tisa Ott, Adult Services Librarian, Penn Hills Library

Hear about visual arts programs for adults offered at Penn Hills Library. Learn strategies for facilitating visual arts activities through the lens of three specific programs: "How to Draw" (a step-by-step drawing class), "Art Lab" (an arts and crafts class utilizing various materials and methods), and "Accessible Crafts" (a workshop featuring self-guided projects). Learn how and why programs were conceived and how they have evolved; how such factors such as patron demographics, room setup and instruction methods were considered. Finally, how the success of programs are determined, both qualitatively and quantitatively, using program evaluations, participant feedback and attendance data.

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Intro to Teen Volunteers
TRACK: Youth Services
Jennifer Farmerie, Head of Children's Services, Sewickley Public Library
Casey Heckman, Teen Services Librarian, Sewickley Public Library

In this session, participants will gain the skills to effectively engage with Teen Volunteers within their communities. They will learn how to utilize Microsoft and Google Forms to streamline volunteer registration, management, and communication. Additionally, participants will explore strategies for organizing and executing successful Teen Volunteer training sessions. The session will also cover the use of CANVA to create

volunteer schedules and track hours. Finally, participants will discover best practices for recognizing and celebrating the achievements of Teen Volunteers.

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Making Cents of Games: Using Games to Fundraise
TRACK: Advocacy & Development
Kati Coleman, Adult Services Program Librarian, Northland Public Library

Working in a nonprofit and asking for donations can be hard, but putting on a game event is fun and makes asking for money easier. Learn about different types of fundraisers you can hold and see some examples of these events held in libraries, with a focus on presenting your own murder mystery event!

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Research & Write With Generative AI
TRACK: Career & Leadership
Denise A. Wetzel, Science & Engineering Librarian, PSU Libraries

This session explores methods to leverage generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools that can enhance your research and writing. While much of the generative AI focus has been on the use of chatbots for prompt-based questions and answers, there are a host of tools that support researchers. Beginning with effective prompt writing, the session will share tips and tricks to get the results you need. The session moves into a review and comparison of multiple tools that support literature searching and literature reviewing. The session concludes with tools that support efficient writing workflows. Some of which attendees may be using already. This session will be useful to all librarians based on the need to research and/or share research tools with their patrons.

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Sensory Rich Environment for Early Childhood Programs
TRACK: Youth Services
Julene Diaz, Director, Alexander Hamilton Memorial Free Library
Beth Steineman, M.Ed., Program Coordinator, Alexander Hamilton Memorial Free Library

This session will demonstrate a variety of program options that can be used or adapted to any library setting. The presenters will share ideas to create a sensory rich environment for early childhood library programs. The session will promote pairing literacy with sensory activities to enhance basic PreK skills. Hands-on activities will

allow participants to engage with materials and discuss with the presenters and fellow session attendees.

1:00 PM - 3:15 PM (Double Session)
Horrors of the Pen: How Authors Write Stories That Scare
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Clare Beams, author
Jessica Warman, author
Leslie J. Anderson, author

Join us for a haunting afternoon with three authors who write with the scary in mind.

- Jessica Warman is the author of *Breathless, Where the Truth Lies;* an ALA Best Book for Young Adult's, and the bestselling *Repeat After Me*.
- Clare Beams is the author of the short story collection *We Show What We Have Learned*, *The Illness Lesson*, and *The Garden*.
- Leslie J. Anderson is the author of the poetry collection *Take This to Space* and the novel *The Unmothers*.

Their books will be available for purchase and autographing during the last 30 minutes of the session.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
The Art of Small Talk and Other Networking Skills
TRACK: Career & Leadership
Amy C. Resh, Chief Executive Officer & Director, James V. Brown Library
Robbin Degeratu, Assistant Director, James V. Brown Library

If the idea of making small talk with an elected official, heading to a conference alone, or actually delivering your elevator pitch gives you anxiety, you're not alone. Join us to build a foundation of basic networking skills that will give you confidence and project professionalism in any setting. You will learn what to do before, during, and after networking interactions to have a positively memorable impact.

After briefly outlining the importance of and return on networking, we will give attendees an overview of the best ways to prepare for a networking event so they are set up for success. They'll learn how to get comfortable making conversation with new faces, and how to ask questions that promote productive professional relationships and foster conversation and goodwill - then put it to use. We will outline etiquette, best practices, and hard-earned lessons for succeeding at receptions and other events. Finally, we'll

talk about what happens the day after a networking event and how to springboard conversations into fruitful collaboration.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
Future Focused: Designing a ChatGPT Workshop for First Year University Students
TRACK: Technology & Education
Beth Transue, Information Literacy Librarian, Messiah University

This session will provide a case study about designing an interactive workshop about generative artificial intelligence, focusing on ChatGPT, for first year university students. The presenter will describe the collaboration process used to create a session based on a request from a campus artificial intelligence task force. Based on the request, the workshop focused on defining ChatGPT, using the software, and discussing ethical issues that would likely be encountered in an academic classroom. Participants will learn about the instructional design process used to create the workshop and how the workshop was approved by various levels of campus administration. The presenter will share the current workshop design and engage participants in several of the interactive activities so that participants can determine how well the workshop format might work in their specific settings.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
Leveraging Public Media to Spark Engagement
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Gina Masciola, Program Director, WQED
Liz Kostandinu, Project Manager, WQED

In this interactive session, applicable for librarians from a variety of contexts and who serve multiple audiences, participants will dive into the connections to and support from local PBS stations, who are members of your learning neighborhood. It will include and exploration of national documentaries, local community highlights, mutlimedia experiences, and interactive and passive engagement opportunities all available through partnership with your local station.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
Make New Friends - But Keep the Old
Retention and Recruitment to Keep Friends Strong
TRACK: Library Administration
Denise Sticha, President, Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries (PCBL), Executive Director, Centre County Library and Historical Museum
Susan Tracy, Vice-President , PCBL, President, Friends of the Mt. Lebanon Library Friends

As the umbrella organization for Pennsylvania Library Friends, PCBL has been seeing a growing number of Friends groups disbanding. The COVID pandemic hit Friends groups hard and many groups haven't fully recovered. But, that's only part of the concern. A lot of our Friends are "aging out" and the organizations are struggling to recruit new members while retaining the wisdom and institution knowledge of existing Friends. Friends can be strong advocates and provide much needed financial support. But whose job is it to keep Friends functional well? How can library administration navigate the often challenging personal and group dynamics that contribute to the decline of a once thriving Friends organization? This session will be a facilitated panel discussion featuring several Friends and Library Directors who have successfully developed strategies to safeguard and strengthen the significant role Friends can play in the Library's long-term health and stability. PCBL President Denise Sticha will lead the panelists to comment on areas of recruitment and retention, roles, responsibilities and relationships, Memorandums of Agreement, and the importance of communication and respect. Attendees will also be invited to submit questions to the panel.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
Mother Goose on the Loose: More Than Just a Storytime
TRACK: Youth Services
Carrie Sturgill, Head of Youth Services, Radnor Memorial Library

Mother Goose on the Loose is a method for presenting an engaging, nurturing infant and toddler storytime that incorporates a research-based approach to baby brain development as well as early literacy education for caregivers. The storytime method strengthens early literacy and teaches caregivers ways to interact with their child in order to stimulate brain development and learning. Mother Goose on the Loose is heavily nursery-rhyme based and also includes music, puppets, read-alouds, play, visuals, props, movement, sensory stimulation, and musical instruments. Woven into the storytime presentation are language and math skills on an age-appropriate level as well. The session will cover a brief overview and history of the Mother Goose on the Loose method and will include a 30-minute interactive demonstration of a typical program.

Afterward, I will break down each portion of the program with tips and resources related to each element (music/rhymes, books, props, etc.), including how to incorporate early literacy and developmental tips for caregivers naturally into the storytime. The session will be presented by a single speaker in a combination lecture and group participation format.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
Tough Interactions: Preserving Access Rights
in Public Service Behavior Response
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Dan Hensley, Coordinator - Staff Training and Development, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Wesley Roberts, Manager, Coordinator, Information and Research Services, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Anyone working in library public service can tell you that it is not uncommon to experience patron behaviors and attitudes that make us uncomfortable or are unpleasant. The challenge for library workers is that unlike in many public-serving professions, community members have a well-established right to access the library, a right which prohibits their access from being denied because of origin, age, background, or views.

For library workers, this means that there is a whole category of behaviors that, however unpleasant or uncomfortable, are allowable under the library's policies. We call these "Tough Interactions," and it is more important now than ever that frontline library staff are clear about what kind of speech or behavior is grounds for exclusion from library services, what is not, and how to minimize the stress that comes from handling tough interactions that do not clear that bar.

In this session, we will:

- Review what the ALA Bill of Rights has to say about patrons' right to access library services;
- Discuss simple ways to think about determining the appropriate response to tough interactions when they occur;
- Learn and practice effective techniques for pausing interactions, setting limits, and successfully completing even the most difficult interactions with patrons.

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM

Opening Keynote Session:

Libraries and the Communities We Build Together:
Celebrating Impact and Inspiring Action
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Shamichael Hallman, Director of Civic Health and Economic Opportunity, Urban Libraries Council

In this keynote, Shamichael Hallman, author of *Meet Me at the Library*, will celebrate the profound impact librarians have on their communities while inspiring action toward a brighter future. Drawing on themes from his book and real-world examples, he will explore how libraries can foster universal civic learning, bridge divides, and empower communities to thrive. Through stories of transformation and innovation, Shamichael will highlight the evolving role of libraries in advancing equity, preserving culture, and nurturing inclusive, resilient public spaces. Attendees will leave with a renewed appreciation of their essential role and the inspiration to continue building vibrant, connected communities.

Copies of *Meet me at the Library* will be available for sale and autographing following the presentation.

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Welcome Reception
TRACK: Networking

All conference participants are invited to network and learn more about association activities at this informal, "getting to know you" event. Light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar will be available.

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Chapter Dine Outs
TRACK: Networking

Join your fellow chapter members for some informal networking and fun as you share a meal at a local restaurant. Look for an invitation from your chapter with registration instructions.

8:00 PM - 9:30 PM
Sneak Peek of *The American Revolution*, a landmark documentary by Ken Burns

Join us for a free preview of *The American Revolution*, a landmark documentary by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt. which will premier on PBS on November 16. We'll take a peek into what will be a 12-hour series on America's founding struggle and the men and women of the Revolutionary generation and the crisis they lived through. By weaving together accounts of American political leaders and their British counterparts with the perspectives of the so-called ordinary people who waged and witnessed war, *The American Revolution* will be an expansive, evenhanded look at the virtues and the contradictions in the fight for independence and the birth of the United States.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

8:00 AM - 8:45 AM
Coffee & Un-Conference Discussions
TRACK: Networking

Start your day with a light breakfast and conversation with fellow attendees about the previous day's sessions.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Championing Freedom: Libraries as Guardians of Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Heather Lindskold, District Library Consultant, Altoona Area Public Library
Kate Cummings, Research and Instruction Librarian, University of Scranton

ACT 48
1 Hour

This session will examine the intersection of intellectual freedom and social justice. As a profession, we are fighting day in and day out to protect our intellectual freedom as well as that of our communities. The threats to these freedoms are all too frequently targeted toward traditionally underrepresented groups; groups we currently try to make feel like they are not only reflected in our spaces, but that they belong there. Libraries championing for social justice is not new. This session will move beyond a cursory overview of intellectual freedom, and will discuss the intersection of social justice and

intellectual freedom as well as provide some of the historical context of libraries as advocates for social justice. We will also discuss current challenges for our field examined through case studies and present strategies for raising spirits and prevailing in the face of injustice.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Growing Communities with Seed Libraries
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Syd Krawiec, Program and Outreach Coordinator, Peters Township Public Library

Seed libraries exist to help collect, distribute, and save seeds for the community. Learn about the state laws and regulations that impact seed libraries and how to set up your own. You will learn about available resources for sourcing seeds and partner organizations for programs and gardening support. Explore examples of seed libraries in and out of the commonwealth and how you can help your community grow with a seed library.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Voracious Readers' Advisory:
How to Satisfy (Hopefully!) the Insatiable Reader
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Mary Ann Lewis, Library Director, Barrett Paradise Friendly Library
Lynn Vroman, Adult Services Coordinator, Barrett Paradise Friendly Library

You're quite sure that your patron has read every book on your shelves and you feel like you've exhausted your stockpile of "go to" recommendations. Now what? We'll tell you about how a collaborative staff effort plus thinking outside the box has helped us keep one of our most voracious readers happy and coming back for more at our small library. Whether your insatiable reader is tech savvy or "old school," we'll share tips and resources to refresh your approach to meeting your patron's needs. The session will include discussion to provide the opportunity to share strategies you use at your library.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
You Can Do It!: A Roadmap to Earning Your PA Forward® Gold Star in One Year
TRACK: Career & Leadership

Rob Lesher, PA Forward® Program Manager, Pennsylvania Library Association

You've heard about PA Forward®, but maybe it seems like a lot of extra work. Perhaps you work in a small library and think it's not possible to achieve Gold Star status with your staffing and budget. But it doesn't have to be that way! In this session, we will discuss how to use PA Forward® branding to promote what you already do. This way, you can better communicate the value of your library to stakeholders and earn your Gold Star without breaking a sweat.

9:00 AM - 11:15 AM (Double Session)
2025 Carolyne L. Smith Best Practices Awards Presentations
TRACK: Youth Services

Rachel Fecho, Children's Librarian, William Jeanes Memorial Library; Chair, 2025 Best Practices Committee

PaLA's Best Practices Awards Committee invites you to join us to be inspired by and to honor the 2024 winners of the Best Practices Awards. The Best Practices Awards highlight and recognize the impactful programming libraries provide to youth of all ages throughout Pennsylvania each year.

Award winners will introduce us to their exceptional programs through either digital, poster, or live presentations. From among the award-winning programs from all 12 categories, the program deemed to be the most creative and influential, the "best of the best," will be presented with David J. Roberts EXCEL Library Service Award, which is accompanied by a $1,000 gift. Ample time will be provided at the end of the session for participants to ask questions and network with colleagues.

9:00 AM - 11:15 AM (Double Session)
Communication, Compliance and Compassion - the Cornerstones of HR Best Practices
TRACK: Library Administration

Grace Bradley Kelly, MBA, SPHR, AWI-CH, HR Consultant, RC Kelly Law Associates
Matt Jandrisavitz, Esq., Attorney, RC Kelly Law Associates

This engaging and informative workshop will delve into the key pillars of effective HR management—Communication, Compliance, and Compassion—and how they

collectively contribute to building a strong organizational culture and effective workplace practices.

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM
Dare to be Different: Crafting Exciting Adult Programs at the Library
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Jennifer M. Koch, Director, North Wales Area Library

Join us for an interactive and lively session where we'll explore innovative strategies for planning and executing adult programs that break the mold! This isn't your typical library program; we're here to shake things up and have some fun!

In this session, you can expect to:

- Discover Creative Concepts: Learn how to take traditional book clubs offsite and into the community, creating unique experiences that draw in diverse crowds. We'll share tips on choosing the perfect venues and themes that resonate with your audience.
- Engage with BYOB Ideas: Explore the exciting concept of "Bring Your Own Beverage" events! We'll discuss how to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere that encourages social interaction while keeping it clean and fun—no shady bar rooms here!
- Build Community Connections: Understand the importance of charging your community connections and circles. We'll discuss how to collaborate with local businesses, authors, patrons, and organizations to enhance your programming and foster a sense of belonging.

Expect a mix of discussion, brainstorming, and hands-on activities that will leave you inspired and ready to implement fresh ideas in your library. Whether you're a seasoned librarian or new to adult programming, this session promises to be informative, engaging, and full of laughter and stories of success and failure!

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM
Health Programming at Your Library: Project Ideas, Resources, and Opportunities
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Michael Balkenhol, Engagement Coordinator, University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System

Interested in offering health programming at your library? Not sure where to start with developing health outreach initiatives and partnerships? Join this session to learn about how libraries have responded to various community health needs through health

outreach and programming. Project ideas explored will include addressing food access and nutrition, starting telehealth services, mental health and wellbeing, storytelling programs, and more. We will cover a variety of replicable programs as well as larger initiatives and identifying national and local partners to best meet your community's needs and interests.

Attendees will leave this session with examples of practical project ideas, programming resources, partnership strategies, staff training resources, and knowledge of funding opportunities. The presentation will include time for audience interaction, feedback, and Q&A.

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

Re-animate Your Teaching: Raising Student Spirits by Utilizing the Backward Design Process

TRACK: Technology & Education

Emily Reed, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Penn State University Libraries

This interactive session will introduce participants to the Backward Design process developed by Wiggins and McTighe in their innovative text, Understanding by Design, originally published in 1998. Backward Design is a lesson planning framework that is transformative for teaching practice and the student experience. This session will focus on the three steps of Backward Design and offer participants the opportunity to practice designing goals, assessments, and learning experiences for common library instruction requests. Notably, this presentation will utilize the Backward Design process in its creation and development. Benefits and challenges of using the Backward Design process for different formats of library instruction will be discussed, and there will be time for questions.

References Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). Understanding by design (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM
You Don't Need a Title to be a Leader
TRACK: Career & Leadership
Matthew Ciszek, Library Director, Penn State Behrend

This session will begin with a discussion of ten common myths about leadership and how these myths keep everyone from developing their true leadership potential. Leadership is more than a title or position and attendees will learn how to develop their leadership potential, discover new resources and tools for leadership development including a selection of the presenter's favorite books and websites on leadership development, and begin to build a foundation for continued leadership development. While this session is primarily focused on library workers who are at the beginning of their leadership development journey, the presenter will be providing a broad overview of leadership development that is applicable for both new and seasoned library workers.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
A Library of Great Big Feelings Activities
with Children's Author, Hallee Adelman
TRACK: Youth Services
Hallee Adelman, Children's Book Author, Albert Whitman & Company (Publisher)

In a world of book banning and ever changing media, librarians deserve support from authors, their library communities, and beyond. Authors can help bolster libraries and children through collaborative programming and meaningful events. Join Hallee Adelman, author of the *Great Big Feelings* series, as she shares unique library engagements for young readers. Learn about: parking lot book parties with character stations, "Story Arc" obstacle courses, "Guess that Emotion" game shows, "I am Strong" videos that celebrate books and patrons' interests like cooking, dance, and pets, along with reflective activities for kids to explore their big feelings as they navigate the world and see themselves and others on book pages.

Participants will also receive exclusive feelings-based learning tools like "Mixed Emotions" card games, "Power Pose" posters, "See You in Me" plus "You Are The Strongest Thing" activities, and the "Librarian's Guide to Feelings, Fun, and FREADom." After gleaming ideas, librarians will be ready to create new collaborative experiences that help readers reap the benefits of growing strong, finding joy, and experiencing the library as a fun, welcoming, and restorative space.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Accessible Reading for All: Supporting Your Library Youth with LAMP
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Laura Hughes, Youth Services Librarian, LAMP/Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians

During this session, we will share information about how LAMP/Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians provides library services for youth patrons who cannot use standard print due to a visual, reading, or physical disability. We will also discuss how organizations such as Intermediate Units and school districts can support LAMP eligible youth beyond library services. Participants will learn how to connect their youth patrons and educators to LAMP services, and we will provide time for a question-and-answer session.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Information Literacy for Real Life: Debunking TikTok Videos with Library Resources
TRACK: Technology & Education
Sheli Pratt-McHugh, R&I Librarian for Technology & Outreach, University of Scranton

This session will examine social media and confirmation bias and highlight an activity I integrated into information literacy sessions that helps students critically evaluate the messaging on sites like TikTok and Instagram. When social media algorithms learn what we like, we are continuously fed similar messaging. The videos are reinforcing one another, confirming what we already think to be true. Students are bombarded with information without the skills necessary to actively question the source for accuracy and reliability, like they might utilize when doing scholarly research.

In this session, I will share an activity I created for an information literacy session that includes watching TikTok videos, using library resources to debunk their claims, and investigating the creators' credentials, and question why they might be producing this content. I also use the topic and content of the video to brainstorm keyword terms and build search strings. In the session, we will do an abbreviated version of the exercise to investigate, fact check, and identify scholarly research that addresses the topic. I will share how this relates to the ACRL framework tenets Information has Value and Searching as Strategic Exploration.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Rural Library Forum: PA Rural Population Revitalization Commission
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Kyle Kopka, Executive Director, Center for Rural Pennsylvania

This interactive session will present the findings of the Pa Rural Population Revitalization Commission which is made up of elected officials and other appointees of the Governor and Legislature. Established by Act 21 of 2024, the purpose of the Commission is to create "reviews and recommendations aimed at attracting and retaining residents in rural Pennsylvania while addressing challenges facing rural communities due to population shifts and changing demographics". This includes recommending legislation and regulatory change. The panel will provide attendees with the opportunity give feedback and contribute to the overall final recommendations of the Commission.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Safety by Design
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Richard Ortmeyer, Partner, Bostwick Design Partnership
Representative, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Your library should be inviting, beautiful, and a safe haven. Learn from experts and case studies how effective security solutions work seamlessly with your vision for welcoming and inclusive spaces.

Learn fundamental principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):

1) natural surveillance (criminals do not like to be seen);
2) natural access control (clearly define public and private spaces);
3) territorial reinforcement (an environment that fosters privacy and a sense of ownership); and
4) maintenance (upkeep to discourage vandalism and other unwanted behaviors). Presentation will be followed by a facilitated Q/A.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Thrive in 25: Best Practices in Board Governance
TRACK: Library Administration
Debra Thompson, President, Strategy Solutions
Jacqui Catrabone, Director, Nonprofit & Community Services, Strategy Solutions

Today, as the pace of change in the world continues to accelerate, our communities need the positive impact of our libraries more than ever. To maximize impact, it is important to be mindful of good leadership practices. Here are some tips to help your board be more engaged and effective. Doing all 25 things may feel a bit daunting, but adding a few to your board development list can help your board Thrive in '25!   Best practices shared include strategies for effective meeting management, recruiting, orienting and engaging your board, clarifying board/staff relationships and organizing the board to support implementation of your strategic plan.

12:30 PM - 5:30 PM
Library Products & Services Expo
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Find out what's new in library design, furnishings, services, equipment and technology all under one roof! Gather raffle tickets from our exhibitors for the prize drawings to begin at 5:00 p.m.

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
Exhibits Grand Opening Lunch
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

A complimentary walk around lunch will kick off the opening of the exhibit hall and offers time to visit the exhibits while enjoying tasty lunch treats.

12:45 PM - 2:15 PM
Carolyn W. Field Award Luncheon
TRACK: Youth Services

Carolyn W. Field dedicated her life to advancing children's literature and the powerful role that libraries play in the lives of youth. Since 1983, PaLA's Youth Services Division has recognized the best book for youngsters written or illustrated by a Pennsylvanian through the Carolyn W. Field Award. Please join us as we recognize the 2025 winner! Pennsylvania is setting the bar high for exceptional children's literature and services for our youth - join us in celebrating these achievements!

12:45 PM - 2:15 PM
CRD Luncheon: How Neuroinclusive Practices Improve Access for All
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Milly Romeijn-Stout, Guest Faculty Member, University of Washington Information School

Libraries are built on community, continuously evolving and adapting to the needs of our users. What methods can we use to enhance inclusion for neurodiverse users? In this talk, we will explore how to incorporate key practices of neuroinclusion to improve library access for everyone. Informed by current research and the Autism-Ready Libraries project (funded by IMLS), we will identify common barriers faced by autistic patrons and discuss ways to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM
No-Conflict Exhibit Time, Exhibitor Showcases & Poster Presentations
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Take a break from formal education settings and enjoy a beverage while strolling among the exhibits to gather information on new library innovations and collect tickets for the exhibit raffle at 5 p.m. View the posters presented by library collegues about successful ideas or programs that could be replicated in your library.

2:25 PM – 2:45 PM

Exhibitor Showcase:

Hale Manufacturing- Library furniture since 1907

TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Erika Romeo, Vice President, Hale Manufacturing

Hale is a fourth generation family business that has been making library furniture since 1907. This presentation will highlight various library furniture products. Erika and her team are a wealth of knowledge for all things furniture related so please use them as a resource.

2:50 PM – 3:10PM

Exhibitor Showcase:

Aspen Discovery for Evergreen Libraries!

TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Katie Greenleaf Martin, Executive Director, PaILS

Come see what Aspen Discovery can do for your libraries - we'll be showcasing the first two SPARK libraries using Aspen Discovery to showcase all their libraries have to offer - from physical collections to events to electronic books, databases and more!

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

eResource Lending and Service Changes: Decision-Making
and Communication Strategies

TRACK: Collections

Sarah Beasley, Collection Development, Collection Services,
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Norah Guignon, Digital Marketing Manager, Communications & Creative Services,
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Mary Phillips, Librarian- eResources, Collection Services, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Hilary Lewis, Coordinator - eResources, Collection Services,
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

The cost of and demand for digital content continues to increase and budgets are not keeping pace. Many libraries have come to a point when the cost of maintaining their current digital collection surpasses their available budget, leading to difficult decisions. How do you make changes so that you are fiscally responsible while meeting demand as best you can without harming other vital collections and services? How do you

support staff and patrons throughout the process? Is it possible to generate goodwill rather than anger when services are being reduced?

Difficult decisions can be made by relying on data and establishing a set of criteria early in the process to evaluate change options. Libraries of any size, regardless of which eResource platforms are offered, can create a well-considered approach that includes data gathering and staff and patron engagement.

Join Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Collection Services and Communications and Creative Services Departments as we detail our approach to the changes we made to our Libby and hoopla lending policies in 2024.

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
In-Reach to Boost Morale and Realize our Full Potential
TRACK: Career & Leadership
Dorothy Stoltz, Author, Consultant, Trainer

Does your department or organization need a morale boost to unlock its full potential? Is your library looking for creative ways to better serve individuals, families, students, businesses, and community partners while maximizing your staff's skills and talents? Sometimes, all that's needed in administrative planning is a new approach to learning, thinking, and doing! Try the in-reach role – the ability to develop our inner best and bring that energy to the table. In-reach, a play on 'library outreach,' helps foster fresh perspectives and boosts morale. In this session, participants will learn seven easy-to-use in-reach techniques or 'can-do-isms.' This session will demonstrate how the in-reach role can inspire creativity, whether navigating internal communications or identifying community needs. It will also show how cultivating a kind, cheerful, and even-tempered attitude in oneself and staff can reduce friction and tap into creative intelligence to move the organization forward.

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
New Horizons: Navigating the Future of Inclusive Librarianship
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Richard E. Ashby, Jr., Director, Sharon Hill Public Library

In today's rapidly evolving library landscape, it is essential to embrace diversity and inclusion as core values. Join us for "New Horizons: Navigating the Future of Inclusive Librarianship," a dynamic session dedicated to exploring innovative strategies and trends that shape the future of our libraries.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into promoting diversity and inclusion, discover cutting-edge leadership approaches, and explore emerging trends in librarianship. Our expert panelists will share practical tools and actionable steps to create inclusive environments that reflect and celebrate our diverse communities. Whether you're a library leader, an aspiring professional, or an advocate for change, this session will equip you with the knowledge and inspiration to drive positive transformation in your library and beyond.

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
Lessons From a Library Disaster
TRACK: Library Administration
Richard Miller, Executive Director, Osterhout Free Library

When the Osterhout Free Library South Branch was only days away from celebrating its one hundredth anniversary, disaster struck. The already beleaguered branch was flooded after a frozen water pipe burst. The resulting damage was the final straw after already suffering from a negligent owner. Most of the furniture, nearly all of the technology, and much of the collection was lost to a neighborhood that relied on this branch for social services almost as much as traditional library service. Could this branch be reestablished, could it be done within a limited budget, and if so where?

This session will give a brief description of the events surrounding the emergency evacuation of a treasured neighborhood branch and how it rebounded. In addition, participants will learn how some of the issues may have been avoided, what proactive actions should have been taken, and tips for avoiding and dealing with emergency situations. Finally, the session will show how a disaster ultimately became a net positive for the community.

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
The NWPA Innovation Beehive Network: Public Libraries as Economic Development Partners
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Rachel Stevenson, Business Librarian, Erie County Public Library
Jacob Marsh, Industry Relations Coordinator, Penn State Behrend

The NWPA Innovation Beehive Network serves as a case study for the library's role in economic development efforts while lowering entrance barriers to university resources. This session will outline a collaboration between the Erie County Public Library (ECPL) system with five regional universities who together offer free complementary services to entrepreneurs and small businesses. The Beehive is a success and a unique model for

economic development, collaboration, and experiential learning. The public benefits by having greater access to more services that help their business planning. University students gain exceptional real world experience solving problems for clients.

ECPL librarian Rachel Stevenson and Penn State Behrend Industry Relations Coordinator Jacob Marsh will explain the collaboration, how it is organized, its funding, its methods, its impacts, and how it overcame challenges.

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM
The Social Emotional Future: Using Upper Middle Grade Texts to Uplift Tweens
TRACK: Youth Services
Jess Callans, Author, Feiwel & Friends / Macmillan
Sydney Dunlap, Author, North Star Editions
Nasha Jones, Author and English Teacher, Aladdin / Simon & Schuster
Ali Terese, Author, Aladdin / Simon & Schuster and Scholastic

The tween years, when young readers are forging identities independent of their families and caregivers, present a key developmental time when librarians and educators can use literature to model social-emotional skills and competencies. High-interest upper middle-grade novels with protagonists who navigate challenging experiences can be powerful tools for illustrating social awareness and relationship skills, emotion regulation, supportive relationships, and cultural awareness and action. As readers are drawn into a protagonist's world, they can follow a narrative arc that explores difficult experiences but also shows resilience and growth: the joy and reward that can be possible once you work through a tough situation. In this interactive presentation, award-winning middle-grade authors will offer immersive, cross-curricular library activities that foster thoughtful discussions, help readers connect their own lives and experiences to situations in the books, and in doing so, build social-emotional skills and competencies. The activities are anchored in texts that incorporate different thematic approaches to working through difficult situations and healing, all of which also feature characters who face difficulties but are able to find their voices and stand up for themselves. Participants will develop author connections and leave the session with practical classroom lessons, library resources, and a recommended book list.

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
Visit the Exhibits
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Visit our exhibitor partners to find out what's new on the library scene and obtain raffle tickets for a chance to win a prize! The raffle drawings* will begin at 5:00 p.m.
*You must be present to win.

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Pennsylvania Black Librarians' Caucus (PABLC) Membership Event
TRACK: Networking

5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
PLD Business Meeting
TRACK: Meeting

Receive updates on Public Library Division (PLD) activities, current and future.

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
Rural & Small Libraries Round Table Dinner Discussions
TRACK: Networking

Join fellow round table members at the Erie County Public Library's Admiral Room to discuss topics pertinent to rural and/or small libraries while enjoying a light dinner. *Additional fee is required to cover the cost of boxed meal.*

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
BrewErie Tour
TRACK: Networking

Join us in celebration of the conference theme, "Raising Spirits" with a nod to "Eerie" at this unique offsite tour at the Brewerie at the historic Union Station. See what lies beneath and hear stories about strange happenings during this two-hour guided tour through the tunnels that were used to transfer mail and access the waterfront from the station. Participate in the tour only or opt to enjoy some light snacks and a complimentary beverage prior to the tour's start (arrive by 6:30 as the tour will start promptly at 7). Full bar will be available to purchase wine, beer and of course, "spirits!" *Additional registration fee required.*

8:00 PM - 9:30 PM
Trivia Competition
TRACK: Networking

Test your trivia skills against your colleagues from across the state at the 12th Annual Trivia Competition! Proceeds benefit the David Roberts EXCEL Award Fund.
Additional registration fee required.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21

8:00 AM - 8:45 AM
Coffee & Un-Conference Discussions
TRACK: Networking

Start your day with a light breakfast and conversation with fellow attendees about the previous day's sessions.

8:00 AM - 8:45 AM
SPARK & Friends Breakfast
TRACK: Networking

Pennsylvania Integrated Library System (PaILS) will be hosting a "SPARK & Friends" breakfast for SPARK consortium members and their guests. A light breakfast will be served alongside an opportunity to learn more about being a SPARK member, to network with other SPARK members, and to hear an update on PaILS/SPARK news from Executive Director, Katie Greenleaf Martin.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Beyond the Book Club: Low or No Cost Adult Program Ideas
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Christine McIntosh, Executive Director, Bethel Park Public Library

Are you looking to diversify your library's adult programming without breaking the bank? Join us for an inspiring session where we explore a wealth of creative, low-cost, and no-cost program ideas that go beyond the traditional book club. In this session, you'll

discover innovative activities that can engage and enrich your community, such as gaming clubs, swaps, DIY crafts, walking clubs, and passive programming like a scavenger hunt. Learn how to leverage community partnerships, tap into local expertise, and utilize existing resources to create dynamic and appealing programs. We'll also share practical tips on how to implement these ideas with minimal budget, including strategies for seeking donations and making the most of what you already have. Whether you're a seasoned librarian or new to programming, this session will equip you with the tools and inspiration to offer diverse and engaging adult programs that meet the needs and interests of your community. Join us and take your library's adult programming to the next level—without the need for a big budget!

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Building a Community Fridge: Food Equity as a Library Service
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Megan Bettenhausen, Public Service Manager, Penn Hills Library
Addie Macioce, Advocacy and Community Engagement Librarian, Penn Hills Library

Inspired by Little Free Pantries and the global Community Fridge network, the Penn Hills Library began distributing food in June 2022. What started as a small shelf and fridge with occasional donations and volunteers has grown into a major library service which provides community access to over 5,000 pounds of food each week. Public libraries often serve food insecure populations and have to refer patrons to outside organizations, so the decision to provide direct food assistance was a logical addition to our efforts in expanding free and non-traditional library services. Most food pantries in the area require pre-registration, address verification, and income verification. The Library's central location, extended hours, and established presence as a community hub and resource center allow us to remove some of these barriers to access food. Some community members who hear about the Community Fridge are visiting the library for the first time, so we have an opportunity to share with them the programs and resources we have to offer. The concentration of people during restock times is a perfect opportunity for collaboration with community partners and the success of the Community Fridge has encouraged us to expand the types of resources we can offer.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Future-proofing Privacy Literacy Programming: A Participatory Design Workshop

TRACK: Technology & Education

Sarah Hartman-Caverly, Associate librarian, Reference and instruction librarian, Penn State University Libraries at Penn State Berks

The future of library-based privacy education needs YOU! This BYOD (bring-your-own-device) participatory design workshop invites library workers whose roles include programming for youth and families, K-12 students, college students, and library leaders with oversight of these areas, to engage with prototype-stage practitioner resources for developing and sustaining library-based privacy literacy programming. Privacy literacy is knowledge of personal information and its role in the information ecosystem. Privacy literate people are aware of how personal information can be collected and used to shape the information they receive, and their access to goods, services, and opportunities in our algorithmically mediated environment. Libraries have long been engaged in teaching community members how to protect their data and practice digital citizenship. Privacy literacy programming builds on this work by educating people about the social, political, economic, and technical systems that exploit personal data, and how corporate-government collusion in surveillance capitalism impacts us as individuals and society as a whole – and what we can do about it.

In this workshop, participants will engage with prototype practitioner-facing resources and contribute feedback for the ongoing development of these materials, which will be open licensed (ex. Creative Commons) and made freely available to the library community in 2026.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Libraries After 2024: Emerging Trends, Opportunities, and What Comes Next

TRACK: Contemporary Issues

Hadass Sheffer, Blue Willow Consulting, LLC Co-Lead Assessment of Collective Impact in PA Public Libraries
Annette Mattei Co-Lead Assessment of Collective Impact in PA Public Libraries
Susan Banks, Deputy Secretary, Commissioner for Libraries and State Librarian, PA Department of Education
Heather Sharpe, Director, Bureau of Library Development, PA Department of Education

Public libraries are no longer just quiet spaces for books—they are vibrant community hubs offering technology access, workforce development, social services, cultural programming, outdoor spaces, and even coffee. But how are they evolving to meet today's challenges, and what does the future hold?

Join us for an insightful session that explores key findings from a statewide assessment capturing the perspectives of over 630 librarians and 1,900 Pennsylvanians. Conducted before, during, and after the 2024 elections, this study provides a timely and comprehensive look at the changing role of libraries. We'll explore critical themes and emerging trends in the library experience, including current concerns, the shifting demand for digital resources, the role of libraries as community anchors, safe spaces, and essential service providers, and the power of partnerships in strengthening communities.

Expect data-driven insights, case-study examples, and practical recommendations to help your library thrive in an evolving landscape. Don't miss this opportunity to engage in the conversation, gain fresh strategies, and reimagine the future of libraries. The next chapter starts here—be part of it!

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Measuring What Matters: Summer Library Impact & Outcomes
TRACK: Youth Services
Heather Warren Smith, Early Childhood Services Advisor Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Bureau of Library Development
Kris LaVanish, Accessible Adult Services Advisor Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Bureau of Library Development
Corri Hines, School Age Services Advisor Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Bureau of Library Development

Libraries dedicate significant time and resources to summer programming, but how do we know if these efforts are making a meaningful impact? This session will focus on the importance of measuring both outputs (such as attendance numbers) and outcomes (such as changes in knowledge, skills, or behavior) to evaluate summer programs effectively. Attendees will gain insight into how the Pennsylvania Summer Library Program Impact Report can be used to assess programming, identify areas for improvement, and communicate the value of libraries to stakeholders within the communities they serve. We will also discuss practical methods for collecting and interpreting data to make informed decisions about future summer initiatives. Whether you are new to evaluation or looking for ways to refine your approach, this session will provide actionable strategies to help you measure the impact of your library's summer programs.

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Small Libraries, Big Leadership: Navigating Board Challenges for New Directors
TRACK: Library Administration
Amy C. Resh, Chief Executive Officer & Director, James V. Brown Library
Andrew Henley, Library Director, New Castle Public Library
Becky McTavish, Library Director, DuBois Public Library
Lauri Fletcher, Director, Indiana Free Library

Small town, big problems? Being a new director in a small or rural library can be challenging, especially when you're navigating working with a board for the first time. We will bring together four library directors with ~70 years of collective experience working in different types of library organizations across Pennsylvania, and with special expertise in small and rural libraries.

9:30 AM - 2:30 PM
Library Products & Services Expo
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Find out what's new in library design, furnishings, services, equipment and technology all under one roof! Gather raffle tickets from our exhibitors for the prize drawings beginning at 2:00 p.m.

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
No-Conflict Exhibit Time, Exhibitor Showcases & Poster Presentations
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Take a break from formal education settings and enjoy a hot beverage while strolling among the exhibits to gather information on new library innovations and collect tickets for the exhibit raffle. Attend an exhibitor showcase to take a deeper dive into some products or services offered by some of our partners. View the posters presented by library collegues about successful ideas or programs that could be replicated in your library.

10:10 AM – 10:30 AM

Exhibitor Showcase:

Strengthening Libraries Through Friends: What PCBL Can Do for You?

TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Denise Sticha, President, Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries (PCBL), Executive Director, Centre County Library and Historical Museum

Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries is the umbrella Friends of Library organizations for Pennsylvania. Join PCBL Board members for an informative session about what PCBL is, and how we have helped strengthen and support libraries, and library Friends for over 45 years.

10:10 AM – 10:30 AM

Exhibitor Showcase:

Designing for Everyone: Building Beautiful, Accessible & Mobile-Friendly Library Websites with LibSites

TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Mazen Khoury, Sales Representative, Springshare

A great library website should be visually engaging, easy to navigate, and usable by all. This session highlights how LibSites enables libraries to build accessible, mobile-friendly websites that don't compromise on design. We'll also explore the Personalized Patron Portal—a dynamic one-stop-shop for library activity that delivers a customized homepage experience based on audience type, ensuring every user sees what matters most to them.

10:35 AM – 10:55 AM

Exhibitor Showcase:

New and Updated Tools for Readers, Learners, and Job Seekers

TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Jake Simone, Regional Sales Manager, EBSCO

Discover new and powerful resources designed to elevate your library's impact! In this session, we'll explore the newly redesigned **NoveList Plus**, the go-to reader's advisory tool with a sleek, modern interface for staff and patrons. We'll also introduce **Learn with NoveList**, a suite of professional development courses that ensure consistent, high-quality service across your team. Finally, we'll dive into **BlueCareer**, an innovative platform that helps patrons explore and thrive in trade careers. Join us to see how these tools can transform your library's services and better support your community.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM
2025 PA Forward® Adult Literacy Programming Awards
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Rob Lesher, PA Forward® Program Manager, Pennsylvania Library Association

The winners in the 5 Literacy areas will be announced publicly and the Best PA Forward® Literacy Program will be announced at the program. Each program winner will be given the opportunity to explain how the program was developed and what they learned from carrying out the program.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM
Building a Better Library: Cultivating a Positive Work Culture
TRACK: Library Administration
Mindy Lee Lipsky, MSLS, Library Director, Lansdale Public Library

A thriving library is built on a strong, supportive, and motivated team. In this engaging session, we'll explore practical strategies for cultivating a positive work culture that enhances collaboration, employee well-being, and community impact. Whether you're a library leader or part of the team, you'll leave with actionable tools to foster trust, inclusivity, and a shared sense of purpose among your staff.

Join us as we dive into:

- Effective communication techniques that build stronger teams
- Strategies for preventing burnout and promoting work-life balance
- Practical tips for embracing diversity and creating an inclusive work environment
- How to empower staff through recognition and professional development
- Tools to measure the impact of cultural improvements on library services

By the end of the session, you'll have a toolkit to create a more positive, productive, and people-centered library culture—one that benefits both your team and the community you serve.

11:15:AM - 12:15 PM

Cutting Through the Noise - What's Working NOW to Spur Donor Engagement
TRACK: Advocacy & Development
Chad Barger, ACFRE, ACNP, Chief Strategist & Owner, Productive Fundraising

Join fundraising master trainer, Chad Barger, ACFRE, ACNP, for a workshop focused on proven ways to capture donor attention. We'll look at the challenge of cutting through the noise in today's daily communication onslaught and the importance of donor retention. Attendees will learn simple, actionable steps that they can take to boost donor engagement at their organization. Examples will be shared of creative ways that real life nonprofit organizations identified, cultivated, solicited and stewarded their donors (including some that had no budget for doing so).

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Libraries and AI 2.0: Prompt Writing for Librarians and Library Workers
TRACK: Technology & Education
Kate Cummings, Research and Instruction Librarian, University of Scranton
Sylvia Orner, Collections and Resource Management Librarian, University of Scranton

Libraries and AI 2.0 builds on the 2024 presentation, Libraries and AI, and focuses on prompt writing for librarians and library workers. Good prompt writing is an essential skill when interacting with generative AI. Attendees will learn about prompt engineering, about different types of prompts, and how to construct an effective prompt when using generative AI. This material is relevant in any type of library. Bring your laptops and get ready to play!

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Read All About It!: Newspaper Digitization and Clipping Files in the Library
TRACK: Collections
Alyssa Loney, Reference Librarian, Scranton Public Library

Through digitization efforts of small local newspapers and extensive vertical files of newspaper clippings, the Scranton Public Library continues strives to make information accessible to researchers. In a case study of the two main newspaper projects at the library, the digitization process, types of access provided by the library, and challenges of maintaining physical resources will be discussed. As an introductory session to the concept of in-house digitization of materials and developing vertical files, the goal of this presentation is to help libraries foster a more research focused approach to their daily newspaper deliveries.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM
Where the Schoolhouse and the Library Meet: Partnerships with Local School Districts
TRACK: Youth Services
Hope Benson, Head of Children's Services and Outreach for Monroeville Public Library
Jennifer Hoffner, Building Principal for Gateway School District
Michael Matteo, Building Principal for Gateway School District

We will present ideas on how to effectively approach a school district and how to start building a partnership. We will discuss how to maintain a balanced and beneficial partnership including: how and when to take the initiative, what information and ideas should be shared and how to do that effectively, and how to work to get the schools to "buy-in" to the partnership and be equal partners. We will also present and discuss creative ideas for specific events that have bolstered our library-school partnerships (including but not limited to school-wide events, regular class storytimes, and all-district Literacy Nights for Title I requirements). We will also discuss boundaries on both sides for support of school and public library goals. We will open the floor to discussion and questions addressing specific concerns and situations.

12:30 PM - 2:15 PM
Public Library Division Luncheon: Resilience Amidst Resistance
TRACK: Career & Leadership
Dr. Helen Davis, Professor, English, Wilkes University

In a job that can be stressful in the best of times, our current moment can feel overwhelming. We will celebrate the critical role that librarians play in our culture and discuss self-care and creating communities of support in order to ensure that we can remain resilient in the face of our many challenges.

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
Exhibits Strolling Lunch
TRACK: Exhibit Hall

Stroll through the exhibit hall while enjoying tasty, portable treats and take advantage of this last opportunity to collect raffle tickets from exhibitors for the 2:00 p.m. prize drawings! *You must be present to win!

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Poster Presentations
TRACK: Networking

View posters presented by library collegues about successful ideas or programs that could be replicated in your library.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Engage Your Community Through Storytelling
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
David Hicks, PhD, Wilkes University

Libraries host readings, book clubs, and writing workshop groups to connect with their communities. But many patrons see such events as intended for literary types and thus don't consider attending. An alternative strategy is to ask a local author to offer a workshop in which attendees are instructed in the basics of how to tell a story, with the assumption that everyone has the innate ability to tell a story.

Author and professor David Hicks has done just this at over a dozen libraries, using a familiar and accessible formula: "Once upon a time . . . .Then, one day . . ." Patrons learn how to identify a story (an event that changed them) in their own lives; the central elements of a story, and how to structure their own story based on that event. They will finish the workshop with the first few paragraphs (character, setting, and plot) of a new story, and the confidence that comes with telling their own story and knowing it matters, both to themselves and the larger community. In this conference session David will describe this activity, demonstrate it with your participation, and explain how such an event can be hosted at your own library.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Engaging Libraries in Brain Health: Raising Awareness and Inspiring Action
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Sara Murphy, Vice President of Programs and Services, Alzheimer's Association Greater PA Chapter
Victoria Bayle, Person Living with Alzheimer's Disease
Jill Varner, Food, Families, and Communities Educator Penn State Extension

Join a panel of three experts as they discuss evidence-based strategies to lower the risk of cognitive decline and potentially dementia. This session will explore the latest understanding of modifiable risk factors and highlight ways the library community can engage patrons through programs, resources, and partnerships to promote brain health.

Hear insights from a representative of the Alzheimer's Association, Penn State Extension, and an individual living in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Even YOU Can Do A Music Program
TRACK: Youth Services
Finley Gelsimino, Youth Services Librarian, Cooper-Siegel Community Library

Never learned how to play an instrument or read music but want to add a music program to your library? Then this is the session for you! Learn to play the super simple Ocarina and how to use it in children's programming!

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Leveraging Technology to Drive Library Card Signups
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Katie Greenleaf Martin, Executive Director, PaILS
Zoey Ralston, Circulation Librarian and Volunteer Coordinator,
New Castle Public Library
Cheryl Morgan, Director, Somerset County Library
Heather Lindskold, District Consultant, Altoona Area Public Library

As libraries continue to offer more and more digital services, having users physically come into the library in order to get a library card can be a barrier to service. We'll discuss how PA libraries have used specific technologies that can drive card signups, as well as ways to leverage lower-tech solutions to reach outside of the library building to get more folks registered for library cards.

Our panel will feature several librarians from around the state and their efforts to work with school and community partners, and provide audience members with an opportunity to share their own experiences and ask questions.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
**Making School Outreach Flexible and Simple with
Ready-to-Go Programs**
TRACK: Youth Services
Carrie Lane, Youth Services Coordinator, Allegheny County Library Association
Courtney Bonnet, Children's Librarian, Northland Public Library
Elaine Volpe, Head of Youth Services, Bethel Park Public Library

Does outreach at your library need a refresh or maybe you need some inspiration to get started? Are you not doing outreach due to school restrictions, staffing or other time constraints?

The Allegheny County Library Association has simplified outreach for libraries by creating four outreach programs geared towards children in preschool – 6th grade to engage readers with literature and create awareness of the public library. Regardless of library size, number of staff or school/class characteristics, these programs offer a flexible approach to outreach, that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of the library, schools and community.

In this panel presentation, attendees will learn more about each program, hear from youth services staff about how it works at individual libraries and discover strategies to easily replicate at their libraries and schools.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Spirits in the Library: Beer (& Chili) Tasting Fundraisers
TRACK: Advocacy & Development
M.A. Jackson, Mt. Lebanon Public Library

For five years, Mt Lebanon Public Library held two successful Beer Tasting events annually at the library (a total of 10), which raised $60,000+ (approximately $6,000 per event). During Covid, we hosted several virtual beer events. This presentation will give attendees a detailed overview for organizing such an event—from pre-planning, to procuring the beer and chili, handling volunteers, and setup/takedown. You'll learn what works and what doesn't as well as tips for running such an event smoothly and how to avoid disasters!

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Outreach at Any Size

TRACK: Community Service & Engagement

Suzanne Macaulay, Program Director, OWWL Library System

Small and rural libraries and library systems can engage in meaningful outreach even with limited personal, time, and budget. This session will introduce ten successful outreach programs--including staff time, costs, and outcomes--implemented by a small and rural library system in upstate New York. Target outreach groups covered will include early literacy, seniors and older adults, homebound, economically disadvantaged, and geographically isolated. Learn how you can scale down (or up) to make a similar program (or programs!) work for your library--no matter its size. Tips, tricks, and lessons learned included– and no bookmobile required!

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Overcoming the Fear: Engaging with Teens in the Library

TRACK: Youth Services

Katie Dunbar, Youth Services District Consultant Librarian, Montgomery County Library District

Let's be honest, most library workers don't want to deal with teens. We love superhero teen librarians who wrangle those hormonal small adults into some semblance of polite social behavior. The problem is that one bad interaction with another staff member can outweigh all the good your teen librarian does. I want to suggest a new mindset: Every person working in a public library serves teens and every interaction with a teen can make an impact. This workshop will discuss why having a space to belong in the community positively influences teens. We'll examine what neuroscience tells us about teen brains and why respect is the currency of teen life. We'll cover how to interact with teens to teach them to be better humans. You'll also leave with tips on how to share this information with your staff back home. This session is for anyone working in a public library (since you all serve teens) and will be a mix of lecture, conversation, and technological interaction.

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM
The PaLA Hidden Treasure: The Digital Media Calendar
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Rob Lesher, PA Forward® Program Manager, Pennsylvania Library Association
Members of the PR/Marketing Committee

Since 2016, the PR/Marketing Committee has developed the Digital Calendar. This calendar is a treasure trove of programming ideas and easy to use social media posts that can be used to lay out an entire year of programming for your library. In this panel discussion, library workers will explain how they use the calendar each year and what successes they have achieved by using the calendar as a foundation of their planning process.

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM
Technopoly: A Surveillance Capitalism Parody Game Design Jam
TRACK: Technology & Education
Nathaly Arias, Makerspace Intern, Penn State University Libraries-Berks, Thun Library
Annamarie Given, Technology and Makerspace Coordinator, Penn State University Libraries-Berks, Thun Library
Sarah Hartman-Caverly, Associate Librarian, Penn State University Libraries-Berks, Thun Library

Protecting your privacy isn't a game… until now! Join us to co-create a Technopoly parody game in which players are data brokers acquiring tech platforms and service providers to capture the most data and win at surveillance capitalism. Created by collaborators working across library instruction and makerspace programming, Technopoly introduces players to concepts and theories related to privacy and surveillance in an accessible, inclusive, and fun format. Attendees will participate in a game design jam to co-create the Technopoly parody game by identifying industries, assigning values to properties, and creating Randomized Algo and Panoptic Sort scenario cards using materials provided.

Throughout the game design jam, facilitators will introduce game-based learning design principles to explain how gaming can be an accessible, inclusive, and participatory format for educational library programming. Facilitators will demonstrate how privacy and surveillance theories informed the Technopoly game parody and are embedded in gameplay. Facilitators will also share lessons learned and best practices for recreating Technopoly or similar game-based learning materials in attendees' own makerspaces, as well as make their open-licensed game design files available to attendees for reuse.

Co-designing Technopoly is half the fun, but we'll also play a few rounds in teams as session time allows!

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM
You Can't Make This Stuff Up!
TRACK: Library Administration
Jennifer Knisely, Executive Director, Altoona Area Public Library
Heather Lindskold, District Consultant, Altoona District

Part stand-up, part theatrics and 100% truth! Participants will be entertained by the antics of Jen Knisely and Heather Lindskold as they recount some of the highlights of their 10 years working together at the Altoona Area Public Library. From bed bugs to possums, it's all on the table!

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Ex Libris Donor Reception
TRACK: Networking

Attendance limited to current donors. A "thank you" reception for Ex Libris Society members. Not a member? Donate now at
https://members.palibraries.org/ap/contribute/DLbk7wr7

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Tea at the Mansion (Hagen History Center)
TRACK: Networking

Join us to learn more of the history of the Erie region through self-guided tours of the Hagen History Center located in the former Watson-Curtze Mansion. This elegant home, built in 1891, is a stunning example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, inside and out. All of the rooms on the mansion's three floors reveal the ornate style of the era. Rooms on the second and third floor also feature rotating exhibits. Refreshments relative to "afternoon tea" will be served. Transportation via carpool. *Additional fee required.*

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Meet & Treat
TRACK: Networking

Raise your spirits and unwind with your colleagues during this fun networking event. Costumes are encouraged, with prizes for most original, creative, and/or library-themed. Enjoy some light snacks and a complimentary beverage. A cash bar will be available to purchase wine, beer and of course, "spirits!" *Additional fee required.*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM

Closing Keynote Session Breakfast:

The Library's Value Increases in the Age of AI
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Nick Tanzi, Assistant Director, South Huntington Public Library; Author, Digital Librarian

The rapid rise of generative AI has sparked fear, excitement, and uncertainty. As with past technological shifts, some question the continued relevance of libraries. In this talk, nationally recognized library technology consultant, Nick Tanzi, will explore the threats and opportunities artificial intelligence poses, and will make clear that despite the challenges ahead, the library has only grown more valuable in the age of AI.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Empowering Vulnerable Populations in Your Public Library
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Katelin Gladback, Assistant Director, Pottstown Regional Public Library
Megan Bealer, Adult Services, Pottstown Regional Public Library

Our focus will be on low cost or free ways libraries can support their vulnerable populations through maintenance of infrastructure, collections, and program offerings. Using statistical data from our local population and library, we will be presenting the effect that our efforts have had. Maintaining our technology, collections, and continual offering of innovative programming has allowed us the unique opportunity to provide for our service area in ways that other public institutions cannot.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Homeschool Exploratorium: Programming for the Homeschool Community

TRACK: Youth Services

Danielle Stokes, Library Assistant II, Chester County Library

This session will provide insight on partnering with the Homeschool Community in your area. It will include information on how your library can serve this unique community including tips on how to be a welcoming space and create programs they want to attend. The session will focus on how we developed, planned, and implemented our successful STEAM focused Homeschool Exploratorium. We will also share highlights of other programs we have offered to Homeschoolers.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Hosting a Human Library

TRACK: Community Service & Engagement

Sarah McCall, Library Clerk, Erie County Public Library

Join us for an insightful presentation on the "Human Library" program, developed in response to research on the growing isolation and loneliness crisis. This innovative initiative invites community volunteers to share their personal experiences in one-on-one conversations with library patrons, fostering empathy, connection, and understanding among individuals who might not otherwise cross paths. Through the program, participants are exposed to diverse perspectives, helping to break down barriers and build stronger community bonds.

In this session, we'll explore the concept of the *Human Library*, the many benefits it brings to the community, and how libraries can play a pivotal role in combatting isolation. You'll also learn practical steps for organizing your own Human Library event, with highlights from the successful *ECPL Human Library Program*, showcasing its positive impact on both volunteers and patrons alike. This is a powerful way to enhance empathy and create meaningful connections, making libraries a vital hub for community engagement.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Making a Space for Teens: Redefining Space in a One-room Library

TRACK: Library Administration

Susan Strnisha, Library Manager, Chartiers-Houston Community Library

The content presented in this session will be aimed at directors and/or youth services staff. It will look at the steps our small library took to create a designated space for our

teen/young adult population. Identifying that there was a need in our community for a safe space for teens, our library wanted to carve out space truly designed for that age group and demographic. Beginning with selecting a location in our one-room library, searching for grants to help off-set costs for trendy furniture, and sharing how we overcame unexpected obstacles, this session will go from start to finish of creating our new teen corner.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Media Literacy in the Age of AI
TRACK: Technology & Education
Nick Tanzi, Assistant Director, South Huntington Public Library; Author, Digital Librarian

Artificial intelligence is rapidly advancing, with the general public now able to access text-to-image generators, chatbots, and other AI-powered tools. In a time of deepfakes and AI hallucinations, how can we discern what is real? This talk will include strategies for identifying AI-generated content in a variety of formats.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Stemming the Spread and Influence of Misinformation:
A Public Library Approach
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Deanna Troust, founder and president, Truth in Common

This session will share a case study of an adult media literacy workshop that was piloted by Truth in Common at public libraries in Maryland, DC and southern PA in 2024. With equal parts presentation and discussion, participants will hear how patrons engaged with the content, reconnected with local information sources and practiced respectful discourse. Attendees will also have a chance to offer feedback on a proposed project to bring these workshops to libraries across Pennsylvania.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Building Home Libraries and Promoting Library Awareness in the Community
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Carrie Lane, Youth Services Coordinator, Allegheny County Library Association

Studies have shown that access to books in the home helps school performance and build vocabulary among other things. The Allegheny County Library Association is trying to help children build home libraries, as well as create library awareness through four different initiatives:

1) Baby Bags: Distributing bags to new and expectant parents that promote early learning and include books and other manipulatives.
2) Book Vending Machines: Placing book vending machines in locations where children are in challenging situations, like visiting a loved one at the Allegheny County Jail.
3) Books & Beyond: Featuring Allegheny County libraries and programs monthly on the local TV show, Pittsburgh Today Live and offering the opportunity for viewers to complete a survey and receive the Book-of-the-Month.
4) Community Events: Distributing books to children at large scale events, such as Kindergarten, Here I Come at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh.

In this presentation, attendees will learn more about these programs, how they can replicate them and hear from some of the collaborators, such as KDKA-TV and the Allegheny County Jail.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Ending the Stigma - Period. Throwing a Period Party at Your Library
TRACK: Youth Services
Elizabeth Martin, Librarian 1 - Literacy Services, Erie County Public Library

In late September and early October of 2024, Erie County Public Library threw two Period Parties for kids ages 8-13. One session was specifically for cisgender girls, and another was for trans and non-binary friends who expected to menstruate as part of puberty. We partnered with the local County Department of Health, who provided a licensed RN to present to the attendees about the process of menstruation. We also partnered with local non-profit Compton's Table, an organization that supports LGBTQIA+ youth in Erie. This session will focus on the planning and execution of these programs, how they were received, and how you can throw your own Period Party at your library.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Everything All At Once!: Addressing Cognitive Load in Libraries
TRACK: Contemporary Issues
Sara Kern, Engingeering Librarian, Pennsylvania State University
Elliott C. Rose, STEM Librarian, Pennsylvania State University
Courtney McAllister, Senior Solution Architect, Atypon

Competing deadlines, an endless barrage of information, and relentless stress pressurize the daily learning journeys of library staff and patrons alike. While libraries

are adaptable and resilient, constant strain on cognitive load magnifies existing challenges and introduces new ones.

Cognitive load refers to the amount of information an individual can retain in their working memory. When it is surpassed, one struggles to learn new information. Cognitive overload can hamper a first-year student's success navigating a complex database to find relevant articles; it can intensify the emotional labor public library staff perform to conduct effective reference interviews and meet an ever-expanding roster of needs; and it can dramatically undermine how well attendees absorb new information presented in library information sessions, workshops, and other programming.

When cognitive overload is not taken into consideration across library services, it can undermine learning and overall success. In this presentation, we share collaborative strategies and examples of efforts to reduce overwhelm in library systems, outreach, and workshops or instruction. Attendees from public, academic, and special libraries will see how cognitive load impacts their respective institutions and learn how their work can address these unique challenges. A toolbox will be provided with helpful readings and other resources.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Pennsylvania Libraries: Where are we now, and What Does the Future Hold?
TRACK: Library Administration
Jessica Miller, Director, Cleve J Fredricksen Library

With changes occurring at the federal level, many questions start to be asked about public libraries in Pennsylvania: what are libraries current source of funds, can they maintain services if funding is cut, what ways are libraries cutting back and how does it affect patrons? This session will look at these questions and others to get a baseline for Pennsylvania libraries through 2024. Then we will look at the best way to increase our collective impact in a fiscally responsible environment.

We will do this by presenting annual report data from 2023 and 2024 that looks at things like the percentage of libraries who could function for a year without any additional funds, percentage of libraries who saw a decrease in funding between 2023 and 2024, and libraries who are continuously using reserves to maintain services. We will also look at how this affects outputs like circulation and program attendance. Finally, we will look at what factors show the biggest effect on these measures. Attendees should be familiar with PA public libraries and some of their challenges.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Rainbow Connection Collection
TRACK: Collections
Fawn Contreras, Head of Youth Services, Valley Community Library

With LGBTQ+ books at risk of increased challenges and bans learn how to build and use your Rainbow Connection Collection. Fawn Contreras, Head of Youth Services at the Valley Community Library will share why queer books are so important for all ages, the importance of creating safe spaces, how to be an ally, and how you can use these books in storytimes, outreach events, and every day to have a fully diverse and inclusive library. Learn how to build your rainbow connections in your community to strengthen your partnerships and support.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Turn Your Library into a Passport Acceptance Facility!
TRACK: Community Service & Engagement
Vince Giordano, Library Director, Juniata County Library

A local case study of how the Juniata County Library (JCL) in Mifflintown became a passport acceptance facility in December 2022. Vince Giordano, library director and one of the three passport agents at JCL, will explain why JCL became a passport acceptance facility, how it navigated the site registration requirements, and how this new service has panned out.

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
Lunch & Explore Erie Public Library

Stay a while longer to visit the Erie Public Library's Idea Lab, learn more about the renovation plans for the Children's Library and explore the Gannon University Lake Erie Research Center. Boxed lunch included. The library is an easy walk from the convention center and there is also plenty of parking available. *Additional fee required to cover the cost of lunch.*

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM
Tour of Erie's WQLN Studio

Join us for an engaging tour of Erie's local PBS/NPR studios! Take this unique opportunity to go behind the scenes of radio and television production and learn about WQLN's impact in the community. Meet the host of Classics with Brian Hannah, and attend an interactive presentation with our TV production team. Don't miss out on this exciting chance to explore the world of local media! *Registration limit: 20*