

# POWER, PERSISTENCE & PURPOSE

MLA ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



# Power, Persistence & Purpose

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MLA leads the advancement of all libraries through advocacy, education and engagement. For 132 years, this has been our clear, shared definition of purpose. It is our north star – the “driving force, the fuel, the bond, the intangible link”<sup>1</sup> that allows MLA to achieve success and maximize positive impact, and it can’t be done alone. From our members, to our ambassadors, to our board, staff, and those we partner with – this is where MLA’s power originates. Over the past two years, MLA has built on the collective strengths that each of you brings to the table as we create strong relationships, deliver open and trusted communications, share enthusiasm, and provide expertise. We are stronger together.

In recent years, we have also seen the world shift right before our eyes, which has only made MLA more resolute in identifying opportunities where they may not have existed before. Our renewed focus on intellectual freedom brought us state and national recognition and awards. Through your wise counsel and the power of a growing membership, MLA has harnessed our shared and deeply rooted beliefs in defending our libraries, protecting the right to read, and extolling the value that our libraries bring to each community and campus.

As we’ve learned from building a powerful and purposeful organization, it takes time, intention and persistence to continue doing something even though it is difficult. We are fortunate to have people in our organization who will push through hard times – people who come together to do great things, regardless of what obstacles they face. They raise their hands when asked to volunteer, and they roll up their sleeves and do what’s necessary to get the job done. Our members, our ambassadors, our board, our staff and so many others do this daily. There is no better definition of how an incredible, membership-driven association should work!

Our purpose guides us individually and collectively, and entrenches us in work that we find inspirational, motivational and meaningful. Together, MLA has positively influenced the strength and value of Michigan libraries through power, persistence and purpose. There is no doubt that MLA is firmly leading the advancement of all libraries through advocacy, education and engagement.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah E. Mikula".

**Deborah E. Mikula**  
Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dillon Geshel".

**Dillon Geshel**  
MLA President

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<sup>1</sup> *How to Establish an Organisational Purpose, Management Decision – Reyes and Kleiner, 1990, Page 51*

# About the Michigan Library Association

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## Guided By Purpose

Libraries throughout Michigan are centers for learning and self-discovery, providing free and open access to information to all residents. Libraries are simultaneously community centers, tourist destinations, places to read, places to gather and socialize, places to study, and places to learn – cultural institutions in the heart of every community, and on every campus throughout Michigan. Since 1891, MLA has been a vibrant and dynamic service organization working to protect and promote our libraries and advance the library profession in Michigan. Our membership of nearly 2500 libraries, library professionals and library trustees come from rural, suburban and urban areas in all 83 Michigan counties.

## Our Mission

The Michigan Library Association leads the advancement of all Michigan libraries through advocacy, education and engagement.

## Our Vision

The Michigan Library Association is an indispensable resource and valued leader, partner and advocate for Michigan libraries.

## Our Staff



**Deborah E. Mikula**  
Executive Director



**Rachel Ash**  
Membership &  
Comms Director



**Keeley Briggs**  
Database Coordinator



**Lisa Buttigieg**  
Administrative Assistant



**Ryan Logan**  
Graphic Designer



**Amber Sheerin**  
Program & Event Director

# Strategic Priorities

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Strategic planning and setting priorities assume that we will be quick to respond to a dynamic, changing environment, which may require changes in the future. Following an internal assessment of our programming and resources, as well as an assessment of community and stakeholder needs, we determined the following strategic priorities that will enhance and guide our work:

## 1 Empowering Members:

We know that any organization's health and prosperity is directly influenced by the mental and physical health, well-being and safety of its employees. We believe that it is critical for MLA to promote and expand our work to bring focus to a library's human resource and knowledge which will result in a healthier and more productive workforce. We are ready to identify, engage and mentor those newer to the field who are shaping it for the future.

## 2 Protecting the First Amendment:

Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession and a basic right in our democratic society. We must protect Michiganders' right to read, oppose attempts to ban books from Michigan libraries, educate the public about the right to read, oppose any legislation that infringes upon First Amendment rights and ensure that librarians across Michigan will be entrusted to continue to do their jobs and serve the needs of ALL individuals and communities.

## 3 Future Ready Libraries:

We are ready to let go of outdated or restrictive practices. We are open to innovation from inside and outside of the library field. Becoming future ready means being visionary and scaling up capabilities and capacity relevant to future global and societal trends. Libraries must proactively embrace advancements and make regular shifts in their practices in order to stay ahead of and meet the needs of the community.

## 4 **Equity, Diversity, Accessibility and Belonging:**

We are committed to ensuring that all individuals who apply to, work with or otherwise interact with MLA are treated with fairness and respect and accorded equal opportunity. As a statewide organization, it is important that our programs and services are inclusive of all library personnel in all cities, townships, and villages, in rural, suburban and urban areas in both the Upper and Lower Peninsula. MLA will embrace, respect and adhere to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act as it guides our work.

## 5 **Collaboration and Partnerships:**

We share a deep commitment to strengthening all libraries in the ecosystem – libraries serving residents from the very young to the very old – and valuing and promoting how they intersect and contribute to each other’s success. It is our work to build bridges and advance critical conversations with other service partners including the Library of Michigan, MASL, MiALA, FOML, MCLS, MCDA and regional consortia, as well as cultural organizations, publishers, advocacy organizations and other state and national library associations. We recognize that by working collaboratively among ourselves, and in partnership with those outside the library profession, we will be successful in creating a strong, united library field.



# Persistence Achieves Results

Over the years, the advocacy work done by the MLA Advocacy and Legislative Committee, the Intellectual Freedom Task Force, our lobbyist, and numerous engaged librarians, has resulted in powerful initiatives that have increased state aid to libraries, relieved tax captures, secured and maintained the privacy of library patrons, and protected the right to read for all Michiganders.

## MLA also:

- Was instrumental in securing an additional \$500,000 in State Aid and maintained an \$800,000 pilot program for school/public partnership in FY23.
- Held our first in-person Michigan Library Advocacy Day in more than 15 years hosting 130 library advocates at the State Capitol who met and built relationships with their House and Senate members.
- Grew the MI Right to Read coalition to over 3000 advocates and built a valuable toolkit of resources to protect Michiganders' First Amendment Rights.
- Conducted a public opinion poll of 800 voters in Michigan and found an overwhelming majority who love their libraries AND oppose book bans.



# A Powerful Initiative of MLA

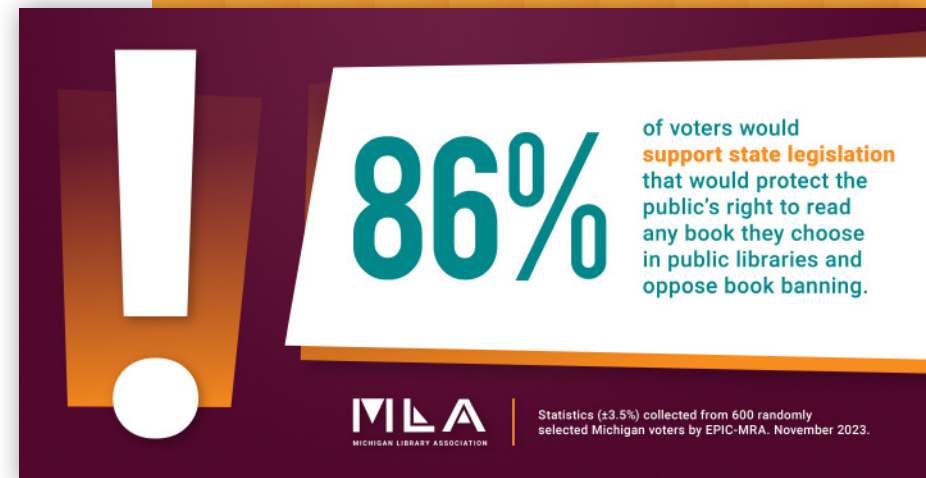
Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession and a basic right in our democratic society. Coordinated through the leadership of the Intellectual Freedom Task Force, the MI Right to Read initiative and coalition was created to protect Michiganders' right to read, propose proactive legislation that protects First Amendment Rights, oppose attempts to ban books from Michigan libraries, educate the public about the right to read, contest any legislation that infringes upon Michigan citizens' First Amendment rights, and ensure that librarians across Michigan will be entrusted to continue to do their jobs and serve the needs of ALL individuals and communities.

With over 3000 advocates, the MI Right to Read coalition is positioned to take action and address the increased volume of attempted censorship efforts at our public and school libraries.



# Numbers Don't Lie

In Spring of 2023, MLA commissioned a public opinion poll of Michigan voters to gauge awareness of, and attitudes toward, the increasingly intense and coordinated efforts to dictate the collection content of local public libraries. EPIC-MRA polled 800 Michigan residents and produced a statewide summary as well as 11 regional summaries based on the Michigan Cooperative Library regions. The powerful results of this public opinion poll further validate MLA's position to protect Michiganders' First Amendment rights and the right to read.



# Convening With Purpose

MLA is unwaveringly persistent in our efforts to stay abreast of evolving trends and challenges within the library community. Guided by a steadfast purpose to meet the needs of this dynamic landscape, our spirit of innovation empowers us to consistently provide high-quality education and training opportunities for library personnel contributing to the sectors growth and excellence.

## Professional Development Programming

### Think Space

Each December and May, 40-50 directors gather for in-depth exploration of topics that impacts their shared purpose and goals. The power of this event lies in its “By Directors, For Directors” approach that gives participants the chance to share insights, experiences, and practical applications of theoretical ideas. The 2022 focus was holding true to the values of librarianship and the 2023 focus was future ready libraries.

### Spring Institute

Spring Institute for Youth Services is a cornerstone event for Michigan library workers with a passion for library services for children and teens. Attendees engage with powerful dedication, nurturing a dynamic exchange of ideas and strategies. The 2023 Spring Institute for Youth Services in Ann Arbor hosted 293 attendees and was the highest attended in history with a theme of “Sustaining Our Future.”

### Annual Conference

The MLA Annual Conference, Michigan’s largest gathering for library workers, powerfully reemerged post-COVID, and underscored the dedication of the Michigan library community by welcoming 505 attendees, partners, and vendors to Port Huron in 2022, and 545 to Kalamazoo in 2023. The respective themes of “Bridging the Divide” and “Connecting the Dots” both aimed to highlight the power of learning from one another and creating a community that fosters a sense of purpose.

### MLA Connect & Connect On-Demand

MLA’s collection of educational session recordings, webinars, and online discussions grew by dozens of hours. MLA members have live and on-demand access to dozens of virtual programs and sessions on a wide variety of topics, giving access to valuable information and resources. The 2022-23 sessions included topics ranging from facilities management, social services in the library, accessibility, working with difficult patrons, and public relations.

### MLA Mentorship Program

From directors to bookmobile managers to youth librarians, professionals from all roles in the library have volunteered their time to the MLA Mentorship program, offering advice and support to mentees as they work on their library degree, transition to a new job, or embark on an exciting new project. In 2022 and 2023, MLA matched 21 mentor/mentee pairs for six-month partnerships.



**19** MLA Connect webinars



**6** In-person events



**55** Ambassadors worked on events and prof. development



**21** Partnerships in the Mentorship Program



**1,463**  
In-person attendees



**660**  
Virtual attendees



# Harnessing Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Accessibility and Belonging

In 2023, the Michigan Library Association Board of Directors, staff, and ambassadors signed on to a newly drafted statement to engage in a sustained effort to create a culture that recognizes, enhances and promotes equity, diversity and accessibility for Michigan's library community. At the same time, MLA is steadfast in modeling an organization where our board, staff, ambassadors and members feel a strong sense of belonging and acceptance, where voices are heard, acknowledged and acted upon.

## MLA Equity Fund Grants

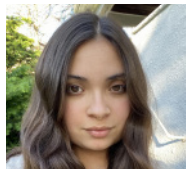
Over the past two years, MLA Equity Fund Grants were awarded to four outstanding applicants. By reducing financial barriers to career advancement, these grants aim to encourage the participation, engagement and leadership of racially and ethnically diverse library workers in the library profession. Grants provide funds for professional development opportunities like memberships, workshop or conference registration, and for projects or activities led by the grant recipient that advance the transformation of libraries and library services through diversity, equity and inclusion.

### MLA Equity Fund Grant Recipients 2022-23



**Mary Higginbottom-Johnson**  
Muskegon Area District Library

2022



**Sandra De La Cruz Tello**  
Kalamazoo Public Library

2022



**Loretta Hunter**  
Wayne County Community College Library

2022



**Amelia Chea**  
Wayne County Community College Library

2023



## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND BELONGING STATEMENT 2023

The Michigan Library Association (MLA) Board of Directors, staff, and ambassadors pledge to engage in a sustained effort to create a culture that recognizes, enhances and promotes equity, diversity and accessibility for Michigan's library community. At the same time, MLA is steadfast in modeling an organization where our board, staff, ambassadors and members feel a strong sense of belonging and acceptance, where voices are heard, acknowledged and acted upon.

In order to do this, we will:

- Certify that all organizational leadership, staff and ambassadors embrace the values of mutual respect and dignity for all persons when looking at our internal practices and policies with relation to governance, employment, and committee/workgroup service, ensuring equality of opportunity that is free from unfair discrimination and harassment.
- Embrace, respect, and adhere to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.
- Ensure open, responsive and respectful communication with any, and all stakeholders.
- Create strong collaborations and partnerships ensuring that all interactions regarding issues of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, are reflective and responsive to the needs of the diverse state we serve.
- Continually monitor and evaluate our internal and external activities to ensure we are providing an environment that makes all feel a sense of belonging, and welcomes equality and diversity in all its forms. This, above all else, will allow MLA to create a culture of shared values and cross-cultural understanding.
- MLA is committed to advancing our work to be more equitable, diverse, inclusive, accessible, and welcoming across the state, including embracing and supporting the rich socio-economic, physical, cultural, racial and ethnic differences that make-up the Michigan library community and the residents they serve.

### MLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Scott Duimstra*

Scott Duimstra, President

*Dillon Geshel*

Dillon Geshel, President-Elect

*Lisa Waskin*

Lisa Waskin, Secretary/Treasurer

*Angela Badke*

Angela Badke, Board Member

*Anne Heidemann*

Anne Heidemann, Board Member

*Mary Higginbottom-Johnson*

Mary Higginbottom-Johnson, Board Member

*Michele Howard*

Michele Howard, Board Member

*Jenny Marr*

Jenny Marr, Board Member

*Shaunna Martz*

Shaunna Martz, Board Member

*Tasha Miller*

Tasha Miller, Board Member

*Deborah E. Mikula*

Deborah E. Mikula, Board Member

*Christine Peele*

Christine Peele, Board Member

*Randy Riley*

Randy Riley, Board Member

*Cathy Russ*

Cathy Russ, Board Member

*Sophia Ward-Brewer*

Sophia Ward-Brewer, Board Member

### MLA STAFF

*Deborah E. Mikula*

Deborah E. Mikula, Executive Director

*Rachel Ash*

Rachel Ash, Membership & Communications Director

*Keeley Briggs*

Keeley Briggs, Database Coordinator

*Lisa Buttigieg*

Lisa Buttigieg, Administrative Assistant

*Ryan Logan*

Ryan Logan, Graphic Designer

*Amber Sheerin*

Amber Sheerin, Program and Event Director

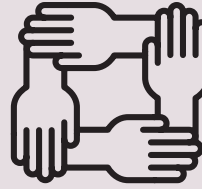
# 9<sup>th</sup>

STATE TO START  
A STATE  
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

# 450 TITLES

Total Titles Read  
and Reviewed for  
Literary Awards

# \$200,000+



## Total Value of VOLUNTEER

Hours  
(based on Independent  
Sector)

Leading the advancement of all Michigan  
Libraries through advocacy, education  
and engagement.

# 3

AWARDS

**YOUTH LITERARY AWARDS.**  
5200+ HOURS SPENT READING  
AND REVIEWING

# 8.6K

MLA   
**Social Media  
FOLLOWERS**

(Combined -  
Facebook, Twitter,  
Instagram, LinkedIn)

MLA is a  
collaborative  
network of  
libraries, library  
professionals,  
and library  
supporters.

MLA serves as a  
forum for collaboration,  
cooperation, and  
partnership for our  
diverse membership.

# 127,583

**Newsletters Read** (40% open rate)

# 2600+

  
**MEMBERS**

ACTIVE LIBRARIES, INDIVIDUALS  
& STRATEGIC PARTNERS



**We are  
STRONGER  
together!**

# \$6,517

  
in Scholarships  
Awarded

# 175

AMBASSADORS  
INCLUDING  
16 Board Members

**MLA Volunteer  
Ambassadors**

# 9

INDIVIDUALS AND 4  
LIBRARIES HONORED  
FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
SERVICE TO MICHIGAN  
LIBRARIES

# 2 MLA

RECOGNIZED  
with STATE &  
NATIONAL  
AWARDS in 2023

Since 1891, MLA has been a  
vibrant and dynamic service  
organization.

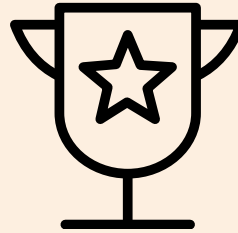
132

YEARS

Celebrating our Founding

\$41,500

GRANTS  
and Other  
AWARDS  
Received



21  
MENTOR  
PROGRAM  
MATCHES

Working together to protect and promote our libraries and advance the library profession in Michigan.



206,382  
PAGE VIEWS  
Website Engagement

INCREASE TO STATE AID TO LIBRARIES FY23

\$500,000

MLA is an indispensable and valued leader, partner and advocate for Michigan libraries.

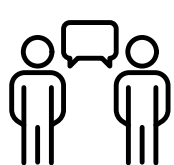
2123  
PEOPLE



Professional  
Development  
Attendance  
(free and paid events)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE  
DEPLOYMENT TO LIBRARY  
OF MICHIGAN IN FY23

\$800,000



SERVED

150+

Yearly Unique Visits, Meetings and Informal Consultations on Marketing, Strategic Planning, and more!



2000  
LEGISLATIVE  
BILLS READ &  
ANALYZED



MICHIGAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

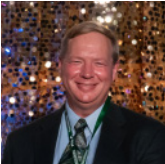
MLA BY THE NUMBERS | 2022-23

# Michigan Library Awards

Considered the state's highest honors and held in partnership with MLA, the Library of Michigan Foundation and the Library of Michigan, the Michigan Library Awards celebrate the excellence, accomplishments, dedication and service of library staff, trustees and supporters in the Michigan library community.



**MLA Intellectual Freedom Award**  
Caro Area District Library Staff



**MLA Lifetime Achievement Award**  
Paul McCann,  
Dexter District Library



**MLA Public Librarian of the Year**  
Megan Buck, Dickinson  
County Library



**Legislator Lifetime Achievement Award**  
Senator Debbie Stabenow



**MLA Heart of a Champion**  
Jim Bolton, Superior District Library,  
Pickford Community Library



**MLA Rising Star**  
Georgina Broyles,  
MacDonald Public Library



**MLA Frances H. Pletz Award for Excellence in Service to Youth**  
Nisa Kessler,  
Petoskey District Library



**MLA Library Support Staff of the Year**  
Victoria Edwards, West Bloomfield  
Township Public Library

# Youth Literary Awards

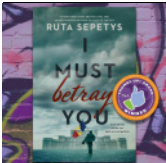
The MLA Literary Awards promote excellence in literature for youth. Each year workgroups spend thousands of hours reading, reviewing and discussing hundreds of books to come up with the top titles, honor books and winners.



**2023 Mitten Award Winner**  
"Sometimes I Grumblesquinch"  
by Rachel Vail, Illustrated by  
Hyewon Yum



**2023 YouPer Award Winner**  
"Three Strike Summer"  
by Skyler Schrempp



**2023 ThumbsUp! Award Winner**  
"I Must Betray You"  
by Ruta Sepetys

# Building Awareness of Michigan Libraries

Libraries serve as essential institutions in all 83 Michigan counties serving as cornerstones of knowledge, learning and community engagement. Every October, MLA highlights the value and importance of Michigan's public, school, academic, tribal, cooperative and special libraries and promotes all the amazing programs, services and collections available for Michigan library patrons. Library Appreciation Month begins with resolutions presented by our legislators and through the Governor's office extolling the value of libraries and continues each day with coordinated social media postings of fun facts, stats, inspirational quotes and proclamations by local elected officials.

# Celebrating and Honoring MLA

In the past year, MLA was recognized with two awards for our work to protect and promote the library profession. MLA is the recipient of the 2023 Michigan Humanities Outstanding Humanities Organization Award and the 2023 Gerald Hodges Intellectual Freedom Chapter Relations Award.

- The Michigan Humanities Outstanding Humanities Organization recognizes organizations, corporate funders, foundations, and organizational partners that have made a lasting contribution over time (five years or more) to the cultural life of their communities or our state through their active support of and involvement in promoting public humanities.
- The Gerald Hodges Intellectual Freedom Chapter Relations Award recognizes an organization that has developed a strong multi-year, ongoing program or a single, one-year project that exemplifies support for intellectual freedom, patron confidentiality, and anti-censorship efforts.

## Michigan Library Appreciation Month 2023

Join us as we celebrate Michigan libraries all October long!



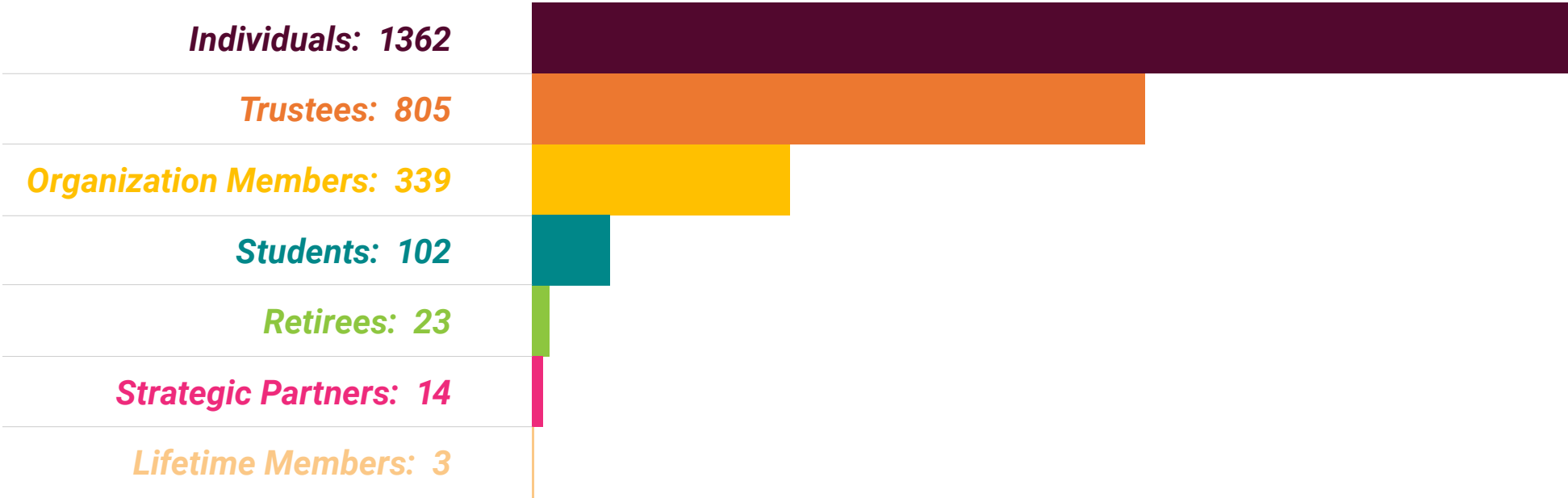
Walking among the bookshelves at a library is like traveling to new worlds filled with ideas and possibilities.

— Nicholle Ruhlman  
Wayne Public Library



# Membership

MLA serves all Michigan libraries, library professionals, trustees, and staff members. Our membership is comprised of nearly 2500 individual, organizational and trustee members from public, academic, school, cooperative, tribal and special libraries.



# Financials

The stable financial position of MLA is due in part to the strength of the work done by the MLA Treasurer, Finance Committee and staff. Below are audited figures as accepted by the MLA Board from Lewis & Knopf at the December 2023 board meeting.

## Balance Sheet

<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>Year Ending 06/30/23</b>
Cash	\$277,184
Investments	\$768,614
Accounts Receivable	\$92,713
ROU Assets —Operating Leases	\$23,258
Other Receivables	\$7,620
Prepaid Expenses	\$17,924
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,187,313</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>Year Ending 06/30/23</b>
Accounts Payable	\$29,331
Accrued Payroll	\$7,005
Accrued Vacation	\$2,773
ROU Liabilities — Operating Leases	\$23,612
Deferred Revenue	\$301,169
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$363,890</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>Year Ending 06/30/23</b>
Without Donor Restrictions	\$816,739
With Donor Restrictions	\$6,684
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$823,423</b>

## Revenues & Expenses

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Year Ending 06/30/23</b>
Membership Dues	\$401,795
Professional Development	\$326,014
Grants	\$43,000
Miscellaneous	\$128,541
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$899,350</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Year Ending 06/30/23</b>
Program Services	\$739,476
Management	\$154,991
Fundraising	\$3,825
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$898,292</b>
<b>Income Over Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,058</b>

# There is Power in Numbers

MLA could not do all that we envision without the expertise and wisdom of committee and workgroup members. More than 175 MLA Ambassadors volunteer their time and talents to help guide the work of MLA. Ambassadors are integral to supporting MLA's work by serving on workgroups and committees that plan educational events, select award winners, develop MLA's Strategic Plan and guide MLA through legislative challenges. Through their participation, ambassadors strengthen their leadership skills, grow their professional networks and lay the groundwork to advance both their own careers and the entire library profession. We thank them for stepping up and providing MLA with close to \$215,000 of in-kind support.

## ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library  
Vice-Chair: Larry Neal, Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
Shirley Bruursema, Kent District Library  
John Clexton, Gladwin County District Library  
Bryan Cloutier, Oxford Public Library  
Bob DeVries, Governmental Consultant Services, Inc.  
Jim Flury, The Library Network (TLN)  
Dillon Geshel, Superiorland Library Cooperative  
Anne Heidemann, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe  
Jessica Keyser, Grosse Pointe Public Library  
Katherine Lester, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools  
Cindy Mack, Brighton District Library  
Michael McCullough, Willard Public Library  
Claire Meeker, Romeo District Library  
Clare Membiela, Library of Michigan  
Ann Neff-Rohs, Jackson District Library  
Dale Parus, Ionia Community Library  
Christine Peele, Detroit Public Library  
Paulina Poplawska, Salem-South Lyon District Library  
Erin Schmandt, Caro Area District Library

## INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM TASK FORCE

Chair: Juliane Morian, Rochester Hills Public Library  
Kate Andrade, Woodlands Library Cooperative  
Bryonna Barton, Eaton Rapids Area District Library  
Rori Bielak, Dexter District Library  
Shirley Bruursema, Kent District Library  
Sarah Burchart, Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research  
Azita Frattarelli, Riverview Veterans Memorial Library  
Kathleen Gallagher, Grosse Pointe Public Library  
Grace Rose Galvan, Troy Public Library  
Dillon Geshel, Superiorland Library Cooperative  
Alice Howard, Ecorse Public Library  
Mary Grahame Hunter, Ferndale Area District Library  
Paris Kelvakis, Canton Public Library  
Dennis Kreps, Independent Librarian

Stephie Luyt, Traverse City Area Public Schools  
Clare Membiela, Library of Michigan  
Chase McMunn, Orion Township Public Library  
Ann Neff-Rohs, Jackson District Library  
Tonya Ryals, MacDonald Public Library  
Kristin Shelley, East Lansing Public Library

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library  
Anne Heidemann, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe  
Mary Higginbottom Johnson, Muskegon Area District Library  
Michele Howard, Traverse Area District Library

## NOMINATING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Cathleen Russ, West Bloomfield Township Public Library  
Steven Bowers, The Library Network (TLN)  
Mallorie DeVilbiss, Suburban Library Cooperative  
Eric Stanton, Capital Area District Libraries  
Kate Van Auken, White Pine Library Cooperative  
Sophia Ward Brewer, Grand Rapids Community College  
Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library

## WORKSHOP AND WEBINAR WORKGROUP

Tracy Bedford, Southfield Public Library  
Amber Johnson, Chesterfield Township Library  
Dennis Kreps, Independent Librarian  
Michael Postula, Ann Arbor District Library  
Sarah Rick, Millington Arbela District Library

## MLA 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE WORKGROUP

Chair: Dillon Geshel, Superiorland Library Cooperative  
Vice-Chair: Wesleyann Johnson, Center Line Public Library  
Katherine Bryant, Bloomfield Township Public Library  
Lisa Burns, Grosse Pointe Public Library  
Rebekah Craft, Baldwin Public Library  
Andrea Ingmire, Peter White Public Library  
Amber Johnson, Chesterfield Township Library  
Mary Johnson, Muskegon Area District Library

Kevin King, Kalamazoo Public Library  
Cindy Mack, Brighton District Library  
Sara Magnuson, Kent District Library  
Cindi Place, Bellaire Public Library  
James Pugh, Orion Township Public Library  
Holly Teasdale, Lyon Township Public Library  
Sophia Ward Brewer, Grand Rapids Community College  
Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library  
Tim Wiggins, Niles District Library  
Elissa Zimmer, Van Buren District Library

## MLA 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE WORKGROUP

Chair: Wesleyann Johnson, Center Line Public Library  
Vice-Chair: Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library  
Matt Archibald, Traverse Area District Library  
Andy Bourgeois, Capital Area District Libraries  
Lisa Burns, Grosse Pointe Public Library  
Amelia Chea, Hackley Public Library  
Rebekah Craft, Baldwin Public Library  
Michele Howard, Traverse Area District Library  
Andrea Ingmire, Peter White Public Library  
Sara Morrison, Briggs District Library  
James Pugh, Orion Township Public Library  
Holly Teasdale, Lyon Township Public Library  
Tim Wiggins, Niles District Library  
Elissa Zimmer, Van Buren District Library

## SMALL LIBRARIES PRE-CONFERENCE WORKGROUP

Linda Adams, Northland Library Cooperative  
Kate Andrade, Woodlands Library Cooperative  
Trixie McMeeking, Homer Public Library  
Sonya Schryer Norris, Plum Librarian LLC  
Eric Palmer, Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative  
Cindi Place, Bellaire Public Library  
Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library  
Tim Wiggins, Niles District Library





**SPRING INSTITUTE FOR YOUTH SERVICES 2024 WORKGROUP**

Chair: Ashley Lehman, Orion Township Public Library  
 Vice-Chair: Jill M. Anderson, Kent District Library  
 Laura Bultman, Kalamazoo Public Library  
 Becky DeLiso, Chesterfield Township Library  
 Kristen Getzin, Fraser Public Library  
 Natalie Haggard, Brighton District Library  
 Heather Harrison, Genesee District Library  
 Jay Hull, Capital Area District Libraries  
 Jocelyn Levin, Lyon Township Public Library  
 Stephanie Martin, Clarkston Independence District Library  
 Courtnei Moyses, Traverse Area District Library  
 Holly Osentoski, Troy Public Library  
 Lydia Schmidt, Hackley Public Library  
 Michele Wittkopp, Muskegon Area District Library

**ADVOCACY DAY 2024 WORKGROUP**

Chair: John Clextan, Gladwin County District Library  
 Bob DeVries, Governmental Consultant Services, Inc.  
 Ann Neff-Rohs, Jackson District Library  
 Tammy Soule, Governmental Consultant Services, Inc.

**THINK SPACE WORKGROUP**

Jack Buck, Richland Public Library  
 Claire Meeker, Romeo District Library  
 Valerie L. Meyerson, Petoskey District Library  
 Juliane Morian, Rochester Hills Public Library  
 Stef Reed, Flat River Community Library

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Chair: Scott Duimstra, Capital Area District Libraries  
 Vice-Chair: Dillon Geshel, Superiorland Library Cooperative  
 John Clextan, Gladwin County District Library  
 Jaci Cooper, Kent District Library  
 Eva Davis, Canton Public Library  
 Michele Howard, Traverse Area District Library  
 Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library

Valerie L. Meyerson, Petoskey District Library  
 Kristin Shelley, East Lansing Public Library  
 Kate Van Auken, White Pine Library Cooperative  
 Vanessa Verdun-Morris, Madison Heights Public Library  
 Sophia Ward Brewer, Grand Rapids Community College  
 Lisa Waskin, Superior District Library

**POLLING AND MESSAGING WORKGROUP**

Dillon Geshel, Superiorland Library Cooperative  
 Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library  
 Christine Peele, Detroit Public Library

**MICHIGAN LIBRARY AWARDS WORKGROUP**

Chair: Cathleen Russ, West Bloomfield Township Public Library  
 Lauren Arnsman, Troy Public Library  
 Jan Davidson, Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS)  
 Marissa Lasoff-Santos, William P. Faust Public Library of Westland  
 Christopher Potts, Capital Area District Libraries

**MITTEN AWARD WORKGROUP**

Chair: Dena Moscheck, Bay County Library System  
 Vice-Chair: Leigh Verburg, Kent District Library  
 Lauren Aquilina, Commerce Township Community Library  
 Tracy Bedford, Southfield Public Library  
 Jackie Boss, Kent District Library  
 Emily Brush, Novi Public Library  
 Austin Gullett, Delta Township District Library  
 Elyshia Hoekstra, Coopersville Area District Library  
 Whitney Jones, Northville District Library  
 Holly Kirsten, Chesterfield Township Library  
 Wendy Lehman, Rochester Hills Public Library  
 Kirsten Malzahn, Novi Public Library  
 Kelly Marra, MacDonald Public Library  
 Christina McIntosh, Salem South Lyon District Library  
 Everett Pine, Ferndale Area District Library  
 Lisa Rodkey, Grand Haven Area Public Schools  
 Loni Wetherell, Cromaine District Library

**YOUPER AWARD WORKGROUP**

Chair: Jessica Keeler, Plymouth District Library  
 Vice-Chair: Katie Perkey, Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
 Taryn Allan, Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
 Catherine Ash, Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
 Heather Draft, Cromaine District Library  
 Filippa Genovese, Clinton Macomb Public Library  
 Nicole Gillies, Bloomfield Township Public Library  
 Kristen Jayska, Livonia Public Library  
 Cheryl Lawrence, Branch District Library  
 Stephanie Martin, Clarkston Independence District Library  
 Carol Robinson, Grand Ledge Area District Library  
 Jeanette Smith, Romeo District Library  
 Samantha Tomlinson, Grace A. Dow Memorial Library  
 Damon Verdema, Ferndale Area District Library  
 Robert White, Flint Public Library

**THUMBS UP! AWARD WORKGROUP**

Chair: Sarah Swiderski, Salem-South Lyon District Library  
 Nathan Bartos, Kent District Library  
 Lisa Boyd, Canton Public Library  
 Georgina Broyles, MacDonald Public Library  
 Josh Campeau, Pontiac Public Library  
 Robert Chartrand, Capital Area District Libraries  
 Kayla Dies, Paw Paw District Library  
 Mollie Hall, Dexter District Library  
 Sabrina Halsey, Orion Township Public Library  
 Jody Helme-Day, Tecumseh District Library  
 Samantha Ingerson, Sterling Heights Public Library  
 Cristen Jackson, Flint Public Library  
 Colleen Kingsbury, Plymouth District Library  
 Anjelica Lyman, Commerce Township Community Library  
 Julianne Novetsky, Warren Public Library  
 Chelsea Pridmore, Clarkston Independence District Library  
 Kelsey Schaefflein, Cromaine District Library  
 Amanda Shepard, Herrick District Library  
 Sarah Welch, Big Rapids Community Library  
 Liz Wierenga, Kent District Library

# Our Members Have Spoken...



*I just want to thank everyone involved; it was a great event (annual conference). A lot of hard work goes into things behind the scenes, so thank you for your commitment to the growth of the library community.*



*Thank you to the wonderful MLA staff for providing outstanding advocacy and professional development services for the Michigan Library Community and bringing out the best in the many volunteers you cultivate to accomplish the work. I continue to be proud to be a member of MLA!*



*As a library board member, I am alarmed and disquieted by the book challenges I see happening around the state. I am grateful for MLA's resources and high-profile advocacy defending the right to read.*



*Keep fighting the good fight – I have full awe and praise for all the work that MLA is doing in advocacy – keep up the great work!*

# We Can't Do it Alone...

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MLA is proud to partner with organizations serving the library community.



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## You Bring Us Purpose – Thank You!

The Board of Directors offers its most sincere thanks to MLA members, ambassadors, staff members, collaborating partners, and our legislators. Our network is powerful. MLA is a credible and trustworthy authority today because we are stronger together. You bring us purpose, and for that, we are grateful.

### 2023 - 24 Board of Directors

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*A truly great library  
contains something  
in it to offend  
everyone.*

— Jo Godwin