

SPEAKER BIOS

****organized alphabetically by last name****

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A

B

Susan D. Ballard is a retired director of Library, Media and Technology. Susan guided her district to the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) National School Library of the Year Award recognition. She has served as an adjunct professor and lecturer in various school librarian preparation programs, published numerous articles in professional and scholarly journals, and edited and contributed to several books. A past president of AASL, the New Hampshire School Library Media Association, and the New England School Library Association, Susan served on the Standards and Guidelines Editorial Board for the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. With Sara Kelly Johns, she is co-author of the forthcoming (Fall 2023) ALA/AASL publication *Elevating the School Library: Building Positive Perceptions through Brand Behavior*.

Rebecca Bushby is the Information Literacy Librarian at the University of Southern Maine, and an instructor in the Library and Media Specialist program at UMaine Online. Prior to joining USM, she was an Assistant Professor in the Library at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), and a school librarian for nine years in Maine and New Jersey. Rebecca's research focuses on the information literacy of first-year students and has been published in *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Journal of Information Literacy*, and *College & Research Libraries News*. She and her co-authors were recently awarded the 2023 NJ Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Research Award, and the 2023 American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Research Grant for their article, *First years' information literacy backpacks: What's already packed or not packed?* published in *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*. She holds a MEd in educational leadership and instruction from The College of New Jersey and a MS in library and information science from Drexel University.

Jennifer Benham (she/her) is the Youth & Teen Services Librarian at Prince Memorial Library in Cumberland, and currently serves as the MLA Youth Services Section vice chair. She holds an MLS with a concentration in Youth Librarianship, and a Graduate Academic Certificate in Youth Services in Libraries and Information Agencies. Jennifer has a long history of working in human services, and especially enjoys serving youth and adults with disabilities, and those who identify within the LGBTQIA+ community.

Pamela Bobker is an Adult Services Librarian at Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick, where she specializes in Readers' Advisory. She facilitates the library's mystery discussion group, as well as discussion groups at two assisted living facilities. Pamela also serves on the MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Mary-Lou Boucouvalas started as the Children's Librarian at the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library in Kennebunkport in 1998. She received her MLIS from Simmons College in 2002 and became the Library Director in 2004. She has served on several committees including MLA Cream of the Crop, Lupine, and co-created the Pasco Lecture series at the Graves Library that was initially funded by the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation to promote Maine authors, illustrators, poets, and artists. In 2015, she served on a committee to raise \$1.6 million dollars of grass roots funds to double the size of the 1813 federal-style building. The Library now includes a business center for remote workers, an elevator, kitchen, bathrooms, a bookstore, and a community room that seats 100. She has a long history of advocating for seniors in her community, especially those suffering from dementia and Alzheimers Disease. She lives in Saco with her husband Greg.

Mary Build is an accomplished seaplane instructor who ran a very successful flight training operation teaching hundreds of pilots how to safely fly from the water. Her passion for flight is evident in each story she tells, from flying to Alaska to surviving an airplane crash, to racing airplanes. Mary has been speaking all over New England and has been invited to the Poconos in September. She expresses the importance of finding your true purpose in life and offers some tips on how to do that. Mary is the author of **Finding Myself in Aviation**, a book about much more than flying. It is a story of one woman's journey from an abusive childhood to finding her freedom in the skies. Mother of two daughters, she lives in Maine. Visit her website at <https://marybuild.com/> For libraries: to order your books at 40% discount please inquire at orders@maineauthorspublishing.com

Steve Butzel is currently the interim director of the Fiske Public Library in Wrentham, MA, and has served as director of the Portsmouth Public Library (NH) and interim director of the Wiggin Memorial Library (Stratham, NH). He has also served as president of the New Hampshire Library Association, State Chapter Councilor on the ALA Council, and he founded the NHLA Information Technology Section and the NH Small Libraries Summit. Having started his own business, Uncomfortable Fun (www.uncomfortablefun.com) in 2022, Steve is also a leadership coach and organizational consultant who works 1-on-1 with library leaders, hosts leadership retreats, and speaks at conferences around the country. He earned his MLIS from Simmons GSLIS and his BA

from Yale University. Steve values honesty, integrity, joy, vitality, curiosity, vulnerability, transparency and courage both in himself and others. He enjoys attending yoga classes, swimming, connecting with a wide range of people in his community, and listening to endless amounts of music. His favorite band of all-time is Phish.

Ysanne Bethel (EE-Zawn; she/they) is the Director of Youth Engagement at The Yellow Tulip Project and she believes in the transformative capacity of hope. In her eyes, hope is the essential ingredient to bring communities together and make positive change. Ysanne loves amplifying the work of young leaders and enjoys supporting them on the issues they are most passionate about. As young leaders continue to be at the forefront of important conversations about mental health and smashing the stigma, Ysanne is excited to work alongside them. A graduate of the University of Southern Maine, Ysanne holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Minor in Race & Ethnic Studies. Utilizing a sociological perspective, she is aware of how seemingly personal issues –like mental health–may actually be community issues.

C

Jim Campbell has a longstanding interest in the intersection of digital technology, law, and public policy and how they affect our daily lives in our increasingly digital world. He is also committed to the democratization of information and to personal privacy, particularly as they intersect with technology. As a volunteer, he covers these topics and more in his weekly radio feature “Notes from the Electronic Cottage” on WERU-FM (weru.org), and through his work as a member of the Maine Freedom of Information Coalition, and as a member of MLA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Richard Cass is the author of the six-book Elder Darrow jazz mystery series, which he originally pitched as “an alcoholic walks into a dive bar and decides to buy it.” The first book, **Solo Act**, was a finalist for the 2017 Maine Literary Awards; the prequel, **In Solo Time**, won the award in 2018. Dick has also published a thriller called **The Last Altruist** (shortlisted for the 2023 Maine Literary Award) and a book of short stories entitled **Gleam of Bone**. He holds a graduate degree in writing from the University of New Hampshire, where he studied with Thomas Williams, Jr. and Joseph Monninger. He’s also studied with Ernest Hebert, Ursula K. LeGuin, and Molly Gloss. His short fiction and nonfiction have appeared in *Playboy*, *Gray’s Sporting Journal*, *ZZYZVA*, *Tough*, and *Best Short Stories of the American West*. He lives in Cape Elizabeth, Maine with his wife Anne and a semi-feral coon cat named Tinker.

Rae Chalmers began her teaching career in a two-room schoolhouse on Great Cranberry Island off the Coast of Maine. Since then, she has had the good fortune to explore, live, and work on many of Maine's Islands. The Oxbow Island Gang environmental mystery series reflect the values of those island communities: resilience, generosity, and respect for nature. *Oxbow Island Gang: Leap Frog* is the fourth book in this series just released in 2023. Other previous titles in order are *Bear and the Oxbow Island Gang*, *Oxbow Island Gang: Lobster Graveyard*, and *Oxbow Island Gang: Winter Crows*. Visit www.raechalmers.com to learn more. For libraries: To order your books at 40% discount please inquire at orders@maineauthorspublishing.com

Deborah Clark has served at the Maine State Library as a Library Management Specialist and liaison to York and Cumberland Counties libraries for nearly 10 years. She received her MLIS from University of South Carolina at Columbia in 1997 while working as a school library media specialist. In 1999, she was hired as health sciences and consumer health librarian at Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway, ME where she served for 14 years until she joined the MSL team in 2013.

Michelle Connors is the Director of Kennebunk Free Library. She moved from New York 10 years ago and has never looked back. Michelle also serves as the Region 1 liaison for the Maine Library Advisory Council, as a Library Seat for the MSLN Council, as a trustee of the Waterboro Public Library, and as a member of the Goal 1 Cabinet for Thrive 2027 (UWSM). She received her MLIS from Queens College and is currently enrolled in USM's Public Policy PhD program.

Samantha Cote is the Children's Librarian at the Windham Public Library in Windham, Maine. She's been active in Maine libraries since 2007, serving in various capacities at the libraries in Biddeford, Gorham, Tenants Harbor and Winslow. Samantha is notorious for joining committees, having served on Reading Round-Up's planning committee, the Maine Student Book Award committee, the NMLD board, a former MLA newsletter editor,, and is ending her term as North Star YA Award Chair at this conference. When not doing committee work, she enjoys good food, good media, hanging out with her husband, and visiting friends and family.

D

Sonya Durney (she/her) is the Scholarly Communication Research & Teaching Librarian at the University of New England. In this role, she liaises with the School of Professional Programs and the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. She also serves on numerous university-wide committees, including the Community Equity and Diversity Council of Chairs and the University Faculty Assembly. Sonya earned her MLIS from Simmons College, a BA in Political Science from Framingham State

University, and a doctoral degree in Public Policy with a focus on Educational Leadership from the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. She has completed ALA's Leadership Institute (2017), ILEAD (2015), and NELLIS (2013). She also served as the NELLIS Maine Mentor in 2019. She is currently the President-Elect of the Maine Library Association and is a member of the American Library Association Policy Corps.

E

F

Anna Faherty is the archivist at the Franco-American Collection at the University of Southern Maine and a graduate of Simmons University's dual degree Master's program in History and Archives Management. Before working at the Franco-American Collection, she worked at Fort Ticonderoga, an 18th Century military site, integral in the French and Indian War (also known as the Seven Years War), and the American Revolutionary War. Anna's historical background is in labor and immigration in the United States from the 19th-early 20th centuries. Anna currently serves as the Secretary of the MLA board, and is an active member of the Maine Contemporary Archives Collaborative and the Franco American Collections Consortium, which manages the Franco American Digital Archives.

G

H

The granddaughter of a bookbinder and a librarian, **Lynn Harlan** (she/her) likes to joke that ink runs through her veins, not blood. She received a BA in history from Coker College in Hartsville, South Carolina and a Library Associate Training Institute Certification from the Maryland State Library Agency. As a military spouse, Lynn has worked and volunteered at multiple libraries throughout the United States and abroad. She has enjoyed getting to know her various communities in roles ranging from Library Assistant, Children's Librarian, and Head Librarian. Lynn is currently employed as a Reference Librarian at Bangor Public Library, but at one time or another has called New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas, Maryland, and South Korea home. As a member of the Maryland Library Association, Lynn served on the Readers' Advisory Interest Group where she planned and led professional development for librarians on book genres including #MeToo, Afrofuturism, Jane Austen Fandoms, and Soothing Reads for Stressful Times. Lynn is currently serving as the Secretary of the New England Library Association.

John Hutchinson is the Business Librarian at the University of Maine, and the representative for the Patent & Trademark Resource Center in Fogler Library. He has been a librarian since 1994, and has

worked at several libraries in Maine and in Iowa. He's worked at the University of Maine since August of 2021.

I

J

Lisa Joyce is the Outreach Librarian at the South Portland Public Library, Co Chair of Age Friendly South Portland and a Fellow at the University of Maine Center on Aging. She received her MLIS from Simmons College in 1993. She has worked in Maine libraries for 30 years and spent 3 years in the publishing world before returning to libraries. She has served on numerous national, state, local and private boards in the areas of open space and services to the elderly.

K

Zip Kellogg, USM Library (retired), has had more than fifty years of canoeing experience, most of it in Maine. He has always found libraries and canoeing complementary in many ways. For example, one of his major reference sources for this avocation has been the *Maine Atlas and Gazetteer*, a tool useful for both geography and helping him wonder. In this session Zip will share many details of the Atlas including its background story, publication history, and countless other details from the first edition (1976) to the current 36th edition (2022). Come learn a few things about this now iconic book of maps...and bring your own *Maine Atlas* stories!

Samar Khuder is originally from Iraq. She graduated from the University of Southern Maine with a bachelor's degree in biology. She is program coordinator for New England Arab American Organization, where she manages several youth leadership programs. She is a certified domestic violence advocate and has extensive training in court proceedings and court services. In her spare time, she pursues art, photography, and decor. Samar is the author of *The Aurantium Tree*, a story about a family that escapes the war in Iraq to find peace and freedom in the United States. For libraries: to order your books at 40% discount please inquire at orders@maineauthorspublishing.com

Jon Knepp is the director of Thompson Free Library in Dover-Foxcroft since 2020. He has an MLIS from Simmons College. He has worked at academic, government, and public libraries and archives in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts prior to moving to Maine. He has also worked in the private sector for the Patent Office. Though he's worked in parts of the library and archives world, he enjoys the variety and level of engagement that comes with running a small-town library.

Jodi Kosakowski, MLS, Ph.D., is the Coordinator of the Information & Library Science program at the University of Maine Augusta. Jodi works with program faculty, various library professionals, information organizations, and more than 160 students around the US and internationally to support education from various perspectives. Continually updating the curriculum, listening and learning about trends and traditions in the field, she is always looking for ways to engage students in active learning practices and, to support each individual in moving toward their personal, educational, and professional goals. With a background in writing and human-computer interaction, along with a love of all things information and libraries, Jodi is always learning, adapting, and evolving.

L

Molly Larson is past president of the Maine Library Association and has nearly 30 years in public library service in Maine. After taking a hiatus, Molly was fortunate to find a position at Maine Authors Publishing in Thomaston as a publishing coordinator where part of her job is to shepherd local Maine authors in getting their manuscripts published and into the hands of readers. As library relations representative, she still gets to be an advocate for libraries and to be among her favorite people: booklovers, authors, and librarians.

M

Megan MacGregor (she/hers) is the Instruction and Outreach Librarian at Univ. of Southern Maine, and a member of the reference and instruction team. She previously worked at Penn State Wilkes-Barre where she was the first Outreach and Engagement Librarians in that statewide library system. She received a master's in Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University in 2008. Prior to her librarian career she worked at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and Historic New England's Phillips House. She is a member of the Northeast OER Summit steering committee, a board member of the USM Special Collections LGBTQ+ Collection.

Elizabeth McKinstry (she/her) is the Training and Programming Librarian at Springfield City Library in Springfield, Massachusetts. Elizabeth never met a special project she didn't like.

Cathleen Miller (she/her) is passionate about intellectual freedom and diversity, equity and inclusion. She serves as the vice-chair for MLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee. Cathleen works as the Education and Outreach Archivist and liaison to the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of New England in Biddeford. She was formerly Curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection. She has worked in archives since 2001, when a volunteer position at the LGBTQ+ community archives in Philadelphia changed her career path. Cathleen is also an artist, writer, farmer and community herbalist.

N

Erica Nadelhaft is the Education Coordinator at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine. She earned a B.A. Magna Cum Laude from Brandeis University; an M.A. Summa Cum Laude from the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and is ABD from the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis. Professionally, she has taught courses on world history, the history of genocide, World War II, the history of the Middle East, women's history, introduction to Judaism, and Hebrew, among others, in the University of Maine system. She has also taught at the University of Moncton in Edmunston, New Brunswick. In her current role at the HHRC, Erica oversees the HHRC team of educators, coordinates school visits, develops new programs, provides professional development training and works with school districts and communities to address prejudice and hate.

O

Kent Oliver recently retired as Director of the Nashville (TN) Public Library. He is now a senior fellow for the Public Policy and Advocacy Office of the American Library Association, involved in policy discussions related to First Amendment freedoms and Unite Against Book Bans. In this role Kent mentors, coordinates, and partners with members of ALA's Policy Corps to advance advocacy on fighting book bans. Additionally, he is a public speaker on book banning and censorship. He is a three-time President of the Freedom to Read Foundation and has chaired the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association (ALA). He received the Stark County Ohio Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award for Defense of the First Amendment. His writings on intellectual freedom and defense of the First Amendment have been published in *Forbes*, *The Costco Connection*, *The Tennessean*, and more. He is a nationally and internationally known speaker on library issues and challenges including literacy and the freedom to read.

P

Jessica Perez is the Digital Equity Manager at Maine Connectivity Authority, Maine's agency committed to expanding access to reliable, high-speed and affordable service statewide. Libraries are important leaders in digital equity and inclusion, and she is participating in this conference to share about the planning effort happening across the state. She's also eager to learn more about librarians' work and needs in this space. Jessica's background is in higher education and diversity, equity, and inclusion. She lives in Freeport.

Jill Piekut Roy is the Special Collections Librarian at University of Southern Maine, with responsibilities in processing, reference, and instruction for the Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, University Archives, Rare Books and Manuscripts collections. She earned her MS in Library and Information Science from Simmons University in 2020 and holds a BA in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic. She has previously worked at Patten Free Library and Maine Maritime Museum, and currently serves on the Maine Historical Records Advisory Board and the Maine Contemporary Archives Collaborative steering committee. Jill was recently selected to be part of the inaugural cohort of the Radical Librarianship Institute at UCLA California Rare Book School.

Vivienne Pirolì is the Director of the Simmons University Library, with responsibility for strategic planning and initiatives, project management, assessment, library technology, information literacy and online teaching and learning. She has a strong background in teaching with adjunct experience in the School of Library and Information Science at Simmons University, and holds board positions in the Oberlin Group of Libraries and the Fenway Library Organization.

Heather Perrone is the Science and Engineering Librarian at the University of Maine where she serves as the coordinator of the Maine Business, Science and Technology Library (MBSTL). She has worked in public libraries in Michigan and academic libraries in Michigan and Maine.

Catherine Preston-Schreck is a Library Assistant, Work Study Coordinator, and Zine Curator at Thorndike Library, College of the Atlantic. She was a member of the 2022 New England Library Association NELLs Emerging Leaders cohort. Beyond her work at COA, Catherine is a library volunteer at the Hancock County Jail, election clerk for the Town of Bar Harbor, and works part time on a small organic farm. Catherine has a M.S. in communication from Illinois State University and a M.Sc. in visual anthropology from the University of Oxford.

Q

R

Barbara Ross is the author of the Maine Clambake Mysteries. Her books have been nominated for multiple Agatha Awards for Best Contemporary Novel and have won the Maine Literary Award for Crime Fiction. Barbara and her husband live in Portland, Maine. Readers can visit her website at www.maineclambakemysteries.com

S

Megan Schadlich, MLIS, is the creator of [The Healing Library](#), the author of [Cooking Up Library Programs Teens and Tweens Will Love](#) (ABC-Clio), a 2 time winner of the YALSA writing award, and a facilitator, host, and creative contributor to numerous Library Journal and School Library Journal professional development courses. She's passionate about innovative library programming, supporting communities through partnerships rooted in listening, and design thinking. She's worked in public libraries for 12 years, has been teaching nonprofit professional development for 17 years, and has been involved in youth development for 29 years.

Tamara Ellis Smith is a children's book writer, author of *Another Kind of Hurricane* (Schwartz & Wade, Random House), *Here and There* (Barefoot Books), and the forthcoming *Grief is an Elephant* (Chronicle Books). She has worked at the intersection of writing, kids, and education her whole life and can't imagine doing anything else. Currently she works for [Pin Lit](#) as a Project Manager and writes the newsletter for [Choose Your Own Adventure](#). She lives in Vermont with her family of many humans and many animals.

Courtney Sparks has worked in public libraries since 2007. Starting her career as a Circulation Manager, she has worked in all library departments with the goal of becoming a generalist (even subbing for storytime in a pinch). While the siren call of Lending Services was always very strong, administration is her true passion. Innovative and inspiring approaches to library management, strategic planning, and community partnerships are the focus of her career. Courtney currently serves as the Director of Freeport Community Library, where she oversees a dedicated team and works closely with stakeholders to shape the library's future.

Hannah Stevens is archivist/librarian at College of the Atlantic where she oversees the college archives and library cataloging. She earned a MS in Library and Information Science from Simmons University in 2012 and a BA in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic in 2009. She currently

serves as the vice chair of the History Trust, participates in the Maine Contemporary Archives, and is chair of the cataloging committee for the Maine Balsam Libraries Consortium.

Amy Stone is currently Library Director at Bridgton Public Library. A Maine native, she has lived and worked in Arizona (Patagonia Public Library, District Librarian for Patagonia Schools), and the San Francisco/Bay Area (California Judicial Center Law Library, East Bay Nonprofit Resource Center). She has served as school board vice-chair for MSAD15 here in Gray, Maine. Currently on the Maine Library Association Legislative Committee and ARSL Advocacy Committee, her work is focused on rural digital equity and community-building.

Lane Sturtevant (they/them) Lane is an organizer with Democracy Maine, a statewide organization that encompasses the League of Women Voters of Maine, Maine Citizens for Clean Elections, and Maine Students Vote; a role they have been in since 2020. In addition to grassroots organizing for legislative advocacy, supporting voter engagement, and coordinating members and volunteers, Lane leads Democracy Maine's Local Government program and co-facilitates the organization's Racial Justice and Equity advocacy team. Lane has a B.A. in anthropology from Bowdoin College. They live in Warren, in the midcoast, where they are an enthusiastic participant in local government proceedings and serve on the town's park committee, along with pestering their friends about showing up for local elections and town meetings.

T

Dawn Thistle is the Director of the Gardiner Public Library. She continues to oversee the Special Collections and reference inquiries for the GPL Community Archives Room, where she has fielded local history and genealogy inquiries since 2012. She earned her MS in LIS from Simmons University in 2008 and has since completed all coursework and exams toward her PhD. She previously served 10 years as Library Director for Vassalboro Public Library, as well as 2 years as a Middle School Librarian, and 3 years on the Reading Round-Up Committee. Dawn is passionate about serving the information needs of those seeking local history information, family histories, and any genealogical questions. She firmly believes that libraries are the greatest asset to any community and that local librarians can help you find whatever information you seek.

Kayleigh Thomas is currently the Assistant Director at the Blue Hill Public Library, where she oversees Reference and Adult Services. She received her MLIS from University of Rhode Island in 2015, and previously worked as the Assistant Director at the Gilford Public Library in Gilford, NH. She lives in Blue Hill.

U

V

W

Donna Wallace is currently the Adult Services Librarian and the Media Lab Coordinator at the Auburn Public Library. Her library work started at a small private secondary school in DE, where she did a little bit of everything and fell in love with the work. After returning to Maine, she started at APL as part-time Media Lab Coordinator, then worked for 8 years as the Teen and Collaboration Librarian. As a part of her work at APL, she serves on several committees, including the Auburn PAL Center Board of Directors, Auburn's Age Friendly Community Committee, the community Bridges Out of Poverty Steering Committee, and on the Androscoggin Prevention Council for Community Concepts. Outside of work, her hobbies include gardening, camping, and cooking. She also serves on Greater Androscoggin Humane Society's Board of Directors and is very committed to their mission of "supporting and engaging the community by providing effective, accessible and innovative services and advocacy for animals."

Nick Whiston (he/him) has been the program director at The Telling Room for the past 10 years. He loves working at an organization whose mission is to empower youth writing and share their voices with the world. Before coming to The Telling Room, he was the director of a college prep nonprofit in the Bay Area and a 7th grade English teacher.

X

Y

Z

Gail Zachariah (she/her) has been a librarian for many years but before she was a librarian she was a museum educator at the Los Angeles Children's Museum and the Denver Children's Museum. She works at the Keene Public Library NH and has worked at the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, Ohio Valley Area Libraries, and the Springfield Town Library in Springfield, VT.