NETWORK CONNECTION

Official Newsletter of the New York State Library Assistants' Association *Jan.- Mar. 2025 Vol.37, No.1*

New York State Library Assistants' Association 44th Annual Conference

Library Assistants: Taking a Ride into Learning, Imagination, and Adventure.

Shai-ana Bess
Public Relations Chair &
Conference Host Committee

It's time for the 44th Annual NYSLAA Conference! This year's conference will be held in downtown Binghamton, NY on Wednesday, June 18th through Friday, June 20th. Join us for three days of networking, learning and fun!

Arrive early and experience some of Binghamton's historic buildings and museums. Known as the "Carousel Capital of the World", Binghamton is home to six antique carousels, all still in service and all free!

Do you struggle with library marketing or collection development? Maybe you are worried about what will happen to your collection in the wake of a disaster? Learn about these and many other topics at this year's conference! Designed for all library professionals, our workshops provide skills spanning public, academic, and institutional librarianship.

Be on the lookout for our conference brochure! We will see you in June! In the meantime, take advantage of our fundraisers! Every little bit goes into making our conferences so special.



Do you want to attend the conference but don't have support from your library? Check out the Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship on the last page. The recipient will receive a full conference registration and up to two night's lodging!

Join the fun at our Meet & Greet dinner!



Join our white elephant gift exchange! Bring a gift ($15 max value) and get a gift during our Meet & Greet dinner on Wednesday evening.

INSIDE: Annual Reports... Fundraising...Donations...Distinguished Service Award... Membership...Craig Koste and Ray Murray Nominations...Eileen Lemley Scholarship

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Donations Chair
(vacant)

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"We would like to see a library community in New York State where library assistants have a voice in decisions that affect their future, are valued for their contributions, recognized and rewarded appropriately, and where there is equitable access to professional development opportunities."

NYSLAA'S MISSION

"The mission of the New York State Library Assistants' Association is:

1. **To enhance the professional image and status of NY State's library assistants.**
2. **To further their professional growth.**
3. **To provide a network for communication to our members and the profession on library and library assistant issues.**
4. **To network and cooperate with library organizations on local, state, national, and international levels."**

CHECK OUT NYSLAA'S WEBSITE: nyslaa.org

Join NYSLAA's electronic listserv (NYSLAA-L) and follow us on Facebook.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the NYSLAA listserv, simply go to nyslaa.org, click on "Join Our Email List" and follow the instructions.

Find us on Facebook

Search for: **New York State Library Assistants' Association**

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Newsletter Committee: **Cheryl Paine**, Gorham Free Library; **Heather Gad**, SUNY Oneonta; **Patty Jackman**, Middle Country Public Library.

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Submission deadline: April 30, 2025

NYSLAA Annual Reports for 2024

President

Cheryl Marriott

A Beacon in the Storm: Encouragement for Library Support Staff

The hum of a library, the quiet rustle of pages turning, the hushed whispers of discovery, the click of keyboards – these are the sounds of knowledge taking flight. And at the heart of this vibrant ecosystem, you, the library support and paraprofessional staff, are the unsung heroes, the quiet force that keeps the magic alive. This season, perhaps more than ever, we recognize the unique challenges you face, and we want to offer a few words of encouragement as you navigate these demanding times.

Libraries are more than just repositories of books or digital gateways to the world; they are community hubs, safe havens, and gateways to opportunity. You are the first point of contact for so many people: the friendly face that greets a hesitant child, the patient guide for a frantic student, the knowledgeable resource for a senior citizen seeking connection. Your work isn't simply about shelving books or processing loans; it's about fostering a love of learning, empowering individuals, and building a stronger community. You are the key to unlocking the vast potential held within those walls.

I personally would like to shout out the NY METRO LASSA Group and Valentin (Val) Colon (Retiree, Co-Convener), Nina Manning (Retiree), Arlene Quammie, Nancy Rettagliata, Angela Reyes, Daniel Veloz, and Anthony Wyche for hosting last year's conference in White Plains, NY and the everlasting support of The New York Public Library Guild Local 1930, and their President Deborah Allman.

We are excited to announce that the 2025 NYSLAA conference will be held June 18 - 20, 2025 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Binghamton, NY.

Vice President

Vacant

Please consider volunteering in any capacity and getting involved with NYSLAA. It is a rewarding experience being a part of this organization.

Treasurer

Heather Gad

Since the Network Connection Newsletter is online, we will not post our financial report on the web. The 2023 Treasurer's Annual Report is subject to our CPA's approval. Our books will be finalized shortly and the taxes filed. All NYSLAA members are entitled to see a full report. If you are interested in seeing it after our CPA has approved them, contact us at nyslaa.org@gmail.com.

Recording Secretary

Patty Jackman

This will be my first year as Recording Secretary for the NYSLAA Executive Council. The position was previously held in 2023 by Heather Gad who moved on to become Treasurer in 2024. Due to the position being vacant, I started serving as Recording Secretary in October 2024.

I have been working in libraries for almost 20 years and have held positions as a reference desk clerk in adult services, part-time library assistant, and office administrative assistant. I'm currently a full-time library assistant in youth services. I've been a member of NYSLAA since 2019 and received a NYSLAA Certificate of Achievement award in 2024.

As the Recording Secretary my duties will be to record and submit all of the minutes from the Executive Council Meetings and the Town Hall Meeting at the NYSLAA Conference.

The Recording Secretary also compiles, edits and publishes the NYSLAA Network Connection newsletter four times a year with the assistance of the Newsletter Committee. We are thankful to Cheryl Paine for stepping up to fill in during 2024. This year the Newsletter Committee will consist of Cheryl Paine and Heather Gad. I greatly appreciate their experience and insight as I navigate this new role! Thank you to our members that have sent submissions for the newsletters. We like to hear what you all are doing in your libraries! Please email me if you have an interest in writing for our newsletter.

NYSLAA Annual Reports for 2024

Conference Coordinator

Wendy Freier

Our last conference was held in 2024 at the Sonesta Downtown in White Plains. NY. The theme was Library Workers: Making Connections and Making a Difference. It was hosted by METRO NY - LASSA SIG.

We had a wonderful buffet meal at the Meet & Greet held in the hotel. We started a white elephant gift exchange for interested participants, and we are looking forward to continuing this for the conference in June. There were many interesting workshops with very knowledgeable presenters. I learned something new at each workshop I attended. Friday's keynote speaker was Anthony Harmon, who serves as the director of staff of the United Federation of Teachers. He was an inspiring speaker and I know that I was moved by his words. We wrapped up the conference with the recognition of the years of membership awards and the basket raffle, always a highlight!

Start thinking about donating a basket to the 2025 conference. Keep your eye on your inbox and Facebook for any fundraising opportunities. We need your help.

Please consider joining the Executive Council. There are open positions available:

Vice President (vacant)
Membership Secretary (looking to mentor)
Conference Coordinator (looking to mentor)

- All officers must be regular Association members in good standing for a minimum of two years.
- Vacancies on the Executive Council shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by appointment by the President with the majority consent of the Executive Council.
- All officers shall serve for two years and may be re-elected.

There are also vacant committees:

Community Outreach Committee Chair:
Acting NYSLAA Ambassador
Donations Committee Chair

If you are interested in any of the above positions, email us or talk to us at the conference. Council members and email addresses are on page 2.

If you enjoyed the workshops last year, please talk to your co-workers about joining NYSLAA and attending the 2025 conference. Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Corresponding Secretary

Cheryl Paine

I began this, my first experience as corresponding secretary in the late fall of 2023 and I have to admit that I felt a little as though I had been thrown in the deep end. This was primarily due to the fact that there was no recording secretary and I found that it is the role of one to take up the slack of the other in the event that the position is left vacant. This required that I work on the newsletter which was a first for me as well. I later discovered that the recording secretary also takes minutes at meetings – also a first. – Yikes. I have definitely discovered areas where I have nowhere to go but up. I would like to thank the council for their patience and Wendy Freier, and Donna Hanna in particular for their assistance and words of encouragement.

One of my duties is to inform the winners of awards and scholarships. Unfortunately, there were no nominations for The Craig Koste Award for Outstanding Service or the Ray Murray Award. There is still time for you to submit nominations for these awards. Please see the back page for more information on the awards and scholarships offered.

This year as corresponding secretary I was to preside over the NYSLAA elections for the Executive Council. Some of these members were to end their term of service in 2024. They have graciously agreed to continue in the position which is a sign of their dedication and belief in the worthiness of our organization as we try to rebuild in a post COVID world.

NYSLAA elections results:

Vice President: Vacant

Membership Secretary: term extended for one year,
Donna Hanna, Milne Library, SUNY Geneseo

Conference Coordinator: term extended for one year,
Wendy Freier, Geneva Public Library.

Recording Secretary: Patricia Jackman, Middle Country Public Library. She stepped in early to this role and is unopposed. Yay, Patty!

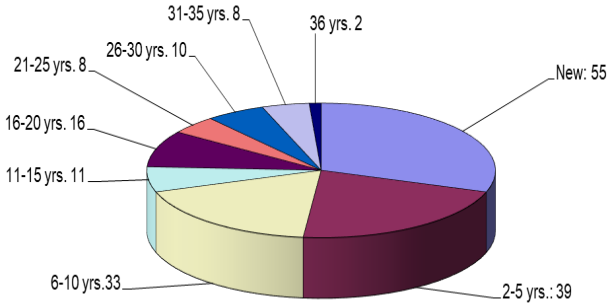
I am looking forward to working more with our wonderful Public Relations Officer and Conference Host this year Shai-ana Bess, from Guernsey Memorial Library.

Membership Secretary

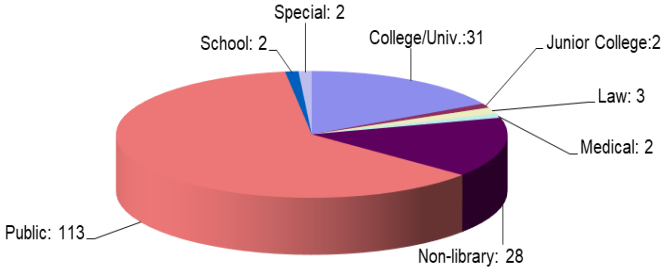
Donna Hanna

The 2024 membership year ended at 183 members. We have 147 regular members and 36 associate.

Years of membership in NYSLAA for 2024 members

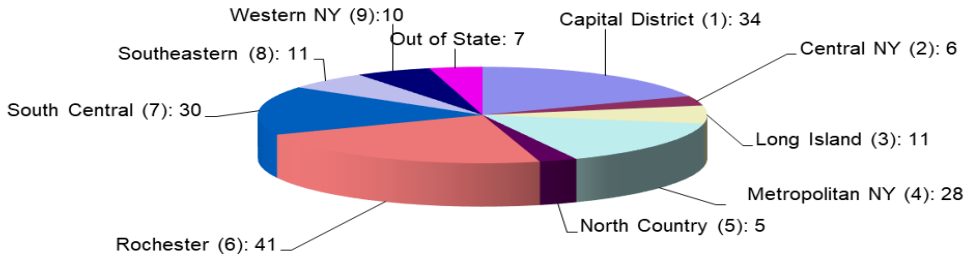


Types of institutions and numbers represented by 2024 membership

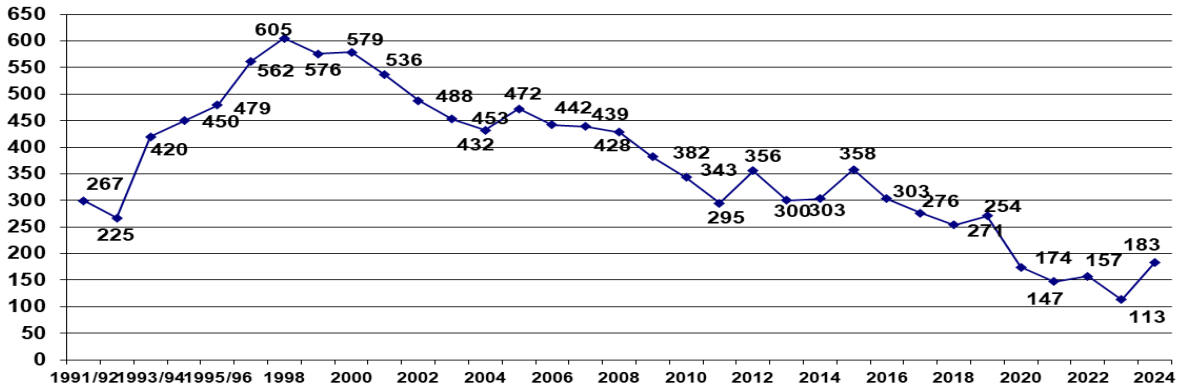


Regional representation of 2024 membership

(regional library council number)



NYSLAA'S Membership Growth 1989-2024



Respectfully submitted, Donna Hanna, NYSLAA Membership Secretary.

NYSLAA Annual Reports for 2024 (continued) and other Library News

Membership Secretary

Donna Hanna

We have 70 members so far for 2025. Nineteen of our members hold associate status. Four of our members are new this year so far! We will be offering our National Library Week free membership for 2025 for library employees who have never been a NYSLAA member. Membership cards/letters have been sent to all members who have renewed or joined, so if you did not receive yours, please let me know.

Membership forms are available on our nyslaa.org website under the "Membership Application" on the right. You can fill out your renewal and mail it in with your check or you can renew via the "tools and resources" tab and following the directions. If you renew using this method, you do not need to send a membership form. I would just need to know if any of your information has changed. As a reminder, membership cards/letters are mailed electronically to anyone who has an email.

We still offer the NYSLAA Membership Year Buy-Back program. For this program you would be able to buy back years of NYSLAA membership where you have had a gap and missed renewing for a particular year. The only stipulation is that you cannot buy membership for years prior to the first year you were a NYSLAA member. Please contact me, hanna@geneseo.edu, to find out what years you are missing and how to go about buying them back.

If you move or your email has changed, please be sure to alert me of these changes. This will help avoid unnecessary delays in receiving your membership information.

As always, if you have a question regarding your membership or if you need a letter verifying your years of NYSLAA membership for the Certificate of Achievement Program please let me know via hanna@geneseo.edu.

END OF ANNUAL REPORTS

Welcome New Members!

Shannon Brandt	Guernsey Memorial Library
Candi Horihan	Victor-Farmington Library
Nathalie Jean Paul	Finkelstein Memorial Library
LeAndre Peoples	Brooklyn Public Library



National Library Week

National Library Week is April 6-12, 2025. NYSLAA is offering a **free 2025 membership** to anyone who has **never** been a NYSLAA member and joins during this week. Visit our website for membership form https://www.nyslaa.org/membership.html. Then, fill out the membership form and mail or scan to email it before April 13th to take advantage of this offer.

Have you participated in our fundraisers?

We can all help to lower costs of our annual conference when we buy some tasty treats!

GIVING BEAN .com great coffee {and tea} for great causes

Little Caesars Pizza

Be on the lookout for future fundraisers!

Award Nominations

Each year, NYSLAA seeks nominations from its members for each of these awards. The Executive Council reviews the nominations in April of each year and notifies the recipients. The awards are presented at the annual conference in June. Please submit your nomination for the following awards:

Craig Koste Award for Outstanding Service

In 1992, the Executive Council created "The NYSLAA Award for Outstanding Service" specifically for New York State library assistants who are members of NYSLAA. In 1995, its name was changed to honor Craig Koste, a library assistant who passed away and bequeathed an endowment to NYSLAA. The award recognizes those library assistants who have distinguished themselves by their service to our organization and to the library assistants of New York on either a state or local level. A stipend of $100 will be given to the library of the winner for collection development.

Ray Murray Award

In 1989, the Ray Murray Award was created to honor Ray Murray, a librarian who opened the door for the creating of the annual library assistants conference, thereby laying the groundwork for NYSLAA. The Ray Murray Award is given to librarians, library directors, trustees, board members or others who have contributed to the recognition and/or professional growth of library assistants. Craig Koste & Ray Murray Award Nomination Process Each year, NYSLAA seeks nominations from its members for each of these awards. The Executive Council reviews the nominations in April of each year and notifies the recipients. The awards are presented at the annual conference in June.

To nominate, please compile a packet including: your nomination letter, supporting letters, and any other pertinent documentation. Please include the name of the nominee's supervisor for notification. For full information go to: nyslaa.org/awardsnominations.html.

Deadline for submission this year is April 7, 2025

Send nomination packets (or questions) for either award to the NYSLAA President:

Cheryl M. Marriott, DRE NYSLAA President
SUNY Downstate Medical Research Library
450 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11203
Phone: (718) 270-7409
FAX: (718) 270-7468

Apply for the Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship

The Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship (ELCS), previously known as the NYSLAA Conference Contest, was renamed to honor the memory of Eileen Lemley who passed away while attending the 2014 conference. Eileen loved working in the library and attending NYSLAA conferences. The recipient will receive a full conference registration, up to two night's lodging, the mixer, and one tour of your choice. **Entries will be accepted from March 1st to March 31st.** Applicants must complete a form and write an essay on "what NYSLAA means to me and why I want to attend the annual conference." Only members who do not receive any funding from their library may apply.

The **application form** for the scholarship and more information is available at: **nyslaa.org/scholarships.html**.