

**Spring 2019****Conference and Communication****Volume 16, no 4****Ready, Set, Network!****Tips for making the most of your conference experience**

By **Erin Hughes**, Children's Librarian, Carlstadt Public Library, and **Morgan Taylor**, Head of Adult Services, Princeton Public Library

Does the thought of meeting new people make you anxious? Do you dread meet and greets, or mingling events? Are you worried you'll forget something or run out of stuff to say? Whether it is your first conference or twenty-first, we have some tips and tricks to ease your anxiety, and make the next conference you attend your personal best.



*The authors (far right) clearly came to NJLA 2017 prepared to network!*

The theme of the NJLA Annual Conference this year is "Engage and Inspire," and as librarians, that's exactly what we're here to do! Engagement means meeting one another, and sharing our ideas and inspiration. With these tips, you'll be conference ready and networking in no time!

**Prepare it:**

If your library has a branded business card, remember to bring them with you! If that's not the case, or if you're networking to find a new position, we recommend creating a card with your contact information. You can choose to print professionally, or grab some cardstock and create it yourself (we recommend using Canva.com). If your time or budget means that cards aren't in the cards for you right now, bring a notebook and some pens so you're

ready to exchange information. When someone gives you their business card, follow up with them once you're home from the conference. Another thing to consider is what ideas or questions you have going into the conference. Make yourself a physical or mental list so you are ready to engage in those conversations with people. If you're attending without those goals, take notes during sessions of potential talking points for future conversations.

*(continued on page 2 )*

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### **Bring it:**

Your packing list should include a tote or a book bag, a notebook, a water bottle, and potentially a reusable coffee mug. There will be places to refill your water, and there are coffee and snack breaks during the conference.

Remember a portable phone charger, even if you think you won't need one, it's best to be prepared... Especially if you are the kind of person who uses your phone for notes or taking pictures of slides. We also recommend having low-mess snacks with you, because it's important to stay fueled up to get the most out of your day.

### **Wear it:**

At the conference, you want to be confident and comfortable. Wear business casual clothing that fits well and makes you feel like your best self. Sometimes that means swapping the perfect *looking* ballet flat for the perfect *fitting* pair of sneakers. What you wear can be a great way to show off your personality and an easy conversation starter. Think about wearing your signature glasses, a novelty tie, a cute cat cardigan, or even a nerdy lanyard.

### **Share it:**

Consider making yourself "that person who..." by bringing something you can share with other attendees at sessions or throughout the conference. It might be gum, candy, snacks, or even extra pens. It'll be an easy way for people to identify you- "I'm the person with the LifeSavers, it was great meeting you during Erin and Morgan's awesome networking session!"

### **Be it:**

The most important part of networking is YOU. Know your own strengths and limitations, so you can be prepared to connect, learn, and interact with exhibitors, speakers, other inspiring and fun individuals from the library community.

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#### **Want more networking Tips?**

Join Erin and Morgan at NJLA Annual for:

**You Can Sit With Us:  
Make Networking Work for You**

Thursday May 30, 9-10 am, Wildwood 6-7

And check out the pre-conference

**I want to know her! How to leverage your  
network and your personal brand**

With Karen Yankovich

Wednesday, May 29, 2019 -10:00am to 1:00pm  
Wildwood 14 & 15 (\*additional registration)

#### **New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter**

is published quarterly.

**To contribute**, contact the Editor at [newsletter\\_editor@njlamembers.org](mailto:newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org).

**To advertise**, contact Ad Manager Melissa Lena at [mlena@njla.org](mailto:mlena@njla.org)

Proposals will be due on or around February 15 (Spring issue); May 15 (Summer); August 15 (Fall); and November 15 (Winter).

#### **Mission Statement of the New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter**

The New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter is one of the official publications of the New Jersey Library Association and serves as a vehicle for communication of library issues and activities among the members of NJLA.

#### **Editorial Statement of the New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter**

The New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter shall provide news of NJLA and information about statewide, regional, and local library activities.

News shall be as current as possible within the constraints of the publication schedule and the publication will serve as an archival record of significant and lasting library issues and topics.

The New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter shall provide reports from officers, committees, roundtables, sections, and other units of the NJLA.

It shall also publish reports on trends and practices in the library profession and articles on topics of interest to the New Jersey library community. Ephemeral issues and time-sensitive topics will be covered in the Listserv or the association website.

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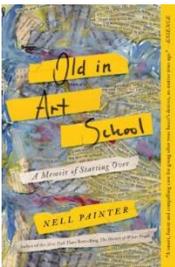
## President's Message

Our committees, sections and round tables have invested countless hours in planning a conference schedule filled with inspiring keynote speakers, interesting and timely sessions, social events and luncheons. The Conference Committee has once again outdone itself to bring innovative ideas for you to take back to your libraries.

New this year is the **President's Conference Kickoff** on Wednesday evening in the exhibits area. Join me for this boardwalk-themed event where Denny More will perform his show "Mind Games," and where you can have your portrait drawn by a caricature artist and visit a psychic too. What better way to visit the over 70 exhibitors!

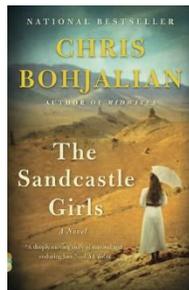
I am very excited about this year's keynote speakers. It was my hope to find a speaker who inspired me and an author whose work I have enjoyed. I was fortunate to find both.

New Jersey based author **Nell Painter** will join us on Thursday to speak about returning to college after retiring from a successful academic career at Princeton



University. Dr. Painter decided to attend art school, earning not only a BFA but also a MFA. She describes her experience in her memoir *Old in Art School*. Dr. Painter's story confirms my belief that we never should stop learning. She has inspired me to think about what I want to learn, or even perfect, in the future.

Bestselling author **Chris Bohjalian** will speak on Friday. He is the author of over 20 books including *Midwives*, *The Guest Room*, and *The Flight Attendant*. His book *Sandcastle Girls* has been chosen as NJLA's One Read. Check out a copy from your library and come prepared to talk about it on Friday, May 31.

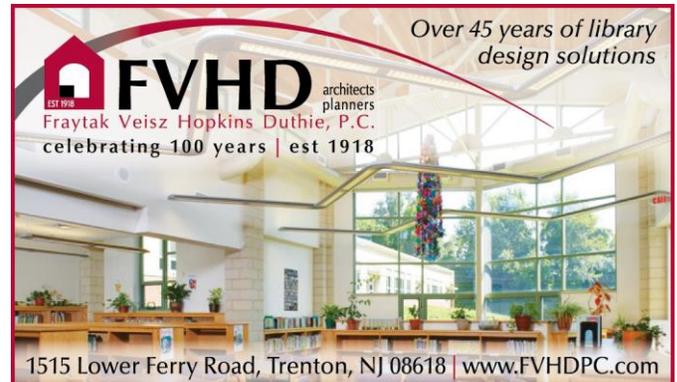


At conference this year, the **Core Values of the New Jersey Library Association** will be presented by the NJLA Executive Board. An enormous thank you to the Core Values Task force and its chairs, Julie Tozer and Michael Maziekien, for guiding the committee through the process and creating a wonderful

document that reinforces the association's fundamental beliefs.

I hope to see you at this year's conference May 29-31 at Harrah's in Atlantic City. If you haven't already, register today! I know you will learn something new, meet new people and be engaged and inspired!

**Leah Wagner**



## People & Places Around the State

### Appointments & Elections

At the Margaret E. Heggan Free Public Library in Sewell, NJ, **Barbara Pilling** was hired as a Teen Librarian, **Kimberly Pinkham** was hired as a Reference Librarian, and **Laura Shiber** was hired as a Children's librarian.

**Kathy Mulholland** has been named the new director of Freehold Public Library.

### Resignations/Retirements

**Barbara Greenberg** has retired after more than thirty years' service as director of Freehold Public Library.

**Barbara Laub** has retired from the Maplewood Library as of January 1, 2019.

### In the News

**Tracy Robison**, Teen Librarian at Elizabeth Public Library, has been cited in *Book Club Reboot: 71 Creative Twists*, an ALA Public Programs Office publication by Sarah Ostman and Stephanie Saba.

**New position? Won an award? Retirement? Tell us your news!**

**Email [newsletter\\_editor@njlamembers.org](mailto:newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org)**



## Letter from the Executive Director NJLA Conference = Memories

There is a quote from an Alfred Tennyson poem which says, “ In spring a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love” (*Locksley Hall*). I confess I did have to google this to get the correct attribution, but what else is a good information professional to do?

For NJLA members, in spring our thoughts turn to the NJLA conference, an annual event which has been happening for over 100 years. In looking through our files, I found a program from the *First Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Library Association and the Pennsylvania Library Club*, held April 5 and 6, 1897 (no, that is not a typo- it was 1897). And, yes, it was held in Atlantic City. I often wonder how our library ancestors were able to get to AC over 100 years ago without the Parkway and other major highways to assist them.

We will be holding it in Atlantic City again this year. I know that for many of you, this is a distance, but I truly believe this year’s conference will be something special and you will find it very beneficial to attend both professionally and personally.

Please take a moment to look at the program online at the NJLA website. We have a wonderful lineup of programs, exhibits and, of course, the NJLA Store.

Really, you must come down on Wednesday to go to the pre- conferences that are scheduled. Wednesday evening’s **President’s Program** promises to be an event you won’t forget. NJLA President Leah Wagner has organized fun, food, magic and more.

On Thursday will be **Dr. Nell Painter**, an award-winning historian who changed career paths and became an outstanding painter. She is truly an extraordinary speaker. At our luncheon on Thursday, we install our new president, **Tonya Garcia**. Please be there to

congratulate her and wish her the best as she takes on the challenge of leading NJLA into 2020.

I have just started reading *Sandcastle Girls* by **Chris Bohjalian**, our keynote speaker for Friday. It is our “**One Book One Conference**” selection so I hope all of you are reading it too.

On Friday, we have two luncheon speakers – **Dr. Joyce Valenza** from Rutgers University will be the luncheon speaker at the **College and University Luncheon** and **Lisa Lucas** who is the Executive Director of the National Book Foundation will speak at the **Garden State Book Awards Luncheon**.

The Conference is unlike any other continuing education activity you will attend all year. It is a place where learning, networking and fun are combined. Conferences make memories for a lifetime. I should know.

When looking through our conference files, I found a picture of a very familiar face - MINE. Yes, clearly a much younger me but I

could still identify myself. I don’t know who took the picture or precisely when, but there I am speaking to a robot at Resorts International in Atlantic City. I look like I am having fun (I can’t speak for the robot). I do know, however, that



*Pat McNulty networks with a robot at NJLA annual.*

neither the photographer nor I ever anticipated I would be the executive director of the New Jersey Library Association and that our annual conference would play such an important part of my professional career. Someone must have thought this would be a great picture for the archives, and I am grateful that they did. It reminded me that coming to the conference is an important part of being a member of the New Jersey Library Association.

Each of you will take away different memories from every conference but participation at the NJLA conference is a unique event. There is an excitement and an energy which you can feel at NJLA that can’t be replicated: rushing to the different sessions, going to the keynotes, the opportunity to see old friends and, yes, make new ones.

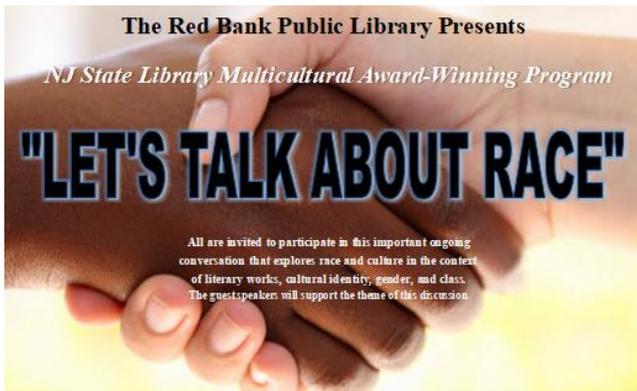
So, I hope I will see you all of you at the conference this year so we can make memories together.

**Patricia Tumulty**

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## Creating Space for Critical Dialogues About Race:

### A Conversation with Red Bank Public Library's "Let's Talk About Race" Program Committee

By **Richard Kearney**, Electronic Resources Librarian, William Paterson University

Before becoming a librarian at the Red Bank Public Library, Linda Hewitt worked several years in marketing and advertising. That experience gave her a keen appreciation for the importance of public outreach. Bringing this approach to her library work in adult services, she set out to meet with individuals and organizations in Red Bank to determine how to better align library programming with community needs.

One thing she learned quickly was that Red Bank was becoming an increasingly diverse community. According to the 2010 census, Monmouth County's African-American and Latinx populations are below the state averages, and over 70% of the county's 53 incorporated municipalities have African-American and Latinx populations below the county's averages. Red Bank, however, has the sixth largest African-American and second largest Latinx populations in the county.

These demographics, however, were not yet evident in patterns of library use, and Hewitt was looking to change that.

Through her outreach efforts, Hewitt hit upon the idea of programming that could help foster greater community cohesion by organizing a series of dialogues around race issues. While the idea was driven by local developments, the widely reported violent deaths of several African-Americans that inspired the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement between 2013 and 2015 gave it greater urgency.

With some modest initial funding, Hewitt secured the services of prominent Red Bank educator, author, and community activist Gilda Rogers to host a series of three monthly programs titled "Let's Talk About Race," with the first event held in August 2015. For these programs, Rogers brought in guest speakers and curated mixed media presentations to stimulate

discussion about local race issues in the library's meeting room.

These first programs drew 30 to 40 participants each and were successful in getting community members to discuss race issues in the context of specific topics. With the funding used up, however, the library would need help sustaining the program, but Hewitt had a solution: A committee of residents invested in the program's goals.

Although the committee's composition has changed over the years, it has generally consisted of a number of area residents (including Hewitt) who bring a variety of perspectives and great enthusiasm to the series. During my visit to Red Bank, I spoke with members Jo Lockett, Julie Adams, and Patty Whyte. The current committee also includes Monmouth University professor Walter Greason and consultant Diem Jones.



*Monmouth University Professor and "Let's Talk About Race" Program Committee member Walter Greason presenting on the economic history of Red Bank and Greater Monmouth County in June 2018.*

(Still image from YouTube video [<https://youtu.be/0QznzDrflaM>] recorded by the Red Bank Public Library)

The energetic committee plans each monthly event through a process of collective brainstorming. Lockett noted the committee asks, "What are the conversations we need to have?" while recognizing that "the challenge is to say something you haven't heard before." Once topics are selected, committee members then attempt to seek out high-quality speakers, also a challenge given the absence of a budget for honoraria. They have been largely successful, sometimes relying on the expertise of a committee member like Greason, who offered a program on racial aspects of the economic history of Red Bank and Greater Monmouth County in June 2018.

The committee publicizes the programs through email, flyers, library signage, various social media services, and its network of local organizations.

*(continued on page 6)*

## Creating Space (continued from page 5)

Contact information collected from attendees at programs and through an online advance registration form has resulted in a growing distribution list for new program announcements.



Members of the Red Bank Public Library's "Let's Talk About Race" Program Committee (Left to Right: Jo Lockett, Patty Whyte, Linda Hewitt, and Julie Adams)  
(Photo provided by Red Bank Public Library.)

On program evenings, committee members pitch in to contribute refreshments and structure the time to facilitate casual socializing both before and after the "presentation" component, promoting active participation. For some programs, the committee has used a "town hall" setup. As Adams noted, "We want to get away from a show-and-tell format and have more interactive programming." After each program, the committee undertakes a critical assessment of what elements were most and least successful in order to make improvements.

Over the last three years, "Let's Talk About Race" has addressed such topics as incarceration, biracial families, white privilege, law enforcement, education, the Women's March, a profile of the Latinx community, raising children without prejudice, the history of African-American communities in the county, writers of color, and—most recently—environmental racism. The committee has also organized programs around film screenings, including the documentary *I Am Not Your Negro* and the three-part series *Race: The Power of an Illusion*.

Committee members emphasize the importance of using a moderator, as they have found this helps to jump-start discussions when audience members are reluctant to initiate them while also keeping discussions focused and civil, even when participants are dealing with controversial or painful issues and

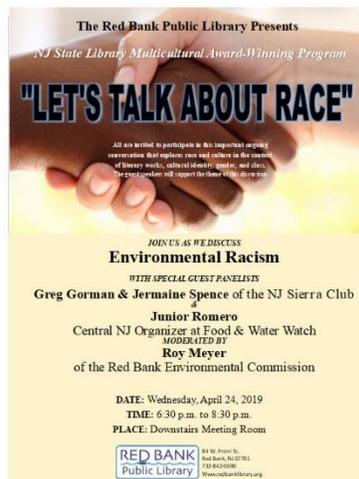
experiences. For the most part, this approach has been effective in drawing out participation, and attendance has run as high as 70 people at some programs. Which is not to say that the committee is satisfied.

During our conversation, members pointed to several goals that remain unmet. Adams hopes to motivate more youth to attend. Lockett has observed that at most programs the audiences tend to segregate themselves by race, with whites sitting in the back of the room while people of color tend to sit in the front. The committee is also interested in taking the program to other locations, because whereas attendance data indicate it draws people from throughout the county, committee members believe there are many neighboring communities where discussions about race issues would be a great public benefit.

Last year the program's quality and impact received statewide recognition when it was one of four recipients of the New Jersey State Library's Multicultural Program Award. The library has also supported the program and the community by investing in more multicultural collection resources and developing an extensive resource page on its website. The webpage features legal reference materials, a detailed section on different categories of racism, bibliographies, lists of helpful videos and feature films, a directory of organizations promoting racial amity, and a recently launched archive of video-recordings of past programs. Hewitt also notes that the library is now happily welcoming far more Latinx residents as regular users of its collections and services.

Now running for almost four consecutive years, "Let's Talk About Race" seems poised for new growth. The committee is planning future programs addressing college admission and graduation, affordable housing, poverty, and other topics. Last year's State Library award included a most welcome \$1,000 donation, and the committee is currently deciding how best to apply the funds, a challenge they will confront with the same rigor and care that has made their program a vital resource in Red Bank's civic life.

*Richard Kearney is electronic resources librarian at William Paterson University in Wayne. He holds an M.L.S. from Rutgers University in New Brunswick. His email address is [kearnevr@wpunj.edu](mailto:kearnevr@wpunj.edu).*



A flyer for the April 2019 "Let's Talk About Race" program on environmental racism

# NJLA Affirms Its Core Values

## Release of the Core Values Task Force Report

In late 2016, ALA issued a press release "highlighting how libraries can advance specific policy priorities of the incoming Trump administration."

(<https://litwinbooks.com/the-ala-press-release-that-was-taken-down-on-1119/> ) After the resulting controversy, members of the NJLA Executive Board agreed this was a crucial time to clarify and publicize the organization's shared beliefs. Subsequent discussion culminated in the release of an **NJLA Statement on Inclusion**, approved by the Intellectual Freedom Subcommittee, Public Policy Committee, and Executive Board in February 2017. This positive statement of our values remains posted at <https://njla.org/content/njla-statement-inclusion>.

To continue the conversations and advance the work surrounding the writing of the Statement on Inclusion, during the 2017 NJLA Conference incoming President Michael Maziekien asked NJLA member and former executive board member Julie Tozer to co-chair a **Task Force on NJLA's Core Values**. The process of the Task

Force's work is recorded in the report available at <https://njla.org/sites/default/files/NJLA%27s%20Core%20Values.pdf> or <https://tinyurl.com/NJLACoreValues> .

Rather than prescribe or recommend values to NJLA and its members, the Task Force sought to capture NJLA's values at this moment in time. The Task Force is particularly interested in the gaps between how survey respondents report perceiving NJLA's values as an association and how they report their own values as library staff, which suggests there is rich ground for further discussion of how the organization should prioritize its work and so express its values.

The report includes a list of NJLA's core values as discerned through the work of the Task Force, a narrative of the Task Force's process, recommendations from the Task Force to NJLA leadership, and several appendices.

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### **Core Values of the New Jersey Library Association**

**Access:** we strive to provide equal access to a variety of materials in all formats and make information both findable and accessible to all people whenever it is needed.

**Civic engagement:** we seek to deepen connections to service areas and improve the quality of life in our communities by actively listening to community concerns, partnering with fellow community organizations to achieve shared goals, and spending time beyond library walls.

**Education and lifelong learning:** we recognize all libraries as hubs for people of all ages to connect with, create, and share knowledge.

**Equity, diversity and inclusion:** we welcome, engage, and reflect all people in our communities through programming, collections, services, and staffing.

**Healthy workplaces:** we embrace the need for libraries as institutions to care for and support library workers, reflecting librarianship as a caring profession.

**Integrity and trustworthiness:** we hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and operate our institutions in a transparent and open manner.

**Intellectual freedom:** we advocate for the First Amendment rights of all library users to freely, equitably, and confidentially read, research, question, speak, and access information.

**Preservation and stewardship:** we support the maintenance of local history and culture, and support libraries as fiscally sound, taxpayer-funded organizations working in the public interest.

**Privacy and confidentiality:** we protect the right to open inquiry without having an interest examined or scrutinized, and we keep personally identifiable information private on behalf of all users.

**Public good:** we empower communities by providing information, services, and support to all community members in an open, equal, and equitable manner.

**Social responsibility:** we prioritize programming, collection development, services, information, knowledge, and staffing that solves problems and builds community.

*Respectfully submitted to the NJLA Executive Board, February 2019*

**The Core Values Task Force’s Process**

A call for task force interest was issued in May 2017. NJLA President and Core Values Co-Chair Michael Maziekien, NJLA Past President Chris Carbone, and Task Force Co-Chair Julie Tozer selected task force members in July 2017.

Task force members included: **Colleen Affrime**, Ocean County Library; **Theresa Agostinelli**, Middlesex County College and Brookdale Community College; **John Arthur**, Englewood Public Library; **Sophie Brookover**, LibraryLinkNJ; **Mary DeNunzio**, Upper Saddle River Library; **Kerry Falloon**, CUNY-CSI; **Carina Gonzalez**, Somerset County Library System; **Andrea Levandowski**, New Jersey State Library; **Laverne Mann**, Cherry Hill Public Library; **Michael Maziekien**, Cranford Public Library; **Eileen Palmer**, LMxAC; **Lilia Pavlovsky**, MI Program, Rutgers University; **Samantha Rice**, Gardner A. Sage Library; **Rebecca Sandoval Sloat**, Somerset County Library; **Dale Spindel**, Springfield Free Public Library; and **Julie Tozer**, Camden County Library.

The group started with a series of in-person meetings in September, November, and December 2017. They confirmed a definition of core values: Intrinsic beliefs which are deeply held/deeply defended and personal / professional. They also created a resource list to satisfy the library-world instinct to only/first research the way out of a problem. (See Appendix B of the report.)

Out of initial meetings and subsequent work via email and Adobe Connect, they created a “long list” of values based on discussion and reading and began to generate recommendations to NJLA for future work around values and taskforces. To refine and focus the list, the Task Force held a session at the 2018 NJLA annual conference, including updates, discussion, and live survey of the audience.

After further discussion, the Task Force determined it would be useful and relevant to ask what NJ library staff define as their own core values and what they perceive to be NJLA’s core values. They gathered additional feedback via the July 2018 NJLA leadership orientation where Chelsea Woods-Turner asked attendees to list what they viewed as NJLA values and what their own values.

Finally, the Task Force gathered a last round of input working with the Strategic Planning Survey Team by including these questions in the November 2018 Strategic Planning survey.

**Survey Question Results**

Survey Question: “From this list, please select the four words or phrases that best represent...”

	...NJLA’s core values.	...your core Values as a library worker.
Access	124	118
Civic engagement	60	59
Education & lifelong learning	<b>183</b>	155
Equity, diversity & inclusion	92	<b>120</b>
Healthy workplaces	29	<b>41</b>
Integrity & trustworthiness	34	<b>88</b>
Intellectual freedom	<b>123</b>	75
Preservation & stewardship	<b>37</b>	19
Privacy & confidentiality	59	62
Public good	138	134
Social responsibility	63	<b>73</b>

**Recommendations to NJLA Leadership**

- In response to the core values questions on the strategic plan survey, there were striking differences in how individual library staff report their own values and how they perceive NJLA’s values. Note these differences and explore what they mean - how might the differences move the organization’s work?
- Undertake a demographic study of the organization’s membership and the statewide library community. Determine who receives financial support from their workplaces for NJLA membership, conference, and other activities.
- Remove financial barriers to entry to NJLA task force/committee work. Explore reimbursement for travel to meeting attendance (mileage and tolls or a flat rate for each attendees), conference registration discount or sliding scale, and other means.
- Provide ongoing opportunities to review and revisit the organization’s core values. The work of this task force is groundwork; it captures where we are now.

*(continued on page 9)*

## NJLA Core Values *(continued from page 8)*

Values necessarily evolve over time and as the organization becomes more diverse, inclusive, and equitable. A list of core values should be a living document that can include aspirational values and questions. What can be done structurally to trigger revision/review of core values on a regular/ongoing basis?

- Improve communication within the organization, including building capacity to support an association-

wide email list for discussion as well as for distribution of information from leadership, and widely posting/publicizing meeting agendas, minutes (especially those of the Executive Board), and contact information.

The Core Values statement will be presented at NJLA Annual Conference during the NJLA Business Meeting, Thursday, May 30, 2019 - 2:00pm to 2:50pm, in room Wildwood 10-11.



### **It's May, which means we're in *Conference Month!***

We hope that you will be joining us **May 29-31 at Harrah's Resort in Atlantic City. Early Bird Online Registration** (<http://njlaconference.info/content/attendee-registration>) is only open until May 15, so act fast! If you would like to add a luncheon or preconference to your registration, you may do so at <https://njla.org/civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=13>. You can keep up with all the exciting plans for the conference on the conference **blog**, <http://njlaconference.info/blog>

Also start reading ***Sandcastle Girls* by Chris Bohjalian**, one of our keynote speakers. It has been chosen as **One Book, One Conference** must read! Copies will be available for purchase and signing at the NJLA Bookstore, but buy your copy ahead of time to ensure availability!

**NJLA Conference Committee**

## From the Editor

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm Jennifer Heise, incoming editor of the *NJLA NEWSletter*, and chair of the *NEWSletter* Editorial Board. I want to thank the current Editorial Board as well as Richard Kearney of the Member Communications Committee for their help with the transition. Former editor Jill D'Amico left some big shoes to fill, and I want to thank her again for the opportunity to work with her on the Editorial Board.

The editorial board will be working hard in the coming year to explore how the *NEWSletter* can facilitate communication and conversation among NJLA Membership. Have ideas for features, articles, or new initiatives to share? Contact me at [newsletter\\_editor@njlamembers.org](mailto:newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org), speak with one of the Editorial Board (listed on the masthead to the left).

**Jennifer Heise.**



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