

Notice: ILA Member Meeting
October 2, 2025 | 12:00 pm



Introducing **2026 ILA** **SLATE of OFFICERS**

MEET

THE CANDIDATES

As we approach the start of the new year 2026, we are pleased to introduce you to the dedicated candidates running for the slate of officers for the new 2026 term.

WHY YOUR VOTE MATTERS

We have an impressive lineup of candidates, each bringing a wealth of experience and a unique perspective. Their commitment to the growth and success of our association will launch us into a successful future. Every vote counts, and your involvement is key to ensuring that ILA continues to thrive and adapt to the evolving needs of our community.

HOW TO VOTE

Voting is simple and can be done electronically. Please visit the ILA website and complete the voting **survey ballot**.

VOTING PERIOD

Voting Opens: October 10, 2025

Voting Closes: October 24, 2025

Announce Winners: November 5, 2025

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

You must be a **current ILA Voting Member**; *Personal Member, Student Member, Retired & Transitional Member, & Trustee Member.*

WHAT'S INCLUDED ON THE VOTING BALLOT?

1. *The slate of officers: Open Positions*
 - ~ Vice President [1]
 - ~ ILA Directors [2]

2026 **VOTE** ILA SLATE



**Jillian
Aschliman**
VICE PRESIDENT



**Michelle
Andersen**
VICE PRESIDENT

2026 **VOTE** ILA SLATE



**AMANDA
SAND**
ILA DIRECTOR



**BOBBI L.
NEWMAN**
ILA DIRECTOR



**JEN
OHZOURK**
ILA DIRECTOR



Candidate

ILA Vice President



BIO

Jillian Aschliman

Jillian earned her MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has spent all thirteen years of her library career working in Iowa public libraries. She is currently the Director of the Bettendorf Public Library, and previously worked as the director of both the LeClaire Community Library and the DeWitt Community Library. During her time in DeWitt, she oversaw a \$5.7 million expansion and renovation of the facility, which included a \$3.7 million bond referendum that passed with an overwhelming 82% positive vote.

Jillian loves baking pies, testing her hand embroidery skills, and always has her eye on a new travel destination. She and her husband reside in Bettendorf with their two poorly behaved, but very cute, dogs.

ILA SERVICE

Over the last year and a half, I feel very privileged to have served on the ILA Executive Board during a time of significant change and transition. Having an understanding of the unique challenges ILA has already overcome, I am very eager to help continue to build on the foundation laid out by previous ILA leadership. Additionally, I am keen on growing our network of support so we may further promote the positive impact libraries of all types provide to the state of Iowa.

SKILLS

I feel very strongly about listening to the expertise of those around me, and building a positive collaborative culture. With an organization as large as ILA, I feel it's important to reach out to hear from different perspectives and foster good working relationships with those whose values and ideas may not align with my own. As a listener, I invite feedback and input as much as possible, but as a leader, I also understand when I need to take decisive action.

POSITION ROLE

ILA is a place for members to connect and support one another. We are here to celebrate each other's wins and step up when someone or their library needs support. I am hopeful that ILA will not only continue to help advocate for all libraries in Iowa (public, academic, school, etc.), but also find more opportunities to help build relationships with one another, and work together in learning how we can be better advocates for ourselves at the local level. I would love to see more ILA sponsored networking and continuing education programs that would benefit all members.



Candidate

ILA Vice President



Michelle Andersen

BIO

Michelle is the director of the Atlantic Public Library. She found her love for public libraries while serving as a trustee in upstate New York. She has experience working in academic libraries, bookstores, and a very small public library before finding her perfect fit in southwest Iowa. When not at the library, Michelle enjoys spending time with her husband and children, volunteering with the local Rotary club or for school events, and playing piano and organ for church services (but not at the same time).

ILA SERVICE

Having served on the Communications Committee and as Past President of ISLA, I feel like I have experienced first-hand what it takes to run a member-led organization (the good and the bad). I have the flexibility to give more time and attention to ILA right now and feel like serving in this capacity would be mutually beneficial. I want to be a voice for small libraries and for those working as “accidental” librarians.

SKILLS

My strengths in leadership are communication and administration. I am also learning the value of connecting with other librarians outside of my day-to-day work...and I’m finding that I’m good at that, too. One of my proudest achievements at my library was starting a weekly social group that has grown to a regular attendance of 15 or more.

POSITION ROLE

Membership in ILA creates a web of connectedness to other librarians across the state, and together, we consider new ways to fulfill the mission of our local library service. To borrow from my library's mission statement: we connect members" to information, resources, and each other in order to spark ideas and new connections."



Candidate ILA Director

Amanda Sand

BIO

Amanda Sand brings 15 years of library experience, including nearly a decade in administration and executive leadership. In 2018, she faced several high-profile material challenges involving LGBTQIA+ library materials, which sparked her deep commitment to intellectual freedom advocacy. Since then, Amanda has become a trusted advocate, providing direct support to libraries confronting censorship and helping develop strategies to ensure equitable access to information.

Amanda has held key leadership roles in both state and national library organizations, including Chair of the Iowa Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee and Chair of the American Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Round Table. She currently chairs the Iowa Library Association's Government Affairs Committee and has served on numerous other ILA committees, including Communications, Conference Planning, and Diversity and Inclusion. She also serves on the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee and previously served as Iowa's Chapter Councilor to the ALA.

Recently, Amanda transitioned into library consulting, focusing her efforts on supporting libraries, boards, and communities in strengthening intellectual freedom protections and navigating material challenges.

ILA SERVICE

I previously served 3.5 years on the ILA Executive Board as Iowa's Chapter Councilor to ALA. That was a pivotal time in the association's history as we faced financial difficulties, transitioned association management companies, and heavily revised legislative priorities. I'm extremely proud of the work I helped accomplish during that period—work that required decisive action, candid conversations, and a shared commitment to building a stronger organization. I bring a direct, collaborative approach to board service and contribute fully to discussions that shape the direction of the association.

ILA is a critical part of Iowa's library ecosystem, and I view board service as a meaningful way to give back and help strengthen that system. With the association currently undergoing structural changes and working to align its efforts with member engagement and capacity, I want to be part of building a leaner, more responsive, and more effective organization. I believe ILA can and should be a leading voice for Iowa libraries, and I want to help create an association that does just that.

SKILLS

I bring a strong mix of board experience across organizations, leadership, and a clear understanding of the diverse needs of libraries across Iowa. During my time as Iowa's ALA Chapter Councilor, I was involved in important and sometimes difficult conversations, and I'm comfortable stepping up to make tough decisions or raise issues that others might hesitate to address. I believe being willing to have those honest, necessary conversations is key to effective board leadership.

Along with governance experience, I bring practical knowledge from library district leadership, association transitions, and advocacy work related to intellectual freedom and public policy. I'm committed to contributing in a direct and collaborative way that helps ILA align its efforts with the needs of its members. I also value building partnerships across different library types and with outside organizations, which I see as vital to strengthening Iowa's library community as a whole.

POSITION ROLE

ILA plays a vital role in supporting all types of libraries in Iowa—a strength that sets it apart from many other state associations. The primary role of ILA is to advocate for, connect, and equip libraries and library workers across the state. That means proactively engaging in policy discussions, strengthening partnerships with aligned organizations like the League of Cities and Iowa Cultural Coalition, and working closely with legislators to protect and advance priorities for libraries in this political climate.

Looking ahead, I hope ILA continues to offer professional development that adds real value to members—opportunities that reflect the needs of today's library workers and attract new participants to the organization. I also see a powerful opportunity to deepen collaboration among library types—creating an interdependent ecosystem in which public, academic, school, and special libraries actively support and learn from one another. By doing this, ILA can not only sustain its relevance, but elevate its impact statewide.



Candidate ILA Director



BIO

Bobbi L. Newman

Bobbi L. Newman is a librarian, instructor, consultant, and speaker with over 20 years of experience in public, academic, and special libraries. She has led statewide and national initiatives focused on staff development, health information access, and workplace well-being. Bobbi is the author of *Fostering Wellness in the Workplace* and editor of *Well-Being in the Library Workplace: A Handbook for Managers*. She regularly presents on library services, mental health, and staff well-being. Her professional service includes work with the Iowa Library Association and national organizations such as ALA, OCLC, and NISO. She holds graduate degrees in library science and political science, along with certifications in public administration and wellness. Bobbi brings strategic insight and a deep commitment to supporting Iowa's library community. Learn more about Bobbi on her blog <https://librarianbyday.net/>

ILA SERVICE

Libraries across Iowa are navigating complex challenges, from shifting public expectations to increased scrutiny of collections and services. I believe ILA plays a crucial role in helping library workers meet these demands with confidence, support, and a strong professional network. My interest in serving on the Executive Board is rooted in a desire to contribute to that support system. I'm particularly interested in strengthening member communication, supporting library staff through practical resources, and ensuring that ILA remains a strong, responsive organization. As a Maximizer, I focus on identifying what is working and building on it to create a meaningful, lasting impact. I would bring this mindset to the board, working to strengthen programs, highlight member contributions, and support library workers across the state. I'm committed to contributing in a way that is thoughtful, collaborative, and focused on helping our libraries thrive.

SKILLS

I bring over 20 years of experience in public, academic, and special libraries, including nearly a decade working in and for Iowa libraries. My work has focused on building partnerships, securing grant funding, and developing nationwide initiatives that support library staff, expand access to health and digital literacy resources, and promote workplace well-being. I've successfully planned and executed national symposia, developed continuing education programs, and championed efforts that prioritize equity, health literacy, and staff well-being.

In Iowa, I've led efforts to address mental health disparities, created continuing education opportunities for library staff, and served on statewide advisory groups. I have extensive experience with strategic planning, budgeting, and project management, as well as a deep commitment to creating environments that are welcoming and have a sense of belonging. Through my work on the ILA Government Affairs and Leadership Development Committees, I've gained a strong understanding of both the challenges and the strengths of our Iowa library community. I'm committed to fostering collaboration, advocating for our profession, and helping to ensure that ILA continues to be a responsive, forward-thinking organization that supports all types.

POSITION ROLE

ILA plays a vital role in uniting and uplifting Iowa's library community. At its core, the association serves as our collective voice, advocating for funding, intellectual freedom, and equitable access to information. It also offers space for connection, collaboration, and professional development across all library types and career stages. Looking ahead, I hope to see ILA strengthen its advocacy efforts, not only at the state level, but by encouraging members to support one another across public, academic, school, and special libraries. I also see great potential in expanding mentorship programs and improving how we communicate across the association, making information more available and timely for all members. Public awareness campaigns can also play a key role in demonstrating the value of libraries to stakeholders and the broader community. More visible member recognition, such as "Member of the Month" spotlights, awards, and public acknowledgments, can also help foster a stronger sense of community and appreciation within the association.

As someone engaged in workplace well-being, ILA has a unique opportunity to support the psychosocial needs of library staff, offering resources and training around mental health, trauma-informed care, and sustainable leadership. I'd also love to see a more modern, welcoming onboarding process and more regular, accessible communication across platforms to keep members informed and engaged. With continued investment in advocacy, equity, recognition, and care, ILA can remain a powerful, responsive presence for Iowa's libraries.



Candidate ILA Director



BIO

Jen Ohzourk

Jen Ohzourk, MLIS, is the Head of Adult Services at the West Des Moines Public Library. Throughout her career in public libraries, Jen has been involved in collection development and program planning and has led teams of various sizes in Illinois, Missouri, and West Des Moines. Before joining West Des Moines, she worked in several roles in St. Louis City, where she helped redesign the Readers' Advisory process, developed unique programs, and contributed to exhibits

ILA SERVICE

I have served on the board of LLAMA for several years, and it has been a valuable experience. I would welcome the opportunity to give back to ILA even more by joining the Executive Board, as well as to learn from others in the ILA community.

SKILLS

I have worked in public libraries for 20 years, gaining experience in Illinois, Missouri, and now Iowa. My time spent in libraries of various sizes and in significantly different communities has provided me with a broad range of experience. I have held management roles for many years and have dedicated much of my time to learning about communication, advocacy, and how to effectively work with diverse groups of people. I changed careers to pursue a path in public libraries, driven by my passion for serving my communities.

POSITION ROLE

ILA plays an essential role in staying ahead of legislative changes, particularly proposed ones that could impact libraries. Its unwavering advocacy for libraries of all sizes and types is not just important; it is vital. While this advocacy often garners attention, ILA's support reaches far beyond legislation. It champions not only libraries and their vibrant communities but also the dedicated individuals who work within them. With a diverse range of committees, enriching educational opportunities, and valuable networking events, ILA stands out as a steadfast and supportive resource. I sincerely value the comprehensive support that ILA provides to all libraries, enhancing their ability to thrive and serve their communities.