Introducing
ILA 2024
SLATE of OFFICERS

Notice: ILA Member Meeting
October 10, 2024 | 12:00 pm
As we approach the start of the new year 2025, we are pleased to introduce you to the dedicated candidates running for the slate of officers for the new 2025 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 18, 2024
- Voting Closes: November 1, 2024
- Announce Winners: November 8, 2024

**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
2. Bylaw Change - Review for Majority Approval
VOTE

2025 ILA SLATE

BRITTANY JACOBS
VICE PRESIDENT

VICTOR LIEBERMAN
VICE PRESIDENT

JANETTE McMAHON
ALA DIRECTOR
2025 ILA SLATE

JEFF COLLINS
ILA DIRECTOR

REBEKAH HOSFORD
ILA DIRECTOR

SUSAN MESECHER
ILA DIRECTOR

MEGAN BLACKFORD
ILA DIRECTOR

ALYSSA HANSON
ILA DIRECTOR
Brittany Jacobs brings a unique perspective to her role as Director of the Burlington Public Library. With a master’s degree in information science and an undergraduate degree in informal curriculum development, Brittany spent the first part of her library career creating fun, hands-on learning experiences. Now, she shapes policy and practice to align with human-centered and sustainable initiatives, while continuing to champion curiosity via lifelong learning for people of all ages.

Brittany serves as a board member for the Iowa Library Association as well as on the editorial review board for the academic journal, Afterschool Matters. In addition to her picture books that she writes and illustrates, Brittany also had her book, Transforming Your Library into a Learning Playground, published in 2017. In Burlington, Brittany champions community development as a board member for the Downtown Partners, Inc. (Main Street Iowa program) as well as the Southeast Iowa Symphony Orchestra.

Above all else, Brittany is committed to enhancing and enriching communities through human-centered policies, collective-based advocacy, and transformative experiences in the public sphere.

ILA is the rallying force behind the political advocacy efforts that work on behalf of Iowa libraries, the beacon of light to turn to when support is needed, and the glue that binds Iowa’s library community together. In these turbulent times for Iowa libraries, I hope that ILA can serve as a trusted partner to help navigate the storms, as well as a cheerleader for all the innovative and transformative library services that take place every day across the state.
GOALS

As a library director I am keenly aware of the impact that state legislation as well as local control, or the loss of it, has on a public library. My experience has helped me to work with stakeholders to creatively advocate for libraries, a skill that will serve me well as an ILA officer. My experience as a board member on ILA has helped give me perspective on the functions of a state association, preparing me to pick up the baton and continue the good work that ILA does.

POSITION ROLE

Long-term funding on a local and state level are at the top of my goals for Iowa libraries. Pro-library legislation that advocates for more social resources, fair e-content pricing, and equitable pay for library workers are goals that I champion as well. With a rich history of library services in Iowa, there is much to be learned from those who paved the way for us to stand here today, but the work is not done. As an ILA officer, I would gladly join in the efforts to ensure a better and brighter future for all of Iowa’s libraries.
Candidate
ILA Vice President
Victor Lieberman

BIO
I have worked at Northeast Iowa Community College since 2016, first as Peosta campus Learning Resources Coordinator, then from 2023-present as Director of Learning Resources for the College. Prior to this I was the Social Sciences & Reference Librarian and Bibliographer at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. And before that, I served as reference librarian and later Assistant Branch Manager at the Queens Borough Public Library in New York City. I currently serve on the Carnegie-Stout Public Library (Dubuque) Board of Trustees, and have been its President since 2023. I am also a member of the Dubuque Area Library Information Consortium (DALINC), and have served as its President (2019) and Secretary (2023-Present). While in North Dakota, I also served as President of the North Dakota Library Association (2013). In short, I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work in many different capacities within our profession, all of which I've found very fulfilling and rewarding.

ILA FUTURE
Learning, professional development, and support have always struck me as key attractions offered by any professional society, including our state library association. Many--though not all--have the chance to explore the profession in school, and still others benefit from working in a large institution with many other library professionals and paraprofessional staff. Additionally, for those across all diverse library work circumstances, our state library association is a gift we give ourselves. It's a network that we cannot build in an instant when we have questions to ask, or may even need urgent assistance. What ILA offers us all is a collective of 100's of library workers who are going to respond to our questions, help us further and deepen our professional understanding, and relate to our concerns on a deep and communal level. ILA helps us all embrace what it means to belong to and practice a profession.
Libraries have cause to celebrate, not apologize, for activities, services, and collections we make available to our user communities and the general public. Where you may not be able, or may be uncomfortable in the role, I will make myself vocal, visible, and available to articulate the values of our profession, share our accomplishments, respond to concerns, and generally spend time keeping us connected and engaged with one another. I have spent my entire career in our profession, and have worked in libraries since I was in high school. This isn't a skill set so much as a life experience I believe I can bring forward when I listen to and respond to needs and issues that inevitably come up. I'm patient, interested in what you have to say, and want us to grow individually and as an professional association for the time I may be allowed to serve in office.

GOALS

Summing it up? Excitement! I am convinced that the role served by libraries can be filled by no other institutions in our society. Whether you wish to learn throughout your life, enjoy the pleasure of leisure reading, listing, or viewing library material, attending programs and events, and so very much more ... we're it from nursery school to nursing home. It's what we do, how we roll, and what we continue to be. As a part of our Association's leadership, I hope that I can share with all our members the potential that exists for your professional growth, whether it is from a paraprofessional to a professional role, toward greater leadership, or in exploring the fantastic diversity of opportunity within our field. ILA can help its members better understand what an exciting, diverse, and rewarding career we've all chosen, and I would be honored and eager to spend a year as an officer to help us all grow together.
Defending the freedom to read, creating safe spaces, and being the “library lady” is how I have spent 30 years of being a librarian. I have worked in multiple sized libraries, from the small where the Director is the jack of all trades—running the circulation desk, planning children’s programming, and defending the budget at the city council meetings; to being an Executive Director of a county system in Wyoming where decreasing budgets, polarizing politics, and geographical distance made it difficult to move the System forward. I have been a member of ILA, participating in subdivisions such as Public Library and Local History Forums. I also participated in the Wyoming Library Association and served on the WYLD board. In Clinton County, I have served as the President of our County Association for two years and community involvement includes a year as President in our local Lions Club.

I have been on the front lines of our struggles to keep the freedom to read in our libraries and understand the loneliness and anxiety of our battles. I also understand the questions when we ask ourselves: Can we win? Does it matter in the end? Can I be the warrior I thought I was? I am running for ALA Councilor because I want to continue working toward keeping not only our freedom to read, but our freedom for information and to create spaces that are welcoming to all, at a state and national level.

ILA FUTURE

I feel ILA is the main line for advocacy, keeping librarians and boards informed of state and national issues. It is the political avenue for librarians to fight for our missions, access and direct funding, and to support each other through tough issues.

I would like ILA to continue growing advocacy through solid and consistent communication with its members as well as potential members. I feel strongly that ILA is the avenue to bring librarians together as a united front, for today’s and tomorrow’s issues.
I want to be part of a consistent, strong communication line. I appreciated all the information released in the last year pertaining to potential state legislation. I want to make sure we not only keep providing said information, but to help expand its reach. Intellectual freedom is extremely important to me. After going through a very public book challenge, I understand the stresses and emotional roller coaster it can be. I want to be involved in not only continuing to fight against challenges, but to support fellow librarians.

Continuing to look for ways to better utilize our resources by working together as budgets dwindle. I would like to see funding equity addressed statewide with counties and contracting cities to be more on par with home libraries.
Jeff Collins is an experienced library administrator who provides trustworthy leadership with integrity. He has proven success in increasing efficiencies and enhancing customer service to advance an organization's mission. His personal mission is to inspire and facilitate positive change.

Currently serving as the Library Director at Davenport Public Library, Jeff has held senior leadership positions at libraries in Wyoming and Arizona, encompassing a range of environments including public libraries, state libraries, and special libraries during his 25-year career in public service.

Jeff obtained his undergraduate and master's degrees in History from Northern Arizona University and a master's degree in Library & Information Science from The University of Arizona. He holds industry credentials as a Certified Public Library Administrator (CPLA®), Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM®), Certified Manager (CM®), and Certified Public Manager (CPM®). Jeff has participated in leadership development activities, including the Public Library Association (PLA) Leadership Academy – Navigating Change | Building Community, and the inaugural Arizona Library Leadership Institute. He served as President of the Wyoming Library Association.

Jeff serves on the Executive Board of the American Red Cross serving the Quad Cities, while also dedicating his time as an adult leader with Boy Scouts. He strongly believes in the impactful role all types of libraries play in empowering their communities. Jeff resides in Davenport with his wife, two sons, and a canine companion named Gandalf.

The Iowa Library Association (ILA) primarily serves to support and enhance the effectiveness of Iowa's libraries and library professionals. The primary role of ILA includes: 1) Advocacy – Representing the interests of Iowa's libraries and library workers, particularly through political advocacy with members and lobbyists in the Iowa legislature; and 2) Professional Development – Offering annual conferences, leadership development opportunities, and continuing education to keep up with the latest trends and educational requirements.

Looking to the future, I hope ILA can offer its members: 1) Advocacy Training – Enhanced training for members to become effective advocates for library budgets, issues, and initiatives, focusing on public engagement (as one of the 99 public libraries impacted by the loss of the Special Library Levy, I can affirm the importance of having a robust association for support); 2) Expanded Networking – More platforms for members to connect, share, and collaborate; and 3) Diverse Programming – A broader range of programs that cater to the varied interests and specializations within the library profession to support all members of the diverse communities we serve. These opportunities would align with ILA’s vision to engage Iowans and build community through Iowa libraries.
If elected to the ILA Executive Board as an At-Large Member, I aim to leverage my knowledge, skills, and experiences to benefit the organization and its members. As a seasoned library professional, I have diverse experience across various library environments, including law, research, state, and multiple public libraries in both rural and urban contexts. I approach decision-making thoughtfully and prioritize generating positive outcomes. In addition, I have served in multiple roles within a state library association, including President, Vice President, member of the Legislative Committee, member of the Annual Conference Committee, and chair of the Awards/Grants Committee. My involvement in various nonprofit boards and commissions — such as the American Red Cross serving the Quad Cities, Laramie County Community Partnership, Raising Readers in Wyoming, and Books for Kids AZ — has further enhanced my leadership skills and provided insight into effective board operations. I am honored to be nominated and humbly look forward to applying these skills and abilities if elected to the ILA Executive Board.

I envision a vibrant future for libraries in Iowa. Having worked in various states, I am impressed by the quantity and quality of libraries and library professionals present in Iowa. Many Iowans may not be fully aware of the extensive array of services offered by their academic, school, and public libraries. My aspirations for the future of library services include:

**Community Engagement** – Strengthening public libraries as community hubs that facilitate gatherings, learning, and participation in diverse programs.

**Supporting Education** – Enhancing the role of school and academic libraries in providing resources and programs that support students and educators in achieving their learning objectives.

**Enhancing Digital Access** – Expanding digital collections and online services to ensure equitable access to a wide range of resources for all Iowans, regardless of their location.

**Technological Advancement** – Implementing the latest technologies to enhance library services and user experiences, such as self-checkout systems, mobile applications, and artificial intelligence.

**Preserving Local History** – Prioritizing the preservation and digitization of local history and cultural heritage materials to broaden access for the community.

These aspirations are in alignment with the evolving needs of library users and the continuing mission of libraries to provide equitable access to information and lifelong learning opportunities. ILA plays an essential role in providing support to library professionals and strengthening democracy throughout the state.
Rebekah Hosford is the Youth Senior Librarian at the Cedar Falls Public Library (CFPL). She received her MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2017 and has over a decade of experience developing youth programs. Rebekah was a member of the State Library of Iowa’s Project Ready cohort, attended ILA’s Leadership Institute in 2022, and served on YSS’s Website Committee from 2021-2023. She is passionate about early literacy, creating community connections, and fostering a love of reading. Rebekah spearheaded the creation of a permanent StoryWalk® at a local park, the installation of free period product dispensers at CFPL, and the creation of the CFPL’s mascot Fable the Fox. Currently, she is developing a prenatal reading program in coordination with a local Women’s Health Clinic. When she isn’t booktalking The Queen’s Thief series by Megan Whalen Turner or planning programs, you can find her cuddling with her cats, drinking tea, and playing Zelda.

Libraries love stories. It’s kind of our thing, and the primary role of ILA is telling libraries’ stories. ILA must communicate, advocate, and tell our stories to politicians whose decisions greatly impact us. ILA must communicate with our communities, so they understand what we offer—how we’ve adapted and modernized to best serve them. ILA must communicate with library workers, sharing best practices, empowering us through educational opportunities, and uplifting us by spreading library joy. In general, libraries need to be better about telling our stories—sharing our joys, making people care about us, and impelling them to stand with us. I’d love to see ILA offer more opportunities for members to connect and learn from each other.
As I stated before, telling the story of our libraries is important. The words chosen and how a story is told depend on whom one is addressing, and I love finding the right words to use for different audiences. I envision helping ILA by being an excellent communicator. Additionally, I enjoy discovering new ways to reach out to potential library collaborators, fostering connections, and problem-solving. Lastly, being on a board is like working on a group project, and I possess all the essential group project skills: I listen to my peers, contribute to the conversation, and complete the tasks I say I will in a timely manner.

1. For the library to be a connector and facilitator in the community. This is something we are already working toward, but it is vital work. Since each community is different, librarians need to learn how to network and find the change makers in their communities. These change-makers will best know what the library could offer to better serve the community.

2. Expand library services outside of the building. Get to the people who cannot get to us, and make sure people know that the library is more than just a building. 3. Make library services and the library building more inclusive and accessible to those with physical disabilities/differences and to those who are neurodivergent.
I started working in public libraries in 1994 for a summer work program for teens in low-income families. In 2009 I received my Masters in Library and Information Science from San Jose State University while working full-time for the Butte County Library. While in Butte County, I worked as a Children’s Librarian for various branches, managed the Paradise Branch from 2014-2017, Chico Branch in 2018, and Oroville Branch as Assistant Director from August 2018-2019. I moved to Iowa in 2019 after accepting the Library Director position for the City of Clinton.

ILA provides information and support for library staff at all levels including educational opportunities at the annual conference. Leadership opportunities are also an important role providing a variety of committees to participate in. In the future I would love to see a structured mentorship program, more opportunities to reach out to fellow libraries for advice and ideas, and youth services pre-conference sessions, especially around early literacy.

As a new committee member on the Communications Committee, I hope to increase our communication with all members and encourage more people to join ILA. I hope to bring creative ideas, increased collaboration with fellow libraries and organizations, and organizational skills. Currently, I serve as the Rotary Club of Clinton Secretary, a Board Member of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Clinton County, and the Council of Social Agencies of Clinton County.

My aspirations for the future are to prepare for the impacts and benefits of Artificial Intelligence, training models and growth opportunities for all staff, and building more new libraries with sustainability in mind both environmentally and financially.
Lover of frogs, forager of wild mushrooms, and resident keeper of the Teen Room at Cedar Falls Public Library, Megan has been enthralled with books and libraries from a time before she can remember. From her time as a student worker at the University of Northern Iowa’s Rod Library, the library bug has bitten her and refused to let go. She continued her journey through various school, public, and academic libraries, landing in 2022 back where it all started at CFPL. The variety has given her the opportunity to view many types of libraries through an intimate lens while having allowed her to work with people from various ages and backgrounds. In addition to loving a good ole YA rom-com (she is currently reading Dungeons and Drama and recommends it!), Megan has a passion for professional development and growth. She’s been a panelist and speaker at multiple ILA conferences and the New England Library Association Conference with topics including inclusivity and arts and culture in the library, and she has worked to further her leadership skills through participation in the ILA Leadership Institute, NELLS (New England Library Leadership Symposium) Emerging Leaders program, and the One Iowa LGBTQ Leadership Institute. Moving forward, Megan’s goals are to offer more STEAM programming, get more deeply involved in the work of ILA, and to spread her love of K-dramas across the land!

I believe ILA has the responsibility to support and advocate for Iowa’s libraries and its members while championing forward-thinking initiatives that showcase to the greater community the importance of all Iowa libraries and museums institutions. In this ongoing and tumultuous political and economic era, I hope for ILA to continue its support for its members while providing quality educational opportunities for both librarians (and by “librarian”, I mean every person who works in a library, from director to page) and the community at large. These educational opportunities should inspire our members and instill in the community the importance of libraries while increasing cross-state connections. The reminder is important that none of us are in this alone.
POSİTİON ROLE

As a lover of new experiences and having done a bit of job-hopping out of necessity in my early years, I’ve had the opportunity to work in a variety of libraries (and even a children’s science museum!). Due to this, I believe I can contribute an understanding of the many ways in which our varied libraries work. As we all, from public to academic to school, fall under the scope of ILA, each of us also has different needs for our particular libraries. I believe I can bring a commitment to fostering connections and an exuberant energy for the future of all libraries. I’ve been told the energy is infectious, but I also have a devotion to protecting librarians’ time and effort in an increasing world of burnout. I believe this balance of energy and passion for library advocacy with a respect for workload and compassion fatigue is a valuable asset to the board and the members of ILA.

GOALS

Would it be too cliché of me to quote Mean Girls and say “The limit does not exist”? Libraries are a pillar of any community they’re in, and as such, they are constantly changing within those communities. While any goal for the future of libraries includes increased patron support and connection, I believe we can achieve that through continuing to expand beyond the physical space. As we strive to reach the corners of our communities that are impacted by physical distance or various socioeconomic constraints, an increase in online resources, mobile services, and social media can help to bring the library to where the public is at. We can’t negate the library itself, though, as a physical safe space for those who need it, and the need for library open hours and adequate staff volume is as important as it ever was. All of these goals boil down to community support and buy-in and creating within our communities the socially-minded, passionate, lifelong learners needed for a space where diverse voices and ideas can thrive.
Alyssa Hanson

Alyssa (she/her) has continuously worked at a variety of library types and sizes since 2008. Currently she is the Web Specialist at the Iowa City Public Library (ICPL) where she manages the website and helps with patron and staff technology questions. She also answers questions at the reference desk and is active on several committees including marketing and strategic planning. She’s worked at ICPL since graduating with a Master of Science in Information degree from the University of Michigan in 2016. While in grad school, she assisted students with their reference questions at the University of Michigan Library and assisted community members at the Romulus Public Library near Detroit, MI. Prior to her graduate program, she worked at the Vogel Library of Wartburg College where she went to undergrad as well as at the Vinton Public Library in her hometown.

As an Iowa native, Alyssa joined the Iowa Library Association (ILA) while still in grad school and, since starting at ICPL, she has presented at the Iowa Library Association Conference three times. She has also presented nationally at the Internet Librarian conference and written an article published in the Computers in Libraries magazine.

Alyssa has volunteered as the ILA web manager since 2020, which allowed her to start getting more involved in the organization. She was later added to the ILA Communications Committee to bring her web perspective. Alyssa was also grateful to attend the ILA Leadership Institute in 2022 to learn and grow her leadership skills. Her Institute experience was helpful in 2023 when she aided with the IT transition of the association’s website and email services when ILA switched management companies. In 2024, she was added to the Membership Committee for email support and continues to offer support in areas related to the IT transition.

ILA FUTURE

We are all going through similar challenges, and we can leverage our collective experiences to help each other grow and to improve our libraries. ILA’s biggest benefit is to bring Iowa librarians together and facilitate knowledge sharing. The benefits of sharing could take a range of forms from sharing time to sharing knowledge. ILA already has guides on topics like advocating for your library or addressing book challenges, and we can make that more accessible and continue promoting it to members. We could offer more mentoring opportunities across the state for new and seasoned librarians. For those looking to get involved in ILA but not able to devote time to a full committee role, we could offer ways for members to get experience micro-volunteering to contribute to the organization. We’re stronger with more people involved and invested in our association.
POSITION ROLE

I can contribute my knowledge from my wide range of experiences to my role as an officer, bringing a perspective from academic and public libraries, both large and small. Working in IT also makes me an adept problem solver and project manager, which are routine parts of my job. I’ve also gained knowledge of ILA while working with the IT transition team in addition to my experiences with working with the ILA Communications and Membership Committees. I can see how decisions the Board makes will affect these workgroups in addition to members. And, having attended the Leadership Institute, I can use the skills learned there to be a reflective Board member and a leader in the association.

GOALS

I would love to see the library be the first thought of any Iowan who thinks about needing a book to read, looking for tech help, a space to work, or any of the other services we offer. An increase to borrowing and library engagement at all libraries across the state would be a great outcome. I want to remove barriers to library services and for more libraries to work together to serve our collective patron base. We share our collections, resources, and time with patrons - why not share across libraries as well? We could expand on existing joint programs like interlibrary loan and digital resources and share other resources such as laptops or specialized personnel. While this might not fall under the purview of ILA, I think the connections made through ILA can help start these conversations and help us grow together as a profession.
Our bylaws are the foundational rules that govern our organization. Periodically, it is necessary to review and update these rules to ensure they align with our evolving goals, legal requirements, and best practices.

The proposed changes have been carefully considered and approved by the Board of Directors for your consideration.

**Instructions for Voting**

1. **Review**: Please carefully review each proposed change within the red-lined version. A clean copy has also been provided for a more convenient review option. If you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact leadership at admin@iowalibraryassociation.org

2. **Vote**: Following your selection for the ILA officers, please cast your vote for the approval or disapproval of the proposed Bylaw revisions.

[Red-Line Bylaw Revision Here](#)

[Clean Revised Bylaws Here](#)