



# Association of Connecticut Library Boards Newsletter

The Association of Connecticut Library Boards (ACLB) is Connecticut's library trustee organization representing public library boards throughout the state.

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## 2017 Trustee Leadership Conference Draws 130 Participants

Some 130 trustees and staff from libraries throughout the state attended ACLB's annual conference on the theme "CT Libraries: Challenges and Opportunities." The event took place on Nov. 3 at the University of Hartford.

This year's keynote speaker was State Librarian Kendall Wiggin who discussed fiscal, perceptual and future-oriented challenges facing libraries. Fiscal challenges follow from the anticipated impact of both state and federal budgets. Cuts in state funding can impact federal—if the state does not put up its share in a particular area, federal funds will not be forthcoming. He advocated partnerships for resource sharing to offset potential problems.

Perceptual challenges, Mr. Wiggin noted, involve people's notions of what libraries do and the importance of getting the word out about all the ways in which they serve their communities. He spoke of the Measures that Matter initiative, a coordinated approach to using data to show the role and impact of public libraries with the goal of increasing support for them.

In connection with the ongoing role of libraries, the keynoter spoke about the Futures Conference held in September in Atlantic City. There are six generations now living, he said, and all have different expectations of what libraries should offer. The challenge is to pay attention to what is going on around us and respond to trends by providing staff with

training, since what worked in the past may not work in the future.

The keynote address was followed by breakout sessions on "Library Trustees, Friends and Directors Working Together," "Cyber Security in Your Library: What You Need to Know" and "CSL Fiber Grants: Funding for Broadband and Internet Access."

The session on cyber security drew a large crowd in view of potentially serious consequences if patrons' security is breached. Dr. Lawrence Snyder of Baypath University spoke on the physical and logical threats to online security and advocated crime prevention through environmental design, for example, placing the network's infrastructure in locked areas where hackers cannot attach devices that capture personal information. Logical threats can be thwarted by constantly updating all systems.

Special guests at lunch were State Senator and Deputy President Pro Tempore Cathy Osten of Sprague and State Representative Noreen Kokuruda of the 101<sup>st</sup> District.

The afternoon speaker was Jeanine Esposito of Innovation Builders who spoke on EXCITE, a team-building training program for library staff. EXCITE's goal is to foster grant-funded programs and services responding to community input and needs and leading to cultural change in libraries.

## *Now is the Time To Invest in Libraries*

*By State Librarian Kendall F. Wiggin*

Increasing funding for libraries in a time of fiscal uncertainty is an investment in the present and future of our state. I am not going to go through all the merits of libraries, but as we again are faced with more budget cuts I ask, what other institution returns such a high value on the tax dollar invested? Undercutting libraries is undercutting our democracy, lifelong learning and the state's competitiveness.

Libraries are not obsolete, they are merely under-funded. Access to vetted information costs money—money libraries don't have. Yet when the state has funded things like the researchIT CT databases, not only do we provide every student, teacher, resident and business in the state with high quality information anytime from anywhere, but we also get an enviable return on investment (ROI).

All of our statewide services facilitate the sharing of library resources and support local libraries. The ROI for researchIT (the statewide databases) is approximately 2,000 percent; for deliverIT it is approximately 8,000 percent; for borrowIT it is approximately 9,000 percent; and for the Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC) it is approximately 1,200 percent. Who else can say that? Yet funding for these programs (74 cents per capita this year) has been dropping for years while the cost of information and providing these services goes up.

There has been much discussion in the legislature in the last few years about regionalization. Great idea. Oh, wait, libraries have been doing this for years. The citizens in our state could greatly benefit from an increased investment in statewide and regional library services.

But far too often regionalization is seen as a way only to save money. To be truly effective, regionalization, at least for libraries, requires an increase in funding. Most libraries in the state operate on one penny of every tax dollar raised. The State Library budget has been cut by more than 37 percent since 2009. These budgets can't be stretched much more.

In the upcoming legislative session, let's start talking about investing in our state's future. Funding shared resources and services at the state level will efficiently provide access to resources for citizens of all ages statewide, saving money locally and yielding a big return on investment at the state level.

### *2017 ACLB Trustee Award Winners*

Six library trustees were honored with awards at the annual Trustee Leadership Conference held in November.

**Amy Sanborn** of the Weston Public Library received the Exceptional Service award. In addition to her most recent achievement of spearheading the library's full-scale renovation, she also guided the board through its first three-year technology plan and first strategic plan and helped make the library an intellectual and cultural hub of its community.

**Claude Amadeo** of the Wilton Library Association was given the Outstanding Achievement award for signature programming for his work in fostering STEM programs for children and teens. To date the library has provided almost 100 STEM programs for young patrons.

**Christina Cumberton** of the Brookfield Library received the Outstanding Achievement award for a building project for her work in reenergizing and spearheading efforts to get a much needed building project back on track. Her efforts set in motion the referendum process for the town to vote on building a new library.

**Robert Zuliani** of the Bill Memorial Library in Groton was the recipient of the Outstanding Library Trustee award. As treasurer he streamlined the library's accounting practices and encouraged efforts to request increased funding. He has also been involved in a variety of projects to improve the library's facilities.

**Gus Chagares** and **Joe Janucik**, both of the Stratford Library Association, were awarded Lifetime Achievement awards. Both have served the library for several decades and worked to modernize the building through expansion and renovation. In addition, both have devoted many years to mentoring new board members, training officers and sharing the library's rich history.

## ***Preparing for Emergencies To Ensure Safety in the Library***

Tragic events across the country as well as what forecasters like to call “weather events” have made us all aware of the need for emergency planning in all public places including libraries. The Connecticut State Library has made resources available to help local libraries develop and implement emergency plans. These guidelines are available online at <http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/emergency/disaster>. This site includes a link to a Power Point presentation on the subject.

Here are some suggestions from the State Library web site on how individual libraries can provide an appropriate environment; foster beneficial use of library facilities, materials and services; and promote the safety and comfort of patrons and staff.

- Collaborate with local authorities including the public safety department and fire department to develop a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan. It should address natural disasters, fire safety and other emergencies affecting public safety such as bomb threats, active shooters, hostage situations and environmental emergencies such as chemical spills and gas leaks.

- Establish a relationship with the public safety department. Police departments are not always aware of the unique public safety issues libraries face on a daily basis and should be engaged to help libraries identify possible issues and develop action plans to resolve them. Conduct a walkthrough of the library with public safety personnel to create awareness of the building layout so that plans can be made for both library and police responses to particular threats and emergencies. Libraries should maintain a liaison with police to keep them informed of potential issues.

- Develop or update a Patron Code of Conduct policy. This policy will provide staff with a tool to enforce rules of behavior for those using the library. The Code of Conduct can reference existing policies such as those covering Internet Usage, Unattended Children, Meeting Rooms and Security Camera Use and can establish standards and guidelines for patron behavior

while in the building or on library grounds. A Patron Code of Conduct Policy establishes guidelines to ensure constructive use of library facilities, materials and services as well as the personal comfort and safety of all.

- Adopt the use of incident reports (separate from accident reports required by OSHA). Incident reports document patron infractions of established policies, activity deemed to be in violation of state law, emergencies and accidents. Incident reports merely document situations and are not disciplinary.

- Find out if your municipality has contracted with a risk management company. Risk management companies can conduct safety audits of buildings and make recommendations based on findings and provide training and resources.

- Develop a communication plan to deal with news media and public inquiries. Establish a News Media Policy, including social media, for library staff to use during and after an emergency. An established policy will avoid miscommunication and speculation surrounding a situation.

In addition to the Connecticut State Library, the Public Library Association also offers a number of links to web sites with information on emergency preparedness under a variety of headings. Here are a few of them:

**Library Disaster Preparedness & Response LibGuide:** American Library Assn.

[libguides.ala.org/disaster](http://libguides.ala.org/disaster)

[libguides.ala.org/disaster/preparedness](http://libguides.ala.org/disaster/preparedness)

These sites include pages for preparing for and responding to disasters such as weather, fire and water events as well as public health crises.

**Safety and Security in Libraries:** ALA

[libguides.ala.org/safety-security](http://libguides.ala.org/safety-security)

This site provides links to related LibGuides, webinars and library security resources.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Library of Congress

[loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/](http://loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/)

**Violence Prevention in the Public Library:** Public Library Association

[ala.org/pla/onlinelearning/webinars/archive/prevention](http://ala.org/pla/onlinelearning/webinars/archive/prevention)

This free webinar discusses violence risk factors and helps enhance situational awareness skills.

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#### **Our Mission**

- Enable member library boards to improve library services in their communities.
- Broaden trustee knowledge of current developments in the library field.
- Improve communication and cooperation among library boards.

#### **What We Do**

- Provide workshops geared to the needs of trustees across the state.
- Maintain strong liaison with library-related organizations on the state and national levels.
- Provide consultant help to library boards and individual trustees

#### **Officers**

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