

REPORTER

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



ON THE COVER

According to chicagoarchitecture.org, a blog covering development in all areas of Chicagoland, the St. Charles Public Library began as a Carnegie Library in 1908 and has been renovated “a number of times” since then; it was one of more than 2,500 libraries funded by Carnegie, 111 of them in Illinois. This year’s renovation and expansion features a new entrance, a new meeting room available to the public, a maker space, a courtyard, and a drive-through window, reflecting many of the ways patrons wish to interact with the library these days.

The St. Charles Public Library was in the news recently after an unruly group disrupted services in defiance of the library’s mask policy—itsself grounded in a gubernatorial executive order—and staff received threats of violence, forcing the library to close to in-person public services. Virtual services and the drive-through window remained open, and the library issued a statement focusing on patron and staff health and safety, noting that the building would re-open once additional security measures could be put in place.

The residents of St. Charles deserve the opportunity to use this beautifully renovated space safely, and ILA stands with our colleagues at the library in their attempts to enable such use.

The Illinois Library Association is collaboratively shaping a new future for libraries in Illinois, providing leadership, advocacy, partnership, and learning for the benefit of Illinois libraries. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 3,000 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has five full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Blaida and Associates for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization.

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See ILA calendar for submission deadlines for the *ILA Reporter*. Copy should be submitted by email to ila@ila.org. You are encouraged to include press-ready digital photos (300 p.p.i.) and graphics with your articles, which will be included on a space-available basis.

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KATHRYN HARRIS



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Library Buildings

2021

Seventeen libraries are showcased this year, including one academic library. The public libraries featured here range from those serving populations under 10,000 all the way up to nearly 90,000, in communities across the state. Makerspaces and maker “places” continue to be prominent features in library renovations, as are comfortable, spacious, beautiful spaces in which to spend time, in contemplation or in use of library materials. The quotes from patrons in the “What people are saying” sections in each entry are testaments to the need and hunger people have felt to gather after the past two years in relative isolation. Libraries continue to be vital hubs of connection and connectivity, and the people of Illinois all deserve facilities like the ones below.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library



photo credit: Kmiecik Imagery

Architect:	Williams Architects
Type of project:	Renovation/expansion
Total cost:	\$1,400,000
Service population:	75,000
Library director:	Mike Driskell

What people are saying:

“At 8,000-square-feet, the Makerplace is really something special.”

“We feel very lucky to have the Makerplace in our area. There are so many really interesting features and different machines that are out of our comfort zone, but we’ll get to try them like the 3D printing or laser cutting, which I don’t think I would try on my own.”

“I really like the Makerplace. I just found out about it a few weeks ago. It’s nice this is so close. There’s a lot of good staff here and you don’t need any previous experience.”



photo credit: Kmiecik Imagery



photo credit: Stephanie Battista



photo credit: Stephanie Battista

Chicago Ridge Public Library



photo credit: McShane Fleming Studios

Architect:	product architecture + design
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$1,466,000
Service population:	14,433
Library director:	Dana Wishnick

What people are saying:

“Absolutely beautiful. Love the new modern look. Can’t wait to relax in the new chairs.”

“Beautiful job and what a great place for kids and adults.”

“The updates are great and the library looks so much bigger now. Without adding space, you managed to add space!”



photo credit: McShane Fleming Studios

Crystal Lake Public Library



Architect:	Engberg Anderson Architects
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$3,885,000
Service population:	40,269
Library director:	Kathryn I. Martens

What people are saying:

"It's a wonderful design at the library now. I just love my library!"

"I really enjoy coming here, and the staff is always friendly. I really enjoy the new upgrades, especially the drive-up window for holds when I don't have time to look around inside."

"One of the best libraries I have stepped in in a very long time. Congratulations. Great job, Crystal Lake!"



Highland Park Public Library



Architect: product architecture
+ design

Type of project: Renovation

Total cost: \$1,564,396

Service population: 30,176

Library director: Heidi Smith

What people are saying:

"I'm very impressed with the Youth Services remodel. It was updated beautifully!"

"The Middle School Room is cool!"

"The natural light and comfortable chairs create a warm, inviting space."



Hillsboro Public Library



Architect:	Farnsworth Group
Type of project:	Adaptive re-use of former bank as new library
Total cost:	\$1,400,000
Service population:	11,000
Library director:	Shelley Kolb Singler

What people are saying:

“Keeping the old bank safe and using it as the genealogy room has allowed the building to retain some of its history while also giving a focus to the history of Hillsboro and our original Carnegie Library.”

“One of the teachers from our high school mentioned that it reminded him of a college campus building. He said there are people at the high school who will be very jealous!”

“It looks incredible! I’m excited for the Hillsboro Public Library! More space, and an open atmosphere right in such a historic downtown location in Hillsboro to be accessible to all! Congratulations to all involved in the process!”

“A vision accomplished!”

“I love the lighting. I believe every library should have excellent lighting.”

“The colors used in the building are beautiful, attractive, and soothing. Very appropriate for a library.”



Indian Prairie Public Library District, Darien



Architect:	product architecture + design
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$1,200,000
Service population:	42,529
Library director:	Jamie Bukovac

What people are saying:

"I'm thrilled with the renovation & Maker Studio. I belong to a non-profit and we can use the embroidery machine to make shirts with our logo. The Maker Studio truly makes the library a community center!"

"We can't wait to come in all the time, as it is a beautiful new library."

"I love that there is rotating artwork throughout the library."



Linda Sokol Francis Brookfield Library



Architect: product architecture
+ design

Type of project: New building

Total cost: \$11,300,000

Service population: 19,476

Library director: Kimberly Coughran

What people are saying:

"Great place, lots of room, so many things to learn are all here. Love it and can't wait to come back."

"Love it! You'll find me in the maker room."

"Lovely new space with lots of air!"

"I've been coming here since I was little, and I'm blown away!"

"I love the mini study rooms and the big quiet room."



Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library, Highland



Architect:	The Korte Company
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$150,000
Service population:	16,000
Library director:	Angela R. Kim

What people are saying:

“‘More than Books’ is our motto, which includes art and architecture making our facility part library, art gallery, and museum.”

“The historic 1929 look of the original library has been preserved, while making classic updates that make it clean, modern and appealing to our community.”



Mary and George Slankard Learning Resource Center, Rend Lake College, Ina



Architect: Eggemeyer Associates Architects

Type of project: Renovation/expansion

Total cost: \$765,000

Service population: 70,502

Library director: Kim Wilkerson

What people are saying:

“The renovations and expansions in the Mary and George Slankard Learning Resource Center have greatly increased students’ comfort and ability to collaborate within the library.”

“It’s a project that involves the possibility to impact every student.”

“[The benches] are nice and I like the flowers.”

“I am inside at least once a week, and the furniture is really comfortable.”



Morton Grove Public Library



Architect: product architecture
+ design

Type of project: Renovation/expansion

Total cost: \$1,570,000

Service population: 23,000

Library director: Pam Leffler

What people are saying:

"The recent renovations make our old building feel like new—calm, open, and welcoming."

"It's so amazing! Thank you for building this beautiful space for us."



Northbrook Public Library



photo credit: Barbara Freeman

Architect:	product architecture + design
Type of project:	Renovation/expansion
Total cost:	\$1,420,000
Service population:	33,170
Library director:	Kate Hall

What people are saying:

“We love all the popular/lucky day books and the self-checkouts too.”

“Kudos on the new, spacious circulation area. I like that you’ve got not only new, but also older popular books for grab and go.”



photo credits: McShane Fleming Studios



Palatine Public Library District



Architect:	Engberg Anderson Architects
Type of project:	Renovation/expansion
Total cost:	\$5,397,103
Service population:	89,000
Library director:	Jeannie Dilger

What people are saying:

"What a difference with the new construction! It is gorgeous and so open! Great job. Good to see my tax dollars are at work! LOVE the library!"

"The library is looking so nice and the back entrance is great. It is nice and easy to get to. Thank you."

"The new construction is fabulous, especially the maker room. Our family attended a tour of the room and really enjoyed it!"

"I love how you added new carpeting and new other things to the library. It's great and I'm excited for the new things that are coming to the library."



Prospect Heights Public Library District



photo credit: McShane Fleming Studios

Architect:	product architecture + design
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$5,100,000
Service population:	14,073
Library director:	Alex Todd

What people are saying:

“Beautiful teen space. The kids’ space is incredible and spacious. The Lab / Maker Space looks very professional, and the fireplace is very cool.”

“The water fountain feature and planters in the courtyard are so welcoming. It’s so much more spacious inside.”

“Such an attractive and inviting space. The courtyard is beautiful, and I am grateful this is my library.”



Riverside Public Library



Architect:	Studio GC
Type of project:	Renovation
Total cost:	\$1,100,000
Service population:	9,298
Library director:	Janice A. Foley

What people are saying:

“The lower-level renovation at the Riverside Public Library is a game-changer for the community. The reallocation of the space gives early learners, kids, and teens their own spaces to learn, play, and grow. The expanded community room accommodates more attendees and multiple programs. Most important, the renovation respects the building’s architecture and integrates the beautiful views of the Des Plaines River and surrounding parkland.”

“Just when I thought the Riverside Public Library couldn’t get any better, it did! A bright yet earthy color palette accompanied by playful fabric patterns sets the tone for any reading adventure. The peaceful, picturesque backdrop of the river is the perfect focal point for the early learning room.”

“Approachable, accessible, and enticing! The decoration is perfect, subdued and natural; the books are the true stars! With our youth area overlooking the river and forest behind the library, the addition of the felt cut-outs on the walls in the shape of trees and river complements the nature outside while simultaneously muting the sound for the adults in the library upstairs.”



St. Charles Public Library



Architect:	Sheehan Nagle Hartray Architects
Type of project:	Renovation/expansion
Total cost:	\$18,600,000
Service population:	55,092
Library director:	Edith Guadiana Craig

What people are saying:

“The way the Carnegie building was incorporated with the new building brings a whole new life to it.”

“The renovated building has something for everyone.”

“The landscaping is gorgeous and fits in with our beautiful Fox River area.”

“There is so much light now in the children’s department! It’s so vibrant.”



Skokie Public Library



Architect: Andrew Berman
Architect

Type of project: Renovation

Total cost: \$17,700,000

Service population: 64,000

Library director: Richard Kong

What people are saying:

“I walked in and stopped in my tracks. The library looks so gorgeous. I am in awe.”

“I just went up to the second floor for the first time and I’m blown away. Every time I come in, I am amazed by something I haven’t seen before. It’s just wonderful.”

“The Kids Room is incredible, the way the items are divided is amazing—best of any library!”



Talcott Free Library, Rockton



Architect: Engberg Anderson Architects

Type of project: Addition and renovation

Total cost: \$2,100,00

Service population: 13,777

Library director: Megan Gove

What people are saying:

"I love how the new addition blends so nicely with the original 1800s building."

"It looks so much bigger and brighter in here!"

"I've never seen a collapsible glass wall like that—such a good idea to expand the space as needed but still look really nice!"



Land Acknowledgments: A Mindful Approach

Over the course of our library's ongoing equity, diversity, and inclusion journey, we discovered important omissions, including the lack of acknowledgment of Native peoples and their history in the space we occupy and utilize. The Downers Grove Public Library (DGPL) believes it is important to be mindful of the history of the land we use and to bring awareness to the Indigenous peoples who inhabited and continue to reside on these lands. To support this purpose, our library worked on a land acknowledgment over numerous months and released it in the Fall of 2021. While there is no one single way to create a land acknowledgment, we learned many valuable insights along our journey that we believe could be useful for anyone looking to begin writing a land acknowledgment or to revise an already existing document. After all, a land acknowledgment is a living statement or document that can, and should, be revised and refined, as one's organization continues to grow and learn.

The first several steps in writing a land acknowledgment actually have nothing to do with writing. A genuine land acknowledgment, that is, one that is not hollow or performative, begins with introspection and self-reflection. Ask yourself, why are you pursuing a land acknowledgment? As the Native Governance Center points out, "If you're hoping to inspire others to take action to support Indigenous communities, you're on the right track. If you're delivering a land acknowledgment out of guilt or because everyone else is doing it, more self-reflection is in order"⁽¹⁾. Reflecting on why you and your organization are writing a land acknowledgment will help you to more deeply think about the impact or outcome you are seeking. This, in turn, will help guide you during your process by keeping you focused on impact over intent.

You will next need to determine who will be writing the land acknowledgment with you. A land acknowledgment not only formally recognizes the historical context of the land we use, but it should also bring awareness to the truthful history of our community and our nation. In doing so, important issues (both past and present) will be discussed. It is imperative to have conversations and collaborate with local Native organizations and individuals to ensure that Indigenous voices are heard and their experiences are truly seen. In reaching out to Native groups and peoples, be clear that you are invested in forming a true partnership. Communicate clearly that you are looking to work together and to support one another continuously. If your organization is not interested in further programming or partnership outside of the land acknowledgment document, reconsider your motivation for this process.



Joseph Standing Bear Schranz, President and Founder of the Midwest SOARRING Foundation, gives remarks at the land acknowledgment announcement event in October 2021. Photo: Downers Grove Public Library



TJ, Midwest SOARRING Foundation performer, and Van McGary, Adult and Teen Services Assistant Manager at the Downers Grove Public Library and author of the library's land acknowledgment. Photo: Downers Grove Public Library

Connecting with Native groups may take some time and energy. It is important to allow yourself and your eventual partners time, and to not rush the process. Thus, the deadline or timeframe should be self-imposed to allow for flexibility. After forming your partnerships, approach the land acknowledgment (a new one or one to be revised) with an open mind, without any expectation of what it “should” be. Let your partners share what they think is important to include and how they want to be acknowledged, but be mindful that they will not be writing the land acknowledgment for you. Allow your interactions to have a conversational, rather than a transactional, nature. Your Native partners may tell you stories and anecdotes, a random fact here and there, an important date or event, issues their people are facing, etc. It is your responsibility to listen, process, research, write, and follow up for feedback. Our partners shared with us many personal experiences, spirituality, trauma, acts of activism, events, and more over countless hours in person and over the telephone. At times, the conversation may become very emotionally challenging for your Native partners and/or for yourself. Be kind and gracious to them and yourself. Take time and care as needed, and allow the process to develop organically. Try to avoid allowing a sense of urgency and/or perfectionism to take over. These are two characteristics of white supremacy culture that uphold systemic oppression and restrict marginalized peoples from fully showing up as their true authentic selves⁽²⁾. In our case, there were many revisions to our land acknowledgment. Be sure to clearly communicate the changes to your organization and partners so that you are transparent during your entire process.

Over the course of your discussions with your Native partners, figure out the format for your land acknowledgment. It may be a short version with one paragraph covering the land acknowledgment or it may include a longer or extended version. This also depends on what sort of outcome you and your Native partners are interested in. In our case, we were very intentional about our land acknowledgment raising awareness about historical and ongoing injustices against Native peoples, and for the document to be a learning opportunity and resource for both community members and organizations. Thus, in addition to having a short version that can be read and posted, we have an extended version that includes a detailed history, current issues, frequently asked questions, and numerous resources for learning more: dglibrary.org/land⁽³⁾.

Regardless of the format or structure of your land acknowledgment, using appropriate language is critical. As the Native Governance Center points out, it is important to “[not] sugarcoat the past” and to name the actions taken by colonizers including genocide and forced removal. In addition, it is important to “use past, present, and future tenses” to make clear that Native peoples are still here⁽¹⁾. The Native

Governance Center also has a useful terminology style guide (4). In addition, Native Land Digital has several suggestions for learning how to pronounce a Native nation’s name including “[r]espectfully asking someone from that nation or from a local organization,” checking the nation’s website, watching videos that include people saying the nation’s name, or calling the nation after hours and listening to their voicemail recording⁽⁵⁾.

While crafting your land acknowledgment based on the information you receive from your Native partners, be prepared to conduct your own research to supplement that information, add additional historical and current events, and provide supporting resources. While it may be useful to look at land acknowledgments from other institutions for inspiration, avoid copying or duplicating with slight adjustments. Make your land acknowledgment authentic by personalizing it using input and experiences from Native collaborators and by instilling your organization’s values. Furthermore, avoid making a land acknowledgment a performative or token gesture by formulating and following through with a “Therefore” statement. A “Therefore” statement in this context is a clear affirmation of an organization’s commitment to Native communities and their work beyond the land acknowledgment. It helps prevent a land acknowledgment from being a one-time item to be checked off a list. As with a land acknowledgment, a “Therefore” statement can evolve as one’s organization evolves.

After you, your organization, and Native partners feel that your land acknowledgment is ready to be released, consider how you want to present or unveil your organization’s land acknowledgment to your community. Both of our collaborators, Midwest SOARRING Foundation and Professor John Low of Ohio State University, emphasized that a land acknowledgment is a small but important first step toward truth and reconciliation, and its power depends on the amount of thoughtful detail and commitment behind it. It was imperative to our organization to demonstrate to our community the significance of this work and our commitment to it. DGPL held a special ceremony and formal announcement of our land acknowledgment to celebrate its completion. This event was planned in close collaboration with our Native partners; it is equally important to let your Native partners guide your continued partnership in the same way they led the way for writing the land acknowledgment itself. It was decided that our library would have Trustees introduce the land acknowledgment and provide context about why the library is doing this work, how it fits into our strategic plan, and how our document was written. Then, we turned the event over to our Native partners; they performed a ceremonial healing dance, a 7-direction blessing, and addressed the crowd. To be a good partner and ally, it is imperative to raise Native voices and de-center ourselves. Some partners may prefer not to share performances, blessings, or words with non-Native community

Land Acknowledgement Statements Statewide

members. Some partners will want to use the opportunity to bring attention to issues they currently face, and may not refer to your land acknowledgment. Yield the floor to your Native partners and allow them to participate in the ways in which they are comfortable.

Ensuring that the land acknowledgment does not simply go into a drawer and become a forgotten document is vital. In addition to creating a webpage, our library decided to feature our acknowledgment in a variety of ways. To encourage patrons to consider the land when they are physically in the building, we decided to put a plaque (that can easily be updated as the acknowledgment evolves) at both entrances to our library. We also provide a binder with the extended version and FAQs, in addition to brochures for the Midwest SOARRING Foundation, at the entrance for patrons that prefer a hard copy of our document. The short version of our land acknowledgment can be found as a standard piece in our bi-monthly newsletter, located next to the library's mailing address. Finally, prior to the start of significant events and meetings, attendees are invited to consider the land through a reading of the short version and are encouraged to learn more. Avoid your acknowledgment from becoming a rote and performative gesture by considering the tone, frequency, and placement.

For collaboration on the land acknowledgment itself and for appearing and performing at our land acknowledgment event, our Native partners were compensated for their time, effort, emotional labor, knowledge, and more. Be sure to approach your partnerships with Native communities with reciprocity in mind and to provide proper compensation. Ideally, the partnerships for your land acknowledgment and any accompanying event is just the beginning of many partnerships and relationships with Native communities to come. **ILA**

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In countries such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, it is commonplace, even policy, to open gatherings and events by acknowledging the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of that land. In recent years, in the United States, including Illinois, institutions such as public and academic libraries have started creating land acknowledgments as efforts focusing on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) have grown. Through this lens, organizations and individuals have developed recognition of the importance of raising awareness of the truthful history of the land they use and the land's original Indigenous inhabitants.

Approaches to creating and sharing land acknowledgments by Illinois libraries vary widely. Accessibility to these documents also differs across libraries from being available on dedicated web pages to only being viewable on specific blog posts, event pages, or during special promotions. Some libraries choose not to make the statement publicly available. The Newberry, a private library accessible to the public, offers full transparency about how their acknowledgment was formed accompanied by information about why land acknowledgments are important and resources available for further education. Academic libraries often have land acknowledgments that were created by their educational institution, as demonstrated by Illinois State University. Their President's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee worked closely across numerous departments to develop their statement, which will be revised as they continue working on an Indigenous reconciliation process.

Across the state of Illinois, few public libraries have released land acknowledgments. In November 2021, Brian Blank from Elmhurst Public Library submitted a Reaching Across Illinois Libraries Systems (RAILS) survey inquiring how many libraries have created a land acknowledgment. The survey garnered only seven results, two of which confirmed a document (Downers Grove and Glen Ellyn Public Libraries). The remaining five libraries (Fox River Grove Memorial Library, Three Rivers Public Library, Antioch Public Library District, Cary Area Public Library, Geneseo Public Library) have not created an acknowledgment. Other public libraries that have released statements include the Bloomington Public Library, Berwyn Public Library, Naperville Public Library, and Chicago Public Library.

ILA Best Practices

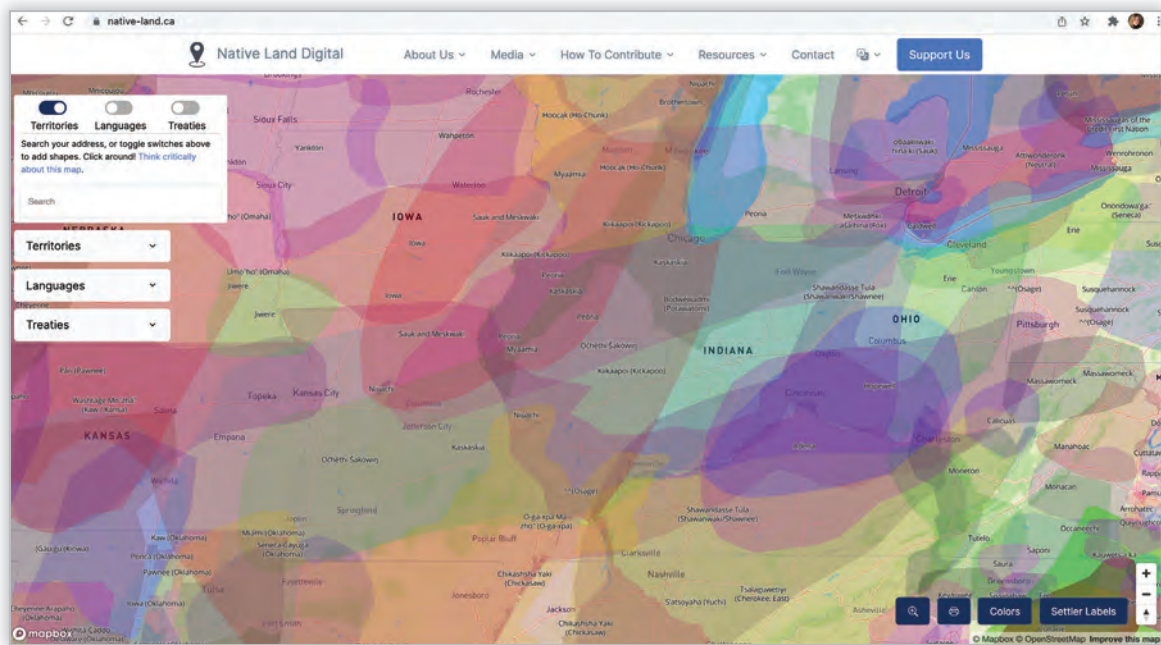
Committee on Writing a Land Acknowledgement Statement

During the 2020-21 service year of the Illinois Library Association Best Practices Committee (ILA BPC), we decided, as a group, to write a statement of philosophy that would serve as the lens through which we would identify, produce, and review our committee work. As the writing process gained momentum, however, we realized the necessity of acknowledging our positionality in the spaces we occupy—not only professionally, but culturally, politically, and geographically—and we would accomplish this by including a land acknowledgment statement as part of our committee’s statement of philosophy. Alea Perez, committee chair when this project began, led the way, as she has extensive experience in working towards diversity, inclusion, and representation in Illinois public libraries.

As the research got underway and progressed, we learned that one of the most challenging parts of the drafting and writing process was trying to determine whose ancestral lands Illinois libraries occupied and identify sources that traced the stories and diaspora of Native peoples, not simply their migratory trajectory. Geographic stewardship and itinerancy prevailed for a variety of reasons: access to natural resources, migratory practices, tribal wars, etc. As a result, the land now known as Illinois was home to many different Native peoples, not only those who lived in this area at the time of forced removal.

Once Alea collected sufficient and credible evidence of the native inhabitants of Illinois soil, she proceeded to construct a land acknowledgment statement using the following steps: research, review resources, reflect, and write. The ultimate goal was to call out and name the exact harm done, without centering all the attention on the oppressors, as this would have been at the expense of honoring the plights and resilience of those who survived.

As we look back on our work on the land acknowledgment statement—a living, breathing statement—we note that it could be further improved upon by broadening its scope to be more inclusive of the excluded Nations who have been stewards of the land now known as Illinois, as well as providing contemporary insights on them. In addition, organizational work should aim to integrate the direct involvement of Native peoples, which would underscore its value and integrity. In so doing, such work could potentially promote far greater benefits such as fostering authentic relationships with Native peoples, increasing knowledge and understanding of where we came from and where we should go in order to correct past injustices and prevent future ones, and creating potential partnerships for future actions and/or planning for Illinois libraries.



One final piece of advice to note before libraries embark on the drafting and writing process is to know precisely what they intend to do with their land acknowledgment statement and what further action is expected from those who read or hear it. These are essential questions that must be answered so that the statement is not merely performative but carries real meaning and impact.

The following Land Acknowledgment statement is in an abridged version due to its incorporation into the ILA BPC Statement of Philosophy:

- As part of our commitment to IDEA, it is also important to note that the ILA Best Practices Committee recognizes that Illinois libraries exist on the ancestral lands of the Peoria and Miami nations, and honors their stewardship of this land.
- In 1795, the people of the Miami nation, having lived on these lands for hundreds of years, ceded their vast stretches of land to the states now known as Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan and were forcibly and violently relocated to what is current day Oklahoma.
- The Peoria were part of the Illinois Confederation, which is a collective of many nations who joined together and that existed for thousands of years on the lands now known as Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Missouri. They ceded their lands in 1832, and were relocated first to Kansas, then Oklahoma. **ILA**

RESOURCES

The **Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma** website offers information about the tribe’s history and culture, its tribal government, resources and services for tribal members, and more: <https://peoriatribe.com/>

The website of the **Miami Tribe of Oklahoma** states two purposes: “virtual community connectivity” and is intended to benefit “all myaamia citizens, and to those who visit this site as guests.” <https://www.miamination.com/>

The **Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana** notes “Our federal recognition was illegally taken from us in the last 1800s.” The mission of the nation’s website is “...to protect, promote, record, and share the Miami of Indiana’s history, language, culture, and heritage. The purpose of this site is to share these and our ongoing struggle to regain our Federal Recognition.” <https://www.miamiindians.org/>

According to its website, “**Native Land Digital** is a Canadian not-for-profit organization, incorporated in December 2018. Native Land Digital is Indigenous-led, with an Indigenous Executive Director and Board of Directors who oversee and direct the organization.” View the project’s maps (pictured above) providing location-based information about nations, languages, and treaties: <https://native-land.ca/>

The **Native Governance Center** “creates accessible, introductory-level resources on a variety of topics related to sovereignty, governance, and nation rebuilding.” Visit the Center’s website for an array of resources, including “A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.” <https://nativegov.org/news/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>



My Turn: The Cards for Kids Program and Shame

The Illinois Cards for Kids Act allows qualifying students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade who participate in the Federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program at school to obtain a library card free of charge, even if they live in an unserved area. This law presents a myriad of challenges to public libraries but also opens up many opportunities for kids who typically could not afford a non-resident library card. However, one potential consequence of the program that may not be initially evident is the possibility for shaming.

“Lunch shaming” has been a hot topic in the news over the past few years. In some cafeterias, students who did not have enough money in their school account found their meals thrown in the trash or physically stamped with ink saying, “I need lunch money.” Another school in the Midwest had less fortunate students go to the office to get a stamp on their hand to get a meal. The schools that have adopted these policies are using shame as punishment for a situation that a child has no control over. Disassociating poverty from shame is difficult subject to discuss and an enormous issue to tackle. Growing up I was a reduced-lunch kid. Every day I had to take my 40 cents to the school office to pick up a weathered little green plastic chip, which I would then give to the cafeteria cashier for my meal. I remember the intense shame I felt walking this path, a daily routine which every single classmate and teacher knew was the poor kid parade. There was no mistaking the dirty green chip, which felt like a Scarlet Letter to me. An unmistakable glowing sign that pointed me out as someone who lived in poverty.

You’re probably wondering what all of this has to do with a free non-resident card in your library. A free non-resident card has the potential to be just like my 40 cents and that tired green chip for a hot meal—a good program executed poorly. As you begin to adjust policies to implement Illinois Cards for Kids, take into consideration how your policies can result in unintentional barriers to access as well as shaming. Remember that there is a stigma to living in poverty and that most people are reluctant to take advantage of programs that require them to disclose their financial situations. Policies like requiring a parent to bring proof of their economic status or to fill out extra paperwork to show they qualify for this card can not only be burdensome to your staff but humiliating to the parents and children. And not every parent of a low-income family can make it to your library during normal hours because they are working multiple jobs or have limited access to transportation.

As you are developing your free non-resident card program, consider the physical design. Do these cards look any different from the ones given to traditional library patrons? Do they single the free non-residents out as recipients of a free library card in some way? Is there some flag in your system that may inadvertently suggests to library staff that these patrons are different? Ensure your free card holders are treated no differently any other patron by providing the same limitations and privileges as all other patrons with the same physical card.



Another crucial step library leaders and policymakers can take is to work directly with the local school administrators to identify eligible recipients and proactively provide these students with cards in an appropriate manner. School districts should already have a list of recipients of the Federal Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program, the qualifying criteria for the Illinois Cards for Kids program.

A suggested process looks like this: Library staff provides an explanatory document regarding the program for school staff to distribute to qualifying families. School staff can find ways to authenticate these documents via stamps, numbering, etc. to prevent/identify duplication of the document. Recipient families then bring the authentic document to the library to obtain a library card.

“The library was a safe haven for me growing up in an impoverished home and, in many ways, it saved my life.”

There are, undoubtedly, other challenges that will arise with the implementation of this program, including bigger issues like accessibility and transportation for children that live outside city or library district limits; however, integrating these practices is a start and will go a long way toward reducing the potential for shame associated with the Illinois Cards for Kids program and ultimately with poverty overall.

The library was a safe haven for me growing up in an impoverished home and, in many ways, it saved my life. It is the reason I am so involved at my own public library, the same library that I called home as a child, and with the Illinois Heartland Library System. It is my hope that, with careful, thoughtful implementation, the Cards for Kids Act will provide the same opportunity for safety, learning, and equality without becoming another little green chip. With your help, an inclusive, shame-free environment where children can discover all that their library can offer them, is possible. **ILA**

The Soon to Be Famous Illinois Author Project: Eight Years Old and Growing

Libraries are not only where stories live, they are where stories are discovered, shared, and even created.

For the past eight years, the Soon to Be Famous Illinois Author Project (STBF), the brainchild of a small group of library marketing professionals, has uncovered hundreds of stories written by indie/self-published authors and introduced them to library patrons who have enthusiastically received them.

Originally inspired by a talk by New York University professor and branding expert David Vinjamuri at the 2013 ALA Annual Conference, this small group decided to take up the challenge that Vinjamuri threw down: to demonstrate the importance and power of libraries and librarians, especially in the age of e-books and increasingly accessible and affordable self-publication, by lifting an unknown author to prominence—to make them “famous.” With that, the Soon to Be Famous (STBF) Illinois Author Project was born. Dozens of librarians signed on to contribute their time and expertise to be volunteer judges. Without their hard work, it’s very likely that very few, if any of these great reads would have found their way to library shelves and recommended by librarians. What’s happened with the project since it kicked off in 2014?

PROJECT EXPANSION

With a few years of the project under our belts, in 2019 we decided to add a Young Adult category to the contest to include more authors. Our inaugural YA winner was Lauren Eckhardt for *The Remedy Files: Illusion*.

While it was exciting to be able to boost self-published authors by promoting them at conferences and library events, we wondered if there were other ways we could support our local writing community. The answer was to take a step back and meet authors before publication by establishing an Unpublished Manuscript Contest. Instead of a cash prize and promotion at library events, winners of the Manuscript Contest receive the services of a line editor and cover design. Again, this opened the door to a new group of authors.

In 2019, Hollie Smurthwaite won our first Manuscript Contest with her story *The Color of Trauma*. One other perk of the Manuscript Contest is, that if the winning author self-publishes their manuscript, it is automatically entered in the following year’s self-published book contest as a semi-finalist. Hollie followed this path and ended up winning the self-published book contest in 2020.



Annemarie Mannion
Winner STBF Manuscript Contest



India Powers
Winner STBF Adult Fiction Contest



Otto Schafer
Winner STBF Young Adult Fiction
Contest



Pascuala Herrera
Winner De La Pagina a la Fama
Spanish Language Contest

2022 Contest Winners

soon to be famous™
Illinois Author Project



The idea of a Spanish language category for the contest has been on our minds for some time. To our delight, last year we were approached by librarians from a Hispanic networking group called HOLA offering to help us expand the contest to Spanish language literature. Led by Claudia Baranowski of the Schaumburg Public Library and Tina Viglucci of Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin, this group hit the ground running, publicizing the new contest dubbed “*De la Página a la Fama*,” and recruiting Spanish-speaking judges. This past November we were thrilled to award the inaugural *de la Página a la Fama* award to Pascuala Herrera of Franklin Park for her memoir *No siempre es un valle de lágrimas*.

INCREASED REGIONAL AND POTENTIAL NATIONAL EXPOSURE FOR WINNERS

Through our partnership with BiblioLabs and the Reaching Across Illinois Library System, we were able to offer our authors increased “discoverability” of their work. Contest participants now may have their books included in online platforms such as OverDrive, Axis 360, DPLA Exchange, and cloudLibrary, and may earn royalties based on number of checkouts.

There is also an opportunity for national recognition for our winners. Since its inception, the STBF Illinois Author Project has inspired 16 other states and two Canadian provinces to establish their own indie author contests. In 2018, these state/province contests, collectively known as the Indie Author Project, offered all contest winners the opportunity to compete for national recognition as Indie Author of the Year.

The 2021 Indie Author of the Year is Amy Rivers from the Lafayette Public Library in Lafayette, Colorado for her novel *All the Broken People*. Upon winning, she said, “I am so very honored to be named 2021 Indie Author of the Year. This program combines two of my biggest passions: writing and libraries. I am looking forward to a year of learning, growing, and sharing. I just can’t say thank you enough.” Our congratulations to Amy!

A COMMUNITY IS FORMED

Over the years, we’ve had the pleasure of hosting many live and (more recently) online conversations with our authors. There seems to be a pattern to these gatherings. At the beginning, the moderator asks questions and each author answers, but before

long, they’re asking questions of each other, clearly excited to be able to share their experiences, questions, and feelings about what can be a pretty solitary pursuit. At a recent presentation, as we were closing, one of the participating authors said, “I could have talked with you all for another hour!” We may not have thought that creating a special community of writers was one of our primary goals for the Soon to Be Famous Illinois Author Project, but we’re very heartened to see it happening.

WHAT’S NEXT?

As we gear up for the judging phase of the 2022 Manuscript Contest, and prepare to receive entries for the 2022 Adult, YA, and Spanish language contests, there is planning in the works for even more additions. Watch for a Spanish language manuscript contest, and possibly a short form contest for all our categories. Sign up for our newsletter at soontobefamous.info for all the latest information.

Finally, we’d love for you to join us. We always welcome new folks to the STBF Committee, so think about joining this fun group! Contact any member of the team for more information:

Eva Baggili, Chicago Ridge Public Library,
ebaggili@chicagoridgelibrary.org

Claudia Baranowski, Schaumburg Public Library,
cbaranowski@stdl.org

Jeffrey Fisher, retired from Fountaindale Public Library,
ghotipress@gmail.com


Gretchen Murphy, Wheaton Public Library,
gmurphy@wheatonlibrary.org

Denise Raleigh, Gail Borden Public Library,
draleigh@gailborden.info

Lucy Tarabour, Clarendon Hills Public Library,
publicity@clarendonhillslibrary.org

Tina Viglucci, Gail Borden Public Library,
tviglucci@gailborden.info

Nicole Zimmermann, Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), nicole.zimmermann@railslibraries.info

For more information, please visit soontobefamous.info. 

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ILA Candidates for 2022

The Nominating Committee has announced the candidates for election in the spring of 2022.

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATES

(three-year term beginning July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025)

Victoria Blackmer, Robert R. Jones Library District, Coal Valley
Ryan Johnson, O'Fallon Public Library

Any ILA member wishing to be added to the ballot by petition shall be added to the slate and placed in the paired candidate group that most clearly matches the affiliations of the petitioner as determined by the Nominating Committee. Petition candidates for vice president/president-elect will be added to the presidential slate as requested.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(three-year term beginning July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025)

A candidate from each pairing will be elected in accordance with the ILA bylaws as amended at the 1998 ILA Annual Conference; a total of four directors will be elected to serve three-year terms on the ILA Executive Board.

Nominations by petition for an elective office shall be proposed in writing by at least one hundred (100) personal members of the association and delivered to the Executive Office by March 1. Candidates nominated by petition shall be added to the slate and placed in the candidate group that most clearly matches the affiliation of the petitioner. The determination of placement on the slate is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Jamie Paicely, Chicago Heights Public Library
Becky Spratford, LaGrange Public Library

The polls will open electronically April 1, 2022. In addition, paper ballots will be sent to persons requesting one. The return deadline is thirty days after the ballot is postmarked. The electronic polls will close April 30.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Sophie Kenney, Glen Ellyn Public Library
TKTK

Serving on the Nominating Committee are Veronica De Fazio (chair), Trixie Dantis, Roberta Richter, Diana Brawley Sussman, Colleen Waltman, and Lisa Williams.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Alex Todd, Prospect Heights Public Library
Sara Zumwalt, Litchfield Public Library

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:

Lisa Butler, Wilmington Public Library District
Esther Curry, C. E. Brehm Memorial Public Library District,
Mt. Vernon





MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

"Because of my association with LIRA, I am a more sophisticated professional and steward for the library and community. I've learned more than I had in almost 30 years working in libraries about safeguarding community assets as a direct result of my involvement with LIRA. Hopefully, additional Illinois libraries will come to understand LIRA is more than insurance; it's a community pulling for each other, contributing to a greater good, and ensuring all are stronger, safer, smarter, and better as a result."

– Tina Hubert, Six Mile Public Library

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ILA Welcomes New Members

On behalf of the ILA community, Executive Board, and staff we would like to welcome our recent new members. We hope as a member of ILA you contribute, grow, and thrive within the library profession and the ILA community; and support ILA's continuing efforts to create and promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

TRUSTEE MEMBERS

Deborah Arendt, Poplar Creek Public Library District
Kim Kiyosaki, Hinsdale Public Library
Mary Krebs, Eisenhower Public Library District
Linda Lin, Glencoe Public Library
Judy Looby, Charleston Carnegie Public Library
Megan Mikhail, Hinsdale Public Library
Denise Wong, Hinsdale Public Library

PERSONAL MEMBERS

Aaron Bock, Schaumburg Township District Library
David Briggs, Harvey
Cara Forster, Loyola University of Chicago
Heather Glass, Elgin Community College
Elizabeth Hultman, Elgin Community College
Jade Kastel, Western Illinois University
Laura Kirk, Chicago Public Library
Miles Schwartz, Northbrook Public Library

STUDENT MEMBERS

Mary Austin, Highland
Kaitlyn Bettner Broughton, Princeton
Sydney Clark, Northfield
Megan Conlon, Mount Prospect
Kara Forde, Urbana
Nathaniel Fortmeyer, Carbondale
Victoria Gellman, Urbana
Marlee Graser, Glen Carbon
Robin Hartsell, Chicago
Elisabeth Nuchowich, Wheaton
Karli Pettifer, Champaign
Melissa Reynolds, Westchester
Adreanna Tyson, Chicago
Cynthia Wade, Urbana
Adam Whitwell, Aurora

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New Illinois Library Luminary: Kathryn Harris



Kathryn Harris is a tremendous force for good in Springfield, Illinois, her hometown for five decades. Her commitment to scholarship, especially the sharing of her remarkable research of abolitionist Harriet Tubman, is a continuation of her life's work around history and exploration. A native of Carbondale, Harris earned a degree in French, with a concentration in education, from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and a master's in library science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Harris served as the director of library services at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield from 1990-2015. Prior to that, her experience includes stints at the Illinois State Library, Southern Illinois University, and the Lincoln Library. Since her retirement in 2015, Kathryn spends her time volunteering in the community, including vibrant portrayals of Harriet Tubman. In February 2021, she received the Illinois Treasurer's Office Black History Month Award for Outstanding Service in Arts and Humanity. She was recognized in 2020 by the State Journal-Register as the First Citizen Award winner, an award that recognizes Springfield-area residents who give selflessly of their time and resources in service to others.

Harris has served on the Illinois Humanities Council, the Springfield mayor's study circles on race, and the city's zoning commission. She was the first African American and woman to be president of the Abraham Lincoln Association. She holds "distinguished alumnae" honors from the universities she attended and received the Webster plaque from the Springfield Branch NAACP. She has been interviewed many times by the media, always with acknowledgments for her many professional and volunteer accomplishments. Kathryn is someone who is dedicated to her family, community, and profession.

Inducted September 23, 2021

After two years of being apart, we look forward to meeting in person in 2022.
Visit ila.org/events for more information on ILA's upcoming events.
If you have any questions, please contact ila@ila.org.

REACHING FORWARD / SOUTH

Reaching Forward South ▶ Friday, April 8, 2022

I Hotel and Conference Center | 1900 S. 1st Street, Champaign

R E A C H I N G FORWARD

Reaching Forward ▶ Friday, May 6, 2022

Donald E. Stephens Convention Center | 5555 North River Road, Rosemont



2022 ILA Annual Conference ▶ October 18–20, 2022

Donald E. Stephens Convention Center | 5555 North River Road, Rosemont

COVID-19 Safety Measures

The well-being of our participants is ILA's top priority and we will continue to monitor and respond to the situation. ILA will be working closely with the event venues to follow state and local safety measures and provide the safest environment. Visit the ILA website for information on each event.



Illinois Library Association



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