



Association
of Law
Librarians of **ALLUNY**
Upstate New York

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Issue Highlights:

- Ella Pieterse Said Take Notes: My Overview of the ALLUNY Spring Institute
- Legal Research: Not Just for Law School Anymore

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Message From the Co-President
Chris Lund

Welcome to the second issue of our newly renovated quarterly ALLUNY Newsletter! We've had a few more busy months, so we once again have lots of great content for you.

Our biggest event since the last issue was our April 25th Spring Institute, focusing on the Pipeline to the Profession. If you weren't able to attend, or if you're just nostalgic for all the fun you had that day, don't fret. We've got you covered with an extensive recap written by **Nichole McCarthy**. And on a similar note, we've got an excellent example of our grant programs at work in the form of **Angela Ackerman's** discussion of her experience participating in the six-week Legal Research Institute Program run by our fellow regional chapter, the Law Librarians of New England.



On the outreach & advocacy front, I'm happy to announce that, for the first time in years, ALLUNY now has an active Government Relations Committee, which is chaired by one of our newest members, **Ella Pieterse**. The committee had its first official meeting on May 27th, and the minutes from that meeting are included within. We're also stepping into the world a bit by sending some members to table at a June 14th Pride Parade, as coordinated by our Vice President **Kristin Neri**.

For an update from the society pages, we have secured a date, time, and room for our joint reception with LLAGNY (NYC area chapter) and NJLLA (New Jersey chapter) at this year's annual AALL Conference. We'll be meeting in Deschutes A Room, Level One, in the Hyatt on Monday, July 21st, from 6:00pm—8:00pm. Due to an unexpected change in personal circumstances, I myself won't be able to attend this year, but I'm looking forward to seeing the pictures and hearing the stories!

Lastly, if you're still reading by this point, that means you're probably a dedicated ALLUNY member, so this request is aimed at you—please consider throwing your name into the ring to run for Vice-President / President Elect for the 2025-2026 term. This organization can only survive if we maintain a roster of willing, dedicated volunteers. As somebody who has previously served in this role, I can assure you that it is very rewarding, and not nearly as intimidating as it may seem at first glance. If interested, please reach out either directly to me, to my Co-President **Karen Oesterle**, or to our nominations chair, Past President **Jessica Petitto**.

Thanks as always,

Chris

clund@nycourts.gov

Ella Pieterse Said Take Notes: My Overview of the ALLUNY Spring Institute By Nichole McCarthy



The Association of Law Libraries of Upstate New York (ALLUNY) held its Spring Institute on Friday, April 25th at Syracuse University College of Law with a Zoom choice online for those who could not attend in person. The institute was aptly titled “Finding Future Law Librarians: Promoting the Profession, Mentoring, Networking, Hiring” and students were welcomed to attend at no cost. Speakers and panelists from several backgrounds discussed what they are doing to recruit, barriers to entry and recruitment, and their own personal experiences with learning about and entering the field. I sat front and center the entire conference, and I took Ella Pieterse’s advice on her pathway to the profession and took notes; here are my highlights:

The first panel just after 10:00 am titled “Building the Pipeline Through Alternate Routes” was moderated by Christine Demetros, Assistant Director for Student Learning Syracuse University College of Law Library. The panelists were: B. Austin Waters, Law Librarian for University at Buffalo State University of New York, Dafni Kiritsis, Director of Externships and Career Services at Syracuse University College of Law, Yarden Wallace, a student at Syracuse University iSchool, and Patti Bevans, Director of Career Services at Syracuse University iSchool.

This was a lively and engaging panel on law librarian recruitment, but also how to appropriately market the career to those who may be interested. Many students do not know that law librarianship is a career, let alone an option for them. So, how do we reach them? Some of the highlights and suggestions are: marketing the field early to undergraduate students, social media ambassadors from communications schools, LinkedIn, student employment/internships, and externships in law libraries. These panelists discussed facilitating relationships with faculty and introduced the association with the acronym name GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums), so we really do learn something new every day.

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2025 AALL ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

ALLUNY/LLAGNY/NJLLA Tri-Chapter Meeting

Monday, July 21, 2025 from 6:00pm-8:00pm
Hyatt, Level One, Deschutes A room

Dear ALLUNY Members,

If you find yourself in Portland next month, please join us for a get-together on Monday evening! We are reviving the long-lived tradition of hosting a joint meeting for three NY-linked chapters and we hope to see you there.

Please make certain to RSVP to koesterle@pli.edu by July 7th.
Thank you, and safe travels!

Chris Lund and Karen Oesterle
ALLUNY Co-Presidents on Behalf of ALLUNY Board of Directors



Spring Institute, cont'd

Shortly after this discussion, Ella Pieterse presented on “Finding My Path to Law Librarianship.” Ella is a newly hired law library assistant for the New York State Unified Court System, and an incoming MLIS student at the University of Buffalo. Ella initially wanted to be a paralegal, then applied to a local library and got the job. Ella knew she wanted to work in libraries after this, but did not know about law libraries until she was told about them by a coworker. Ella connected with ALLUNY members Chris Lund and Allison Perry, who stressed the importance of networking. Ella connected with Beth Adelman at University of Buffalo and joined the ALLUNY spring institute planning committee. All of these (and more) connections helped guide her towards a career plan, the appropriate library science degree program, and the job she was looking for. Ella’s best advice was to network and take notes!

Immediately following Ella, Kristina Alayan discussed the AALL Mentorship Program. Kristina is the Associate Dean for Library and Technology and Law School Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, Francis King Carey School of Law. Kristina has been involved in the AALL Mentorship program for several years. The program is free to all AALL members, and members are able to become mentors or mentees. Members who sign up are matched based on the selections that they make, and a cohort also mentors each other. Highlights of this open discussion were that so many of us feel like we are not “experts” in our field to provide mentorship, but we all have a lot to offer. These types of programs provide safe spaces for us to communicate, learn, and vent, and it fosters community in this field.

We took a break for lunch, and committee members stayed around to monitor the chat in case any remote members had questions or wanted to chat with anyone.

After lunch, Teresa Miguel-Stearns, Associate Dean of Legal Information Innovation, Director of the Daniel F. Cracchiolo Law Library & Professor of Law at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, held a wonderful discussion titled “Reaching the Next Generation of Law Librarians.” Just weeks prior to this conference, and halfway through a three year IMLS grant on expanding pathways to law librarianship, the grant was terminated for the National Law Library Fellows Program at the Daniel F. Cracchiolo Law Library at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law. Of course this is devastating news for all law librarians, especially those whose futures are immediately impacted by such a decision.

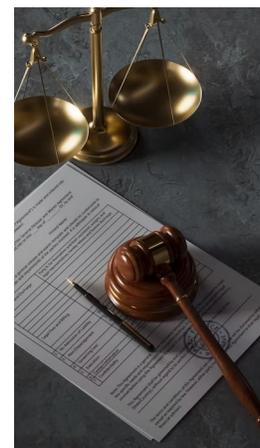
Teresa discussed two key points: Why we might *want* to increase access to law librarianship and why we *need* to increase access to law librarianship. We want to increase access to law librarianship because it is a great profession, so many of us are satisfied with our careers, and it is rewarding work. However, we also need to increase access because there simply are not enough law librarians to fill vacancies. Teresa went through the data (as we librarians love to do and see). AALL membership data shows a steady decline in membership. In that decline, law librarians are retiring at higher rates than new members are joining. With these declines in memberships we see more and more employers reporting difficulty filling positions, and what happens when we don’t fill positions? Burnout! Many of us have been there and it is a bad experience for everyone involved. Of course, the National Law Library Fellows Program was directly addressing this issue of reducing barriers and increasing access to the profession. It is incredibly heartbreaking, demoralizing, and discouraging to encounter such a barrier to an important program and profession. While we lack this creative and flexible support, that is exactly what we must all do, be as creative and flexible as we can while considering our outreach and recruitment.

Teresa mentioned toward the end of the discussion how she had never really posted on LinkedIn prior to the unilateral termination of the IMLS grant for the fellowship, and she had begun utilizing that platform as a way to speak out. As a *Certified LinkedIn Lurker* myself, I think we all should be considering this. Not just utilizing LinkedIn to speak out, but to strengthen and support our own community, to market ourselves and our work. When I say we all, yes all law librarians, but also our professional organizations; share job postings with your network, create group discussions, create intern alumni networking groups, organize meetups and informal networking nights, share your experiences and what you are doing. It has become very apparent in all of our discussions up to this point that we are trapped in our own echo chambers, we are not reaching outward, and we could do a lot better at creating a community and a network that folks want to be a part of.

After Teresa’s passionate discussion, Diana Koppang and Carla Wale joined us virtually to talk about the AALL Pipeline to the Profession Special Committee. Diana is the Director of Research & Competitive Intelligence with Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP, and Carla Wale is a Teaching Professor, Associate Dean of Information and Technology, Director of the Gallagher Law Library, and Director of the MLIS program with the School of Law & Information School at the University of Washington.

Diana began by discussing the common misperceptions that all law librarians are required to have both a JD and a MLIS, and that the pay is not great. Part of future recruitment strategies should include demystifying this and making the profession less intimidating to those who are unaware of the work involved and the requirements.

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“So many of us feel like we are not ‘experts’ in our field to provide mentorship, but we all have a lot to offer.”

Spring Institute, cont'd



“Creating more flexibility in education and experience and demystifying the requirements to become a law librarian are critically important.”

The Pipeline to the Profession program was created and a final report was submitted including some insightful findings, which Carla and Diana both reviewed in this session. Some of these are: Exploring better ways to serve and liaise with students; an acknowledgment that we have a “cart before the horse” situation where programs will not offer courses if there is no demand, how do we pique interest and recruit students early if there are no courses offered?; we all need to promote the benefits and versatility of the degrees, establish partnerships with schools, find ways to have flexibility with hiring graduate students and offering mentorship, stop with the “unicorn” job postings that are so oddly specific that no one applies, PAY - Please pay law librarians fairly, and reduce the silos between the AALL special interest sections (SISs).

Diana went on to discuss that we are in essence preaching to the choir at this point. Many of the folks we are reaching had already found us. How do we get out of our echo chamber and reach those outside of the profession? Carla jumped in to state that marketing our profession is critical and I couldn't agree more.

We wrapped up the day with an open panel discussion on finding your career path. Allison Perry, Research and Information Services Manager with Bond Schoeneck & King; Jessica Pettito, Technical Services Librarian with Syracuse University College of Law Library, Erin Kovalsky, Principal Law Librarian with the 5th JD of the New York State Unified Court System; Nikki DiNatale, Knowledge and Research Consultant with LexisNexis; and Chris Lund, ALLUNY Co-President, discussed some barriers to entry as well as the incentives to entry, which looks different depending on which sector of law librarianship you are in.

While there are some things that should change like rigid and archaic civil service requirements, creating more flexibility in education and experience and demystifying the requirements to become a law librarian are critically important. Sometimes learning more about which practice of law librarianship you are coming from or going into may draw more folks from different backgrounds. For law firms, Allison Perry explained that many firm law librarians become a “jack of all trades” and there is a need for versatility; there are also “embedded librarians” that serve a specific practice group.

My final thoughts: This was such a lively and engaging day. Everyone was so motivated to learn and to share their experiences, and that is a good look for us. We *all* have a responsibility here; we cannot leave these resolutions to any particular professional organization, and many of us are involved in these organizations, whether that is AALL or a regional chapter, like ALLUNY. This institute started with marketing, ended with marketing, and this was a theme throughout. It is up to us to speak up, to network, to be open to connection, and to communicate with others on what we are doing. Let's all get on LinkedIn and make ourselves available to create the community we want to see.

With sincere appreciation,
Nichole M. McCarthy

ALLUNY's Quarterly Lunch-n-Learn Recap

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

17 librarians from all over upstate New York attended, along with several from New York City and one from Washington State. A lively discussion ensued with topics ranging from vacation plans to recent AALL activity to multiple aspects of Artificial Intelligence. Two librarians on the call connected over traveling to China and we are all eager to see how AALL goes this year, given recent changes.

Concerning AI, we talked about usage patterns and tasks, Elyssa Valenti Kroski's recent webinar on AI Prompt Engineering, and how several individuals on the call have used AI. We shared how applying different prompts and filters to manage our AI results has worked for us, and closed after exploring what the next generation of AI might bring.

The next Lunch-n-Learn will be held on Wednesday, September 10th. Watch your email for an invitation!

Karen Oesterle
Co-President

Legal Research: Not Just for Law School Anymore

By Angela Ackerman

Thanks to the generous support of the [ALLUNY Miscellaneous Program Grant](#), I had the opportunity to participate in the 2025 Law Librarians of New England (LLNE) [Legal Research Instruction Program](#)—a six-week intensive designed to equip librarians with foundational skills in legal research. Held entirely online, the program blended synchronous Zoom sessions with asynchronous modules, offering a comprehensive and flexible learning experience led by an inspiring cohort of law librarians.

Running from March 19 through April 23, 2025, each Wednesday evening session covered a cornerstone of U.S. legal research. From dissecting the structure of federal and state court systems to demystifying statutes, administrative law, and legislative history, the instruction was both rigorous and remarkably accessible. I especially appreciated the thoughtful design of the curriculum: sessions paired theoretical grounding with hands-on exploration of legal databases like Westlaw and Lexis+, while also emphasizing low-cost and open access alternatives.

What made the program stand out wasn't just the content—it was the community. The instructor modeled best practices in pedagogy and brought warmth, humor, and candor to the virtual classroom. He encouraged discussion, posed real-world hypotheticals, and shared insights that made the research process come alive. As someone who entered the information profession from a non-traditional background—including health, nonprofit, and corporate sectors—I found the course empowering and immediately relevant to reference work in both special and academic libraries.

The asynchronous modules added further depth, offering guided tutorials and curated resources I continue to revisit. After the course concluded, continued access through May 31, 2025 included optional certifications through Westlaw and Lexis, allowing participants to reinforce their learning and build demonstrable skills for the workplace.

I'm deeply grateful to ALLUNY for making this experience possible. The LLNE program not only sharpened my research abilities but also expanded my understanding of how legal information professionals serve justice, equity, and civic engagement. I would enthusiastically recommend this program to anyone looking to deepen their expertise—or chart a new course—in legal librarianship.



Manlius Pride

Saturday, June 14, 2025
12:00-5:00 PM

ALLUNY partnered with a host of wonderful organizations and individuals to celebrate Pride for the first time. We hosted a table at Manlius Pride alongside the Pride Alliance of NYS Courts. Thank you so much to everyone who came out to support and celebrate our LGBTQ+ communities.

2025 CNY Pride Festival & Parade

Saturday, June 21, 2025
11:00 AM start time

ALLUNY will be joining the Pride Alliance of the New York State Courts to march in the parade. This year's theme is Revolutionary Love. The parade kicks off from the Destiny Mall Pink Lot, proceeds along Solar Street and Kirkpatrick Street for 0.75 miles on paved city streets, ending at the festival grounds at Progress Park.

Please sign up [here](#) to participate.



March in the 2025 CNY Pride Parade

The 5th Judicial District is joining the Pride Alliance of the New York State Courts & the Association of Law Librarians of Upstate New York to march in the CNY Pride Parade to celebrate this year's theme: Revolutionary Love.



CNY Pride 2025
Progress Park, Inner Harbor, SYR



Sign up



ALLUNY Board Meeting Minutes March 3, 2025 (Approved April 28, 2025)



ALLUNY Meeting

Held on Zoom

Monday, March 3, 2025

Present: Christine Demetros, Jessica Petitto, Angela Patti, Allison Perry, Nichole McCarthy, Chris Lund, Karen Oesterle, Lisa Worhacz, Kristin Neri, Olli Baker

Meeting called to order at 10:02 AM (Oesterle)

Old Business

- Spring Institute summary
 - Pipeline to profession based title/topic with focus on finding future law librarians, promoting the profession, mentoring, and networking.
 - Reviewed confirmed speakers and topics (e.g., AZ Fellowship Program; AALL pipeline initiatives; how to create a pipeline from high school on; SU career services; Library to Law Library; Law degree to Library).
 - Already posted April 25 Save-the-Date.
 - Draft agenda and schedule in progress.
- Newsletter update
 - Newsletter committee designed a template.
 - First issue forthcoming, possibly in March.

New Business

- Discussed AALL's role as advocate to promote open, equitable, and reliable access to legal information as outlined in the AALL Guiding Principles for Public Access to Legal Information on Government Websites.
 - Discussed AALL's current silence on preserving government websites, documents, and information.
 - Attendees expressed that AALL members are unhappy and asked how this would/could affect ALLUNY as a chapter.
- Thanks to Angela Patti for managing membership renewals.

Announcements

- Next Lunch and Learn will be Thursday, March 12.

Adjourned 10:20 (Oesterle)

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Worhacz, Secretary

ALLUNY Government Relations & Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes May 27, 2025

ALLUNY Government Relations & Advocacy Committee (GR/A)

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 27, 2025

Time: 1:30 PM

Attendees: Ella Pieterse, Kristin Neri, Chris Lund, Elaina Brown, Michael Ginsborg

Primary Goal

The committee's current top priority is to establish regular procedures for:

- Gathering relevant information
- Defining subject areas to monitor
- Determining what types of developments to track (e.g., legislation, litigation, access to legal information)
- Developing methods for distributing information to members
- Posting regularly in the ALLUNY newsletter

1. Committee Role

- Agreed the GR/A Committee should focus on informing membership about:
 - Pending or enacted legislation
 - Legal actions impacting libraries and law firms
 - Broader access to legal information
- Supportive of strong advocacy when appropriate, but will review ALLUNY Operations Manual before taking public positions.
- Any updates to committee operations must be approved by the ALLUNY Board.

2. Communication Channels

- The committee will use Gmail as the primary communication tool for collaboration.

3. Newsletter Strategy

- Focus content on:
 - Pending legislation relevant to law libraries and law firms
 - Litigation or policy changes impacting access to legal resources
- Past GR/A newsletter contributions can be found in the HeinOnline archives.

4. Meeting Frequency

- The committee will meet monthly, with a standing meeting time of Tuesdays at 1:30 PM.

5. Success Metrics (Next 12 Months). Success for the committee by May 2026 will look like:

- A defined set of procedures for:
 - Tracking developments
 - Identifying subject areas
 - Sharing information
- Quarterly newsletter participation from GR/A
- Developments of a tracking spreadsheet for legislation
- Possibly: a guide to accessible legal research resources (informal format)
- Possibly: a training webinar for ALLUNY members on advocacy or legal information access
- Delivering a one-hour session at the ALLUNY Fall Institute
- Other resources & ideas

Action Items

- Review ALLUNY Operations Manual
- Start draft of procedures for monitoring and distributing info
- Explore format for legislative tracking spreadsheet
- Locate past GR/A newsletter entries on HeinOnline

Next Meeting: 6/17/2025 1:30 PM EST



Member News



Welcome to the following new members, who have joined ALLUNY since our last issue:

- Matthew Walker
- Angela Ackerman
- Anna Russell

New Committee Chairs:

- Membership Committee — Angela Patti has graciously agreed to take over the Membership Committee for the remainder of this election cycle. We are looking for a new volunteer for this position beginning this fall after the Annual Meeting.
- Government Relations/Advocacy Committee — new member Ella Pieterse has volunteered to get this dormant committee up and running again, along with a motivated group of people. If you are interested in joining, please send her an email to find out more.

Job changes

- Ella Pieterse has recently started a new position as a Law Library Assistant in the Rockland County Supreme Court Law Library

If you've recently presented at a conference, authored a new publication, changed jobs or job title, or if have any other news you'd like to share, please submit your updates to Newsletter Editor Melissa Sievers or to Newsletter Committee Member Chris Lund

HAPPY SUMMER



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Newsletter: Melissa Sievers
Public Relations: Sue Ludington
Social Media: Laura Suttell
Website: Melissa Sievers

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Vendors & Corporate Sponsors:
Jessica Petitto

Government Relations/ Advocacy

Chair: Ella Pieterse

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Membership: Angela Patti
Elections: Nina Scholtz
Grants & Awards: Karen Oes-
terle
Nominations: Jessica Petitto

Parliamentarian

Chair: Nichole McCarthy

