



Association of Law Libraries of ALLUNY Upstate New York

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September, 2025

Issue Highlights:

- Save the Date: ALLUNY Annual Meeting, October 24, 2025
- AALL Conference Recap
- Updates from the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee

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Message From the Co-President Karen Oesterle

It is hard to believe it's September and time for school to begin. Many law schools began classes in August and time seems to be flying. Our 2025 Annual Meeting will take place on Friday, October 24th in Getzville, NY and will be hosted by the grand folks at Hein. I hope to see many of you there in person or on Zoom. We have not been in Albany since the Fall of 2019 but we want to get back there soon for a future event!!

In July I enjoyed attending the 2025 AALL Conference. Before the event began with the Opening Reception, I visited the [Portland Art Museum](#) to view the "Monet to Matisse: French Moderns" exhibit, including around 60 masterpieces. It was stunning and made for a wonderful beginning to the weekend. Included below are a few snapshots of notable artworks from this exhibit and from the outstanding regular collection.



Walking back to the convention hotel, I stopped at the Portland Pride Waterfront Festival 2025 at Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Booths and groups offered a multitude of swag, sweets, and useful items, of which I am still using the rainbow fan, rubber wristband, and pen. The atmosphere was bright and enthusiastic and fit right in with our law librarian exhortation to **Be Bold!** Pictured at left is a very cool piece of street art I spotted nearby.

The Saturday evening reception was a delight. Seeing long-time friends from all across the US was a real pleasure. The shop at the Convention Center Hyatt also made creative use of an old card catalog, shown at right. The high point of the conference for me was Sunday morning when our keynote speaker, Fort Bend County Libraries System Library Director [Roosevelt Weeks](#), gave a stirring speech. He encouraged us to be bold and reminded us of key responsibilities to our patrons, our institutions, and our communities. Some of his slides are pictured below, and if you're an AALL member, you can watch his full address through [the AALL eLearning page](#).



THE ROLE OF LAW LIBRARIES

- Law libraries are at the heart of the legal ecosystem;
- Central to access to justice and the democratization of legal information;
- Support legal research, education, and practice with vital resources;
- Key contributors to legal technology adoption and development.

Be Bold in Standing Up for Library Values

- Defend the principles that sustain justice and democracy
- Intellectual freedom is non-negotiable
- Patron privacy in a digital age
- Demonstrate library value amidst financial constraints

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Message From the Co-President (Continued from Page 1)



L to R: Madeline Cohen (Bloomberg Industry Group's Library Relations Director); Jim Currie (LLAGNY President); and Eileen Dolan (ALLUNY and LLAGNY member)

The rest of the conference flew by. On Monday night, ALLUNY hosted a joint reception with LLAGNY and NJLLA. An enthusiastic crowd showed up. Bloomberg generously sponsored our event and Madeline Cohen from Bloomberg brought along several colleagues. All had a great time, and we'd love to renew this as an annual event going forward.

I have been thinking about where ALLUNY stood three short years ago in the Fall of 2022. Our beloved Jay Deveau stepped up and hosted the Annual Meeting, featuring the outstanding speakers Rebecca Chapman of SUNY Buffalo Law; Bob Weiner and John Olson of the Law Library and the E.S. Bird Library at Syracuse University; Vin Bonventre of Albany Law School, the Center for Judicial Process, and the New York Court Watcher; and Sue Ludington of the New York State Unified Court System.

ALLUNY'S future was uncertain and Jay and Elaine Knecht shared several options with attendees. If a full slate of candidates volunteered to serve on the Board and keep ALLUNY going, the association would continue. If not, the association could merge with another association or close. Suffice it to say that enough people stepped up to serve on the Board and we are now strong and healthy with lots of new members. Several new law librarians hold positions as Board members, Committee chairs, and Parliamentarian, and others will become officers and Board members in October.

It is exciting to see these changes and the new energy and ideas among the association, and we thank each person who has given their time, energy, ideas, and talents to benefit ALLUNY during these past three years. We honor the few who kept ALLUNY going during the pandemic and thank you for your faithfulness, perseverance, and service. We owe you a debt and gratefully acknowledge this fact. We remember generous and hardworking Debbie Simonik and were pleased to make memorial donations in her name to the AALL Scholarship Fund.

Hope to see many of you in Getzville or on Zoom next month to mark the 2025 Annual Meeting and set out on a new path with a transformed Executive Board. Thanks to each one of you.



Save the Date!

Friday, Oct 24, 2025

2025 ALLUNY ANNUAL MEETING

Meeting Location:

William S. Hein & Co., Getzville (near Buffalo), NY & Virtual on Zoom

Explore how Law Librarians and legal information professionals use tools like Springshare© to design impactful research resources and ensure they actually get used! Learn practical strategies for building, promoting, and updating sustainable tools that connect users with the information they need most.

“Learn practical strategies for building, promoting, and updating sustainable tools that connect users with the information they need most.”

Questions?

- Contact: Kristin K. Neri, Vice President
- kneri@nycourts.gov | (315) 671-1150



2025 ALLUNY Election Results

Thank you to all 35 of you who voted in this year's elections! The results are in:

- Vice President/President Elect: **Ella Pieterse** (2025-2028)
- Secretary: **Lisa Worhacz** (2025-2027)
- Treasurer: **Angela Patti** (2025-2027)
- Board of Directors: **Olli Baker** (2025-2027)
- Board of Directors: **Yage Huang** (2025-2027)

Congratulations to all of our winners. We'd like to welcome Ella and Yage, who will be joining us for the first time as new board members, as well as welcoming back Lisa, Angela, and Olli, who were all re-elected to new terms for their current positions. The new Board will take office at the close of our Annual Meeting on October 24th.

Call for Lifetime Member Nominations

With our Annual Meeting rapidly approaching, we are seeking nominations for Lifetime Members. Per Article 1, Section 1(c) of our Bylaws, *"The Association may, at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present, elect to life membership those who have retired from active library work."*

If there is anybody you'd like to nominate for Lifetime Membership, please reach out to Chris or Karen.

Member News

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

- Michele Coolbeth
- Amanda McCormick

In July, Kristin Neri, Law Librarian at the Onondaga County Supreme Court Law Library, was selected as the AALL Diversity & Inclusion Committee's July Member of the Month. Kristin is dedicated to expanding public access to legal information. She supports the NYS Unified Court System's "Ask a Law Librarian" service and contributes to statewide initiatives that improve access through helplines and public terminals. An active leader in the profession, she serves as secretary/treasurer of AALL's Social Responsibilities Special Interest Section and participates in multiple committees on government law libraries, legal history, neurodiversity, disability, and LGBTQ+ issues. [Read her full profile here.](#)

In October, Chris Lund will be taking over as Chair of AALL's Government Relations Committee. He will serve in this role for the remaining nine months of the term of the current chair of the committee, who will be stepping down to serve in another role.

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





AALL Conference Recap

By Nichole McCarthy

I attended the AALL Annual Conference in Portland, Oregon from July 19th through the 22nd. The theme was “Be Bold.” While I primarily focused on the “Tech Track” of sessions, I was **bold** and explored other sessions and social events that offered practical value for my own professional growth. Those smaller, unexpected moments often proved just as valuable as the conference sessions in advancing my primary goals of continuing education and professional networking.

Tour! at the Library

I began with a tour of the Multnomah County Central Library. The small group made for a better experience, allowing extra time for questions. The building is striking, rich in history and art, and home to the Beverly Cleary Children’s Library, named for the beloved author and former summer library employee. Cleary also donated a signed collection of her books.

In the basement, an automated RFID-enabled sorting system processes thousands of daily returns, reducing wear on materials. While efficient, it occasionally misplaces items if carts aren’t in position. The library also holds city directories, historic records, and a government documents room. Signage and shelving are labeled in English, Chinese, Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese, based on U.S. Census data for the area. I could have spent hours there.

“While I primarily focused on the “Tech Track” of sessions ... explor[ing] other sessions and social events that offered practical value for my own professional growth ... often proved just as valuable as the conference sessions in advancing my primary goals of continuing education and professional networking.”



Resistance is NOT Futile

At the Opening General Session, I broke my usual habit of sitting in the back and I sat up front with Anna Russell, Deputy Director of Cornell Law Library. Anna introduced me to incoming AALL President Jenny Silbiger, State Law Librarian of the Hawaii State Judiciary, and to Rebecca Chapman, Senior Assistant Law Librarian at SUNY Buffalo [Ed. Note: AALL featured this moment in their [AALL Conference Wrap-Up video](#), starting at the 0:33 mark]. I’d met Rebecca virtually through an ALLUNY event, but this was our first in-person meeting.

Thanks to Anna and Rebecca, I received a last-minute invite to the Government Documents SIS social event at Lewis & Clark Law Library. Like many in the profession, I’m an introvert, but I pushed myself to network. After a quiet start and a solitary moment on the balcony, I noticed an adorable “Slug Xing” sign at the foot of a dirt walking path. I took a photo and went back in to socialize. Later, in conversation with other attendees, someone showed me a photo of the same Slug Xing sign, this time with an actual slug in frame, crossing just below the sign. Hours later, scrolling through my own photos, I realized I had unknowingly captured the slug too. Sometimes the details are there, you just have to look.



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AALL Conference Recap (Continued from Page 4)

Key Sessions

I attended much more than library tours and social events, even though those experiential outings are equally important. As always, there were a lot of great sessions at this conference. I'm not writing a novel, so I'll keep it to a couple of my favorites.

Resistance Is NOT Futile: Strategies for Integrating a Critical AI Perspective in Libraries

Presented by Rebecca Fordon from Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Kate Irwin from Wake Forest Law, and Leland Sampson from Maryland's Thurgood Marshall State Law Library. This panel examined critical AI perspectives in libraries, from resistance to enthusiasm, and emphasized the need to see past the hype. I liked the elaboration on the spectrum of resistance, from complete refusal, active opposition, the "doomers", and reluctant opposition to adopting AI. They went over some moral and ethical issues and AI's impact on access to information, including the shift from search engine to answer engine – burying organic search results and impacting analytics.

AI can be powerful for many tasks and for research, but it remains imperfect, requiring critical information literacy to assess the output. This discussion also addressed and acknowledged concerns of extraction, such as labor, from content creators whose work trains AI, to outsourced data workers, to the environmental costs of resource extraction and data centers. This discussion was reminiscent of the book *Atlas of AI* where Dr. Kate Crawford says, "Planetary computation depends on the exploitation of human labor, all across the supply chain of extraction."

Librarians have a great opportunity to train and educate folks on the risks as well as when and how to properly utilize these tools.

The Power and Peril of Unfinished Work: How to Manage the Brain's Obsession with Your To-Do List

Presented by Morgan Stoddard from George Mason University Law Library, Julie Tedjeske Crane from Pennsylvania State Dickinson Law, Heather J. E. Simmons from University of Georgia School of Law, and Jennifer Gonzalez from the Law Library of Congress. First, the acknowledgement that so many of us may be struggling to be more productive and efficient, not because we aren't busy but because we are constantly being pulled away from projects to respond to menial tasks, was affirming. This session offered strategies for focus, balance, and prioritization. They humorously acknowledged the habit of adding just-completed tasks to a to-do list for the satisfaction of crossing them off (I felt so seen, maybe even a little attacked), and they shared useful book and app recommendations for project management. Some great recommendations were blocking off times in your calendar for working on specific projects and for answering emails. It is easy to get distracted as emails and requests come in throughout the day, and it may be a better option to respond to these emails and requests at a scheduled time during the week, so you are not constantly pulled away from your tasks. Other recommendations are using project management software, like Trello, or even apps like Google Sheets and Smartsheets to keep yourself on task and to set priorities and deadlines.

AALL Members can view a recording of this session on [the AALL eLearning page](#).

I must confess that I was reluctant to attend AALL at all this year. I was afraid that there would be rising tension given recent government censorship and advocacy efforts. I did not want to attend a conference that was going to be tense, hostile, or unpleasant, as I believe it would hinder effective communication, growth, and positive change. I am relieved to say that I felt a great comfort and unity among fellow law librarians at this conference. We all have the skills necessary to effectively communicate and advocate for the greater good of our profession without divisiveness. This was a wonderful experience where I was able to meet many new people and learn new perspectives and skills, and I never felt uncomfortable. I am thankful for the experience, and for all of us librarians working hard to ensure access to legal information.

Sincerely,
Nichole M. McCarthy



"We all have the skills necessary to effectively communicate and advocate for the greater good of our profession without divisiveness."

ALLUNY Board Meeting Minutes May 5, 2025 (Approved July 7, 2025)



ALLUNY Board Meeting

Held on Zoom

Monday, May 5, 2025, 10:00AM

Present: Karen Oesterle, Melissa Sievers, Christina Demetros, Jessica Petitto, Yage Huang, Nichole McCarthy, Kristin Neri, Allison Perry, Ella Pieterse, Angela Patti, Chris Lund, Lisa Worhacz

Meeting called to order at 10:02 (Oesterle)

Approval of 3/3/25 Meeting Minutes

(Oesterle, Perry, Unanimously Approved)

Old Business

- Spring Institute general recap
 - 58 total attendees in person and online, including speakers. 33 attended online.
 - Event went as planned and “usual things went well”: good engagement; smooth meeting; all speakers and panelists arrived as scheduled; and most attendees seemed to benefit from the day.
 - Areas for improvement: formal introductions; assign introductions to President-Elect earlier to allow for more time to prepare; bring food into the conference room for convenience; and, expand marketing to include anyone with potential interest, especially at library schools (role for new ALLUNY liaisons).
 - Contact Tom Hemstock, Membership Chair, about Albany participation.
- Reviewed Spring Institute survey results
 - Respondents were primarily from law schools although individuals from other types of libraries also provided feedback.
 - Respondents rated all programs useful.
 - Positive feedback about interaction and tech connections.
 - Most would participate regardless of format: 4 virtual only and 3 in-person only.
 - Motivations for attendance: primarily learning; networking ranked lower.
 - Key takeaways from free-response comments:
 - Marketing: reach out to students/promote law librarianship to students; create AALL or ALLUNY chapters at library schools.
 - Future suggestions: provide more opportunity for personal/group discussion; longer breaks; icebreaker; typing Zoom questions in chat; field trips or asking a vendor to host (e.g., HeinOnline has offered to host); send Social Media Chair posts for LinkedIn and other websites; support for inviting students.
 - Future topic suggestions: unauthorized practice of law; focus on New York legal resources that are not easily accessible/available; LRS; arcane corners of New York law; negotiating with vendors; and vendor relations.
- AALL Annual Meeting Joint Reception
 - Coordinator from AALL confirmed that a space is available.
 - ALLUNY President will reach out to vendors.

New Business

- Government Relations Committee update
 - Board appointed Ella Pieterse, Chair.
 - Rebecca Chapman and Kristin Neri expressed interest in participating.
 - Chris Lund will act as liaison to ALLUNY from AALL Government Relations Committee and will be responsible for notifying ALLUNY about training and events.
 - Board determined the Government Relations Committee should communicate via ALLUNY Listserv and Newsletter.
- HeinOnline
 - Treasurer calls for approval to pay \$350 to HeinOnline for term August 1, 2025 to July 31, 2026.

(Patti, Perry, Unanimously Approved)

Treasurer's Report

- Checks are in the mail for food and other reimbursements associated with the Spring Institute.

Newsletter Committee

- Published the first newsletter and is working on a second.

Adjourned 10:53 AM (Oesterle)

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Worhacz, Secretary

ALLUNY Board Meeting Minutes July 7, 2025 (Approved September 8, 2025)

ALLUNY Board Meeting

Held on Zoom

Monday, July 7, 2025, 10:00AM

Present: Karen Oesterle, Angela Patti, Nichole McCarthy, Chris Lund, Ella Pieterse, Jessica Petitto, Melissa Sievers, Olli Baker, Allison Perry, Kristin Neri, Sue Johnson, Lisa Worhacz, Christine Demetros, Yage Huang

Meeting called to order at 10:01 AM (Lund)

Motion to add Deborah “Debbie” Simonik Memorial Scholarship to agenda
(Oesterle, Patti, Unanimously Approved)

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (5/5/2025)
(Oesterle, Perry, Unanimously Approved)

Old Business

- AALL Annual Meeting and Joint Reception
 - Co-President sent announcement via ALLUNY listserv a few weeks ago. The reception will be Monday July 21 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Hyatt.
 - Bloomberg authorized \$500 to sponsor event (Treasurer will confirm when she receives check or ACH payment).
 - Co-President and a representative from NJLLA will shop for food and drink to minimize cost. Hyatt catering minimum was out of budget -- \$3500 plus required gratuity.
 - Karen Oesterle and Nichole McCarthy plan to attend event. Bloomberg representatives will be there as well.

New Business

- Nominations & Elections for 2025-2026 Term
 - Ella Pieterse volunteered for VP/President Elect; Lisa Worhacz volunteered for Secretary; Angela Patti volunteered for Treasurer; Olli Baker volunteered to continue as Board Member; Allison Perry will volunteer for Board if no one else comes forward.
 - Discussion about timing: Operating Manual states that the call for nominations, bios, and related activities should happen between April and June with voting to take place in July. New Board to be formally recognized during Annual Meeting. Nina Scholtz volunteered to coordinate.
- Annual Meeting Planning (Including Request for AALL Board Member Visit)
 - Discussion about potential dates and location. Decided October 3, 17, or 24 in Getzville? and Syracuse.
 - VP/President Elect will send listserv announcement ASAP to call for Planning Committee volunteers and schedule meetings.
- Deborah “Debbie” Simonik Memorial Scholarship donation to AALL
 - Co-President confirmed that ALLUNY cannot give more than \$50 without changing the bylaws.
 - Motion to donate \$50 now and \$50 next fiscal year (begins October 1).

(Oesterle, Neri, Unanimously Approved)

Committee Reports

- Government Relations Committee
 - Permission to create Gmail email address. Board agreed, so long as it is a shared account, and officers have access to login credentials because committee members change.
 - Committee already started a shared drive.
 - Committee members are working on a bill tracking spreadsheet and report to include in the September newsletter.
- Membership Committee
 - Tom Hemstock, Membership Chair, left Albany Law to become Director at New England Law Boston.
 - Angela Patti will fill-in as Membership Chair until Annual Meeting.
- Newsletter Committee
 - Published a newsletter on June 13.
- Grants and Scholarships
 - Angela Ackerman received the ALLUNY Miscellaneous Program Grant to participate in the 2025 Law Librarians of New England (LLNE) Legal Research Program. As per grant guidelines, she wrote an article for the newsletter.

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ALLUNY Board Meeting Minutes July 7, 2025 (Approved September 8, 2025) (Continued from Page 7)



- Archives Committee
 - Lisa Suto volunteered for ‘keeper of archives,’ but ALLUNY still needs an Archivist/Archives Committee Chair. Board agrees that the volunteer should be in or located close to Albany.
 - Jessica Petitto will send a listserv email to ask for volunteers(s).
 - The Appellate Division 4th Department Law Library transferred approximately 30 boxes, along with a poster, flagpole and flag, and life preserver, to Albany Law School. The archivist must decide what (if anything) should be discarded and what should be digitized.

Announcements

- Chris Lund and Karen Oesterle revised the Meeting Manual last year, but now the Operating Manual needs attention. Chris Lund volunteered to lead the rewrite once his term as Co-Present ends.
- Next ALLUNY Board meeting September 8, 2025, at 10:00 AM.

Adjourned 10:36 AM (Lund)

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Worhacz, Secretary

Updates from the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee

Dear ALLUNY members,

As you may know, ALLUNY’s Government Relations and Advocacy Committee (GR/A) is back in business. We’re starting from the ground up, with many plans already underway, and would like to take this opportunity to re-introduce ourselves to the association.

I am Ella Pieterse, newly appointed chair of the GR/A Committee. I serve as a Government Law Library Assistant in Rockland County and have recently begun my Master’s in Library and Information Science at the University at Buffalo.

Joining me on the committee are:

- Kristin Neri, Government Law Librarian in Syracuse and ALLUNY’s Vice President/President-Elect
- Elaina Brown, Academic Law Librarian at Albany Law School
- Chris Lund, Principal Law Librarian for the 6th Judicial District, who serves as Co-President of ALLUNY.

Our committee has several goals for the coming year. First, we are developing a bill-tracking spreadsheet to monitor state and federal legislation impacting all libraries. We also plan to create partnerships, table at events, publish newsletter articles on current issues in our profession, and share advocacy opportunities with members via email. Once we’ve established a foundation, we’ll begin hosting webinars on a range of topics related to government relations and advocacy.

If you’re interested in joining the committee, or would like to sit in for a meeting, we would love to have you! Please join us at 1:30pm on Tuesday, October 14 via [Microsoft Teams](#).

Finally, to help us better understand what would benefit our members most, we invite you to participate in our Member Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6H5B6JY>

Thank you, everyone! We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,

ALLUNY Government Relations and Advocacy Committee



2024-2025 ALLUNY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES OF UPSTATE NEW YORK

Website:
www.alluny.org

Social Media:

[Facebook](#)
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Co-President

Chris Lund
Principal Law Librarian
NYS Unified Court System
92 Court Street, Room 107
Binghamton, NY 13901
[Contact Chris Lund](#)

Co-President

Karen Oesterle
Director, Legal Research
Practising Law Institute
1177 Ave of the Americas, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10036
[Contact Karen Oesterle](#)

Vice President

Kristin K. Neri
Law Librarian
NYS Unified Court System
401 Montgomery Street, 5th Floor
Syracuse, NY 13202
[Contact Kristin Neri](#)

Secretary

Lisa Worhacz
Manager of Information Services
Harter Secrest & Emery LLP
1600 Bausch & Lomb Place
Rochester, NY 14604
[Contact Lisa Worhacz](#)

Treasurer

Angela Patti
Principal Law Librarian
Supreme Court Library at Buffalo
77 West Eagle Street
Buffalo, NY 14202
[Contact Angela Patti](#)

Past President

Jessica Petitto
Technical Services Librarian
Syracuse University College of Law Library
Dineen Hall, Suite 228
950 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13244
[Contact Jessica Petitto](#)

Director

Christine Demetros
Assistant Director for Student Learning
Syracuse University College of Law Library
Dineen Hall, Suite 228
950 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13244
[Contact Christine Demetros](#)

Director

Allison Perry
Manager, Research & Information Services
Bond Schoeneck & King
One Lincoln Center
Syracuse, NY 13202
[Contact Allison Perry](#)

Director

Olli Baker
Law Librarian
NYS Unified Court System
86 2nd Street Courthouse Annex
Troy, NY 12180
[Contact Olli Baker](#)

Newsletter Editor

Melissa Sievers
Senior Research Analyst
Harris Beach Murtha Cullina PLLC
99 Garnsey Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
[Contact Melissa Sievers](#)

Committees

Archives

Chair: Vacant

Communications

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

Continuing Education

Chair: Kristin Neri
Vendors & Corporate Sponsors:
Jessica Petitto

Government Relations/ Advocacy

Chair: Ella Pieterse

Members & Elections

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

Parliamentarian

Chair: Nichole McCarthy

