



The Newsletter



Expand Your World

Winter 2007 Volume 12, Number 1

A Message from Your Fearless Leader (Um, President Elizabeth Olesh)

I would like to thank you for being a member of the Ethnic Services Roundtable. ESRT is one of the warmest, most welcoming groups with which I've been involved.

I believe that our diversity is our strength. As library staff members, we each bring a fresh perspective to the table, whether that is through the lens of gender, religion, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, or any other element of our personality that makes us who we are.

Through ESRT, we use the strength of our diversity, experience, and professional expertise to help our colleagues across the state serve New York's ethnically diverse communities. We offer programs at NYLA's Annual Conference, such as the standing-room only program on recent books about minorities for all ages and the well-attended reading by Iranian author Nahid Rachlin. We prepare resource lists for our colleagues on topics such as Bollywood films and immigrant writing. Most importantly, we give staff opportunities to learn from each other at our general membership meetings, which are held at two or three times each year at interesting locations related to ethnic groups.

I would like to invite you to get more involved with ESRT this year, in which we celebrate our 25th anniversary.

Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 7 at the Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences in Manhattan (208 East 30th Street). We'll follow our meeting with lunch at a Polish restaurant. If you are interested, please RSVP by e-mailing me at eolesh@nassaulibrary.org or calling (516) 292-8920 x237. I'd love to hear from you!



I visited a waterpark on my birthday and celebrated with this airbrush tattoo of the Chinese character for "laugh."

Contest!: Where's Zahra?

How many pictures of Zahra M. Baird can you find in this issue? Send your guess to ESRT President / newsletter editor Elizabeth Olesh at eolesh@nassaulibrary.org. A winner will be picked at random. We don't know what you'll win yet, but it will be good!

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Attendees are Raving About Spanish Language Outreach Program Workshops

By Cassie Artale and Gabriel Duque

Working together, 14 public library systems and the New York State Library are offering **Spanish Language Outreach Program** workshops across New York State. The workshops are made possible through a Gates Library Foundation grant to WebJunction and New York State.



Trainers across the country have been trained to lead the Spanish Language Outreach Workshops by nationally-known expert Yolanda Cuesta.

The State Library is partnering with the **New York Library Association**, the New York State Association of Library Boards, the Public Library System Directors Organization, and the Mid-Hudson Library System to implement this national project in New York State.



Begun in October of 2006, by May of 2007, trainers will have offered 48 workshops across the State. It is expected that some 800 library staff from all kinds of libraries, library board members and graduate students in library science will attend the one-day training. Participants are learning how to attract Spanish-speakers to their library, offer appropriate library materials and services, and provide access to library computers. Knowledge of the Spanish language is not a requirement for the training.

Workshops have already been held in Bellport, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Garnerville, Geneva, Jeffersonville, Middletown, Port Washington,

Poughkeepsie, Syracuse, and Utica. Some comments from trainers show how popular these workshops are with participants:

- "The community panel was the highlight of the day. It was made up of a deacon from the Hispanic Apostolate, a workers' rights advocate/organizer for day laborers, and a community health physician from the university hospital. Each panelist described in detail the needs of the Spanish-speaking community, as well as the valuable contributions to be made by Spanish speakers in the community. All three panelists made several contacts with librarians for future collaboration. We also had a local Colombian restaurant provide lunch, which got rave reviews!" Jean Kaleda, Patchogue-Medford Library & Suffolk Cooperative Library System.
- "We talked about how libraries can stand up on sensitive issues such as immigration without alienating funding and how we can share our personal opinions via town meetings etc. I was especially pleased by how much group discussion occurred..... I saw a lot of change over the course of a day." Kim Iraci, Pioneer Library System
- "We had participants including librarians, information assistants, and clerical staff. They were all extremely energetic and showed much enthusiasm at the workshop. This made conducting the workshop a pleasant and rewarding experience. We had two raffles in which we gave out prizes, and we also gave away free books on a variety of

topics pertaining to the Hispanic/Latino Culture." Hector Horta, The New York Public Library

Thirty-five more workshops will take place in these and other locations during 2007. **For more information on the program and how to register for workshops visit the Spanish Language Outreach Page on the State Library's Library Development site:**
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/gat/eslib/spanish/index.html>

Questions?: please contact Cassie Artale, Library Development Specialist, New York State Library, 518/474-1479, cartale@mail.nysed.gov or Gabriel Duque, Student Assistant, New York State Library, 518/473-0117, gduque@mail.nysed.gov

And the Winners Are. . .

The Ethnic Services Round Table took advantage of one of the features of NYLA's new membership program – online elections. It was secure, cost-effective, and made it fast and easy for our members to vote. Here are the results:

Alla Makeeva-Roylance -- Vice-President/President-Elect, 2006-2008

Liana Alaverdova, Brooklyn Public Library -- Member-at-Large, 2006-2008

Younshin Kim, Queens Library -- Member-at-Large, 2006-2008

Congratulations to you all!

--Brigid Cahalan, ESRT Nominating Chair

Did You Know?

In addition to her work as Coordinator of Reference and Adult Services at New York Public Library, ESRT's



Immediate Past President Miriam Tuliao is a competitive swimmer with Team New York Aquatics.

Read more about Miriam's adventures on her blog, The Jock Librarian, at <http://www.jocklibrarian.blogspot.com>

Do you have an interesting hobby that you'd like to share with your fellow ESRTers? E-mail President and newsletter editor Elizabeth Olesh at eolesh@nassaulibrary.org and see your accomplishments in print!

The NYLA/ESRT PROFESSIONAL

DEVELOPMENT AWARD was presented to Timothy Baird of the White Plains Public Library at NYLA's 2006 Annual Conference in Saratoga Springs. One of the conditions of this award is that the winner write an article about his / her conference experience – Tim's conference diary follows this article.

The NYLA/ESRT Professional Development Award was established to encourage ESRT members' professional development while they attend programs during the NYLA Annual Conference. All ESRT members in good standing are eligible to apply (except for members of the ESRT Awards Committee and the ESRT Executive Board). The award of \$500 is co-sponsored by Lectorum Publications and is intended to defray the costs of attending the NYLA Annual Conference.

ESRT also presented their annual MULTICULTURAL AWARD at NYLA's ESRT Annual Membership Meeting at the Conference to Zahra M. Baird of the Chappaqua Library, who was also recognized during the NYLA Inaugural Banquet.



Based on evidence of outstanding achievement, advocacy, and leadership, ESRT's Multicultural Award includes a citation, a check for \$250 and a gift certificate for

\$750.00 worth of books (to be selected by the winner) from Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group).

official Council photo taken so that it can be posted on the NYLA website to have people connect a face to a name, an action which will help NYLA members feel more connected to the leadership of the organization.

Program planning is fun - I attended the 2007 Conference programmers meeting as a representative of NYLA's newest roundtable, FILM (Finding Inspiration in Literature and Movies). This roundtable will present their first programs at next year's Annual Conference in Buffalo. At this meeting, I met ESRT President Elizabeth Olesh for the first time. She is a very enthusiastic and committed leader and I look forward to working with her in the upcoming year.

That evening was quite busy as I first attended a RASS Board meeting at Lillian's and then left before dinner to make it to the New Member's RoundTable (NMRT)/FILM showing of "Charlotte's Web". This was a very exciting event as Walden Media had given us the rights to show an advance screening of this film. Everyone had a really good time and many tears were shed during the movie!

Timothy A. Baird's 2006 NYLA Annual Conference Diary



Wednesday November 1st

I kicked off my conference experience with my first NYLA Council meeting as a newly elected Councilor-at-Large. Having been to Council meetings before, it was exciting to not only be part of the discussions but also to have a vote to effectuate change in the best interest of the association. Lights, camera, action! I had my

Thursday November 2nd

Thursday morning at Conference is always a very busy time for me. After checking to make sure everything was in place at the NMRT Booth, I went to the NMRT signature event, the 3M NYLA Network, which I have hosted for the past four years. We had a very large turnout for this event, over 250 people attended including several ESRT and new members. Hopefully the ESRT leadership got to do a little networking as well as have fun at this event. Thanks to the generosity of 3M, conference attendees started out their conference experience right by consuming a hot breakfast while being introduced to the ins and outs of NYLA. The "Find Someone Who" contest was

a success; the lucky winner received a \$100 Gift Certificate to the NYLA Store.



After a morning of touring the vendor booths, and staffing the NMRT booth, veteran ESRT member Fred Gitner trained me in the ways of running the ESRT booth so I was well versed when I took the reins for my 45 minute shift. While staffing the ESRT booth, I noticed that ALL NYLA members really enjoyed the variety of the book and video lists that ESRT has to offer FREE of charge. I managed to sell quite a few raffle tickets and I encouraged attendees to find out more about ESRT at the ESRT Membership meeting.

When my stint at the ESRT Booth ended, I headed to the "Global Scene: Recent Books for Children, Teens and Adults" program sponsored by ESRT. The room was overflowing and the speakers ran out of handouts with the large turnout. Danita Nichols and Beryl Eber both of the New York Public Library entertained the audience with their booktalks of fictional works that focused on the many different cultures that populate New York libraries. I will be able to share this information with my colleagues and order some of the selected resources to bolster our White Plains Public Library collection.



Thursday evening began with the NMRT Meet and Greet reception in

NYLA President-Elect Rachel Baum's suite. We had a nice attendance of about 50; most of them first time Conference attendees. In this informal setting, NMRT Board members had a chance to encourage new members to become more active in NYLA over pizza and drinks.

After the Meet and Greet, I went to the Vitality Event at the Saratoga Raceway. I thought this was the best Vitality Event that NYLA has had since I've been attending Conferences. I enjoyed the horse racing although luck did not shine on me that evening. The food was quite good, this being the first Vitality Event I attended which came with a full dinner, and the company was great.



Friday November 3rd

I was up at the crack of dawn to attend the ABDO breakfast. My library's children's room orders quite a bit from ABDO and that company recognizes that by hosting a nice breakfast at Conference for their customers. I had some very interesting conversations with other attendees whom I might not have met if I had not attended this event.

I attended the RASS/LAMS luncheon and enjoyed hearing author Francisco Goldman speak about the year he spent at the Writer's Center at New York Public Library's Research Library. His writings sound very interesting and he came across as being very passionate about his work which enticed many attendees to purchase his books.

The ESRT Membership Meeting was Friday afternoon and I was very excited to hear about ESRT's plans for the coming year. I received my ESRT/Lectorum Professional Development Award at the meeting and my wife Zahra M. Baird received her Multicultural Award as well. There were many photos taken and the genuine congratulations flowed – ESRT is a NYLA unit that really makes its members feel welcome. To top it off, there was cake to celebrate ESRT turning 25 years old! I look forward to becoming involved in the celebration process as the year unfolds.

The ESRT meeting adjourned and the group went to the NYLA General Membership Meeting where I was introduced to the Membership as one



of the new Councilors-at-Large.

Friday evening at Conference is always

the Inaugural Banquet. We heard Jennifer Morris give her tearful farewell speech and Rachel Baum's inaugural speech accompanied by a visual PowerPoint slideshow. All of the award winners were announced so I got to be in the spotlight one more time thanks to ESRT. Attending with my wife and sitting with my friends was a wonderful way to be feted. The evening was magical - food, music, dancing, and a chance to catch up with old friends.

Saturday November 4th

Getting up early is the norm for me when I attend NYLA Conference. I had another breakfast meeting, this time it was the Web Liaisons' breakfast which I run as Chair of the Web Committee. Jeremy from the NYLA Office and Rob Cullin from e*vanced solutions showed everyone how to use the calendar software to enter all of the NYLA units

events. This should be available for all units to use by the end of the year. Galina from ESRT was in attendance and brought up the problem that we discussed at the ESRT meeting of certain members no longer being listed as members of ESRT in the membership database. Jeremy will use an in-house database and work with Galina to rectify this problem so that ESRT can serve ALL of its members.

I helped out with the NMRT program "The Write Stuff - Seeing Your Name in Print" where I gleaned some writing tips and then attended a workshop "Talking Without Jargon: Improving Library/IT Relations." This last program was very practical as it gave many suggestions on how librarians can better interact with their Technology departments to make their work environment more productive. I will implement some of the strategies that were recommended when I return to my library.

The grand finale was the Farewell Luncheon as we were treated to an exceptional talk by Bill Barnes and Gene Ambaum, the creators of the online library comic strip "Unshelved".

Everyone was laughing and participating and the line to get signed copies of their works was the longest I'd seen. There was a lot buzz throughout the Conference about these speakers and they totally lived up to their billing! I was happy that Conference Chair Kim Bolan and Zahra were able to provide attendees with a high note with which to leave conference on.



The Unshelved Guys
I feel that this was an exceptional NYLA Annual Conference due to a large attendance, a full vendor floor, many diverse programs sprinkled with some exceptional speakers. With many libraries having to cut the allotment of funds for Conference attendance, I want to thank ESRT for offering this great award to their members. It affords librarians the opportunity for professional growth when they might not otherwise be able to attend NYLA's Annual Conference. I am committed to working with ESRT and I anticipate an exciting 2006/2007 season.

Educate Them and They Will Come

by Dr. Nara Venditti

When I first immigrated to the US, I had no idea how much the public library could do for me. Coming from a country where the sole purpose of a library was to lend great literature, I was stunned at the possibilities and conveniences that my local library offered newcomers.

Throughout American history, although immigrants contributed greatly they have often been mistrusted and frowned upon. Once again, this is happening and the Melting Pot is boiling. If newcomers do not assimilate at a faster rate, in the long run it might be a problem for our country. In my own struggles to adjust and succeed in the US, I keep asking myself these questions: What are the biggest obstacles facing foreign-born people in this country today? What is the best way to help them to overcome these obstacles? What do they need to know to get oriented faster and to become self-directed?



Libraries can help to overcome those problems. They recognize the need for

providing information and services to help in the integration of the next wave of foreign-born into the established community. Success of this mission can be greatly improved by keeping a few points in mind when attracting and serving multicultural patrons. You have probably heard these tips before, but I urge you to act on them for the sake of those most in need of your impressive services.

1. **Marketing and public relations.** Know the demographic and business make-up of your community. Build alliances with other agencies serving immigrants. Develop relationships with local ethnic places of worship, media and businesses that employ a multicultural workforce. Write an article or, even better, a regular column in ethnic papers. You will find that many papers will be happy to translate the articles. Explain what the library can do for them and their families. Describe library services, explain concepts, e.g. that "borrow" does not mean to "buy" and it is important to bring literature back on time or extend it in order to not get fined. Attend ethnic festivals, meet your potential patrons and their leaders face-to-face. Build relationships on their turf and then invite them to your library. Get to parents through their children. Put together events that appeal to their values. For instance family events attract everyone, but Hispanics may be especially responsive.
2. **Provide systematic training to cultivate change.**
Staff. Recognize that cultural differences existing between staff and patrons may affect quality of

service. Provide training to your staff on multicultural communication and developing empathy. Learning a language may be difficult but learning a few words will go a long way in building relationships. Sharing culture may be difficult as well but making an effort will be appreciated.

Patrons. Educate them and they will come. The majority of immigrants are hungry for knowledge. They understand that their success depends on knowledge and education. These days libraries more and more are becoming centers of education. Write grants to provide activities to enhance ESL skills, employability and to teach how the American workplace works. Contact your local Toastmasters club and ask them to help to organize a speaking club in your library.

3. **Collection development.**

Acquire English books for beginners with accompanying audio and film with subtitles. Provide lists of books available on ESL, communication, employability and other topics that will help your immigrant patrons to succeed. Look for books geared toward people new to the United States that are written from an immigrant perspective, that provide glossaries and cultural perspectives, and that are written in simple language.

Transformation is in the heart of education. Help them to transform and succeed!

Dr. Nara Venditti is the president of Succeed in America and the author of "How to Get A Job in the USA" and "Ameri\$peak." Dr. Venditti can be reached at +1 203 791 1107, or nara@SucceedinAmerica.com.

"Although I had a good idea of the strong dedication many have to NYLA, I did however learn first-hand the deep devotion that many members have to their sections. . . . When attending a meeting of the Ethnic Services Round Table, I was impressed by the commitment of its members to travel around the state to attend a one-day meeting -- not to mention the great lunches they arrange."

---**Rocco Staino**,

former NYLA President, in his farewell address at the October, 2005 NYLA Conference, Buffalo, NY.



**NEW YORK PUBLIC
LIBRARY A 2006
WINNER FOR
PROGRAMMING**

**RELATING TO IMMIGRANT
WRITING IN NEW YORK
STATE**

The New York Center for the Book recently recognized the New York Public Library, in the large institution category, for imaginative programming relating to Immigrant Writing in the spring of 2006.

During the year, the New York Center for the Book requested information about programming plans from institutions throughout the State. Many of these programs and other information about and for immigrants in the State can be found at the Center's website at www.newyorkbooks.org. The Advisory Board of the Center, whose Director is **Natasha Cooper**, selected the

winners, who received a certificate and a \$100 prize.

The Center welcomes information about programs relating to Immigrant Writing and allied cultural forums that will take place during 2007.

Experience Education, a



producer of educational, bilingual resources, recently created a Spanish video/DVD series, entitled EXITO EN EL NORTE/Success in the

U.S. The series was created in collaboration with the Southwest Iowa Latino Resource Center (<http://www.swilrc.org>) and Iowa State University Extension (<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/>). It addresses topics vital to successfully navigating daily life in the U.S., such as finances, healthcare, education and the legal system.

ExEd and partners hope to share their new, comprehensive educational tool where it may most benefit Hispanic immigrants – throughout communities and in public libraries across the U.S.

Detailed information about the video/DVD series, as well as its history and creators, may be reviewed at <http://www.exitovideos.com>. A preview is available as well at <http://www.exitovideos.com/preview.htm> (a longer preview DVD is available free of charge if you are unable to access the Quicktime version).

For more information, call toll-free (800) 477-4236.

New America Media

New America Media (<http://news.newamericamedia.org>) is the country's first and largest national collaboration of ethnic news

organizations. Founded by the nonprofit Pacific News Service in 1996, NAM is headquartered in California, where ethnic media are the primary source of news and information for over half of the state's new ethnic majority.

NAM's goal is to promote the editorial visibility and economic viability of this critical sector of American journalism as a way to build inclusive public discourse in our increasingly diverse, global society. NAM produces and aggregates editorial content from and for the ethnic media sector and develops pioneering marketing services on behalf of corporations, foundations, and non-profits who are targeting ethnic media and ethnic communities.

NAM also distributes multilingual polling to bring the voices of ethnic audiences into national focus and organizes events to give ethnic media direct access to decision makers in government, business, academic and foundation/non profit worlds.

New America Media's news wire streams the work of its own writers and editors, its multiple youth media publications and broadcasts, and aggregated content from more than 700 ethnic media partners into one subscription-based service.

This unique news service provides content, analysis, opinions, and voices from one of the most diverse pools of writers and media makers in journalism today.

Want to see your words and / or photos in print? Send them to Elizabeth by March 1st.

Many thanks to ESRT Member Catherine Given of the Half Hollow Hills Community Library for her assistance with this issue.

