

Message to NYLA Membership

In the past few weeks, NYLA has gone through major changes: Jeremy Johannesen, our Executive Director for nearly a decade, resigned from his position and moved on to another opportunity. Claudia Depkin, President, Dr. Jen Cannell, Past-President, Roger Reyes, Treasurer, Grace Riario, Treasurer-Elect, and Jennifer Byrnes, PLS President, resigned from their positions on Council.

In lieu of these resignations, we were able to swiftly welcome in Arlene LaVerde as President-Elect, Barbara Stripling as Immediate Past-President, Kelly Harris as Treasurer, and Meg Van Patten as PLS President. Thank you for stepping up, especially Arlene and Kelly for beginning your terms early, during this time of great transition.

Much work needs to be done to mend rifts, restore trust, and reaffirm our dedication to the mission of the New York Library Association to be the voice of the library community. This is work well worth doing, and I have been grateful for and humbled by the number of members who have reached out to offer support and assistance during this time of transition.

To move forward with purpose and momentum, Council will come together and take the following steps:

- Holding a special election for Treasurer-Elect
- Appoint an Interim Executive Director to ensure that daily operations continue to run smoothly at NYLA HQ
- Form a Governance Task Force to examine issues in NYLA's by-laws and structure and recommend changes or updates
- Begin the search for a new Executive Director to lead NYLA confidently into the future

Your Council will be meeting numerous times during the next two weeks to complete these steps. With our eyes toward transparency and improved communication with membership, we will post agendas and other relevant information to the [Council section](#) of the NYLA website in advance of each meeting. We are working with staff to efficiently prepare and post minutes of meetings so that all members can stay informed of Council's plans and actions.

Mark your calendars for the following Special Meetings, to be held on Zoom:

- Monday, August 23, 2021, from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
- Wednesday, August 25, 2021, from 12:00 – 2:00 pm
- Thursday, September 9, 2021, from 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will still be held on Thursday, September 16, 2021, from 3:00 – 4:30 pm on Zoom.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to a Council member or to me. Our contact information and section or at-large affiliations are listed below.

Thank you for your patience as we adjust to these changes and start to set the association back on course.

We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it as not as dreadful as it appears, discovering that we have the strength to stare it down.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Sincerely,
Beth Merkle, President

NYLA Council Members Directory

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