

Georgia Library Quarterly

Volume 60
Issue 4 Fall 2023

Article 1

11-1-2023

Fall 2023

Georgia Library Quarterly

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Quarterly, G. (2023). Fall 2023. *Georgia Library Quarterly*, 60(4). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol60/iss4/1>

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GEORGIA LIBRARY QUARTERLY



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Georgia Library Quarterly (GLQ) is the official journal of the Georgia Library Association.

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ISSN

2157-0396

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Rebecca Ballard

Hello again, friends. As I write this final column, it feels like this year has gone by so quickly. I am very grateful I have been able to work with all of you this year.

Our 2023 Georgia Libraries Conference (GLC) “We’ve Got Stories to Tell” in Athens, GA, was a huge success. I loved seeing all of us come together to teach, encourage, and learn from each other. We had a huge variety of sessions, and there was something for everyone; I wish I could have visited all of the presentations I wanted to see—there were so many! I would like to give a huge thank you to the entire Conference Committee and to everyone who made this conference possible. I’d like to offer special thanks to Ben Bryson (conference chair), Tim Daniels and Jenn Bielewski (exhibits and vendors), Karen Doster-Greenleaf (session selection), Austina Jordan (registration), Catherine Mancini (keynote coordinator), Sarah Rogers (scholarship raffle), Kara Rumble and Laura Burtle (program), and Micki Waldrop (catering). Everyone worked very hard for many months to make this conference a valuable experience for all. I can’t wait for 2024’s conference—again in Athens—which will be an especially engaging joint conference with the Society of Georgia Archivists.

And, I want to offer congratulations to this year’s GLA award winners! The awards are one of my favorite parts of GLC because we can acknowledge the amazing accomplishments of our cohorts who work in this profession that often

go unappreciated or unacknowledged. We have many, many rockstar librarians, professors, researchers, teams, and advocates among us. I encourage you to look at your coworkers and consider whom you might nominate for next year’s awards—so many among us deserve awards, but they won’t get them if you don’t nominate them!

A joyful welcome and congratulations to our newly elected 2024 officers: Ben Carter will be vice president/president-elect, Gina Viaruel begins a two-year term as vice president for membership, and Brenda Poku will be secretary. On January 1, 2024, they will join incoming President John Mack Freeman on the GLA Executive Board.

I would also like to thank every single one of you for being GLA members. I am thrilled that our membership overwhelmingly voted yes this year to creating a new, progressive dues structure that will enable our organization to continue supporting, educating, engaging, and advocating for Georgia librarians. When people ask me about GLA membership, I am delighted to tell them that being a GLA member has made me a better librarian; I have learned so much from my cohorts in GLA, found both mentors and friends, discovered endless opportunities for continuing education, and benefited from an organization of librarians that helps support me in a multitude of ways. Thanks to all of you for that. I appreciate you more than I can say.

Rebecca Ballard is the 2023 president of the Georgia Library Association

Fayette County Public Library's Partnerships for Health and Wellness



Display at Fayette County Public Library

Elevate Farms is a partner of Fayette County Public Library (FCPL). A seed library was created by Elevated Farms (Kay Mance) to support library patrons and Fayette County citizens' health and wellness. Fayette County Public Library seeks to educate the community through literacy, arts and culture, and community engagement. The library, in partnership with Elevate Farms, launched a community seed library. This initiative provides an opportunity for citizens to take garden seeds from the designated seed catalog at the library while donating seeds in return. "Take One, Bring One" is the concept. The Seed Library began Thursday, June 1, and is open during library hours each week.

In addition, FCPL is a partner of Let's Move in Libraries. Let's Move in Libraries is an international initiative to get people of all ages and abilities on the path to health. Many public libraries support healthy communities through StoryWalks®, seed collections, yoga classes, gardens, cooking classes, and much, much more.

Visit Fayette County Public Library and share your story of how the library has increased your health awareness! To learn more about FCPL, check out https://fayettecountyga.gov/public_library/.

Michelle Bennett-Copeland is the library director at Fayette County Public Library

Gwinnett Technical College Library Renovation

The Gwinnett Technical College Library (Lawrenceville campus) recently reopened its doors after a long-planned renovation! Students are enjoying our modern and bright library spaces. Popular features include six large study rooms, each filled with natural light thanks to floor-to-ceiling windows. The rooms are equipped with computer access via wall-mounted monitors. Students may reserve rooms through a streamlined reservation process that utilizes QR codes.

In addition, the library introduced RFID self-check technology with the installation of two self-check kiosks. Items are tagged to protect the collection, and security gates also provide much needed statistics for foot traffic and in-house visits. Library staff conduct research instruction workshops for students in the on-site computer lab, equipped for online instruction presentations. From English, culinary, or veterinary science courses, staff provide instruction to help students develop essential research skills.

The west-facing side of the library is a beautiful, open space featuring a long wall of full height windows, comfortable sofas, and live plants, all of which create a collaborative and inviting atmosphere. This area serves as a perfect backdrop for programs such as Poetry Night. The library hosts this annual event, allowing students, staff, and faculty to gather to recite original and favorite poems, celebrating literature and creativity.



Gwinnett Technical College student ambassadors in the newly renovated library

Gwinnett Tech's newly renovated library serves as a space for inquiry, exploration, discovery, learning, and growth that fosters student success in school, work, and life. Library staff members are proud to serve a diverse student population and provide our students with a space that promotes inclusion, collaboration, and positivity. If you are in the Lawrenceville area, please feel free to stop in for a visit!

Emerly Abbot-Daniel, a surgical technology student, said, "The ambiance is simple yet tasteful and the study rooms are quite conducive to learning. The new library would not be great without the library team, who are always ready to assist me with my research."



LeAnne Watson, a respiratory therapist student, said:

The success of one's academic performance is predicated on the learning environment and the support one receives. The Gwinnett Technical College library has provided me with a space that meets both of these needs. I am very pleased with the library's efforts and the work that has been put into the Gwinnett Technical College Library.

To learn more about the Gwinnett Technical College Library, go to <https://gtclibrary.libguides.com/Home>.



Keitaro Mikami is a library associate at Gwinnett Technical College Library

Deborah George is the director of library services at Gwinnett Technical College Library

Yvette Williams is assistant direct of library services at Gwinnett Technical College Library

Lakshmi Ramachandran is a library associate at Gwinnett Technical College Library



Jozina Cappello is a librarian at Gwinnett Technical College Library

Libraries are for Everyone: Inclusive Programming for the LGBTQ+ Community

Libraries strive to be inclusive and supportive spaces for all members of their communities. That means creating spaces, building collections, and offering programs that meet the needs of diverse groups. Grant Hedrick, library assistant III at Sibley Library in Marietta, Georgia, found that programming for the queer community, an often underserved group, in Cobb Libraries was lacking, and he set out to address it.

month. Participants choose a theme under which they can choose any form of media—from TV and film to podcasts and art—to discuss.

The initial goal of the LGBTQ+ Media Club was to provide a space that was accessible and inviting for queer adults where they could find community and broaden their understanding of the queer experience. It was a way to signal to

LGBTQ+ patrons that the library is a space where they are welcomed and celebrated. Since the club's first meeting in June 2021, it has come to mean a lot more.

The club attracts a steady group of participants, and conversations are meaningful. The camaraderie that has been built has been very rewarding for those involved. The atmosphere the

group creates is open and accepting, where everyone is free to speak without censoring themselves or their identity.

Participants, too, have expressed how great it is to see openly queer library staff members



Staff members Mox, Celt, and Grant at Braves Pride Night

Grant created the LGBTQ+ Media Club: a program designed to create a safe and exploratory atmosphere to analyze and discuss queer media and representation. The club, for adults ages 18 and up who identify in the LGBTQ+ community or as allies, meets once a



Staff member Celt (left) at Braves Pride Night

creating programs like this. It lets the LGBTQ+ community know that they are safe to approach with questions about LGBTQ+ literature and gives them a safe space to express themselves.

Creating spaces within our libraries to encourage self-expression is vital to niche community groups. This is particularly important as conversations around their right to exist take center stage. Libraries have an ability and a duty to serve everyone in their communities, and

simple programming for LGBTQ+ individuals plays a key role.

To learn more about the Cobb County Public Library System, go to <https://www.cobbcounty.org/library>.

Shannon Tyner is the virtual librarian at Cobb County Public Library System

Grant Hedrick is a library assistant III at Cobb County Public Library System

Chamyre Hynson's Private Library

Having your own personal library is both comforting and sentimental. The idea of it being your own makes it unique because you, as an individual, have many different traits, hobbies, and interests that make up who you are as a person, which lays the foundation of your very

own book collection. Even if you don't currently have a private library, it's never too late to explore new things through books. Maybe one day, you are in the mood for suspense, or maybe you wake up one Sunday morning and decide to read something lighthearted. That's what makes

one's private library so unique; you're in your own little personal story world.

I enjoy a multitude of different genres. When I was younger, I was fascinated with anything involving animation, so I gravitated toward illustrated books or graphic novels. I'm the type of reader who visualizes everything down to the character's hair color, what kind of accent they speak in, or how they would portray themselves if it were real life. My absolute favorite TV show growing up was *Lizzie McGuire*. There used to be a part in the show where an animated version of Lizzie would appear several times throughout each episode to mimic her inner dialogue. While watching, I often said to myself, "Imagine if she had a book created just for the animated part!" So common with those who become librarians, I had a



The author's bookshelves

teacher, Ms. Guessner, who realized my love of reading and gifted me the Lizzie McGuire book set in the third grade. What made it even better is the fact that the book centered around the *animated* version of Lizzie that I had imagined! I will never forget the glow on Ms. Guessner's face as I unwrapped my gift. I couldn't wait to go home and add my newly gifted set to the rest of my book collection.

Lizzie McGuire was not the only set I collected; I also enjoyed reading the Junie B Jones collection along with more thrilling and spooky books such as *Scary Stories to Tell in The Dark* by Alvin Schwartz, which was later adapted into a film in 2019. Of course, I started getting a little older and, with time, my reading tastes changed. Sometimes you end up moving and have to get rid of things. Sadly, I donated many of my childhood books to thrift stores. Luckily, my love of thrifting means that I often find copies of my childhood favorites and can take a stroll down memory lane!

Most of the books in my private library today range from graphic novel memoirs to fashion catalogs to home décor books to anything that may spark my interest while browsing the aisles of Barnes & Noble or the book section of Goodwill. Sometimes when I'm out shopping for clothes, I would see a blouse or pants and say to myself, "I think I saw this type of fabric in the fashion catalog I have back home!" Or even better, if I'm out thrifting for home décor, there may be antique or vintage items that were mentioned in a book I was reading. I would say



One of the author's favorite books

approximately 75% of the items I own were inspired by all the style books and catalogs I have lying around in my apartment. If interior design librarians were a thing, it would be me!

I encourage anyone to start their own private and personal library. It's a fun way to not only build a collection of things that interest you but to discover new things about yourself.

Chamyre Hynson is a reference and instruction librarian at Oglethorpe University Library

Librarian Residency Programs: A Vital Solution for Increasing Representation in Academic Libraries

By Aisha Johnson, Alexandra Brinson, Kayleah Brown, Karen Manning,
and Estella Richardson

Organizational diversity and inclusion initiatives are being developed across the world to address the lack of diverse representation in the workforce. Librarianship is no exception to this challenge, and we are often seeking innovative ways to increase representation for inclusion. Library diversity residency and fellowship programs provide additional support as a stepping-stone into a career path designed for new and early career librarians from underrepresented populations. While diversity goes beyond race, the representation of library workers from diverse cultures and communities makes a significant difference in services, collections, and the development of the profession. Diversity is an issue on which the profession has consistently struggled to get a handle, particularly over the last 15 years as the lack of racial and ethnic diversity has persisted (Department for Professional Employees, 2023; Kung et al., 2020). The American Library Association's 2017 demographic study revealed that an overwhelming number of its members were White (86.7%) while professionals identifying as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) were under 5% each. More recently, a general overview of the demographics in the profession was provided by the Department for Professional Employees; in 2022 they found that out of the 164,280 librarians employed in the United States, over 82% identified as White, 4.3% as Black or African American, 8.0% as Hispanic or Latino, and 5.1% as Asian-American or Pacific Islander. It is also worth highlighting that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021) projects

librarianship to grow by 9% over the decade of 2020–2030, making it more critical to ensure libraries are representing all populations and communities they serve. To better accommodate library users, it is essential that librarians represent the various populations and understand services that are needed and provided. The Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) curriculum connects theory with practice in librarianship, archives, museums, information systems, and technology. Residency programs are an essential tool to increase diversity for representation in the library and information science (LIS) profession.

A History of Library Residencies

Although research on library residencies heavily documents programs focused on diversifying the field, their origins can be found in post-master's employment programs from the 1940s. These programs were initially intended to recruit professionals into research and academic libraries. Many of these early programs were intentionally flexible and operated based on institutional needs, frequently evaluating the benefits of residencies. In 1980, guidelines for residency programs were drafted by John B. Berry, leading to official guidelines for postgraduate resident programs of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (Velez, et al., 2021). According to these standards, residencies are "post-degree work experience designed as an entry level program for professionals who have recently received the MLS degree from a program

accredited by the American Library Association” (Perez, 2008, as cited in Velez, 2021, p. 2). Distinct from MLIS internships, residencies are designed for those who have earned the graduate degree (Velez et al., 2021). Inspired by affirmative action, a policy intended to ensure that people of color received equal opportunities regarding education and employment, library residencies began to focus more on recruiting “minority” librarians (Boyd et al., 2017). Since this change, there have been slight improvements in field diversification, with the number of librarians of color increasing between 2014 and 2017 (Office of Research and Statistics, 2017). These numbers, though showing positive increase, illustrate a need for further work in the library field that better represents the demographic of the U.S. To make lasting changes, past residency programs have been examined to identify the characteristics of successful programs. Donaldson (2018) evaluates several former residents’ experiences and determines that institutional buy-in, mentorship, and strategic planning are some of the factors that contribute to designing a residency. Similarly, Velez et al. (2021) reinforces buy-in and inclusive environments as best practices when designing and implementing a successful program.

According to Brewer (2001), the first post-master’s program designed explicitly to recruit for diversity in librarianship was the Library Minority Internship Program at University of Delaware Library. Developed in 1984, this program would later be renamed the Pauline A. Young Residency Program but retained the original mission of providing professional experience opportunities to early career librarians from diverse backgrounds and marginalized communities. The University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) would follow quickly after initiating their Minority Internship Program in 1985 (Dawson & Llamas, 2001). Much like the program at University of Delaware, the UCSB program dropped the term “minority” from the official title, renaming it the Library

Fellowship Program. These parallel changes point to a charged political climate concerning affirmative action initiatives, and the changes to program titles were considered necessary to protect the mission of diversification without risking program dissolution. Over the 30 years following these inaugural programs, a small number of other academic institutions would offer similar programs. However, there was a significant uptick in the number of recent programs in the late 2010s after the formation of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Diversity Alliance in 2016 (Donaldson, 2018).

Assessing Diversity-Orientated Residency Programs

Diversity residencies were, and continue to be, developed to address the poor recruitment and retention of librarians from diverse backgrounds, particularly racial and ethnic minorities. According to surveys, those who participate in such programs are more likely to remain in the profession, an indication that they acquired skills and valuable experience (Boyd et al., 2017). Some critics have brought into question whether residencies are an adequate solution to diversifying the field, advocating for more initiatives beyond residency programs to address poor recruitment for MLIS degree programs (McElroy & Diaz, 2015). Still, residencies are recognized as a crucial component of a larger initiative to improve representation and change the impression of librarianship that primarily welcomes White, cisgender women. One must acknowledge that a major component of the success of these initiatives is ongoing program evaluation. A great deal of scholarship notes the need to evaluate throughout and after the program, including research by Donaldson (2018) and McElroy and Diaz (2015) who propose that failure to assess whether residency programs are meeting the needs of minority librarians can have an adverse effect on retention.

Acknowledging both the positive and negative feedback from residents can help target issues inherent to a program's structure and ensures that the mission to diversify librarianship is furthered rather than hindered (Brewer, 2001; Donaldson, 2018; McElroy & Diaz, 2015). Former residents have written about their experiences in diversity programs, and it is advised to utilize such research as developing and guiding practices for residencies (Alston, 2010; Hill et al., 2022; Sekyere, 2009). Most former residents detail the residency's organization, describing their rotations and the work they completed. Overall, their assessment is often positive but still offers insight into ways that programs can be improved to better suit those involved. Commonly discussed is the need for comradery and the support of a cohort. Being in a temporary role, especially for a new professional and member of a BIPoC or marginalized community, can be stressful and having a peer or peers with a similar employment status can be helpful (Hill et al., 2022). Hiring more than one resident is often determined by funding but is mentioned as necessary in offering a more welcoming environment (Hill et al., 2022).

Unique to the resident experience is what Alston (2010) calls the "intern factor." Alston describes that in the program they were sometimes referred to as an "intern" and not a resident. This is a common mistake made by those who do not fully understand the purpose of residency programs. However, Alston emphasizes the need to treat residents as entry-level librarians and hold them accountable as professionals or colleagues. Residents must be able to participate in research, serve on committees, and produce deliverables; not simply be assigned busy work. The topic surrounding terminology appears throughout literature regarding residencies. For example, Boyd (2017) references a suggestion from a former resident to refrain from calling their program an "internship" as it made developing relationships with faculty more difficult and created a divide with their professional peers (Boyd et al., 2017). Similarly, Donaldson (2018)

highlights a survey of residents in which they express feeling that they felt "disrespected as a professional." These responses indicate that the distinction between interns and residents should be understood to design a program that will be the most beneficial to early career librarians.

Career Development

Residencies and fellowships incorporate fieldwork hosted by a library organization outside of the classroom (Sands et al., 2018). From the authors' first-hand experience, practicums are critical in preparing new and early career professionals for everyday practices, building on their confidence and contributions as scholars. Residents gain practical knowledge in all areas of library work and choose one or more specialized area of librarianship as a focus. The programs contribute to the effort in attracting, recruiting, retaining, and mentoring librarians. Although major organizations and programs create and support residency programs—such as the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, the American Library Association's (ALA) Spectrum Scholarship, and ACRL's Diversity Alliance/Resident Program/Fellowship—we lean on the academic, public, and school libraries to properly implement these programs in the most beneficial way that produces practical professionals.

Postgraduate specialty training offers participants a wide variety of experiences in a brief period of time (The Association of Postgraduate PA Programs, n.d.). The benefit of library residency programs is not only to provide employment opportunities at the professional level, but to also serve the greater purpose of allowing early career librarians to develop core competencies for future work. This is accomplished by supplementing the curriculum that MLIS programs offer. Although master's programs do provide emerging librarians with most of the fundamental skills of librarianship, many graduates express feeling underprepared for implementing these skills in practice

(Tavernier, 2021). Residency programs designed with this in mind are an opportunity for new librarians to apply their knowledge, gaining hands-on experience that the MLIS curriculum—especially for online degree programs—fails to provide. A key aspect of this hands-on experience is mentorship, which is a crucial component of a successful residency. The program coordinators of the Dr. Henrietta M. Smith Residency at University of South Florida, established in 1995 by the library's diversity committee, identify mentorship as the most vital component of their residents' future success (Taylor, 2005). Accordingly, Donaldson (2018) includes mentorship as one of the key factors to consider when evaluating a program's success.

An Inclusive Organizational Culture: Library Case Study

Wanting to implement a residency program is great, however, it is critical to ensure you have the proper organizational culture to welcome and embrace new and early career professionals. In general, organizational culture can be defined as the shared values, beliefs, and norms of employees who work together to fulfill the organization's vision and mission. Provance et al. (2021) highlighted the fact that people are the key factor in creating a culture of excellence. The evolution of an organization and its culture is also driven by leadership and their intentionality to create a work environment where all employees can thrive. Advances in technology, changes in user expectations, and service delivery continue to be major drivers of organizational evolution (Goetsch et al., 2017). As Donaldson (2018) and Velez et al. (2021) state, institutional buy-in and an inclusive culture heavily influence the success of a residency program. Creating a culture that is warm, welcoming, and committed to an environment that leads efforts in diversity is a journey that is never static and requires contributions from all. But at the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), shifting our organizational culture was a necessary challenge.

In the early 1980s, like many academic libraries, the Georgia Tech library was a traditional, passive organization. Users were expected to come to the library for limited services which were often not user-centered. Library departments were siloed, and employees kept tight reins on their work. There was little sharing of knowledge for fear that an employee's responsibilities would be weakened or even taken away. As the organization evolved into one of transparency and openness, transformation with significant movement for more collaborations and partnerships occurred, internally and externally. Under the leadership of a new dean in the early 2000s, the library began to undergo vital changes. Priorities shifted, and the library became user-centered, creating and providing exemplary services and technology. Employees became involved in the evaluation, innovation, and implementation of services, facility management, and planning. New buildings, renovations, and large-scale collaborations assisted in the needed change of organizational culture. As a result of these and other improvements, the profession began to take notice, and the library was awarded the 2007 ACRL Excellence in Libraries Award. However, the organizational culture still faced major obstacles. It took time for employees to adjust to new responsibilities and new physical environments. While library faculty welcomed sharing their knowledge and expertise through a formal residency program, the organizational culture was not healthy enough to positively influence new and early career professionals.

As with any change, there were many hurdles along the way that impeded cultural growth within the library. Often new leadership is a path to forge new beginnings. It is an opportunity for a fresh perspective and strategy. Naturally, the new library dean had to gain buy-in and trust from existing employees: all were more than happy for an open, transparent advocate as a leader. The dean wasted no time in innovating a strategic plan which invested in the library

employees and soon built a new senior leadership team that was also open, transparent, and collaborative.

The intentional environment created opportunities for the library to establish both internal and external collaborations and partnerships required to become a model teaching library willing to share expertise. Today, we are an organization where all employees are welcomed, encouraged, and given the opportunity to thrive. With such changes, the library was now prepared to create a formal resident program and welcome new and early career professionals into an environment with hopes to contribute to the issue of representation in the larger profession.

Our Library Residency Program

Libraries must foster a culture of inclusion where diversity is a fundamental value that is supported and embraced. Our library had not had the reputation nor representation that supports diverse librarians. Previous efforts were not directed to making this change toward diversity, and the opposite was occurring. New leadership was the pivotal point in changing the library's culture and addressing the lack of diversity and inclusion for our librarians. In 2019, a recently retired BIPoC librarian was rehired as a temporary program manager to create a program to help improve the diversity and culture in the library. The library's portfolio process was implemented to create a project team that would document a plan for a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) program. After conducting research that included best practices from our peer institutions, the team produced its deliverables report that included several recommendations. The first recommendation was to create a DEI Council responsible for leading the implementation of the other approved recommendations.

One of the most important recommendations was for the library to join the ACRL Diversity

Alliance Program. The ACRL Diversity Alliance Program gained popularity as a strategy to address the need for hiring librarians from underrepresented and marginalized communities. The ACRL program was brought to the attention of library leadership as a resource that aligned with the library's strategic objectives for growth, addressed the gap in diverse librarian representation, and supported a well-intentioned resident program. Georgia Tech Library leadership's commitment to transforming the organization and providing operational excellence resulted in hiring two ACRL diversity residents and the creation of new positions focused on diversity initiatives across the library.

During the development of the residency, the hiring manager gathered leaders from various departments to discuss what would be most valuable and important for the participants. Each department discussed projects and deliverables based on each resident's desires for skill acquisition. Those discussions, among others, mapped out a residency that would be flexible enough to cater to each resident's career interests, passion, and goals. We are all familiar with ongoing projects and how necessary it is to balance a layered workload conducive to building partnerships and collaborations. We wanted to give authentic and inclusive experiences that would be expected in the field, specifically in academic libraries. Consistent areas focused on advocacy and outreach efforts, including public programming and events, the library diversity council, assessment, acquisitions, and leadership/management.

With a detailed job description including salary, the library invited new and early career librarians and archivists from BIPoC and marginalized groups to apply for the diversity residency position. The positions were designed to provide early career librarians and archivists with an opportunity for rapid professional growth while bringing new perspectives and fresh ideas to the library. The yearlong residency, with the possibility of renewal for a second year, was

developed with a six-month rotation. During the second half of the year, residents chose an area to focus their work through the end of the program. The schedule and rotation agreed upon as a collective is below.

Knowledge Exchange Rotation: January–April

- Public Services: January 9–31
- Campus Engagement and Scholarly Outreach: February 1–28
- Technical Services: March 1–17
- Archives: March 20–April 14
- Assessment and Acquisitions: April 17–28

Focus Area: May–November

- Resident A in Archives
- Resident K in Technical Services and Acquisitions

Annual Wrap Up: December

- Presentation of Resident Projects
- Reception

One goal of this program is for each resident to work both with a mentor and independently to develop, complete, and report research or creative work at a conference or as a publication. As visiting faculty, the resident will also serve on library committees and project teams and participate in professional organizations. The residency is designed for participants to benefit from formal and informal mentorship, funding, and professional development with a focus on career planning while addressing the need to increase the diversity of professionals at major research libraries. As previously discussed, ongoing evaluation is critical to ensuring the intended purpose of the program is achieved and properly and authentically executed.

Resident Experiences

During the program, resident A and resident K met weekly with the hiring manager to discuss how the program was going, various things occurring in the field, and additional skill building opportunities. Here, our two residents share their first quarter experience.

Resident A: In the Summer of 2020, I attended a virtual gathering of early career librarians. It was in a breakout meeting with a more established academic librarian that I first heard about residencies, and I began to do my own research on programs. From my casual exploration of the literature on residencies, I determined that they were great opportunities to cultivate the skills I learned in library school and make necessary connections in the field. Initially, I was nervous starting this position at the library. Coming from a public library, I felt like I had to reacclimate myself to the world of academia. I was also nervous about what I could expect as a resident in a program that was newly established. There was a lot of excitement about everything I could learn. The opportunity for developing new skills and narrowing my focus in libraries motivated my decision to accept this position, and though I had concerns, I was looking forward to the experience.

After completing the first quarter of the residency, it has been great to see the effort and planning put into this program's design. Though I and the other resident are in a unique position being the first library residents at this institution, I have not felt like anything other than an early career professional. It is obvious that prior discussions took place regarding our position as faculty members, and it has served as a great introduction to the field. Though I cannot say just yet where I will land, I am on the right track for developing the skills I need to be successful in the future. My experiences so far have also been affected by fellow library faculty who have been helpful, offering their time and expertise on many occasions. I have been invited to participate in studies, created digital learning objects (DLOs), and been included in planning library events. Each time I have been invited to participate in these projects, my personal interests have been considered and I have appreciated the flexibility in designing the work around my career goals.

As I near the end of rotations, I am grateful to work in an environment where diversity and inclusion are valued. It is refreshing to see the effort by all members of this institution to create a library that is welcoming for everyone. Additionally, I am appreciative of the opportunity for mentorship in this residency. Having more experienced librarians and archivists that I can ask for advice and partner with on projects has given me insight into the profession that I am not sure I would have received otherwise. Especially helpful in this experience so far has been setting specific goals to prioritize. Keeping track of my progress has provided good documentation and helped affirm that I am working on projects that reflect my interests. Though we have accomplished a lot in the first quarter, there is certainly more to come as far as skill acquisition and professional development.

Resident K: When I learned that the library was offering a residency for early career librarians, I knew that I had finally found the opportunity I had been looking for since earning my MLIS at the end of 2020. At the time of applying, I had been full-time staff at a different university for over six years. Academic librarianship already has a high barrier to entry, and during a global pandemic, entry level positions had all but ceased to exist. My job search was significantly limited compared to my cisgender and heterosexual peers. There were logistical concerns—relocating for a position in another state could mean risking my access to healthcare—as well as concerns about whether my safety and mental health would be protected at an unfamiliar institution. I could not take a position based solely on the institution’s willingness to hire a recent graduate. Since this residency was designed with the expressed intent to offer professional experience to librarians from underrepresented and marginalized communities, it sounded like an amazing opportunity to finally break into the profession in a safe and inclusive environment.

My interview experience was reflective of what a candidate for a permanent faculty position might expect. This was surprising and welcomed. Not only did it give me experience with the process, but it also demonstrated that the institution would take me seriously as a professional. I came into the position knowing that this was the first year that the library was offering this program, so I expected this would be a learning process for everyone. There are always going to be drawbacks to being in an inaugural position; it is impossible for anyone involved to predict whether everything will work out as intended. However, the major benefit to participating in a brand-new program is that everyone I have worked with has been so excited and eager to take part in shaping our experience. I have been impressed by how flexible and understanding my colleagues have been when managing expectations and developing projects to best fit the residency's scope. My colleagues have been consistently seeking feedback on whether the program is going well, and to me, that indicates a genuine passion for helping new library professionals thrive.

When I accepted this position, I did not know yet that there would be two of us. I found this out on my first day, and admittedly, I was relieved. It made the structure of the program feel less intimidating and I no longer had to worry about being cast out as the only temporary faculty member. This also strengthens the opportunity for shared learning and collaboration, and I believe that having more than one resident in the program is a crucial component of success—both for us and for the institution. We can offer our unique viewpoints to contribute to a more well-rounded experience for ourselves and for future residents.

These first three months, we have already rotated through four different departments. It has certainly been fast paced; at times, it can feel like a crash course. But I do feel that I have spent enough time in each area to get a top-level overview of the role each department plays in the

greater schema of the academic library. This is largely thanks to the eagerness and willingness of my colleagues to act as mentors, even after the cessation of my rotation through their respective departments. With their continued support, I have improved my confidence in my existing skills and learned new ways to apply that knowledge. A lot of professionals do not get an opportunity like this to engage in library work on a holistic scale before delving into their specialized field, and I am fortunate to have the chance to learn from so many different professionals in one place. This role has been an invaluable component of my career development because it supplements my library education with personal, hands-on experiences that online degree programs just cannot offer.

Representation Matters

While societal, organizational, political, and personnel factors remain obstacles in diversifying librarianship, resident diversity programs are a promising pathway when paved with good intentions. Such programs have been shown to have a positive impact on one's career. The enhanced professional and personal learning experience and mentorship gained in an inclusive environment through a residency provides an opportunity to diversify the profession and retain passionate people to serve all communities. However, these programs must be supported with institutional and leadership buy-in. Without support, the profession will be unable to serve all people, reduce library anxiety, and stand on a platform of representation for all.

Funding sources need to be embedded in the library's budget to ensure continuation of such programs, demonstrating a bigger commitment to countering one of the biggest obstacles in librarianship.

The development of residency programs and initiatives which promote the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion is a pure form of advocacy and outreach. These efforts, for strategic and statistical reasoning, have been injected into institutions of higher education where student populations have become more diverse. Residencies are not only beneficial to the profession, but also to the communities we serve. This is one way—an essential way—to recruit, retain, and support our goals of being an inclusive profession.

*Aisha Johnson is the Associate Dean for
Academic Affairs & Outreach at Georgia Tech
Library*

*Alexandra Brinson is an ACRL Diversity Resident
at Georgia Tech Library*

*Kayleah Brown is an ACRL Diversity Resident at
Georgia Tech Library*

*Karen Manning is the Engagement & Inclusion
Librarian at Georgia Tech Library*

*Estella Richardson is a librarian emerita at
Georgia Tech Library*

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GLA Executive Board Meeting Summary July 2023

Friday, July 21, 2023. The meeting was called to order, and minutes from the April 2023 board meeting were approved with 7 "aye" votes.

President Ballard initiated her updates by emphasizing the need to comprehend the association's current operating model. She encouraged members to review the proposed dues structure presentation prepared by the vice president for better understanding. Additionally, President Ballard proposed a meeting with Angela and Thomas to discuss the Members' Code of Conduct, suggesting a vote on this matter be postponed until October. She also reminded attendees about the quarterly newsletter and urged members to utilize it for event and speaker announcements. Acknowledging Ben Carson's dedication to the upcoming October conference, she extended an invitation to members to join the Conference Committee. Furthermore, John Stephens was introduced as the new chair for the School Library Media Division.

Administrative Services Liaison Linh Uong informed the membership that IMPACT would only be available from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Eastern Time on Fridays until September 1st. She also informed the members that her term as administrative services liaison would conclude in December 2023 and sought assistance in finding a replacement, planning to create a role description for distribution to identify potential candidates or volunteers. Linh discussed the peak periods for the administrative services liaison role, notably in December and January during the transition and fall elections, which includes a 20-day grace period for voting. This year, two fall elections were scheduled, allowing more time to address last-minute ballot issues.

The first election would encompass all association officers and division chairs, while the second would cover interest group officers, with specific dates to be determined in collaboration with the Interest Group Council chairs. Linh also noted an increase in the Wild Apricot subscription cost.

In the treasurer's report, Justin Nobles highlighted that, apart from increased administrative services costs, there were no significant financial issues, with the association generally on track for July. He anticipated a potential increase in membership dues, particularly for those with a fiscal year starting in July, as the association had 11,000 members out of an expected 20,000. An overview of the balance sheet was provided, addressing inquiries about the dues increase and expecting ongoing discussions about the need for it despite having sufficient funds. Ben Bryson raised concerns about the maturity of CDs early next year and suggested exploring higher-interest options such as a new CD package or a high-yield savings account due to rising interest rates.

In ALA Councilor Angela Cortellino's report, she explained Bill Track 50, a web-based tool offering daily updates on bill progress during legislative sessions, with efforts to set up an account for several members within GLA. Plans were shared about the Fall Advocacy Academy, where ALA intends to financially support at least one individual from each state chapter for an in-person session in Chicago, preparing them for a fast-paced legislative session impacting libraries and education. Angela also highlighted developments in certain states, including Montana and Missouri, related to their association with ALA, and she's been preparing talking points with GPLS to address similar

discussions in Georgia. She emphasized the importance of being proactive in addressing potential challenges, particularly those related to intellectual freedom and community room usage and invited collaboration on this effort if others were interested.

New Business

Changes to meeting requirements within the Government Information Interest Group (GIIG) bylaws were discussed and approved. Additionally, proposed amendments related to vacant chair positions and vacancy procedures within the Interest Group Council were approved. Angela Cortellino presented the Freedom to Read statement, which was endorsed by President Ballard on behalf of GLA, underscoring its significance and encouraging member support for the campaign.

Completed Business

A motion to rescind the planned rate increase for July was proposed, seconded, and approved through an email vote, with 9 "Aye" votes in favor of the motion. During the meeting, members discussed the vice president's presentation regarding the rate increase, some members' interest in reviewing administrative cost, and the importance of documenting the benefits of the current arrangement and the

challenges of finding a better deal in the industry. The vice president also highlighted the intricacies of the association's structure and suggested potential avenues for reducing administrative costs in the future.

Action Items

The ALA councilor and vice president discussed potential attendees for the ALA Fall Advocacy Academy and agreed to conduct an email vote to select a member once additional details about the academy's timing and requirements are provided.

Announcements

President-Elect John Mack Freeman announced the search for conference sites for 2025–2026 and encouraged those interested to join the Conference Committee. Ben Bryson shared that registration for this year's Georgia Library Conference is scheduled to go live by August 1st. He mentioned the receipt of over 90 presentation proposals, indicating a promising and content-rich conference ahead.

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 am.

*Betty Wright is the 2023 secretary of the
Georgia Library Association*

2024 Georgia Library Association Election Results

The Georgia Library Association (GLA) held an election between August 25–September 13, 2023, to elect new GLA Executive Board and division leaders for 2024. This year, all but the Staff Library Division participated in the elections. Elections for interest group leaders will continue to be held separately in November.

GLA Executive Board Officers

The following individuals were elected as new GLA Executive Board officers. Their term of office will begin in January 2024.

- Vice President/President-Elect: Ben Carter
- Vice President for Membership: Gina Viarruel
- Secretary: Brenda Poku
- SELA Representative: Austina M. Jordan

Additionally, Carly Jessup has accepted the vacant role of Vice President for Marketing and Branding.

They will join the following officers currently serving on the GLA Executive Board:

- 2024 President: John Mack Freeman
- Treasurer (3-year term 2022–2024): Justin Nobles
- ALA Councilor (3-year term 2022–2024): Angela Cortellino

Division Leaders

Academic Library Division

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Laura Burtle
- Secretary: Emily Rogers
- ACRL Chapters Council Representative: Eli Arnold

Advocacy Division

- Chair: Angela Stanley
- Vice-Chair: Angela Cortellino

New Members Roundtable Division

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Em Farmer
- Secretary: Femi Jayeola

Public Library Division

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Stephen Houser
- Secretary: Kimberly Snoddy-George

Special Libraries and Information Services Division

- Chair: Gina L. Martin
- Secretary: Sarah Trowbridge

School Library Media Division

- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Ifeude Hill

Interest Group Council

- Vice-Chair: Leslie Drost

Thank you to the Nominations & Elections Committee Members: Sofia Slutskaya, Rosanne Guy, and Kimberly Snoddy-George.

Kimberly Snoddy-George is the 2023 chair of the GLA Nominations & Elections Committee

2023 Georgia Library Association Award Recipients

The 2023 Georgia Library Association (GLA) awards were announced during the Georgia Library Conference (GLC) on October 5, 2023, at The Classic Center in Athens, Georgia. Each year GLA recognizes individuals for the contributions they make to advancing the library profession, providing exemplary library service, and advocating for libraries in Georgia through a series of named awards also known as the GLA Awards. Many thanks to this year's Awards Committee members: Alex Beswick, Rhonda Boozer, Karen Manning, Gina Martin, and Edward Whatley.

Read about the 2023 GLA awardees recognized for their achievements and dedication below.

Bob Richardson Memorial Award

The Bob Richardson Memorial Award was established by the Executive Board in 1999 in recognition of Bob Richardson's dedicated service to the Georgia Library Association. It honors those who have given outstanding service to the Georgia Library Association.



Laura Burtle

Laura Burtle, GLA's 2020 president, is this year's Bob Richardson Memorial Award recipient. Laura is a long-serving member of GLA who has served the organization in

a variety of capacities, including vice president, president-elect, and chair of the GLA Handbook and Constitution & Bylaws Committees. Among the many accomplishments mentioned in her

nomination letter, Laura's exemplary leadership during the pandemic helped to ensure the continued success of the organization. She was instrumental in successfully renegotiating the organization's contract with the conference vendor without any cost to the association. She also spearheaded and led the association in adopting Google Workplace. The platform helped to streamline communication within the association and provided emails and cloud storage space for all the officers, divisions, interest groups, and committees. As stated in her nomination letter:

Laura represented aspects endemic to the best leaders: a spirit of collaboration, a willingness to listen to multiple points of view, and the ability to take a broad perspective for what would be best for such a diverse organization. When she accepted the nomination to become president in 2018, no one could have anticipated what the demands placed on her during her term would be. Yet, through all of this, she responded with a grace, energy, and dedication that was exactly what the moment called for.

Library Support Services Award

The Library Support Services Award is given each year to recognize someone employed in a library support profession who has furthered library development or who has made outstanding contributions to Georgia libraries as part of his or her job or business. The award winner could be a vendor employee, an employee of an office or department that supports library services, or an employee of an individual institution.

Erica Luke, youth services specialist at the Embury Hills Branch of the DeKalb County Public Library



Erica Luke

System, is this year's award recipient. Though she has a focus on youth and children's programs, Erica creates an environment that is "welcoming to all ages." Her programs are so popular in the community, that one "better make sure to

register as soon in advance as possible because her programs always fill up!" Erica has been able to transform the meeting space "into exciting new places that encourage the attendees to explore and learn in a friendly setting." Her programs have helped children learn about coping methods, etiquette, and sensory play. She embraced the summer reading theme of All Together Now by helping her attendees build a strong sense of unity by creating items to show appreciate to local service men and firefighters. Erica's nominator expressed:

I am not sure how we ended up lucking out to have Mrs. Erica at our local library but it has certainly made such an impact for the better in our lives! I will forever be thankful for my daughter's absolute excitement to go to the library and love of reading that Erica Luke has instilled in my child[ren]! I know we are grateful to have these experiences.

McJenkin-Rheay Award

The McJenkin-Rheay Award was established by an anonymous donor and approved by the Executive Board on July 17, 1981. It is given to recognize a librarian early in his/her career who has made outstanding contributions to the Georgia Library Association and to leadership as exemplified by the careers of Virginia McJenkin (school libraries) and Mary Louise Rheay (public libraries).

Rosemary Humprey is this year's McJenkin-Rheay Award recipient. Rosemary is currently the interim assistant



Rosemary Humprey

director of Access Services at Kennesaw State University. She has been an active member of GLA since she began her career in 2014. Since joining the association, she has served on the Conference Equipment Sub-committee, been chair of the Interlibrary Loan Interest Group, and worked on the Public Relations and Atlanta Emerging Librarians committees. She currently serves as the chair of the Interest Group Council, where she works to keep all the interest groups active and is helping to update the GLA Handbook so it reflects current practice. In addition to her roles in GLA, she is an active participant and leading voice in the Georgia and regional interlibrary loan community. She has shared her knowledge and experience in resource sharing and staff development at state, regional, and national conferences.

Nix-Jones Award

The Nix-Jones Award is given to a practicing librarian for distinguished service to Georgia librarianship. It recognizes substantial contributions to the library profession, such as: stimulation of library development, leadership in library programs, unusual and imaginative services, and outstanding support of Georgia's libraries.



Chelsee Dickson

Chelsee Dickson is this year's Nix-Jones Award recipient. She currently serves as the Scholarly Communications Librarian and Research & Scholarship Team Lead at Kennesaw State University. Chelsee is described as a "natural leader who people are enthusiastic to follow." She spearheaded All Things Open (ATO), a twice-yearly virtual conference that brings together various members of the library community to discuss and understand the importance of open access, open education, and scholarly communication. What was once a grassroots initiative has grown into "an international, free, biannual event where educators from the U.S. and Canada come together to share their work and interest in all things open." In its eighth iteration, ATO, being held in October 2023 saw record-breaking registrations. Presentation materials generated from all iterations have seen more than 37,000 downloads.

In addition to her work with ATO, she serves GLA as the associate editor and peer review coordinator for the *Georgia Library Quarterly*. She began as an author and soon took on the role of copy editor. Her nominator credits Chelsee's dynamic leadership and guidance as inspiration for her and says that "Chelsee's involvement with the journal helps make it a strong and vibrant publication."

GLA Team Award

The GLA Team Award was established by the Executive Board in 2012. This award honors a team that has excelled in the past year by offering

innovative programming or services, performing or acting on assessment activities, undertaking a successful outreach or promotion effort, or providing outstanding support of an individual Georgia library or Georgia libraries as a whole.

This year's recipients are the staff of the Organizational Strategy, Communications, & Outreach (OSCO) team at Kennesaw State University (KSU). Team members include the OSCO director and Assessment & User Experience Librarian Manda Sexton, Student Outreach & Sponsored Programs Librarian Kristina Clement, Assessment &



Pictured above, clockwise from top left:
Manda Sexton, Kristina Clement, Sean Crampton, and Jennifer Carter

Communications Librarian Jennifer Carter, and Program Assistant Sean Crampton.

Each member of the team plays a vital role in its success. Collectively, the team's out-of-the-box thinking has led to them being able to remove barriers to student engagement by meeting the students where they are with library programming that suits their needs. Kristina is described as the "ideator," who challenges the status quo of library programming and finds creative and exciting new ways to interact with students. Jennifer, "a seasoned communicator," piques the interests of students and entices them to attend OSCO's events. Manda's "analytical mind and attention to detail" bring to life the post-event data that tells the story of the students' participation, enjoyment, and feedback. Sean is the "glue which holds the team together," assisting where needed and helping to ensure the overall success of the events. One notable event hosted by the team was programming for Pi Day. On March 14, the OSCO provided an opportunity to gather feedback on library services to students in an exciting and unusual way. Once the students completed the survey, they were able to select and enjoy a pie of their choice and throw a whipped cream pie at a library staff person. The students were "ecstatic to take part in pieing librarians" but they also provided genuine feedback to the survey and had meaningful and engaging conversations with the library staff, providing for an overall valuable and enlightening experience. The OSCO's out-of-

the-box programming has provided great opportunities for student engagement as evidenced by their typically "long lines, happy faces, and positive feedback."

BIPOC Travel Grant

In 2021, the Georgia Library Association Black Caucus established the BIPOC Travel Grant in order to support the professional development of a library worker of color in Georgia.

This year's winner of the BIPOC Travel Grant is Deon King. Deon is a dedicated Army veteran who has transitioned into the role of a library associate.



Deon King

Drawing upon his military background, he brings discipline, attention to detail, and a commitment to service to his work in helping students and researchers access the information they need. He is passionate about supporting the pursuit of knowledge and empowering others to achieve their academic goals.

Tamika Strong is the 2023 chair of the GLA Awards Committee

2023 Georgia Library Association Scholarship Recipients

The Georgia Library Association (GLA) Scholarship Committee is excited to announce the 2023 recipients of the Hubbard and Beard scholarships.

The Hubbard Scholarship



Niké Shimobi-Obijuru

Niké Shimobi-Obijuru is this year's C. S. Hubbard Scholarship winner. Niké currently works as the circulation services coordinator for the Athens Regional Library System and has just begun studying for an MLIS at Valdosta State University.

After graduating from Spelman College with a BA in English, Niké first began working in libraries as a part-time circulation assistant in September of 2019. In under two years, she was hired for her current position as the head of the circulation department. Having fallen in love with the field during this time, Niké chose to pursue librarianship as a full-fledged career.

As a member of her library's leadership team, Niké works hard to ensure that policies continue to be applied equitably so that all patrons retain access to the services and resources the library provides. She writes:

Though libraries have historically sought to remain politically neutral, their very purpose necessitates engagement. They are meant to be environments which support learning and nurture personal development, and the resources and services that they provide are invaluable to many members of the

community, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Too often neutrality equals compliance even in regard to unfair practices, and bringing recognition to this topic is one of my career aspirations.

In gaining her MLIS, Niké plans to strengthen her existing skills and increase her knowledge in the hopes of one day becoming a library administrator and affecting change on a larger scale. She states:

Receiving the Hubbard scholarship is an incredible honor, and thanks in large part to this financial assistance, I will be able to complete my MLIS program almost entirely debt free! This will give me more freedom and ease to pursue my career aspirations, which include one day joining library administration. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity that the GLA has provided me and will be proud to join their ranks as an officially certified librarian upon my graduation.

The Beard Scholarship

Cole Hale is this year's Beard Scholarship award winner. He is a historian of Sixties youth culture with an emphasis on the hippie community in Atlanta. He earned his BS in history education from Kennesaw State University, his MA in



Cole Hale

history from Georgia State University, and was an Institute of Museum and Library Services Fellow

at Drexel University. He has presented his research at conferences across the United States, and he has been published in various academic media outlets. Cole Hale currently works as a library associate in the Georgia Room at Switzer Library in Cobb County, while attending Louisiana State University to receive his MLIS. Cole writes:

Upon completion of my degree, I will continue helping patrons with their research needs, while taking the Georgia Room into the exciting new direction that I have already started by offering more preservation efforts, digitization services, and community archival projects, with the intent to make the department more universal and relevant to

everyone in our community...This scholarship will allow me to continue educating and better preparing myself as libraries expand beyond a physical space, and into an increasingly digital age where technology and outreach are central.

Complete information about the scholarships, including application information and how to donate to the scholarship fund, is available on [GLA's website](#). The next application cycle will begin in March 2024.

Sarah Rodgers is the 2023 chair of the GLA Scholarship Committee

A State Both Wonderful and Strange: Switzer Library's Return of Weird Georgia

Did you know that there are 11 fiberglass cows beneath a transmission tower in Conyers? How about that there is an art compound created by a fortune teller in Buena Vista? The Georgia Room at Switzer Library in Cobb County certainly knows about these local oddities and dozens more!

On September 25th, 2023, the Georgia Room held "The Return of Weird Georgia" in Switzer Library's Community Room. As the name suggests, this was a follow-up to a program held last year as the community attempted to return to normalcy after the pandemic. While Weird Georgia was a hybrid program in 2022, this year it was in-person only.

Approximately 40 people across all age groups gathered into the darkened room, lit only by a projection screen and green LED lights. The program was largely a lecture, with host Cole Hale introducing patrons to Georgia's most unique and strange landmarks, sharing with them the history and culture of the sites. The locations discussed were the Smiling Peanut in Plains, the Doll's Head Trail in Atlanta, the Smithsonian's National Tick Museum at Georgia Southern University, and more than 30 more sites. While Switzer's Community Room may have been filled with gasps if the lecture was based on "haunted"



Advertisement for the program

locations, the room was instead filled with laughs, as each Weird Georgia location was selected for its bizarreness and validity, purposefully steering away from ghost stories and other folklore.

In addition to the lecture, Weird Georgia also had games and trivia. This included a game in which an LED-lit beachball was bounced

between patrons as a techno-based remix of Andrew Gold's "Spooky, Scary Skeletons" played. The lucky patron holding the ball when the song was over won prizes such as a banana duck statue—yes, a banana duck statue. Trivia questions were based on the landmark most recently discussed, with prizes related to both the question and the location—for example, a three-foot inflatable cow upon discussing Cow Tower in Conyers.

The fun did not stop at the end of the 90-minute lecture. Instead, Hale revealed three orange and gold pumpkin trophies with "2023 Weird Georgia Landmark Traveler" engraved into their plates. First, second, and third place winners will be given the trophies based on who visits the most Weird Georgia sites during October. Participants are expected to email a photograph of them at each location as proof, and they are



Prize trophies for Weird Georgia challenge winners

encouraged to fill out composition books given away during the program to share their experiences or other information they learned about the sites via their own research. The goal is that a digital compendium will be made of these stories in the future.

Funding for this year's Weird Georgia event came from a grant received by WETA in collaboration with PBS Books for their new documentary series *Iconic America*. In the series, host David Rubenstein visits national landmarks to understand how they shaped and influenced American culture. In applying for the grant, Hale expressed that the strange landmarks discussed in *Weird Georgia* do the same, except they form

an "alternative" local culture outside of our state's more well-known sites.

So, will there be yet another return of *Weird Georgia* in 2024?

Most likely not, although Hale is working on a slightly similar program titled "Deadly Georgia." This program will take place at Switzer Library on April Fools' Day 2024, and will discuss the state's most poisonous plants and dangerous animals, albeit in the same lighthearted spirit as *Weird Georgia*.

Timothy Cole Hale is a library associate at the Georgia Room of Switzer Library, Cobb County Public Libraries



Entrance to the Seaboard Depot building, the home of the new Art Research Library

Columbus State University's new Art Research Library

How does a library organization with no additional funding and no new staffing create a whole new library? A collaboration of librarians, student workers, and staff who have a shared mission for access to information and a passion for libraries. While it is a challenge to find the first time, the Art Library is in a fantastic location immersed in the thriving cultural arts district in downtown Columbus, Georgia. The newly formed Art Library will join the popular Music Library supporting our downtown River Park campus.

This collection was available to art students and

hidden from the rest of the campus until now. The Columbus State University (CSU) Art Department curated this private collection of about 2000 books. In 2022, the collection was adopted by the CSU Libraries. The collection was previously cataloged in a small library software program that was a closed system. To create access for all CSU patrons, CSU library staff decided to create a new library within Ex LIBRIS ALMA/PRIMO library catalog. Library staff added books by way of copy cataloging and original cataloging and physically processed all 2,000 items. The holdings are also updated in OCLC's WorldCat Catalog. As of fall 2023, over 600 items



A group study space inside the new Art Research Library

are already in the catalog. A web presence for the new library branch is still in development.

The collection includes exhibition catalogs, art history textbooks, and all the widely studied artists such as Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Dutch Masters, Titian, architecture, photography, ancient art, Asian art, biographies, books about the business of art, various nonart books that happen to be in the collection, and much more.

The collection is accessible to all CSU students and faculty. Tucked right inside the door, the library also includes a student-run food pantry that is available for any student in need. The library is currently staffed by students, who are

managed by Art Librarian and Associate Professor of Library Science Tom Ganzevoort.

This hidden collection is no longer hidden from cyberspace, however the physical space is still a bit of a challenge to discover. Currently this library is in a space downtown in a building called the Seaboard Depot. The Seaboard Depot at 933 Front Ave. is a historic brick building that was built in 1902. The Depot's original name was Seaboard Airline Railroad Freight Depot and it served the

riverfront cotton mills and warehouses. The building functioned as a freight depot until 1971. After 1971 the building was used as a warehouse for flour, meal, seeds, and similar products. The W.C. Bradley Company bought the building in 1976 and planned to convert it into a hotel complex. On August 10, 1977, the building burned, destroying all its wooden elements (Historic Structures, 2018). With support from the Mildred Miller Fort Foundation (Foundation Center, 2023) and others, the depot was renovated for the Department of Art. It currently houses the Art History Department, College of the Arts Facilities spaces, as well as art studios for students, faculty and visiting artists. The entrance is around the corner, down stone steps in the

shaded inner courtyard off Front Avenue. The library includes some cozy seating areas and study tables which are surrounded by shelves of artistic inspiration. This library is open to all CSU faculty and staff and is currently open Monday through Friday 9:00 to 5:00 PM. Books are available for borrowing through GALILEO Interconnected Libraries (GIL.) This is a small but mighty step forward in expanding CSU Library's presence on the downtown Riverpark Campus.

Sources

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Amy B. Parsons is the head of technical services at Columbus State University Libraries

Digital Library of Georgia News (September 2023)

The DLG has made its 3 millionth digitized and full-text-searchable historic newspaper pages available freely online.

The title page of the first edition of the May 22, 1917, issue of the *Atlanta Georgian* reports on the destruction caused by the Great Atlanta Fire of 1917 and the city's effort to control the damage.

first year of publication, the paper infamously printed stories intended to inflame racial tensions that contributed to the start of the Atlanta Race Massacre of 1906.

Famed newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst purchased the *Atlanta Georgian* in 1912. Under his ownership, the paper printed increasingly scandalous headlines and illustrations that dramatized local crimes, including its coverage of the Leo Frank case in Atlanta.

The digitization of this title was funded through a grant from an anonymous donor as part of their mission to provide resources that promote a greater understanding of Georgia's history during this important period.

DLG. has developed an [online press kit](#), which includes:

- An image, description, and link out to our 3 millionth page;
- A link to our press release;
- [An interactive map](#) showing which cities and counties in Georgia have newspapers digitized by the DLG;
- Eleven impact stories that demonstrate how digitized historic newspapers have helped people find what they were looking for;
- A link to ["Covers Dixie Like the Dew": A History of Newspaper Journalism in Georgia](#);
- [A blog post](#) written by DLG staff of the five favorite newspaper pages;
- Links to instructional videos on how to use the Georgia Historic Newspapers site.

You can read more about everything [on the blog](#).



Atlanta Georgian. (Atlanta, Ga.) 1912-1939, May 22, 1917

This issue marks the 3 millionth page digitized by the Digital Library of Georgia.

The newspaper circulated daily from 1906 to 1939, was the first Hearst-owned newspaper in the South, and is the most prominent example of sensationalist yellow journalism in Georgia. In its

Georgia Historic Newspapers Update Summer 2023

This summer, the Digital Library of Georgia released 28 newspaper titles to the [Georgia Historic Newspapers website](#) funded or otherwise supported by shared institutional partnerships with the following organizations:

- Chattooga County Historical Society with a grant from the Tillotson–Menlo Charitable Foundation, Inc.
- Forsyth County Public Library
- Georgia Public Library Service
- Georgia State University Library

- Kennesaw State University Museums, Archives and Rare Books
- Mercer University Libraries
- Middle Georgia State University Library
- National Digital Newspaper Program with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities
- Taylor County Historical–Genealogical Society
- A grant from an anonymous donor


You can read more about these titles on the [DLG blog](#).

Standard Telephone Company Records documenting Standard Telephone Company's provision of services to rural northeast Georgians for the past century are now available online.

Selected by statewide cultural heritage stakeholders and funded by [the DLG's competitive digitization grant program](#), this collection is the Habersham County Historical Society's first collaboration with the DLG and is available here: [Standard Telephone Company Records](#)

The collection contains historical materials dating from 1904 to 1999 that come from the archives of the independently owned Standard Telephone Company (STC). Headquartered in Cornelia, it provided telephone service to rural northeast Georgians. Among the materials are items recognizing 50 years of service from the Standard Telephone Company's longtime employee, Henry Davis, the first African American telephone engineer in Georgia and possibly the nation.

Dean C. Swanson, former president of STC Holdings, and Jim Johnson, former president of STC, jointly establish the importance of making this work accessible freely online:



Henry Davis was born September 25, 1902, in Clarkesville, Georgia, the son of Lucy and Clark Davis. He and his wife, Clara, who were married over 50 years, had three daughters: Mrs. Mercedes Murphy, Mrs. Jeannene Gosey and Mrs. Lucy Bland. They also had three grandchildren: Jenera Gosey, Octavia Bland and Lisa Murphy.

Henry began his telephone career in 1917 when at the age of 14 he began hauling poles for M. C. York, then owner of Standard Telephone Company. This was the beginning of a career that spanned 50 years and included such positions as Lineman Helper, Installer and Combinationman. Throughout his career, Henry always exhibited devotion for his work, the company, his family, and co-workers. He earned the respect of everyone who knew him.

In recognition of the respect that others had for him, Henry was featured in a *TELEPHONY* magazine article; served as Grand Marshal of the annual Mountain Laurel Festival Parade; and was the subject of many newspaper articles. In addition, he was prominently featured in the book *VIVID AND COMPELLING DREAM*, written by H. M. Stewart, Sr. Firsts for Henry include: he was the first and only person ever to record 50 years of service to Standard Telephone; he was the first black man in Georgia, and probably the nation, to become a technician in the telephone industry.

Henry was further honored only yesterday when, at the annual Georgia Telephone Association Convention in Savannah, he was officially inducted into the Peach State Pioneer Hall of Fame.

With the dedication of the Henry Davis Building today, the men and women of Standard Telephone have taken a step that will preserve the memory and inspiration of Henry Davis in the minds and hearts of everyone who knew him.

Pamphlet celebrating the dedication of the Henry Davis Building, recognizing fifty years of service from the Standard Telephone Company's longtime employee, Henry Davis

The Independent Telephone Companies in Georgia had the most difficult economic and physical deployments due to the nature of the rural areas; these pioneers persevered

with great risks. Digitization would be a great tribute to them. Additionally, the circumstances and conditions under which the Standard Telephone Company was developed are highly generalizable. They can serve to glean similar processes in other rural areas for which this kind of history is not available. While the Habersham County Historical Society has a museum of Standard Telephone's history and phone apparatus, we know too well that the younger generation will often turn to online digitized history to learn about the history of this industry. Given that, we feel digitizing this information is of great value to future generations.

About the Habersham County Historical Society

The Habersham County Historical Society was

formed on February 22, 1973, by 12 citizens from Clarkesville, Cornelia, and Demorest, on the campus of Piedmont College. In 2018, the society compiled the county's history in a bicentennial publication: *A Brief History 1818–2018, Habersham200: New Thoughts of Old Things*. To celebrate its 50th Year Golden Jubilee, the society published a commemorative edition that is available on [Amazon](#). The celebration was hosted by Piedmont University on March 11, 2023, and celebrated the entire county.

For highlights of the celebration, visit <https://www.habershamcountyhistorical50.com/>.

You can find Habersham County Historical Society online at: <https://habershamhistoricalsociety.org/>.

Oral history interviews of W. W. Law, civil rights workers, and 20th-century Savannah civil rights history are now available freely online

Another project selected by statewide cultural heritage stakeholders and funded by [the DLG's competitive digitization grant program](#) is the [Walter J. Brown Media Archives's W. W. Law Collection](#), this partner's fourth collaboration with the DLG.

The content for this project consists of oral history interview videos with W. W. Law and other Savannah, GA, community members involved in the Civil Rights Movement. The tapes were

shot just prior to Mr. Law's death and are the longest and most detailed interviews he did on his life and career as a civil rights activist.

The footage was shot in 2001 by Lisa Friedman



Interview with W. W. Law, Part 2 of 2; B-Roll of Green Meldrim House and Beach Institute African-American Cultural Center. Image courtesy of the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection

with the help of the late oral historian Cliff Kuhn for the purpose of creating a documentary on the life of W. W. Law. Although that project never came to completion, it still managed to yield important historical content about Savannah civil rights workers and community leaders, including Aaron Buschbaum, Dr. Clyde W. Hall, Edna Branch Jackson, Ida Mae Bryant, Rev. Edward Lambrellis, Richard Shinholster, Tessie Rosanna Law, Dr. Amos C. Brown, Mercedes Arnold Wright, Carolyn Coleman, E. J. Josey, Walter J. Leonard, and Judge H. Sol Clark.

W. W. Law was fired from his job working for the post office in 1961 because of his civil rights work but was reinstated after an intervention by NAACP leaders and U.S. President John F. Kennedy. As with all civil rights movements in American towns and cities, stories of lesser-known activists in the Civil Rights Movement and the historical impact made by community leaders like Law and the others interviewed in this project are invaluable for researchers interested in the history of civil rights in Georgia.

Luciana Spracher, director of the City of Savannah Municipal Archives, defines the importance of digital access to this content and the stewardship of this audiovisual work that was granted to the Brown Media Archives and made accessible through this DLG subgrant:

[The City of Savannah Municipal Archives's W. W. Law Collection](#) represents his life's work, as left behind by him at the time of his death in 2002. The Walter J. Brown & Peabody Awards Collection's collection of

W. W. Law material includes video interviews where Mr. Law discussed his life and legacy less than a year before his death, as well as interviews with people well-represented in the papers of our collections that document civil rights activities in Savannah. Both collections complement and enhance understanding of the other. The opportunity to hear these individuals recall the events represented in our collections is invaluable to students and historians who are studying and learning from them. Greater discoverability of the interviews online will assist researchers in seeking insight into the Civil Rights Movement in Savannah, as well as the larger movement in Georgia and the United States.

About the Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection

The Walter J. Brown Media Archives & Peabody Awards Collection is home to more than 350,000 analog audiovisual items, over 5,000,000 feet of news film, and over 200,000 digital files. It is the third-largest broadcasting archive in the country, behind only the Library of Congress and the UCLA Film & Television Archive. The Archives comprise moving image and sound collections that focus on American television and radio broadcasting and Georgia's music, folklore, and history; this includes local television news and programs, audio folk music field tapes, and home movies from rural Georgia. Learn more at libs.uga.edu/media/index.html.

Online Exhibit Intern Inspired by Georgia LGBTQ+ Artists in the DLG

Sarah Mayo held the position of online exhibit intern for the [Digital Library of Georgia](#) and the [New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) from January 19

to April 16, 2021. You can read about her experience with digital curation and project management through this internship on [the DLG blog](#) as well as its results in her online exhibit, ["LGBTQ+ Art and Expression in Twentieth-Century Georgia."](#)

Mandy L. Mastrovita and Donnie S. Summerlin are digital projects librarians and archivists with the University of Georgia Libraries

Oglethorpe University Library Welcomes Amo Ikiror

The Philip Weltner Library at Oglethorpe University (OU) is thrilled to announce a new staff member: Amo Ikiror will serve as the university's library assistant.

Amo Ikiror graduated from OU in May, earning her bachelor's degree in biology. While attending OU, Amo worked as a student library assistant. According to her:

I always loved books and reading, so when an opportunity to work at the Philip Weltner Library as a student library assistant came up, I took it, loved it, and now I'm honored to be back working as a library assistant.

At OU, Amo will assist with interlibrary loan, statistics, budgeting, and stack maintenance. She will help OU faculty, staff, and students access books, articles, and other material needed to succeed.

In her spare time, Amo enjoys reading fiction novels. She is excited to become more engaged with the Georgia library community and proudly represent Oglethorpe as an alumna.

University Librarian Eli Arnold said:

I am so excited that Amo has joined our team! We have a super small staff here in the library at Oglethorpe, and Amo is



going to help us meet our goals to ensure every member of our community is provided with the tools to academically succeed.

Chamyre Hynson is a reference and instruction librarian at Oglethorpe University Library

Amo Ikiror is a library assistant at Oglethorpe University Library

Carnival in Alabama: Marked Bodies and Invented Traditions in Mobile by Isabel Machado (University Press of Mississippi, 2023: ISBN 9781496842596, paperback, \$30.00; 9781496842589, hardcover, \$99.00)

The phrase “American Mardi Gras” typically evokes images of New Orleans, but according to local Mobile, Alabama lore, it is actually the Azalea City that claims the first celebration of Mardi Gras in the United States. Despite several historians claiming this landmark occurrence for Mobile, however, Machado argues that there is no evidence to support this claim, the first of several origin myths about Mobile and Mardi Gras. A second origin story—with some evidence to back it up—is that Mobile is responsible for the origin of mystic societies, which many Mobilians and Carnival historians claim as the true beginning of American Mardi Gras as we know it because it created “a form of public masking that was accepted and controlled by the social elite, who could be trusted for their restraint.” Finally, there is the story of Joe Cain, celebrated for his impromptu march in 1868 that is now commemorated as the “People’s Parade,” wherein Mobilians of all identities and backgrounds can participate in Mardi Gras revels.

In Machado’s authoritative work on invented traditions, she not only questions the authenticity of these beginnings but also how inclusive this social elite was, even during this bacchanalian celebration known for its connotations of misrule and mischief. Unlike other historians, Machado acknowledges that this social elite was made up of upper-class White citizens. “Marked bodies,” or those that differed from the normative mainstream of the time either by race, class, or sexual orientation, were not welcome in these Mardi Gras celebrations and in fact were segregated by race, with the “colored” Mardi Gras celebration taking place on an entirely different street from the

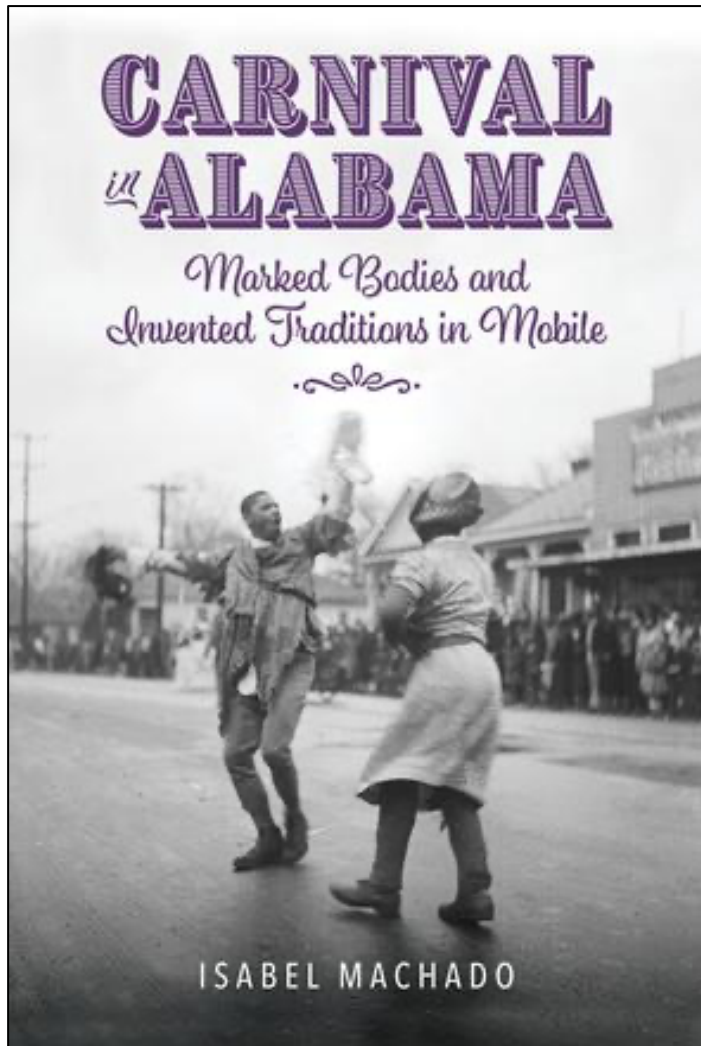


Image courtesy of the publisher

“main” parade. Joe Cain Day, now celebrated as a family-friendly extended block party, commemorates Confederate veteran Joe Cain donning a Native American headdress and, along with several fellow Confederate soldiers, marching in rebellion against the Union troops that were still occupying Mobile. LGBTQ citizens were all but invisible in any of these celebrations, except inasmuch as those who professed a different gender orientation could get away with

dressing in “drag” to express their authentic selves for that one day. However, while cross-dressing was typically part of the Mardi Gras frivolity, it often involved heterosexual-identifying White men dressing as grotesque depictions of male femininity that mocked homosexuality and gender nonconformance.

Despite these specious beginnings, however, Machado deftly argues that just as these traditions were invented to alienate “marked bodies,” they have been rewritten over time as traditions that welcome rebellion and defiance,

with mainstream Mardi Gras society eventually accepting the Order of Osiris—the oldest continuous openly LGBTQ mystic society—in addition to finally desegregating the parade in the 1990s. This erudite work is recommended for anyone interested in local Southern lore, the mythology of Carnival, or reckoning with the racial and homophobic prejudice and violence of the past.

Amy Shaw is a reference and instruction librarian at the Georgia State University Clarkston Campus

Dynamic Design: Mary Hambidge, Mary Crovatt Hambidge, and the Founding of the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences by Virginia Gardner Troy (University of Georgia Press, 2023: ISBN 9780820362724, \$39.95)

Virginia Gardner Troy, Berry College professor of 20th-century art and design, takes a closer look at two influential artists who have been overshadowed by the dominant narrative of art history. Informed by her research at the Hambidge Center, the Atlanta History Center, and the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Georgia, Troy provides historical context to the Hambidge's careers and incorporates various primary sources like personal letters and photographs to tell the story of the Hambidges. The book is illustrated with sumptuous photographs, including close-ups of colorfully dyed wool and Mary's early dress designs.



Image courtesy of the publisher

Mary Crovatt Hambidge (1885–1973) was born to a wealthy family in Savannah, Georgia. She moved to New York as an actress and professional whistler (sharing an act with her mockingbird, Jimmie), where she fell in love with Jay Hambidge in 1914. They influenced each other creatively over the next 10 years, and they both took inspiration from ancient Greece; its traditional weaving and dress design would inspire her throughout her career.

Jay Hambidge (1867–1924) was a Canadian-born

American artist known for the theory of dynamic symmetry, a geometrical system of proportion found in the natural world and used in design. He developed dynamic symmetry over the course of years and study trips to Greece. The Parthenon, he contended, was a masterful instance of the theory. Hambidge's ideas were applied to art and industry: the Chrysler Six series of automobiles referenced dynamic symmetry as a design principle, and notable artist followers included painters Maxfield Parrish and George Bellows. Dynamic symmetry had its detractors, as some archaeologists and mathematicians pointed out inconsistencies in Hambidge's calculations.

After Jay died in 1924, Mary followed through with their shared plan to open a school in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Mary had begun helping to revitalize traditional weaving practices in the Rabun Gap community, and by the late 1930s, with the help of funding from a wealthy donor, Mary established the Jay Hambidge Art Foundation and the Weavers of Rabun workshop. She also founded Rabun Studios, a New York City boutique, where Philip Johnson and Georgia O'Keefe were among the famous clientele. Mary was devoted to Jay's teachings and incorporated them into her utopian visions

for the Rabun weavers and the Hambidge Center.

Troy's writing shines when she provides context and analysis:

[The Hambidges] contributed a great deal to 20th-century visual culture. They were significant participants in the modernist phenomenon of cultural appropriation that took place in Europe and America during the first half of the 20th century . . . Like many other Western artists, Jay and Mary sought out cross-cultural and cross-historical connections to reinforce their artistic expressions and theories.

In another example, she notes, "Both Jay and Mary lived and worked at a time when the forces

of the machine age challenged artists who clung to more traditional forms of art and craft." She also writes about why, while influential in their time, the Hambidges sit overlooked in the art historical canon: "Neither was an academic, and neither fit solidly into a specific style niche. Their art and ideas never became mainstream or associated with the avant-garde."

Recommended readership for *Dynamic Design* includes any young adult or adult reader interested in 20th-century American art and design, the unique output of the Hambidges, and Mary's impactful connection with Southern Appalachian craft.

Lauren Bellard is an urban studies librarian at Georgia State University

Making Our Future: Visionary Folklore and Everyday Culture in Appalachia by Emily Hilliard (University of North Carolina Press, 2022: ISBN 9781469671628, \$24.95)

The roots of Appalachia run deep and strong, so much so that it is difficult to put into writing how much tradition—oral and otherwise—means to her people. However, Emily Hilliard makes an attempt so lovely, it was hard to remember that the anthology is nonfiction and not a series of stories told from a rocking chair with a sweating glass of sweet tea in hand.

Making Our Future: Visionary Folklore and

Everyday Culture in Appalachia takes the reader through forgotten and often neglected subcultures of West Virginia, stopping by for coffee in Scott's Run where regulars are "bound by place and memory," to hoisting signs with Hazel Dickens lyrics, and demanding living and thriving wages for all West Virginia teachers.

Hilliard's storytelling is grounded in thoughtful and extensive interviews, a format which lends well to her background as a former West Virginia state folklorist. The cast of characters Hilliard assembles breathes life into a region often oversimplified by outsiders, or even worse, "mentioned briefly in history books of more notable places, written as if this place is dead and gone or absent from the narrative all together." If readers take away nothing else from this collection, it must be that Appalachia is much more than most understand it to be.

Readers should realize that this is not a history book. It is a living document. Everything is happening in real time. Poet and songwriter Shirley Campbell is still waking up in the middle of the night, singing a song she wrote. She is still trying to contextualize herself within her generation, her music, and her home state. She—along with Ella Hanshaw, Cora Hairston, and Elaine Purkey—is keeping the "tradition of women's writing and self-documentation in Appalachia" alive and well. There is still a line of people in Marion County waiting to order a hotdog "with everything" and a line of people prepared to defend their definition of "everything"—and whether or not it includes slaw.

Making Our Future is a special collection with truly something for everyone. There is a

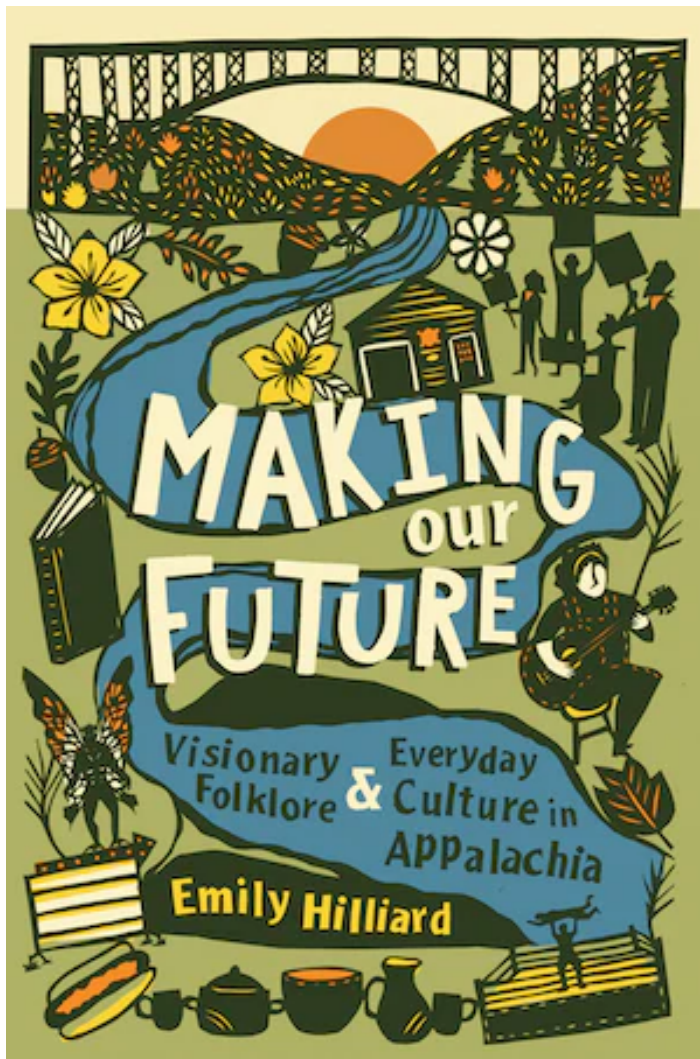


Image courtesy of the publisher

story for amateur historians, foodies, and folk art fanatics. However, there is a special call to those who may have wandered too far down the mountain to come home and reconnect with the region that made them who they are. This book is a reminder that the Appalachia that they remember does not exist just in romantic memory of the past. Hilliard states that modern West Virginia is “not motivated by nostalgia for a cultural purity that never was . . . It’s honest about

the past. It’s multivocal, multiracial, multiethnic, and multigenerational.”

There is room at the table for everyone in this Appalachia—even more importantly, there always has been.

Rebekah Scarborough-McGraw is an adult literacy librarian at Middle Georgia Regional Library