



Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association

Annual Report 2020-2021

GPLLA Board Members for 2020-21 were Andrew W. Lang, President; David M. Haendler, Vice President/President-Elect; Kristen Matteucci, Treasurer; Leigh Cohen, Secretary; Julie Randolph, Director-at-Large; Mary Cate Matta, Director-at-Large; Erin M.O. Vassalotti, Director-at-Large; and Janet Peros, Immediate Past President.

Despite the widespread uncertainty and disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, which began to affect Philadelphia in March of 2020, the 2020-21 fiscal year was one of great productivity and innovation for the Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association.

In the spring, the board decided to waive membership dues for financial hardship due to COVID. Ultimately no members claimed this waiver and our membership levels held steady. In keeping with these considerations, however, the board was committed to making all events low or no cost to members throughout the year.

As the pandemic forced us to cancel all plans for in-person gatherings, we pivoted to hosting virtual events. For our members, this included a virtual happy hour in the late summer, a virtual holiday party featuring trivia, and a spring trivia event as well.

In November, we hosted our first ever virtual GPLLA Institute at no cost to attendees and, like many other chapters, opened the program to non-member attendees. We hired Dr. Alyssa Westring, a professor of management at DePaul University, whose keynote address was “Work and Life during the Pandemic: Leadership Skills for Challenging Times.” To subsidize the cost of the Institute, we received an AALL Continuing Education Grant in addition to vendor sponsorship from LexisNexis and Thomson Reuters.

In collaboration with the Law Librarians’ Society of D.C. (LLSDC) and the Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM), our chapters created the Project 20/20 initiative, which ran from October 2020 through June 2021. This virtual programming series featured three free events every month: a substantive, webinar-style program, a professional development workshop, and a social networking event. The series was nominated for a AALL Excellence in Community Engagement Award and netted over 1000 engagements from law librarians across the country.

Highlights of the series included:

- The keynote discussion with Ijeoma Oluo, New York Times best-selling author of *So You Want to Talk About Race*,
- A program on library marketing with library consultant Mary Evangeliste that was extremely well-received;
- The closing program featuring Ashley C. Ford, New York Times best-selling author of *Somebody’s Daughter*.

Late in the fall, AALL's Bylaws and Resolutions Committee approved our revised bylaws which were then adopted by membership through an electronic ballot that closed in February. Building on the bylaws revisions, we created an ad hoc committee to review GPLLA's committee structure, suggest new committees, draft committee charges to be featured on the website, and solicit volunteers from our membership.

Growing out of our members' interest in public service and prior work with Books Through Bars, we created a new Social Responsibilities Committee, which will focus on volunteering opportunities and issues of access to justice.

-Submitted by Andrew W. Lang, President, 2020-2021