THE MICHIGAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PRESENTS SPRING INSTITUTE CELEBRATE OUR STORIES

APRIL 10-11, 2025 FRANKENMUTH

PROGRAM GUIDE & Event Details SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

5:30 - 6:30 PM	Registration Open
6:00 - 8:00 PM	Reception at Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library
	Shuttle nicks up and drons off at Conference Center entrance

Thursday, April 10, 2025

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration Open
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Exhibits Open
8:00 - 9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 - 10:15 AM	Opening Keynote with Author Gary Schmidt
10:15 - 11:00 AM	Visit with Vendors Gary Schmidt Book Signing
10:30 - 11:00 AM	Share Faire Poster Presentations
11:00 - 11:45 AM	Breakout Sessions
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM	Lunch - Lightning TitleTalks with CATS
I:45 - 2:30 PM	Breakout Sessions
3:00 - 3:45 PM	Breakout Sessions
4:00 - 5:00 PM	Afternoon Keynote with Kathy MacMillan
5:30 - 7:30 PM	Celebration at the Lodge

Friday, April 11, 2025

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration Open
8:00 - 9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 - 10:00 AM	Fireside Chat with Author Aisha Saeed
10:00 AM - 2:15 PM	Partner Faire Open
10:15 - 11:00 AM	Aisha Saeed Book Signing
10:45 - 11:30 AM	Breakout Sessions
11:45 AM - 12:30 PM	Breakout Sessions
12:30 - 1:45 PM	Lunch - MLA Literary Awards Announcement and Trivia Competition
2:15 - 3:00 PM	Breakout Sessions
3:15 - 4:15 PM	Closing Keynote with Kaitlin Johnstone

CONFERENCE DETAILS

WiFi Access

Complimentary wireless internet access is available throughout the Bavarian Inn Lodge. WiFi network: Bavarian Guest Access

Restrooms

Gender neutral restroom is located on the second floor. Women's restrooms are located on the first and second floors. Men's restroom is located on the first floor.

Accessibility

Elevators Elevators are located behind the stairs in the Composer and River lobbies.

Nursing Room

If you need a nursing room please let MLA staff know and accommodations will be made for you.

Meals

All meals are free of nuts, fish, and shellfish. Full menus are located on the MLA website and event mobile app.

If you requested a special plate a ticket will be provided to you at the registration desk.

Reasonable Accommodations

Please notify MLA staff at the registration desk if there are any accommodations needed to make your conference experience more comfortable and successful.

Registration Desk Hours

Wednesday, April 9 5:30 - 6:30 PM

Thursday April 10 and Friday April 11 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Book Signings

Thursday April 10 10:15 - 11:00 AM | Gary Schmidt

Friday April 11 10:15 - 11:00 AM | Aisha Saeed

Bookstore Hours

Thursday April 10 and Friday April 11 8:00 - 9:00 AM | 10:00 - 10:45 AM

MollyMade Cookie Shop

Thursday April 10 and Friday April 11 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Exhibit Hours

Thursday April 10 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Partner Faire Hours

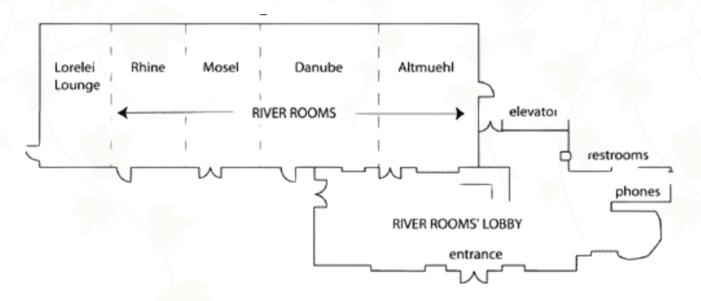
Friday April 11 10:00 AM - 2:15 PM

MLA SPRING INSTITUTE FOR YOUTH SERVICES | APRIL 10-11, 2025 | FRANKENMUTH

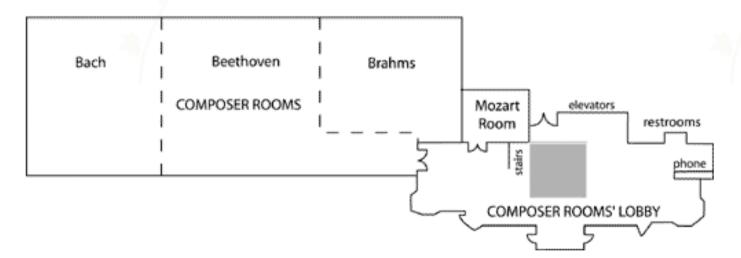
VENUE MAPS

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Bavarian Inn Conference Center First Floor



Bavarian Inn Conference Center Second Floor



SPECIAL EVENTS

Wednesday, April 9

Welcome Reception 6:00 - 8:00 PM Frankenmuth James E Wickson Public Library 359 S Franklín St Frankenmuth, MI 48734

Celebrate with music, crafts, networking, and snacks.

A shuttle will pick up attendees at the Convention Center entrance of the Bavarian Inn throughout the event. You can also drive or walk the 1-mile route to the library.

Thursday, April 10

Lunch Lightning TitleTalks with CATS 12:15 - 1:00 PM Composer Room

Discover what's hot off the press and what trends to look out for in summer/fall 2025 as Baker and Taylor booktalks the latest and greatest titles for kids and teens from lots of different publishers.

> Celebration at the Lodge 5:30 - 7:30 PM Bavarian Inn Family Fun Center

All Spring Institute attendees will all get a drink ticket to the Ratskeller Bar and their choice of a \$10 arcade card or a free game of miniature golf in the Bavarian Inn Family Fun Center.

The Family Fun Center is open until 11:00 PM and the Bavarian Shores Waterpark is open until 8:00 PM. All overnight guests will receive waterpark passes as well.

Friday, April 11

MLA Literary Awards Announcement 12:45 - 1:00 PM Composer Room

Hear from the YouPer, Mitten, and Thumbs Up workgroups about the new stories being celebrated by MLA in 2025!

> Trivia Competition 1:00 - 1:45 PM Composer Room

Following the awards announcement we'll engage in some friendly competition with a table versus table interactive trivia challenge with Matt Eickhoff of Here's Your Host Trivia.

SI Gives Back

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is an organization that believes that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional, and mental support that a child needs.

Please consider bringing a donation of twin sized pillowcases, bedding, pillows, or a cash donation to support kids in the Frankenmuth region.

Kids Food Basket provides nutrition to more than 38,000 kids in West Michigan. During Thursday's lunch we will have lunch bags and coloring supplies available so the food provided can come in fun and attractive packaging that helps take the stigma out of the supper sacks.

EXHIBITORS & PARTNERS

Thursday Exhibitors

Sprinkles Studios Booth I

Bound to Stay Bound Books Booth 2

MellyPop! Productions Booth 3

> Capstone Booth 4

Daniels and Zermack Architects & Interior Designers Booth 5

> World Book Inc. Booth 6

> > Book Farm Booth 7

Cherry Lake Publishing Group Booth 8

> Cosmo Miko Booth 9

TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten Booth 10

> Lerner Publishing Group & Rosen Publishing Group Booth 11

Abdo Publishing Company Booth 12

Friday Partners

Michigan Braille and Talking Book Library Booth I

> Wayne State University School of Information Sciences Booth 2

Michigan eLibrary (MeL.org) Booth 3

Oakland Community College Booth 4

> Teach My Kid to Read Booth 5

TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten Booth 6

Scavenger Hunt

Each exhibitor and partner will possess a secret letter that when combined spell out something special.

Unscramble the phrase and submit your answer in the mobile event app or at the registration desk and you will be entered to win a free registration to Spring Institute 2026 scheduled next March 19-20 in Grand Rapids.

Winner will be drawn at the closing session. Need not be present to win.

SHARE FAIRE & DISPLAYS

Share Faire Posters will be on display in the Composer Lobby throughout the conference. Presenters will be available for discussion on Thursday from 10:30-11:00 AM

Picture Book Themes - Megan Goedge, **Petoskey District Library** When kids can find their favorite books on their own in the library it's a win. The Picture Book T

When kids can find their favorite books on their own in the library it's a win. The Picture Book Theme collection does just that.

Best in YA: Shelvies Book Awards - Jennifer Sunderhaus, Shelby Township Library

A teen hosted a book award ceremony from start to finish where the teens got to tell their community what should go on everyone's TBR.

Benefits of Incorporating Children's Yoga/Mindfulness Into Youth Programming - Michelle Zimostrad, Public Libraries of Saginaw

It's easier than you think to add yoga and mindfulness to children's library programming and it's fun to breathe like a dinosaur!

Celebrating and Engaging with Stories through Poetry and Geography - Azita Frattarelli, Riverview Veterans Memorial Library

Incorporating geography and poetry into your storytimes makes the celebration of stories and imagination rich and impactful for early learners.

Parenting Collection: Equipping Caregivers with Toolkits - Eileen Pock, Portland District Library Having a tough time navigating the early years with your little one? Fear not! Portland District Library has you

covered with Parenting Toolkits.

Life Sized Gaming displays will be in the Composer Lobby throughout the conference.

Life Sized Gaming Kyle Bartoszek, Bridgeman Public Library

Supersized Fun: DIY Life-Size Games for Any Budget

EmmaLee Ridenour, Mallory Stevenson, and Faith Mendham, White Lake Township Library

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Opening Keynote with Gary Schmidt 'To Watch the Woods Fill Up with Snow': The Promises We Keep as People of the Book Thursday 9:15 - 10:15 AM - Composer Room

In a time when books are so often targeted and banned at a rate well beyond anything we saw in the 1950s and 1960s it is proper to ask what it is that is so important about bringing children and books together, and what is so dreadful about the loss of such connections? Beyond literacy, what does a work of fiction bring to a middle grade or young adult student? What does a poem bring? A work of nonfiction? The response may not be this: Answers. It may be something very different.

Afternoon Keynote with Kathy MacMillan Welcoming Deaf Kids and Families to Your Library Thursday 4:00 - 5:00 PM - Composer Room

In this interactive overview, you'll learn communication tips for interacting with D/deaf kids and parents, information about American Sign Language and Deaf Culture, best practices for program access, and even some basic ASL vocabulary to introduce yourself and help families navigate the library.

Friday Morning Keynote Celebrating Our Stories: Fireside Chat with Author Aisha Saeed Friday 9:00 - 10:00 AM - Composer Room

Aisha never saw herself in the stories she read as a child, so she knows how important it is for kids to feel seen. As an author she aims to write stories that underscore the common threads of humanity that bind us together and wants children realize just how important their stories are and how much their voice matters. Join acclaimed author Aisha Saeed for an intimate fireside chat as she shares insights into the power of storytelling and its role in shaping our identities, communities, and future. Aisha will discuss her journey as a storyteller, the inspiration behind her works, and the importance of amplifying diverse voices.

Closing Keynote with Kaitlin Johnstone

From Classroom to Kind Cotton: Building a Legacy of Literacy

Friday 3:15 - 4:15 PM - Composer Room

In this inspiring keynote, Kaitlin Johnstone, co-founder of Kind Cotton, shares her powerful journey from kindergarten teacher to social entrepreneur. With a deep passion for children's education and literacy, Kaitlin recognized a critical gap in book access for kids and decided to make a difference. Together with her partner Kevin, Kaitlin launched Kind Cotton—a clothing company with a unique mission to donate books to children with every purchase.

Thursday, April 10 | 11:00 - 11:45 AM

Workshop: Celebrating Early Literacy Through Movement

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

We all know the early literacy practices of Talk, Sing, Read, Write, Play, but have you considered integrating Movement and Mindfulness into your programs? The Two Ms are just as important: preparing little learners through fine and gross motor activities while stretching their imaginative capacity. Discover how bringing dance, yoga, & intentional breathing into early literacy programming helps little learners celebrate themselves and their potential. Be ready to move and groove. Facilitator: Kelly Dykwell, Marshall District Library

Providing Services, Materials and Programs for Disabled Youth

Altmuehl Room

Learn how to create an inviting environment for youth with disabilities of all types. From what types of materials to purchase to creating innovative programming this session will provide all the tools needed to get you started in serving this much overlooked part of every community. **Speaker: Shari Fesko, Southfield Public Library**

Enhance Your Library Storytimes with Music and Movement

Danube Room

Are you interested in harnessing the power of music to make your storytimes more engaging and fun for children? Learn how you can use music and movement in various ways during storytimes, and why they are such effective tools, all with the ultimate goal of helping children on their path to literacy.

Speaker: Matthew Archibald, Traverse Area District Library - East Bay Branch

Library Arcade: Building & Strengthening Communities with Retro Games

Mosel Room

Video games have been a popular pastime for decades, making them a perfect medium for intergenerational programming that builds and strengthens connections among children and their families. From the benefits to the logistical challenges, this session will share how a few old gaming consoles inspired the creation of a variety of programs and why libraries should consider incorporating retro gaming into their programming in a way that works for their staff and community. **Speakers: Killian Weston and Jayah Johnson, Bloomfield Township Public Library**

Reach Out and Refresh with Wonder Media!

Rhíne Room

Discover Wonder Media, an online resource filled with programming resources to use for engaging school outreach. Learn how to facilitate programs about misinformation and dependable news sources through fun and interactive activities. Mix and match these peer-designed resources to build a school program that is just right for outreach. **Speakers: Cathy Lancaster, Library of Michigan and Sue Ellen Christian, Western Michigan University**

Thursday, April 10 | 1:45 - 2:30 PM

Workshop: Lego Build Competition

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

Experience a Lego Build Competition. Inspired by puzzle competitions, participants will work as teams to build the same Lego set as quickly as they can. The first team to assemble their set wins! Prizes available to the winners! Facilitators: Lydia Schmidt and Melissa Thatcher, Hackley Public Library

Toy Libraries: Broaden the Playing Field for All Ages, All Abilities

Altmuehl Room

Toy libraries increase play opportunities and support developmental needs of children; ease economic challenges of families and promote positive socialization and cognitive conservation of seniors. Discover ways to utilize toys in library programs and how to successfully launch and maintain a toy library to encourage play that entertains, educates, and enriches....everyone! Speaker: Sue Kirschner, Cayahoga County Public Library

Teen, Teen, Goose: Creating Whimsy in Your Teen Space

Danube Room

Building a vibrant culture in your Teen Space can be fun! Learn how to empower teens to help you shape the identity of your library's Teen Space. Get ideas for how to solicit input from teens, inspire them to create community art, and engage their sense of whimsy. Participants will leave this session with passive programming ideas geared toward middle schoolers and high schoolers, community art project inspiration, and perhaps even the desire to acquire a fanciful mascot. Speakers: Olivia Pennebaker and Karina Gluys, Portage District Library

Partnering with Your Senior Living Community Through Storytime

Mosel Room

Come learn how the Dewitt District Library Youth Librarians started a new inter-generational story time. They will discuss how partnerships with senior living communities enriched the program, benefiting both seniors and young children. Information will include logistics, planning and tips for a successful storytime format. Be empowered to build relationships across generations, include different community members into story times, and broaden perception and understanding of senior populations. **Speakers: Jozefa Rogocki and Kelsie Rodriguez**, **DeWitt District Library**

Podcasting with Kids

Rhíne Room

Hosting a Podcasting with Kids program is a great way to introduce kids to new technologies, but it comes with unique challenges. What can you accomplish during a program? What kind of technology expertise do you need? What about privacy? Sound effects? Editing? Importantly, how do all of these things change with the addition of kids? From preparation and set-up, to storytelling choices and finalizing your podcasts, this session will explore strategies for successful podcasting with kids. **Speaker: Anna Hinkley, Saline District Library**

Thursday, April 10 | 3:00 - 3:45 PM

Workshop: Only Mysteries in the Library

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

Take up the case at this Murder Mystery workshop! Interrogate witnesses and suspects, gather evidence and bring the suspect to justice. If you have ever wanted to host a murder mystery at your library, this workshop is for you. Leave with a list of free online resources, and inspiration to create your own mystery from scratch including Al tools and document generators. Facilitator: Jennifer Sunderhaus, Shelby Township Library

SEL: Social Emotional Learning Support through Children's Library Programs

Altmuehl Room

After emerging from pandemic lock-downs youth service librarians reported changes in kids, Äô behavior, ranging from inabilities to reengage in play and normal conversations to demonstrating lacks of empathy and inclusion. A call went out for remedial SEL: Social Emotional Learning. Positive results inspired librarians to expand SEL interventions into all programming. Learn how to foster social skills through kids's programming in this interactive, participatory session and review of best resources. Speaker: Kathleen McBroom, Wayne State University School of Information Science

Aged out of Storytime... now what? Programming for ages 5-8

Danube Room

With the trends of providing programming specifically for teens and tweens, the 5-8 year old crowd may be overlooked. We will share our programs catered to this group. You will learn what has worked for us and what hasn't and hear what other libraries are doing.

Speakers: Dana Bussard, Michelle Berens, and Samantha Stachowiak, Plymouth District Library

Early Literacy Popcorn Session

Mosel Room

n our special "popcorn" session, we ask you to be the experts! Everyone is doing great work in their libraries and this is the moment to share with our peers. We'll have a jar of questions and invite people to pick a question and share with the group. This session will discuss early literacy programs and initiatives.

Facilitators: Lydia Schmidt, Hackley Public Library and Courtnei Moyses, Grand Rapids Public Library

All Ages Archives: Working Together to Share History and Stories

Rhíne Room

This session explores ways to engage youth in historical literacy and primary source research. Archives can be intimidating for students, but changes in statewide curriculum has made it imperative for library professionals to engage youth in historical inquiry, share resources, and encourage primary source-driven projects for academic work and extracurricular activities like Michigan History Day. Through examples, this session shares successes and challenges in shaping future historians! **Speaker: Lindsay Hiltunen, Michigan Tech Archives**

Friday April 11 | 10:45 - 11:30 AM

Workshop: Braille Builders: LEGO and Literacy in Tactile Play

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

Join us for Braille Builders, an interactive workshop that combines the creativity of LEGO with the tactile experience of learning braille. Each participant will have the opportunity to engage with LEGO Braille Bricks kits as they work together in small groups to create, test, and share programming ideas for their public library audience. Perfect for anyone interested in accessible learning through play, this session proves that when it comes to creativity, there are no limits, only possibilities. Facilitators: Stephanie Wambaugh and Anita Chouinard, Braille and Talking Book Library

On the Hunt for Easy Programming: Library Scavenger Hunts

Altmuhl Room

Learn how scavenger hunts can be easily created and run with minimal librarian effort. We'll also discuss fun ways to make more involved scavenger hunts, how to pair them with existing programs, and how to use them as educational opportunities. In the last few minutes, we'll even design one together! Everyone will leave with practical ideas, examples, and the confidence to create their own. Speaker: Lauren Aquilina, Commerce Township Community Library

Mix, Measure, Master: Teen Food Programs

Danube Room

If you feed them, they will come. Food can be a motivation for tweens and teens to attend library programs but it can also be an opening to learn something. No kitchen? no problem! Using recipes that require little to no cooking, rural libraries were able to teach kitchen skills and expand palates in a fun and engaging atmosphere. Speakers: Kayla Koning and Laura Dorgelo, Paw Paw District Library

StickyStories: Early Literacy and Family Engagement via Community Collaboration

Mosel Room

StickyStories: Literacy That Sticks is a community-driven initiative by Flint & Genesee Literacy Network using interactive song and story mats to foster early literacy and family engagement. Partner organizations tailor StickyStories to their programs, from bilingual tales at the Latinx Center to nature themes at For-Mar Nature Preserve. This hands-on, low-cost approach connects literacy with culture, science, and play, enhancing school readiness, parent-child bonds, and community impact. Speaker: Heather Harrison, Flint & Genesee Literacy Network

First Grade Round Up: Getting Kids Stoked on the Library for over 30 years.

Rhíne Room

Canton Public Library has been hosting First Grade Round Up (FRGU) every March for over 30 years. FGRU is a program that invites every first-grade classroom in the community to the library for a fun and exciting 90-minute program culminating in every child getting their own library card and checking out a book. Learn how the program has evolved over the years, remains an important benchmark for many young patrons and one of the highlights of the year for all of the staff involved. **Speaker: Nichole Welz, Canton Public Library**

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Friday April 11 | 11:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Workshop: Paint & Pop

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

Giving patrons a space to be creative is so important. It provides options for date night, an escape from the day-today, and a place to make new friends. Join me for this Paint & Pop workshop where I show you how easy it is to run an instructional beginner painting program for all ages.

Facilitator: Adrianna Triche, Kent District Library Wyoming Branch

Dyslexic-Friendly Print Materials in the Library

Altmuehl Room

Dyslexia is a common learning disability that affects a person's ability to read, write, spell, and process language. Those with this neurological condition can find reading traditional print materials unenjoyable or even frustrating. Dyslexic-friendly print materials are a rapidly growing option allowing individuals with print disabilities to experience the joys of reading through print. Learn how your library can support those with dyslexia and how you can build a dyslexic-friendly collection. Speaker: Cathrine Trautman, Northville District Library

Hands-On Chaos: Exploring the Joy of Messy Play

Danube Room

Messy play is a vital part of childhood! Through it, children develop critical thinking skills, a sense of curiosity, and fine and gross motor skills. Learn how to put on a messy play program for ages 0-4 and how to adapt it for indoors, outdoors, or different sized libraries. Let go of cleanliness and gain the confidence to speak about the benefits of mess to caregivers. **Speakers: Nicole Munson and Brad Bachelor, Plymouth District Library**

Camp MADL: Camp Inspired Stations to Create a Great Program for Kids

Mosel Room

Bring the fun of camping to the library! Use a variety of materials (some may already be in the supply closet) to create an engaging program filled with creativity and education. Self-guided, stations allow kids to choose the activity they want to enjoy from things like axe-throwing (child friendly toy), knot tying, picnic area (blanket and play food), a scavenger hunt, frog jump, make your own bracelet, sit by the campfire (don't get burned), and end with a thrilling outdoor experiment. Speakers: Diana Wenger and Christina Le Vey-Rowland, Muskegon Area District Library

Strategies for Effective Conversations with Concerned Parents and Caregivers

Rhíne Room

We want all families to feel welcome and safe in our libraries, but it can be hard to please everyone in today's polarizing times. This session will help you have hard but respectful conversations with concerned parents and caregivers about the library. Learn what experts recommend and bring your success stories to share with the group. Speaker: Kristin Fontichiaro, University of Michigan School of Information

Friday April 11 | 2:15 - 3:00 PM

Workshop: Dramatic Play Stations: Pick and Play Early Literacy Skills

Composer Room - This workshop session requires pre-registration

Dramatic play stations are an open play program for ages 2 - 5 to practice early literacy skills. Conference attendees will learn more about how to promote early literacy through play by interacting with 2 dramatic play station themes. Each theme will have 5 stations with examples of activities that correspond to early literacy skills. Following playtime, attendees will have the opportunity to plan their own dramatic play stations to bring home to their library. Facilitator: Jessica Biebuyck, Clinton-Macomb Public Library

Out-of-the-Box Collection Development Strategies

Altmuehl Room

Building diverse and dynamic collections for youth requires more than just reading review journals. This session will explore unique and unconventional approaches to collection development. Participants will also have an opportunity to discuss their methods and brainstorm new practices for curating diverse collections. Speaker: Whitney Jones, Northville District Library

Where the Pages Take You: Destination Story Times

Danube Room

Pack your bags for "Tales on the Trail: Destination Story Times!" Join me, Beth Emmons, as I share two years of adventures bringing story time out into the community. I'll spill the tea on the good, the bad, and the magical moments, plus give you a list of tried-and-true destinations. You'll also have time to brainstorm and swap ideas to make your own Destination Story Times a hit. Let's take story time on the road and spark imaginations everywhere! Speaker: Beth Emmons, Frankenmuth Wickson District Library

Animating Stories: Launching and Maintaining a Club for Young Animators

Mosel Room

Interested in helping your youth patrons create their own animations but not sure where to start? In this session, the presenters will share tips and resources to help library programmers develop and run engaging animation programs. Various animation techniques, activities, and resources will be shared. Regardless of budget or artistic experience, there are many ways that library programmers can help their patrons discover the joy of animating. **Speakers: Eric Berling and Gillian Streeter, East Lansing Public Library**

Implementing a Community-Wide Read Program for Youth

Rhíne Room

One Book, One Community programs are popular, but they are often geared toward adults. How can such an initiative be implemented for youth? For nearly twenty years, Grand Rapids Public Library has conducted a One Book, One City program for fifth graders. Learn how you can create a similar program in your community and foster literacy, social-emotional learning, and connection among students. **Speaker: Erin Hart, Grand Rapids Public Library**

THE 2025 WORKGROUP

Please take a moment to thank this year's workgroup if you see them at the conference. This event would not be possible without their months of hard work.





































Are you interested in joining the 2026 workgroup?

Sign up today by visiting: www.milibraries.org/get-involved