

President's Update - October 11, 2018



Congratulations to Gail Madziar on her retirement! While we will miss Gail as the director of the Michigan Library Association (MLA), it is hard not to react to the big smile on her face when she shares her retirement plans with you. Ask her and you will see for yourself.

Thank you seems too simple of a phrase for the tremendous amount of time, effort, knowledge and passion Gail has given to MLA and Michigan libraries. Gail has strategically moved library specific legislation through the state house and senate, and some during tough lame duck sessions

. These include tax captures; a permanent injunction against PA 269 which impeded libraries' ability to communicate with their communities about millage proposals; an amendment to the District Library Establishment Act allowing for the continuation of a district library in the event one or more of its entities ceased to exist; the repeal of a sunset so school districts could continue to be part of a new district library; mitigating proposals that would allow only November ballot issues; including libraries in 2014 Proposal 1 to guarantee full reimbursement from losses due to the Personal Property Tax repeal; numerous threats to penal fines; Narcan bills, and annual state funding increases. She did all of this with tenacity and grace. During her leadership, Gail looked beyond typical funding sources to find new revenue streams for MLA, revamped the committees and workgroups, developed the MLA mentor program and reorganized the MLA staff. While Gail will credit the wonderful MLA staff for many of the successes, it takes a strong leader to restructure and develop initiatives. MLA staff have openly shared with me that Gail is a great mentor.

Gail graciously gave the MLA Board of Directors a six-month notice. Her plan is to retire in March. So, you may be wondering what the next steps are? In September, I named a six member search committee for a new director. The search committee has three academic librarians (Steven Bowers, Marc Boucher and Jennifer Dean) and three public librarians (Michelle Boisvenue-Fox, Kelly Richards and myself). We have reviewed and tweaked the current job description, gathered a list of hiring consultants, and with the full board of directors have developed a list of qualities, characteristics and skills we see as essential requirements for the new MLA director. As we all know, March will be here before we know it so we are moving quickly to get a consultant on board, to post the position nationally and to

interview candidates.

Again, a heartfelt thank you to Gail for so adeptly leading MLA for the past six years. The organization is financially solvent and Michigan libraries are fortunate we had a smart, forward-thinking and skillful leader.

[Back to news](#)