

President's Update - March 14, 2019



Ch-ch-ch-ch changes, turn and face the strange, ch-ch-changes." The song *Changes* by David Bowie is considered a song about defying critics and stepping out on your own. Change is always upon us. We just changed our clocks; spring is coming (it really is); and the Michigan Library Association staff and leadership are changing.

"A lot of people resist transition and therefore never allow themselves to enjoy who they are. Embrace the change, no matter what it is; once you do, you can learn about the new world you're in and take advantage of it." - Nikki Giovanni.

As MLA transitions through staff changes, the Executive Director search is well underway and finalists have been selected. There were 25 applications submitted; the search committee narrowed the semi-finalists to four candidates. In depth phone interviews were conducted the week of March 4. The search committee selected two finalist in which to conduct live interviews. The full Board of Directors will conduct interviews on March 25. The Board is excited about the prospects of the Michigan Library Association as we move the organization into the next stages of working for all Michigan libraries.

Meet the new faces of MLA! It is more than the Executive Director position that is changing at MLA, there is a new Administrative Assistant, Lisa Buttigieg. Lisa brings many years of experience with a focus on membership, communication and retention. She enjoys the art of empowering others to succeed as well as art in many forms. Lisa has a degree in graphic design, which she has used to promote educational events and brand identity. Lisa looks forward to providing MLA members with the best service possible and contributing to the success of the association. In addition to Lisa, Ross Anderson has joined the MLA staff to help with the transition of new staff and changing roles. Ross has over 11 years of administrative experience with a focus on accounting. Currently, he is a student at Davenport University in Grand Rapids, where he will be graduating in April with a Bachelor's degree in business. Ross is originally from Scotland. He moved to the United States to coach soccer. Ross is balancing

his studies with being the assistant coach of men's soccer at Davenport University. Ultimately, he wants to be a collegiate head soccer coach. In the meantime, he is expanding his skills and helping MLA serve its members. MLA is also searching for a new Professional Development and Meeting Planner.

I am pleased to share that with all the transitions happening at MLA, and with Spring Institute happening March 28-29 in Bay City, Gail Madziar has agreed to stay on at MLA to help with upcoming workshops, conferences, the Narcan bill, meeting new legislators and transitioning the new director. While Gail's official retirement date is March 15, she will be around a bit longer. Thank you, Gail.

The MLA Board elections are coming up soon, which presents more opportunities. The MLA Nomination and Leadership Development Committee and Board of Directors took seriously the membership's request to have choices on the election ballot. The Board approved the committee's recommended ballot with several individuals to select from for the open member-at-large positions. The committee and board members had several conversations, over many months, seeking multiple candidate nominees for President-elect, as well. The final approved slate for President-elect includes one nominee, as only one member, ultimately, stepped forward to take on this role. The Board and committee feel that the one nominee is a strong and experienced candidate, who is committed to the success of MLA. Therefore, since no other members have volunteered for the role, and a strong candidate exists, a single candidate has been put forth, which has been done in the past. Members who would like there to be more than one nominee for President-elect may choose to write in an alternate candidate on their ballots when casting their votes, if they desire. We appreciate all of the candidates running for board positions, their willingness to serve and our members' participation in the nomination and election process. Look for your ballots soon!

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez says, "Change takes courage." I know the MLA staff and membership will face the coming changes courageously.

As a reminder, more big things are happening in March:

- [Spring Institute!](#) Advanced registration rates expire **March 15**
- The call for volunteers will be opening later this month
- The annual conference [call for proposals](#) is open through **March 31**
- Upcoming workshops:
- [Human Resources for Libraries](#) : Early Bird deadline March 15

- [Community Collaborations 2019](#) : Early Bird deadline March 22

Take that leap, open yourself up to change by volunteering for an MLA committee or by attending a conference or workshop. You might just learn about a whole new library world.

[Back to news](#)