Written by Kristin Shelley, 2018-2019 MLA President

President's Update - May 9, 2019



As Michigan emerges into spring and new beginnings so do Gail Madziar and the Michigan Library Association (MLA). We said goodbye to Gail on Friday, May 3. Gail led MLA for six years through budget challenges, tax capture triumphs, Narcan legislation victories and so much more. A huge thank you to Gail for her passion and tremendous advocacy for Michigan libraries. Gail's financial prowess, political savvy and business acumen proved to be exceptionally valuable in making MLA financially stable and our libraries well loved by many legislators. I wish Gail the best of luck in retirement and all her future endeavors.

New beginnings are on the horizon for MLA as the staff and Board of Directors welcome Deborah E. Mikula as the new Executive Director. Debbie comes to MLA from the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, most recently, but has local, state and federal nonprofit experience. Her accomplishments include receiving the Community Builder award from Downtown Lansing Inc.; producing four annual Creative Placemaking Summits; and facilitating the Cultural Economic Development Plan for Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. Debbie's first day will be June 24. She has shared with me that she is very excited to lead MLA and to work for Michigan libraries. The Board and I are thrilled to have Debbie as the new Executive Director and to see where she takes the organization.

Thank you to the MLA staff and membership for your patience and guidance throughout the search process for the new director. I am incredibly indebted to my fellow board members. Your support, encouraging words, wisdom and confidence in me have meant more to me than I can express. Michigan libraries should feel very confident in the MLA Board. The dedication of our board members is truly admirable.

As MLA welcomes new staff (Debbie, Amber and Lisa), and new board members (Julia Eisenstein, University of Detroit Mercy, Scott Duimstra, Capital Area District Libraries and Mary Freier, Northern Michigan University), the Board says a very fond farewell to Steven Bowers, Wayne State University; Marc Boucher, Lake Superior State University; and Juliane Morian, Clinton-Macomb Public Library. Again, thank you for your leadership and commitment.

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