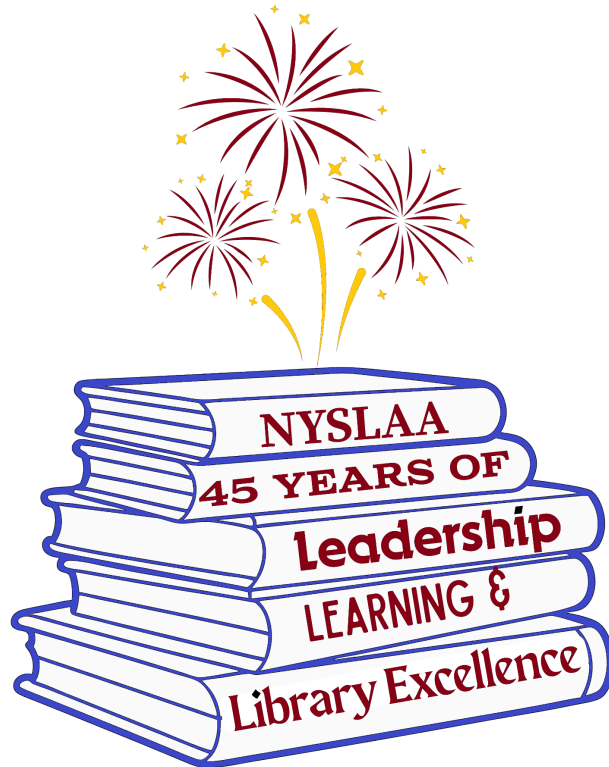


New York State Library Assistants' Association

45th Annual Conference

May 27 - 29, 2026



NYSLAA: Celebrating 45 Years

**Empowering Library Workers to Lead,
Learn, and Excel**

**Hosted by the NYSLAA Executive Council
Held at the Radisson Hotel in Corning, NY**

Come Early and Visit the Local Attractions!

Here are **fun and interesting things to do near the Radisson Hotel Corning** (all easily walkable or a short ride) while you're at your conference — great for evenings or free time outside workshops:

Museums & Culture (Walkable)

- **Corning Museum of Glass** – World-renowned glass museum with stunning exhibits and live glass blowing demonstrations; a signature Corning experience (discounted admission of **\$16** with your conference name tag).
- **The Rockwell Museum** – Smithsonian-affiliate art museum featuring American art and cultural exhibits — just a few minutes' walk. **Open Wednesdays after May 1st.**
- **West End Gallery** – Boutique art gallery in the nearby market district — great stop if you enjoy local and contemporary art.
- **Historical sites nearby** – Spot landmarks like **Little Joe Tower** and explore downtown Corning's heritage (there are historic buildings and local history points within walking distance).

Stroll & Explore

Corning's Gaffer District – Historic downtown full of shops, boutiques, cafes, and murals. It's perfect for window-shopping, quick bites, and local souvenirs.

Food & Drink Spots (Great for Lunch & networking)

All of these are **just a short walk from your hotel**

Casual & Local Favorites

- **Aniello's Pizzeria** – Beloved local pizza place.
- **Atlas Brick Oven Pizzeria** – Highly rated pizza & casual fare.
- **Nickel's Pit BBQ Corning / Slammin' Jammin' BBQ** – Great BBQ options.
- **Little Boomers' Burrito Bar** – Fun burrito spot with positive reviews.
- **Woodhouse Stadium Grill** – Classic American grill nearby.

Bars & Social Spots

- **The Cellar** – Stylish wine & tapas bar (good for relaxed evening drinks).
- **Hand And Foot** – Highly rated bar with small bites — great for casual networking or a nightcap.
- **Mooney's Sports Bar & Grill** – Local favorite for drinks and sports.
- **Antoinette's** – Bar with New American fare.

Other Good Eats

- **Oka Asian Food** – Asian fusion favorites
- **Giuseppe's Italian Eatery** – Italian comfort food
- **Three Birds Restaurant** – Upscale dining
- **Old World Cafe & Ice Cream** – Great for a sweet treat or lighter meal
- **Donna's Restaurant / Ella's Acres / Burgers & Beer of Corning** – Other local classics

Entertainment

Palace Theatre – Historic local movie theatre within walking distance of the hotel for a film night.

<https://todoseekers.com/things-to-do-in-corning-ny>

NYSLAA Program May 27-29, 2026

Wednesday, May 27, 2026

- 11:00 - 5:00 p.m. Conference Registration – **Lobby Alcove**
6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Meet and Greet: Included in the registration price - **Market Street Social** (in the hotel)
We will exchange white elephant gifts.
The gifts should cost no more than \$15.00. Bring a gift, Take a gift.

Thursday, May 28, 2026

- 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Conference Registration – **Lobby Alcove**
7:00 - 8:30 a.m. Hot Breakfast Buffet – **Keuka/Seneca Room**
8:30 - 9:45 a.m. Welcoming Remarks and Town Meeting. Please join us - **Keuka/Seneca Room**
10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Workshop Session I
11:30 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch – On Your Own
1:30 - 3:00 p.m. Workshop Session II
5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Dinner in the **Keuka/Seneca Room**

Friday, May 29, 2026

- 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Conference Registration – **Lobby Alcove**
7:00 - 8:30 a.m. Hot Breakfast Buffet – **Keuka/Seneca Room**
8:00 - 8:30 a.m. Welcome and Announcements – **Keuka/Seneca Room**
8:45 - 10:15 a.m. Workshop Session III
10:30 - 12:00 p.m. Workshop Session IV
12:00 - 3:00 p.m. Keynote and Awards Luncheon – **Keuka/Seneca Room**
Certificates of Achievement presented
Milestone Recognition of members
Passing the Scroll
Basket Raffle

Lodging Information:

Radisson Hotel
125 Denison Pkwy East, Corning NY 14830

Call the Hotel Directly at 607-962-5000
and request a reservation under the
NYSLAA 2026 Conference group block or

Rate: \$159 per night

Book before 11:59 pm on **April 26, 2026!**

Book online with this link:

[NYSLAA 2026 Conference Group Room Block](#)

Conference Info:

See **nyslaa.org/conference.html** to download
copies of this brochure.

Join **NYSLAA-L** from **nyslaa.org** for
questions/discussions regarding the conference.

2026 Community Outreach:

Pawz and Purrrz Animal Rescue, Inc.

<https://www.pawzandpurrrz.org/>

See insert for more information

Corning Community Food Pantry

<https://corningfoodpantry.com/>

See insert for more information

Question? Contact:

Wendy Freier at 315-521-9442 or wfreier@owwl.org
Donna Hanna at 585-245-5508 or
hanna@geneseo.edu

Workshop Choices Thursday— May 28, 2026

Workshop Session I: 10:00 - 11:30
Please see insert for speaker information

1. MEDITATION: "Finding Calm in the Stacks"

Cheryl Marriott (ZOOM)

This workshop is for library assistants and support staff, who deal with daily work stress. Between helping a lot of people, fixing computer issues, and moving heavy books, the work can be tiring for your body and your mind. This class teaches simple, quick "tiny meditations" tricks that you can use while you work. They take only a few seconds but help you stay calm, feel less tired, and do your best work.

2. Checking Out Fines: Ending the Era of Library Punishment

Virginia Wescott

For decades, libraries relied on overdue fines to teach responsibility. Experience has shown they don't create better users—they create barriers. This session shares one library's journey to becoming fine-free, from early steps, bold decisions, and the big impacts on budgets, workflows, and staff morale. You will leave with practical ideas to spark the fine-free conversation in your library; Data gathering, how to message the change, and how to respond to the classic question, "But what if they never bring it back?" Going fine-free isn't about losing revenue—it's about removing barriers. Libraries don't exist to collect spare change; we exist to make change.

3. Roundtable: Celebrating Student Workers and Library Volunteers: Library Workers On the Frontlines

Donna Hanna
Heather Gad

Discussion about ideas for celebrating student workers and library volunteers throughout the year. Come and share ideas on how we can show our appreciation for these worker bees who help keep our libraries going.

4. What Library Paraprofessionals Need to Know about Civil Service

Hillary McShea

Although the intent of civil service law is to provide a fair and merit-based playing field for government employment, in practice, the rules can be opaque and difficult to understand. This workshop will offer information and tips to assist library workers as they navigate careers in a Civil Service environment.

Workshop Session II: 1:30 - 3:00
Please see insert for speaker information

5. Open Houses: A Sampler of Historic Homes

Lisa C. Wemett
Terry Mulee

Homes with history. Fashionable neighborhoods. Architectural gems. Whether elegant showstoppers or humble landmarks with a story to tell, these historically significant houses are well worth the time for a tour when you are on a road trip. Lisa Wemett and Terry Mulee will introduce you to some famous residences you can visit in New York and Pennsylvania.

6. Legal Reference for Public Libraries

Christopher Lund

This workshop will provide a basic overview of how to respond to legal reference and research questions from public library users. Topics will include: Understanding the difference between Legal Information v. Legal Advice; Finding common legal forms; Using the New York State Court System's CourtHelp website and Help Centers; Distinguishing between various types of primary and secondary legal sources; Where to refer users for further assistance and more.

7. Stop Telling Me to Be Resilient: Building Networks, Not Burnout

Virginia Wescott

"Be resilient." We hear it all the time—but too often, it's used to gloss over real workplace challenges and chronic stress. This session takes a light-hearted yet honest look at how shifting from simply enduring to connecting can create lasting change. Drawing on experiences and morale-building efforts, I'll share practical ways to build support networks, nurture joy at work, and take small, meaningful actions that strengthen our teams and communities.

8. The Who, What, Why, Where, and What for Becoming a Sustainable Library

Fred Stoss

We look at the evolution of sustainability in libraries and highlight the vital role library assistants play as promoters of sustainability through programs, projects, activities, and services in their libraries and communities. In October, ALA and SLI announced a new collaboration providing public libraries with education, training, and practical tools to increase their capacity as sustainability leaders and to advance resilience within their communities.

Workshop Choices Friday—May 29, 2026

Workshop Session III: 8:45 - 10:15
Please see insert for speaker information

9. Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE)
Richard Myers

(CRASE) is a training program developed by Texas State University that teaches the public how to survive an active shooter event using the Avoid, Deny, Defend (ADD) strategy. It provides strategies and guidance for civilians to take immediate action to save their own lives before law enforcement arrives, focusing on three core responses: **Avoid** the attacker, **Deny** the attacker access, and **Defend** yourself. The course includes classroom instruction and includes lessons learned from real-world scenarios.

10. IDS Network and Resource Sharing
Mark Sullivan

Mark will be giving an overview of IDS Network which is a resource-sharing cooperative of over 120 member libraries, many in New York. The IDS Network facilitates the free and efficient sharing of library materials (books, articles, etc.) among participating institutions. Come see what it's all about.

11. Book & Paper Crafts for Teen & Adult Programming
Patty Jackman

Learn how to make a cute hedgehog from an old book. Then, let the good times flow with a coffee themed paper craft. Discuss how these programs and more might be offered at your library and bring your own craft programming ideas to share! Written instructions with a list of materials will be available.

12. Simple & Chic: DIY Jewelry for Beginners
Chandra Best

Welcome to a fun and relaxed jewelry-making workshop designed for beginners! In this session, you'll learn the basics of crafting simple, yet beautiful, necklaces, bracelets, and earrings. We'll cover easy-to-follow techniques for stringing beads, working with clasps, and assembling your own jewelry. No prior experience is needed—just bring your creativity and enthusiasm! By the end of the workshop, you'll have a few handmade pieces to wear or gift, and the confidence to continue creating your own jewelry at home.

Workshop Session IV: 10:30 - 12:00
Please see insert for speaker information

13. Artificial Intelligence and You: The what, when, why, and how of ChatGPT, Copilot, and other AI tools
Alan Witt

This workshop provides a practical introduction to AI tools, focusing on how they work, their limitations, and their impact on the workplace. Through discussion and real-world examples, participants will explore ethical concerns, job security questions, and ways AI can be used thoughtfully to support—not replace—human work.

14. Revitalizing and Re-engaging Support Staff to Enhance Professional Development

Le'Andre Peoples
Ruth Pozo
Sharon Palmer

This workshop explores the evolving role of library support staff in an era of organizational change. Emphasizing employee engagement, professional development, and collaboration, the session offers strategies for motivating support staff, identifying hidden talents, and fostering teamwork to strengthen community outreach and library impact.

15. Elevating Impact, Cultivating Growth: The Power of Lifelong Learning

Caroline Kravitz

In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how to leverage professional learning opportunities to deepen their impact as library workers and advance in their careers. Participants can expect to reflect on the current ways they engage in professional learning, explore sustainable methods to build learning into their daily workflows, and discover fresh tools and resources to support them along the way.

16. The Library of Things
Carol Ellen Kowalik-Happy

Kelly Povero

From musical instruments to metal detectors, Libraries of Things are transforming how communities use their libraries. This session highlights how nontraditional lending collections can increase access, promote sustainability, and deepen community connections. Learn practical tips for launching or expanding a Library of Things, including policies and promotion strategies that ensure long-term success.

Speaker Information

Workshop Session I

1. Cheryl Marriott

Cheryl is the Coordinator of Archives and Special Collections at SUNY Downstate and serves as President of NYSLAA.

2. Virginia Wescott

Virginia (she/her) is a Certified Poverty Coach with 25 years at Troy Public Library, including 17 years as Head of Circulation. She now serves as Lead Library Specialist in Access Services at RPI.

3. Donna Hanna

Donna is the Collection Management Assistant at Milne Library, where she has worked since 1979, and has long served in leadership roles with CSEA and the New York State Library Assistants' Association.

Heather Gad

Heather is a Library Assistant 2 at SUNY Oneonta. A 12 year NYSLAA member, having previously been Recording Secretary and is the current Treasurer. She also has been an IDS Peer Advisor for the past 6 years.

4. Hillary McShea

Hillary is the Circulation Supervisor at the Henrietta Public Library, with 11 years in public libraries and prior experience as a Personnel Clerk.

Speaker Information

Workshop Session II

5. Lisa C. Wemett

Lisa retired in 2009 from the Webster Public Library, where she was the Assistant Director for thirteen years. She volunteers for the Friends of Libraries Section of NYLA.

Terry Mulee

She is a member of the Friends of Libraries Section Executive Board (NYLA). She is active in NYLA and has been a NYSLAA member since 2010. She is a life-time member in the Girl Scouts

6. Chris Lund

Chris is the Principal Law Librarian for New York's Sixth Judicial District in Binghamton.

7. Virginia Wescott

Virginia (she/her) is a Certified Poverty Coach with 25 years at Troy Public Library, including 17 years as Head of Circulation. She now serves as Lead Library Specialist in Access Services at RPI

8. Fred Stoss

Fred is a tenured Full Librarian at University @ Buffalo, serving as liaison to Earth Sciences, Environment & Sustainability, and Psychology. He has held leadership roles in major library associations and is recognized for his contributions to environmental science librarianship, including election as an AAAS Fellow.

Speaker Information

Workshop Session III

9. Richard Myers

Rick Myers is currently the Assistant Chief of Police at SUNY Geneseo. Rick joined the New York State University Police at the University at Buffalo in November 2004; he transferred to Buffalo State as a police officer and was promoted to Lieutenant in 2012.

10. Mark Sullivan

Mark Sullivan is the Executive Director of the IDS Network, a library resource sharing consortium, based at SUNY Geneseo that focuses on community and innovation.

11. Patty Jackman

Patty Jackman is a dedicated Library Assistant in the Youth Services department at Middle Country Public Library on Long Island, New York, where she has worked for 20 years.

12. Chandra Best

Chandra is an Office Associate I with the NYPL, where she supervises and mentors staff, fostering a positive and collaborative work environment.

Speaker Information

Workshop Session IV

13. Alan Witt

Alan is a research instruction librarian at SUNY Geneseo. He runs Milne Library's research instruction internship program. He serves on Geneseo's AI pedagogy task force and is president of the Geneseo chapter of United University Professions.

14. Le'Andre Peoples

Le'Andre is a Brooklyn Public Library professional with over 20 years of experience, now serving as Regional Assistant, with strengths in operations, technology, and administrative leadership.

Ruth Pozo

Ruth is a Brooklyn Public Library professional with over 20 years of experience, an MLIS, and a 2025 NYLA Developing Leaders Program graduate. She currently chairs NYLA's Membership Committee.

Sharon Palmer

Sharon Palmer is a Regional Director at Brooklyn Public Library overseeing ten libraries and 100+ staff, recognized for collaborative leadership, award-winning customer service, and innovative community programming.

15. Caroline Kravitz

Caroline Kravitz is an educator and program leader focused on youth and workforce development. She currently serves as a Senior Specialist at Brooklyn Public Library.

16. Carol Kowalik-Happy

Carol is currently serving as the System Adult Outreach Services Manager for the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. She also represents the library as a Patent and Trademark Resource Center Representative.

Kelly Provero

Kelly is the Library Director at the Watkins Glen Public Library. Kelly serves the community through various board commitments, and chairs the Southern Tier Library System's Director's Advisory Council.

NYSLAA: Celebrating 45 Years

45th Annual NYSLAA Conference, Radisson Hotel Corning, New York

May 27 - May 29, 2026

Registration Form

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Work _____

Email _____

In the event you have an emergency while at the conference, please provide contact information.

Name _____ Phone _____

I would like to volunteer: Registration Table Anything you need

Registration Information

Early Bird registration deadline: **March 20, 2026**

Final Registration deadline: **April 24, 2026**

Full payment must accompany registration.

Mail to: Donna Hanna

Make checks payable to NYSLAA

SUNY College at Geneseo

Pay using *Paypal* (see back of form,
an extra **\$10 fee** applies **per person**).

Milne Library

1 College Circle

Geneseo, NY 14454

We regret that no refunds can be made.

Please direct registration questions to Donna - phone: 585-245-5508

email: hanna@geneseo.edu

Confirmation, receipt, and information will be mailed **after** the payment has cleared. Any returned check fees must be paid prior to receipt of the conference packet.

Workshop Selections

Some workshop sessions might be limited. Please give more than one choice below.

1st Choice 2nd Choice 3rd Choice

Thursday Workshop Session I (Workshops 1 - 4 only) _____

Workshop Session II (Workshops 5 - 8 only) _____

Friday Workshop Session III (Workshops 9 - 12 only) _____

Workshop Session IV (Workshops 13 - 16 only) _____

Workshop substitutions: In the event of an emergency, we reserve the right to substitute an equally qualified speaker or cancel a workshop and honor one of your alternative choices.

SPECIAL NEEDS: NYSLAA can better accommodate you if we know in advance.

Please indicate any **physical or dietary requirements** below.

Registration Fees

Early Bird Deadline—March 20, 2026 (Postmarked or submitted to PayPal by March 20, 2026)

Full Conference: 4 workshops, 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, Meet & Greet, Thursday Dinner

\$225.00 Member \$250.00 Non-member \$ _____

Thursday Only: 2 workshops, Thursday breakfast & dinner

\$170.00 Member \$195.00 Non-member \$ _____

Friday Only: 2 Workshops, Friday breakfast & lunch w/keynote

\$170.00 Member \$195.00 Non-member \$ _____

Final Deadline—April 24, 2026 (Postmarked or submitted to PayPal by April 24, 2026)

Full Conference: 4 workshops, 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, Meet & Greet, Thursday Dinner

\$255.00 Member \$280.00 Non-member \$ _____

Thursday Only: 2 workshops, Thursday breakfast & dinner

\$200.00 Member \$240.00 Non-member \$ _____

Friday Only: 2 Workshops, Friday breakfast & lunch w/keynote

\$200.00 Member \$240.00 Non-member \$ _____

The Gift for this year's conference is a tee shirt. Please fill in so that you receive your gift!

Apparel Choices—Indicate color and size choice below. See apparel insert for sizing information.

Choose a tee shirt color and size: Ash Light Blue _____ (XS - 4XL) _____

NYSLAA Membership 2026 \$15.00 regular \$12.00 associate \$ _____

If you are not a 2026 member yet, join now and register above at the NYSLAA member rate.

To pay online go to www.nyslaa.org/membertools.html. \$ 10.00 \$ _____

(A \$10 fee applies **Per Person**, even for multiple registrations through PayPal.)

Total Amount for Conference: (Make checks payable to NYSLAA) \$ _____

Food Information

The following are included. To assist with catering, please mark your attendance (yes or no) for each meal:

Wed. **Meet & Greet (included in registration fee)** Yes No

Thurs. **Breakfast/hot buffet** Yes No **Dinner Buffet** Yes No

Fri. **Breakfast/hot buffet** Yes No **Lunch Buffet** Yes No

Enter any **special dietary needs** in the space provided on the front of this form. ?

Name Tag Information

Name badges will be required for all conference activities.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution/Library: _____

City/State: _____