MANAGER TO MANAGER: TIPS TO KEEP YOU SANE AND EFFECTIVE

Gail Wechsler, Library Director, Law Library Association of St. Louis (gwechsler@llastl.org)

UTILIZING DEI AS YOU RECRUIT STAFF MEMBERS

Many years ago, in my first job as an attorney, I worked for a government agency dedicated to making sure that contractors who did business with the City of New York had employment practices that complied with all local, state, and federal anti-discrimination laws. Included as part of this was a requirement to make sure that the company engaged in some form of affirmative action. We actually sent businesses lists of employment agencies, unions and other sources that could generate pools of diverse applicants in terms of race, gender, age, disability, etc.

Times have changed. However, then as now, it is important to consider diversity, equity and inclusion when recruiting new staff at your library. Beyond making sure your library does not make hiring decisions that violate the law, you should be looking toward policies that attract a diverse workforce and promote inclusion.

Why do this? One reason is that having a diverse workforce encourages and leads to more creativity and innovation. Studies also show it leads to improved decision making at an institution, as diverse work forces make it less likely there will be blind spots or outdated assumptions at play prior to making a decision. And using recruitment tools that stress diversity and inclusion can guide you to a previously untapped talent pool of applicants.

What are some roadblocks? One is that we all have some unconscious biases that might influence recruitment practices. We may also be resistant to change. Many of us like to do things the way we have in the past and how we feel comfortable.
What are some best practices toward this end? This list is not exhaustive. However, tips include:

*Review your job descriptions.* Make sure they don’t include any skills or requirements that are not absolutely needed. Also be sure to use gender-neutral language and to consider descriptions that are accommodating to those who might have a disability.

*Have a diverse review committee if possible.* Having a panel of people from different backgrounds as part of the decision-making committee will help reduce any unconscious bias and increase the chance of adding employees who meet your DEI goals.

*Do outreach.* Similar to the lists of employment agencies and unions we used at my old job, consider reaching out to partnering agencies that might help you in the job search. Related to that, if looking for a paid intern, consider recruiting those who have received an American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) George Strait Scholarship (awarded to minorities in the law librarianship field).

*Add diversity training for your staff.* You and any staff that engage in hiring and recruitment should receive training to raise awareness of unconscious bias and to learn ways to be more inclusive in the recruitment and hiring process.

Everyone benefits when we have a diverse library staff where everyone feels valued and included. Get out of your comfort zone and think outside the box. This will go a long way toward achieving your DEI goals as a library manager.

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**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*Le’Shawn Turner, Reference Librarian, Chickasaw Nation Law Library at Oklahoma City University School of Law* ([lrturner@okcu.edu](mailto:lrturner@okcu.edu))

The month of May is over and it was truly a doozy! My thoughts and prayers go out to all of the communities that were affected by tornadoes and severe storms. I pray that you all are on the road to recovery and that you have all of the resources needed to do so.

There are a lot of exciting things happening this summer! First, we will have a **business meeting on June 18, 2024 (Tuesday) at 1 pm CST.** This will be a virtual meeting. Please be on the lookout for the registration email and the link to the meeting. This meeting is a mid-year check-in and gives the Executive Board a chance to let everyone know how the organization is doing and to report on any exciting news. If you are a committee chair and have a report to share, please forward it to your Board Liaison. At the business meeting, there will be a raffle for a free registration for the annual meeting! Also, the Local Arrangements committee will be raffling off a basket filled with wonderful Nebraska stuff!

Next, the Diversity Committee is hosting MAALL’s first stand-alone program! The program, titled *"Slavery’s Legal Legacy and its Meaning for Law Librarians and Legal Research Professors,"* will be on June 26, 2024, at 1 pm CST. This is a virtual program. If you haven’t registered yet please do so. After you register, you will be sent the link to attend. The speaker for this event is Prof. Justin Simard. Prof. Simard is an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University College of Law. This program will explain how the law of slavery was constructed, why modern American judges continue to rely on slave cases and principles derived from them, and how legal research tools and methods have led to this reliance on the law of slavery. Thank you to Gail Wechsler and the Diversity
Committee for all your hard work organizing this event. Also, thank you to Rachel Ford and the Website Committee for all your work getting the word out to the membership and setting up registration.

Third, we want to see you in Chicago! Let’s get together! MAALL will be hosting its annual get-together during the AALL conference in Chicago. We will be meeting up July 22, 2024 at Emerald Loop Bar & Grill, from 4 pm – 7 pm (Happy Hour). The Emerald Loop is located at 216 N Wabash Ave. MAALL will buy some appetizers and the first round of drinks. Please look out for the registration coming in the next few days. We need to have an estimate so we know how much food to buy. Also during the Happy Hour, Local Arrangements will raffle off another basket filled with wonderful Nebraska stuff. Hope to see you there!

Finally, I hope you are excited about the upcoming Annual Meeting in Lincoln, NE! I know I am! Nebraska is where I was born and raised (in Omaha) and I haven’t been there in several years. It will be good to visit again. In addition to all of the great programs that the Education Committee is planning, I am looking forward to tasting Valentino’s pizza! We will be in Lincoln from November 7-9, 2024! The theme is Back to Basics. If you haven’t submitted a proposal for a program and you want to, please contact Matt Timko. If your program wasn’t selected for AALL, but you know it’s a great program, we want to see it. The Annual Meeting is the time for us to share knowledge with each other about our particular area and learn about other areas outside of our own scope. If I miss you in Chicago, then please let me see you in Lincoln in November!

MAALL 2023: THINKING ABOUT COLLECTIVE COLLECTIONS

Benjamin J. Keele, Associate Director, Ruth Lilly Law Library at the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law (bkeele@iu.edu)

Thanks to a MAALL Annual Meeting Grant, I was able to attend the 2023 meeting in Des Moines. As always, these meetings are stimulating opportunities to learn from our peers. The sessions I found most interesting were the two sessions on “Collections for the Future.” In these sessions, speakers discussed a number of trends that have affected how law libraries obtain materials and provide access to their researchers. Collections budgets tend to fall, if not in nominal dollars, in effective purchasing power due to inflation and increasing costs. Space for libraries’ physical collections tends to decrease, often by large amounts due to building moves, renovations, or reconfigurations. Online resources are growing, but libraries can usually only be renters, not owners, of these resources, and thus have limited influence over prices or feature development.

I remember hearing about these trends when I first became a law librarian over a decade ago, and everything I’ve observed suggests they will continue to roughly follow their current trajectories. One could get pretty discouraged about the future of law libraries. However, I left the sessions and conversations feeling a good deal more optimistic. This is because
these sessions show that law librarians see what is happening and are working on ways to not only adapt, but perhaps also take advantage of these changes to better serve our researchers and students. I credit these discussions with the inspiration for more collective solutions to law library collections as a promising avenue as our respective collections change over time.

For physical collections, academic library consortia have built shared print collections, either through centralized, high-density storage facilities, or through distributed commitments to retain certain materials. The Partnership for Shared Book Collections coordinates activities among its shared book collection members. While some legal materials have surely been retained through these shared collections, I have yet to hear much about law libraries being active members of such initiatives. The Legal Information Preservation Alliance and NELLCO’s PALMPrint are notable exceptions.

For digital collections, I don’t have a collective ownership solution in mind. The resources needed to make an effective alternative to Westlaw, Lexis, or even a smaller vendor, such as HeinOnline, strike me as unrealistic, since all law libraries cannot divert all their subscription funds to a brand-new, speculative project. However, I suspect that purchasing consortia will become increasingly important tools to help control subscription costs. Sharing the costs of digitizing and maintaining collections of materials that are worth keeping, but niche enough that a vendor cannot make a profit off them, could also be a space in which collective digital collections could grow.

These ideas demonstrate the big-picture perspectives and reflections I gained as a result of attending these sessions at MAALL, and I am grateful for the meeting grant facilitating this important growth opportunity.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Matt Timko, Academic Technologies & Outreach Services Librarian and Assistant Professor, Northern Illinois University College of Law, (mtimko@niu.edu)

The Annual Meeting is upon us… two in fact! I hope to see many of you in Chicago this summer (July 20-23) for the AALL Annual Meeting, which is the first AALL meeting in the Midwest since… the last time it was in Chicago. While there I hope you will attend the MAALL Happy Hour on Monday, July 22 from 5:00-7:00 pm at the Emerald Loop Bar & Grill. This is the first time MAALL will hold a Happy Hour meeting and it should be a great time!

In addition to the AALL sessions, please take an opportunity to stop a MAALL member in the halls, find them online, or make plans beforehand to chat or catch up. MAALL members went such a long time without an Annual Meeting of our own, and you could see how excited members were to finally get back together last year in Des Moines and have real and in-person conversations with each other. We should take advantage of these opportunities whenever we can; MAALL is such a wonderful, important, and supportive organization, and it is because everyone in it is so helpful, friendly and (IMO) incredibly welcoming. I hope and believe this will continue, so I will do my part to be on the lookout for you all and at the very least I will stop to say hi!

As for the “real” Annual Meeting (shhh… don’t tell the AALL Board I said that) in Lincoln, Nebraska in November, we are well underway in making that a terrific event, which is even harder considering it follows
the impressive performance of Drake in Des Moines last year. But Rich and the folks at the University of
Nebraska are doing a wonderful job, and I am really excited about the Opening Ceremony (more details in the
coming months).

As always, please be on the lookout for Book to Action’s book decision, as well as the local charity and
bookstore that we will be working with. Also, please reach out to me, anyone else on the Board, or a
committee member to ask questions or find out how you can get involved. I hope you all have a fun, safe, and
productive summer, and I hope to see many of you in July!

AFFIRMATIONS

Allison C. Reeve Davis, Sr. Manager - Knowledge & Research Services,
Littler Mendelson, P.C. (areeve@littler.com)

HARNESSING STRATEGIC CURRENT AWARENESS AND TAMING INFORMATION OVERLOAD

What is Current Awareness & Why is it Important?

Broadly, current awareness services are any undertaking that keep stakeholders up to date. Activities include
marketing and outreach to advertise your services, reports of quarterly or annual metrics and activities,
or good old fashioned news delivery. This column will focus on aspects of current awareness that update
constituents on legal and business changes and trends.

Where does the law librarian fit into this type of current awareness? We subscribe attorneys, faculty, and
judges to news services, provide newspapers in their offices, and help them set up custom RSS feeds and case
alerts. What more could they need? We take it a step further by getting crucial information to the right people
at the right time so they can use it in actionable and strategic decision-making.

Examples of Littler Mendelson’s Knowledge & Research Services (KRS) department’s current awareness
services and their potential impact follows.

News Delivery

We’ve already mentioned subscription news services, but how we bring multiple sources together for specific
practitioners is what adds value.

Consider your stakeholders and have a conversation about keeping up to date. What are the crucial sources
for their area of practice? How often do they want to receive newsletters and what’s difficult for them about
staying current? Do they need to follow legislation, litigation, industries, companies, or competitors? With
these answers we create solutions.

Legal professionals rely on a variety of sources: newspapers, agency publications, social media, and newsletters
provided through subscriptions such as Bloomberg, VitalLaw, and LexisNexis. We help tame the noise using
Lexis Newsdesk, a subscription news aggregator (of which there are several choices for varied use cases) to
curate and automate newsletters.
The Daily News provides firm-wide access to the day’s top headlines in Labor & Employment decisions, legislation, and labor organizing. Practice group-specific newsletters provide the same, tailored to a niched area of law. Daily legislation reports deliver movement of federal, state, and local bills and rulemaking. Individuals across the firm receive notifications following specific industries, clients, or corporate counsel movement.

Case Alerts

In all legal institutions, attorneys follow cases. They need client monitoring, decision outcomes, and docket movement alerts. Harnessing the technology in common subscription sources allows KRS to pull the right case information, brand it, and distribute pertinent information to those who need to know.

Relying on daily case filing raw data, custom regional, industry and client-focused, or practice area-specific reports can be created. Traditional tools like Westlaw and Lexis provide for docket alerts to help litigators stay within ordered case schedules and KeyCite alerts let attorneys know when new decisions on similar matters are issued. You may find the need to take these practices a step further to identify trends or stay informed in rapidly moving situations. For example, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic we tracked virtual litigation orders from all court levels, and we have long monitored L&E class actions and settlements to identify risk to clients and assess case values.

Turning Current Awareness into Actionable Intelligence

Spend your time wisely and provide information that brings success to your stakeholders. Collaboration is key to unlocking the solutions to keep everyone informed without information overload. The updates you provide should result in a strategy or competitive advantage. Was a client targeted in a major lawsuit? Has the EEOC released a flurry of consent decrees? Is legislation banning non-compete agreements sweeping the nation? Helping your attorneys get their eyes on the trends they need to know allows them to connect with clients, build new business, or update their counsel. In other institutions, this translates into academic analysis of the trends or changes to curriculum. At government law libraries, the judiciary needs to know what types of cases might bubble up or how other courts are deciding big issues so that preliminary research can be completed or hiring decisions made.

We’re always looking to make current awareness easier and new technologies promise to help us maintain what we do now, improve upon it, and expand our services. We are looking into automation technology to expand our existing client filing alerts to cross-analyze clients within practice areas and within jurisdictions. News aggregation platforms are integrating the power of generative AI to summarize the day’s top headlines and provide actionable steps gleaned from top legal writers. The possibilities are endless when we keep abreast of technology and maintain relationships with current awareness consumers.
**STATE MEMBER NEWS**

**Kansas Supreme Court**
The Kansas Supreme Court Law Library is overjoyed to announce our new Librarian I, Laura Maloney, who started with us on March 18, 2024. Laura is our reference and cataloging librarian, and most recently worked at the KU Wheat Law Library as a circulation and serials manager.

By the time this newsletter is published, Laura will have graduated from Emporia State University with her MLS. We look forward to watching her career take flight and welcome her library expertise! Please join the Judicial Branch in congratulating Laura on her new role as Librarian I and MAALL member.

**Law Library Association of St. Louis**
Library Director Gail Wechsler has given numerous presentations on “Legal Research for the Non-Lawyer” throughout the St. Louis region. Five presentations were given in-person at different branches of the Saint Louis Public Library between March and May. A virtual presentation was given in cooperation with Saint Louis County Library in June.

Also in June, the Law Library Association is co-sponsoring a Juneteenth event with the Freedom Suits Memorial Foundation. It is “The Milly Project: A Unique Freedom Suit Case and its Historical Implications.” It includes a film screening about an important Freedom Suit case, followed by a panel discussion. More information about the event, which takes place on Tuesday June 18 at 4:30 PM, is at https://llastl.org/Juneteenth-event-2024.

**Littler**
Since the last edition we’ve been able to celebrate three additional promotions on the Littler team: Cynthia Brown (Executive Director), Amy Backes (Knowledge Analyst II) and Autumn Collier (Knowledge Analyst II). All are dedicated, innovative, and deserving of recognition for their contributions and leadership. We also welcome two additions to our team. Rachel Clowers and Dyamond Hutton recently grew our crew of Knowledge & Research Coordinators. They’re off to a fantastic start and we’re excited to expand our services and projects with their support.

**Mizzou**
Congratulations to MAALL member, Laura B. Wilcoxon, winner of the 2024 AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Award in the New Member Division! Wilcoxon is the Reference and Student Services Librarian at University of Missouri School of Law, and her award-winning paper is titled "Next Generation Legal Researchers: Implementing Critical Information Literacy through the ACRL Framework to Ensure Student Success on the NextGen Bar Exam."

**Saint Louis University, Vincent C. Immel Law Library**
Kathleen Casey will retire on June 30, 2024 from her appointment as Head of Reference and Faculty Services in the Law Library and Assistant Professor of Legal Research at Saint Louis University School of Law. Kathleen has served the Law Library in six professional appointments over the course of 33 years, including Co-Interim Director of the Law Library from August 2022 to August 2023. She has also held a faculty appointment in the School of Law’s nationally renowned Center for Health Law Studies. Her service to SLU, across many capacities, totals 49 years. Kathleen’s contributions to and leadership in the Law Library, the School of Law, and the
University, are immense and irreplaceable. She will hold an Emerita faculty appointment in the School of Law.

**Washington University**

We have lots of personnel changes to report from WashU:

After thirty-plus years at Washington University Law Library, Hyla Bondareff will retire on July 3, 2024. Over this time she has held numerous positions including Acquisitions Librarian, Associate Director, Electronic Resources Librarian, Co-Interim Director of the Law Library, and Director of Faculty Services. She has also taught Legal Research Methodologies since the course’s inception at WashU in 2001. Should you wish to reach her in the future, she is reachable at hyla.bondareff@gmail.com.

Peter Van Brunt has joined our team as Research and Instruction Librarian & Lecturer in Law. Peter joins us most recently from library school in Ontario, Canada and previously from the NJ Attorney General’s office where he served as a Deputy Attorney General for five years.

We also welcome back Josh Zink as Resource Description and Technical Services Librarian. He joins us most recently from the Illinois Heartland Library System where he was the Senior Cataloger responsible for training cataloging librarians at member libraries, as well as overseeing the shared catalog. He has also held Technical Services Librarian positions at the Ferguson Municipal Public Library and Greenville University.

And if anyone is looking for a new position, please consider our Head of Faculty and Access Services position!

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**University of Nebraska, Schmid Law Library**

Stefanie Pearlman and fellow MAALL Member Melissa Serfass received the GLL-SIS Dr. Joel Fishman Professional Publication Award for their book *Animal Welfare Laws: A Legal Research Guide*.

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**University of South Dakota Knudson School of Law, McKusick Law Library**

This summer is a time of many changes at the McKusick Law Library. We are currently undergoing a renovation of the main floor of the library, following the renovation of our lower level last year. We look forward to the completion of the project in the early fall. In July, Assistant Dean and Law Library Director Eric Young will depart USD to take a new position at the Northern Kentucky University Salmon P. Chase College of Law as Associate Dean and Law Library Director. He will be greatly missed, but the opportunity brings him closer to family and back to his alma mater where he began his law library career. Sarah Kammer, the Head of Public, Faculty & Student Services, will serve as the Interim Law Library Director for the upcoming academic year.

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To all our other members:

*We hope no news is good news! Please let us know of any future news items by contacting Hyla Bondareff (bondareh@wustl.edu), State Member News Editor.*
MAALL MARKINGS INFORMATION

MAALL Markings is published four times a year by the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership. The purpose of MAALL Markings is to publish news of the Chapter, selected news of AALL and other professional associations, and MAALL members, as well as to solicit and publish articles to add to the body of literature in the profession of law librarianship. All articles are copyrighted and any republication or use of any portion of the content for any purpose must have written permission from the author/s.

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## LINKS TO AALL CHAPTER & SIS PUBLICATIONS

Links originally compiled by Lindsey Carpino for the CALL Bulletin and reprinted with permission. *MAALL Markings* updates links on a yearly basis. The original post is available at [http://bulletin.chicagolawlib.org/2016/05/aall-chapter-sis-publications/](http://bulletin.chicagolawlib.org/2016/05/aall-chapter-sis-publications/).

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Vice President & President-Elect: Matthew L. Timko
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Treasurer: Jennifer Mart-Rice
Secretary: Cindy Shearrer
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2023/2024 Committee Rosters

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Grants Committee
Chair: Ellen Jones
Members: Crystal Bauer, Heather Buckwalter

Library School Liaison Committee
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Members: Alexandra Brennan, Carolyn Clark, Victoria Mantel, Patricia Scott, Le'Shawn Turner

Local Arrangements Committee
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Members: Genesis Agosto, Maureen Eck, Matt Novak, Sandy Placzek

MAALL History Committee (ad hoc)
Chair: *
Members: Abdulrahman Alzahrani, Susan Boland, Colleen Williams

Membership Committee
Chair: Deanne Fix
Members: Abdulrahman Alzahrani, Rachel Ford, Chris Galanos, Maggie Kiel-Morse

Newsletter Committee
Editor-in-Chief: Therese Clarke Arado
Associate Editor: Sarah Kammer
Layout Editor: Amy Backes
State Member News Editor: Hyla Bondareff
Columnists: Autumn Collier, Matt Timko & Gail Wechsler

State Member News Liaisons:
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Members: Laura Dixon-Caldwell

UELMA Task Force
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Vision Planning Task Force
Chair: Matthew Braun
Members: Matt Timko

Website Committee
Chair: Rachel Ford
Members: Abdulrahman Alzahrani

*positions not set at the time of publication

There are a number of opportunities available to serve MAALL. Please contact Le'Shawn R. Turner at lrturner@okcu.edu if you would like to serve on a task force or committee.