



Executive Director's Report April 2025

We spent a good amount of time on hiring and are excited to have two new talented colleagues join our management team. In addition, our new Community Services Director is in training, and reaching out to community groups. Because of an internal promotion, we are now searching for a new Youth and Teen Services Manager. In the news section following my report, you will see that Selicia was published in ILA Reporter. Striving to improve our safety and security, we are exploring an incident tracking system as well as additional measures and training at the branches. As for building updates, elevator modernization is underway. Families are eagerly awaiting the hatching of our chicks. The United Palatine Coalition (UpCo) has planned a community wellness resource fair, which will take place later this month. We are trying something new in the Summer newsletter by highlighting some of our partner organizations. We hope to demonstrate to the community how we work together. The foundation is seeking donors for the StoryWalk, so if you know someone who might be interested, send them our way.

Strategic Plan Activity

We would like the board to contribute to next year's strategic plan. Please submit one big idea for each of the 4 strategic plan goals. The management team will take your ideas, along with the staff's, and will sort and rank them using the 25/10 crowdsourcing technique. (<http://www.liberatingstructures.com/12-2510-crowd-sourcing/>). I will be asking for your ideas at the board meeting so please brainstorm in advance.

ALA Fly-In Advocacy

The American Library Association (ALA) hosted an annual advocacy day that brought two representatives from each state to advocate for libraries at the federal level. I was fortunate to represent IL with Veronica DeFazio from the Peoria Library. We visited staff at the offices of Senators Durbin and Duckworth, and Congress members Quigley, LaHood, Krishnamoorthi, Sorensen, and Foster. It was a vital time to highlight our needs, as the Institute of Museum and Library Services staff was laid off, and funding was cut in many states on the day we visited. We asked legislators to:

- Protect the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and provide at least \$232 million for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) in FY26.
- Protect the U.S. Department of Education and provide at least \$50 million for Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) in FY26.
- Sign the Dear Colleague letters in support of both LSTA and IAL funding for FY26.
- Allow the FCC's hotspot lending program to move forward; oppose Congressional Review Act resolutions that would diminish access to Wi-Fi (S.J. 7, H.J. 33)





Staff You Should Know

HR staff have had a busy month, and we wouldn't be where we are with so many new hires without Stefania, our Human Resource Associate. Beyond assisting with hiring and onboarding, she also helps organize staff events. Here's what her colleagues have to say about her:

"Thank you for all your help with hiring—your organization skills (and those glorious color-coded folders) kept us on track and made the process feel almost...fun? We couldn't have done it without you or your magical folder system! 🗂️📁"

"Thank you for the Library Workers Day lunch, especially delivering to the branches. We appreciate it!"

"Thank you for an absolutely amazing staff development day! It was incredibly enjoyable, with delicious food and wonderful company."

"Thank you for all your hard work on planning, coordinating, hosting, and everything else with this year's resource fair. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot!"

New Employees/Promotions

- Isabelle was hired as Materials Assistant
- Ethel Alegria was promoted to Workshop Assistant Manager
- Miyuki was promoted to full-time Library Associate II
- Megan Buttera (a boomerang hire) as Adult Services Manager

Employee Milestones

- Brooke celebrated her 5-year anniversary.



Calendar

- Rotary 3/11, 4/8
- St. Joe's Dinner with Rotary 3/11
- Cooperative Computer Services (CCS) Strategic Plan Retreat 3/12
- Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) investigation interview 3/13
- Partners for Our Community (POC) Marketing Committee 3/14
- League of Women Voters 3/14
- St. Patrick's Day Parade 3/15
- Championing Trans Inclusion training 3/18
- Illinois Library Association (ILA) Noon networking training 3/19
- American Library Association (ALA) fly-in training 3/19, 3/24, 3/27
- National Night Out (NNO) planning meeting 3/19
- Rotary Board 3/19
- POC Board 3/27
- ALA fly-in 4/1-4/3

Strategic Plan Update

Q4, April 2025

Goal 1

Maintain high levels of service by investing in staff: providing sufficient tools and training, optimal staffing levels, advancement opportunities, and fair compensation, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

- Promoted from within for the new positions, Community Services Director and Workshop Assistant Manager.
- Posted, interviewed, and hired external candidates for the new position of Branches Assistant Manager and the Adult Services Manager.
- Researched and selected services that offer language assessment on over 100 languages, including all those currently spoken by staff at the Library. Currently drafting procedures for Library staff to request a language assessment in order to receive increased compensation for using their bilingual skills in their work.
- The Buildings and Grounds Committee met with Executive Director Melissa Gardner and the Library's architect to discuss the proposed scope and budget for a renovation of first-floor spaces including staff workrooms, public meeting rooms, and the south lobby.
- The Technology Department replaced staff computer monitors and is in the process of imaging new PCs with increased processing speeds and storage.



20% Complete
59% In Progress



13% Complete
86% In Progress

Goal 2

Increase visibility and remove barriers to participation for all members of our diverse community through meaningful engagement, increased partnerships, and targeted communications.

- Team assembled to create a strategy for distributing promotions at outreach and outside events.
- Reached out to a local Ukrainian church and waiting for response on how to connect to help the Ukrainian community.
- Brought in the local nonprofit Understanding Autism, an awareness group to talk to the Teen Advisory Board and create fidget toys for kids with autism.
- Partnered with CRC Future Leaders Teen group on March craft program and skill sharing.
- Partnered with CRC parent group to create a community cookbook.
- Partnered with the Palatine Garden Club to decorate the Main Library for spring.
- Increased school tour capacity by scheduling 300 middle schoolers to visit the Library in April and using multiple staff in different departments to coordinate an activity and tour.

Goal 3

Adapt programs and collections to deliver relevant content that serves changing community needs by restructuring systems, dedicating resources to these activities, and engaging in ongoing dialogue between members and staff.

- Added LOTE4Kids, a database of children's picture books in more than 85 languages to expand our World Language offerings.
- Added youth programs to two Saturdays per month based on member feedback for weekend programming. Turnout has been high.
- Preschool outreach doubled in both classes and schools visited due to a full-time dedicated staff member.
- Increased youth Spanish and bilingual Programming at Rand Road.
- Workshop staff completed inventory and service for major machines and are updating instructional binders to support the space and projects.

18% Complete
43% In Progress



80% Complete
20% In Progress

Goal 4

Begin to understand how the library will serve the Palatine community of the future by developing a long-term plan for existing and potential new spaces.

- Joined community planning committee for National Night Out.
- Advocated for Federal Library funding in D.C.
- Created a new organizational chart that dedicates more staff to outreach and community services focus.

| **Todd Miller**, Niles-Maine District Library; **Liz Poppenhouse**, Indian Trails Public Library District;
Jimmy Gonzalez-Vicker, Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District;
& **Selicia Applegate**, Palatine Public Library District |

The Community Impact of Makerspaces

As the inclusion and development of the maker movement in libraries has grown, these learning destinations have become integral spaces that serve a variety of different makers and learners. Crafters and DIY-ers may be one of the core group of users, but new users have been emerging, including people who utilize these spaces for entrepreneurial, economic, and educational purposes. These developments have been positively impactful and genuinely show how these learning opportunities have interesting and unique impacts on their community.

Just as libraries come in all shapes and sizes, so do makerspaces. Makerspaces and fabrication labs often include equipment such as laser engravers/cutters, 3D printers, vinyl cutters, CNC (computer numerical control) machines, sewing machines, embroidery machines, and more! While some libraries are fortunate enough to have allocated budgets, dedicated physical space, and designated staff, maker learning does not always have to happen in a specific makerspace. Some libraries have vinyl cutters on a cart or a laser cutter with portable exhaust, either of which can be stored away and brought out for specific programs or events.

Often, these creative spaces include elements that can resemble a digital production studio, such as dedicated rooms or spaces within makerspaces that facilitate uses like recording and editing audio, greenscreens for filming video, and software for editing video as well.

In the digital production studio, which is part of the Creative Studio at Niles-Maine District Library (NMDL), library patrons use the space for entrepreneurial and economic development. One patron uses the space to record content for an online radio show on the iHeartRadio network, while another patron, a pet grief psychotherapist, learns the art of podcasting, with the intention of creating a passive income stream as she nears her retirement years.

Both of these use cases highlight people who have the means to make this content in their homes or offices, but choose to utilize the library. Factors for this include having a space free of distraction and outside noises that can bleed into audio recording and staff available for software and hardware troubleshooting assistance, one-on-one learning appointments, or additional resource recommendations.





Patrons at NMDL have the option to choose from a variety of ways to learn these audio recording skills, whether it is through library programs (a three-part podcasting series in the summer of 2023), one-on-one appointments with staff who are familiar with the process, or self-guided learning with the assistance of staff-created how-to manuals.

At Indian Trails Public Library (ITPL), the creative space, known as the Launch Pad, facilitates solutions to problems that community members have identified. One such example is the use of the 3D printer being used to create keyguards for speech and language pathologists to use with students' iPads. These 3D printed keyguards, which are placed over the screen of an iPad and help students select the correct keys to communicate, cost a fraction of the retail price of the product.

Staff, and therefore the larger library community at ITPL, also benefit from the Launch Pad. The availability of equipment in the Launch Pad creates efficiency and saves the library money. The ability to create vinyl and acrylic signs, fabricate 3D printed parts to repair library equipment for the Facilities Department, and use sewing machines to repair damaged checkout bags and make book cart covers has saved staff time and money. These uses represent advantages of the creative space that reach beyond facilitating craft projects.

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Another example of dreams fulfilled at PPLD's Workshop is a patron who is a retired electrical engineer and who saved the schematics for making a personal computer that he purchased at 13-years-old in 1963. Over the course of 55 hours, he used the space to 3D print all the pieces he needed to finally make the computer he aspired to all of those years ago.

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One of the most important parts of the service model in the SPL Studio is the use of learning guides. Staff developed custom, step-by-step instructions that guide Studio users working with the software and equipment in the makerspace. These guides have clear visuals in addition to the written instructions to accommodate different types of learning and are an incredible tool when training new staff and making instructional videos. Detailed written and visual instructions are helpful when setting expectations with Studio users as they are in a self-guided space and have the power to pursue their own projects, many of which have similar starting points. It also removes the ideology that any process that is learned must be remembered for their next visit.

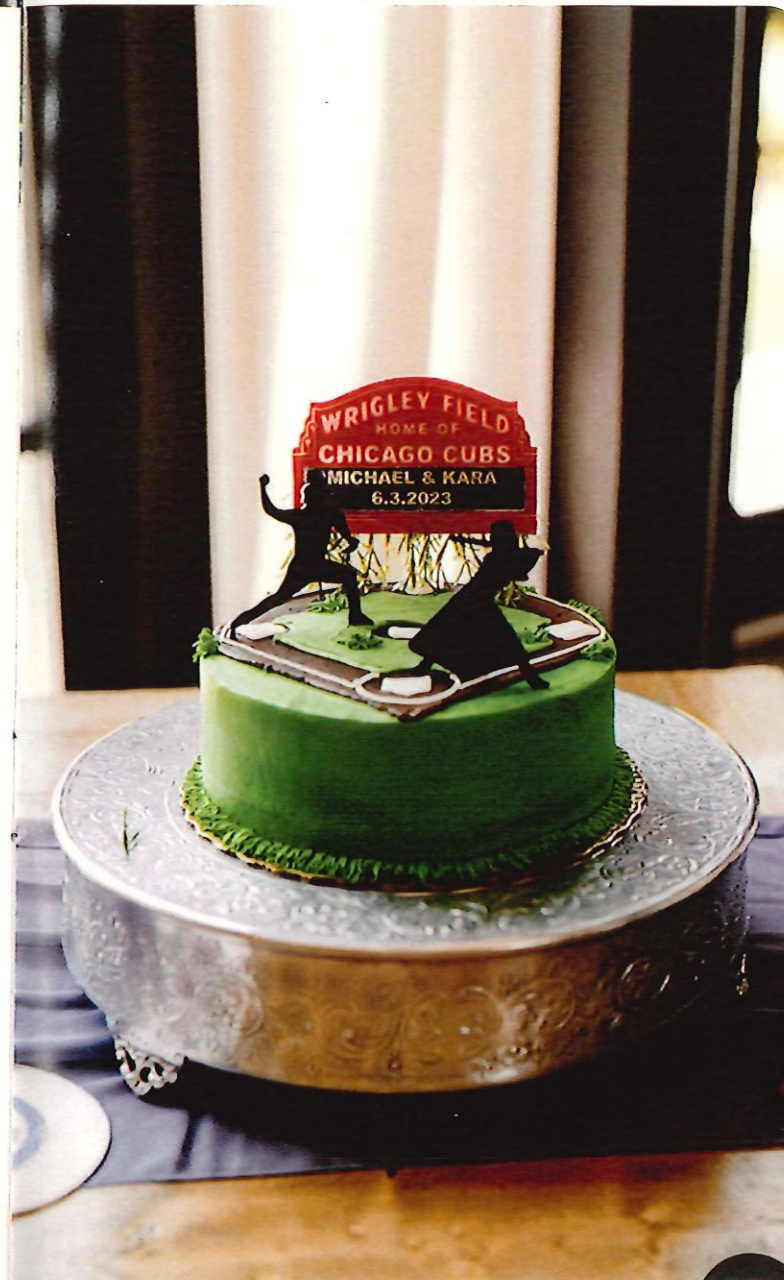
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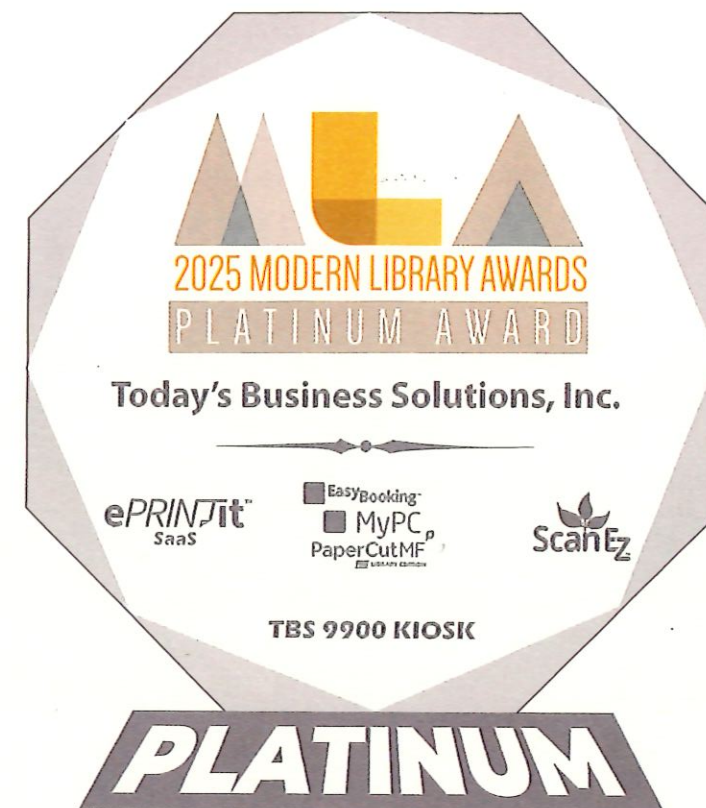
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The Community Impact of Makerspaces

March 3, 2025

Todd Miller, Niles-Maine District Library; Liz Poppenhouse, Indian Trails Public Library District; Jimmy Gonzalez-Vicker, University of Illinois Chicago; & Selicia Applegate, Palatine Public Library District

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COMMISSIONER SCOTT BRITTON
AND THE PALATINE PUBLIC LIBRARY
INVITE YOU TO

HOW TO REPORT A HATE CRIME

Hate Crime Investigations & Remedies

Hate is on the rise. Do your part to reduce these incidents by reporting hate when you see it. Hear from representatives from the Cook County Offices of the Sheriff, State's Attorney, Department of Human Rights and Ethics, and Public Defender to learn:

- How hate is investigated
- The difference between hate crimes and hate incidents
- Victim support resources and mental health services
- Remedies when hate is not a crime
- What to do when you are a witness or a victim



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Hate Crime Prevention Panel

Wednesday, April 09, 2025 , 6:00pm-7:30pm

[Add to Calendar](#)

Location

[Main Library](#)
700 N. North Court
Palatine, IL
[Directions](#)

Description

In partnership with the Cook County Commissioner's Office, State's Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office and Office of Human Rights, Cook County United Against Hate talks about the rise in hate crimes in Cook County and how they can be reported and prevented. Time for audience Q & A is included. Sign up- Palatine Library is a Cook County United Against Hate partner, empowering everyone, everywhere to learn to actively stand against hate. Location Details Main Library

More Info

[Visit Palatine Library District](#)

Event Contact
nlarocque@palatinelibrary.org
(847) 907-3600