



## 2023/2024 ANNUAL REPORT

### Advocating for Libraries

#### Digital Equity in New York State

- Staff and several member libraries and library systems continue to work with the Western New York Digital Equity Coalition (WNYDEC) and the New York State Digital Equity Network (NYSDEN) to promote digital inclusion and digital equity for our region and state.
- Heidi Ziemer assisted with the coordination of the first in-person NYSDEN assembly at the Central Library in Syracuse, NY. This convening brought together key stakeholders, including elected officials, nonprofit leaders, and state agencies, with the goal of discussing strategic approaches to bridging the digital divide.

#### Diverse Collections Development Grant

- The High School to College Committee distributed grants of \$500 each to Maryvale Intermediate/Middle School Library, Anthony J. Schmidt Elementary School (Lakeshore), Tonawanda High School, and Buffalo Public School #17 - Early Childhood Center. The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-racism (EDIAr) Committee also provided financial support for this program.
- These grants help support school library members develop and maintain inclusive collections to ensure equitable access to resources that reflect the varied experiences, cultures, and perspectives of their communities.

#### State Legislative Advocacy

- A total of 140 staff, trustees, and patrons attended 8 in-person meetings with Western New York State Assembly and Senate members throughout the winter. These meetings were held in member locations around the region including Audubon Branch Library, Hamburg Public Library, Falconer High School, Lockport High School, and Buffalo General Medical Center.
- Staff from member libraries and WNYLRC attended NYLA's Advocacy Day in Albany on February 7, 2024. WNYLRC advocated for several key pieces of legislation, increases to Library Operating Aid and Library Construction Aid, and the addition of a budget line for NovelNY in the NYS budget, all of which will benefit NYS libraries.
- WNYLRC contracted with the New York lobbying firm, Masiello, Martucci, and Associates. They connected WNYLRC with Bonnie Kane Lockwood, Regional Director of Western New York for the Governor's Office.

### Building Community

- 116 library jobs were posted on WNYLRC's job board in 2023-24.
- Staff made 13 site visits to member libraries, affiliate libraries, and non-member organizations. These included: Jamestown Community College, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System Headquarters, SUNY Fredonia, Supreme Court Law Library - Buffalo, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Music Library, Buffalo AKG, Seneca Nation of Indians - Cattaraugus/Irving Branch Library, Gowanda Free Library, Dunkirk Public Library, Patterson Library, Ahira-Hall Memorial Library, and Falconer Public Library.
- WNY Academic Directors Caucus convened at SUNY Erie - South in the spring to discuss the current state of academic libraries in the region.
- WNYLRC contributed to programming from the School Librarians' Association of Western New York (SLAWNY) by providing CTLE accreditation and other support.

### Message from the 2024 WNYLRC Board President



**Kathryn Leacock**  
*Buffalo Museum of  
Science*

Each year, the board President is asked to contribute to the annual report. While it has been my privilege to serve in this capacity for 2024, I certainly don't deserve any of the credit for the accomplishments of this organization. It has been an honor to watch the WNYLRC Team continue to strive for excellence and be the leader in library innovation. This report is a testament to this small, yet mighty, organization and all that they have accomplished alongside our member institutions over the past months.

The following pages highlight what a great year it has been. The programs, services, and advocacy continued, without pause, while physically moving the entire operation. I would be remiss if I did not call out the team for all the hard work in relocating operations to the new office space. If you weren't able to visit during the recent open house, I do hope you will visit soon – or participate in an onsite training, with windows!

WNYLRC's work with Masiello and Martucci was a highlight of the year and our leadership in this endeavor has been recognized by NYLA as the partnership transitions to state-wide starting January 1st, 2025.

As we conclude another year of our strategic plan, we measure annual success through the usage statistics of programs such as Ask Us 24/7, Ask the Lawyer, and workshop participants. All show the incredible value of WNYLRC to our regional libraries. I could list the 'alphabet soup' of other initiatives illustrating WNYLRC's commitment to embracing experimentation and facilitating collaboration, but for me, building community through site visits, committee meetings, and fellowship are at the top of my list.

With that, it has been an honor to serve WNYLRC in this role, and I want to thank the staff, fellow Board members, and the member libraries for giving me this opportunity.

With appreciation,  
Kathy

# Program and Service Highlights



## Cultivating Learning

### Events and Workshops

- 45 workshops and webinars were provided to 1,030 attendees.
- WNYLRC members accessed the Tech-Talk database 322 times.
- WNYLRC supported 6 member seats across 6 NEDCC webinars.
- The well-attended programs this year covered a wide range of timely topics including book challenges, library data, advocacy, marketing and communications, and serving specific population groups, such as homeschool families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

### Intersect Unconference

65 library staff attended the 6th annual unconference hosted by the Continuing Education Committee. It was held on October 13, 2023, at BECPL's Central Library.

### Traveling Exhibits

- 14 exhibit reservations were made by members of all library types.
- 5 exhibits are now available for any member to borrow.

## Embracing Experimentation

### ESLN AIR

Since the ESLN Academic Institutional Repository began in 2023, 9 institutions have joined statewide. Participants include: Daemen University, Hobart & William Smith College, LeMoyné University, Nazareth University, Niagara University, Paul Smith's College, Rochester Regional Library Council, Western New York Library Resources Council, and Villa Maria College. A total of 1,537 items across all repositories have been uploaded by these institutions.

## Facilitating Collaboration

### AcademicSHARE

18 academic libraries statewide now participate in AcademicSHARE, and school libraries can now provide their students or patrons with AcademicSHARE Passes to facilitate visits to academic libraries across the state.

### Archival Services

Regional archivist Heidi Ziemer provided support to the Western New York Archivists, contributed to the statewide Ask-the-Archivist service, co-hosted an in-person watch party for the New York Archives Conference, and led advocacy efforts focused on securing professional archivists and maintaining archival collections in academic universities.

## Facilitating Collaboration

### Ask the Lawyer

65 questions from library staff statewide were answered this year by attorney Stephanie "Cole" Adams, and 48 questions were added to the Recently Asked Questions (RAQs) database.

### Ask Us 24/7

47 libraries now participate in this collaborative, virtual reference program. 23,288 questions from patrons and students were answered through this service, with 19,667 of those questions answered by participating NY librarians.

### Coordinated Collection Development Aid (CCDA)

WNYLRC facilitated the distribution of \$153,592 in state funds to 15 participating academic institutions to enhance regional collections available for resource sharing.

### Empire State Immersive Experiences

This collection of 360 images has grown to include 36 panorama tours with 592 digital objects. Two panorama tours were added:

- OLV National Shrine & Basilica Tour - Our Lady of Victory Charities
- St. Amelia Catholic Church - University at Buffalo Libraries

### New York Heritage

6 collections were added this year. These include:

- Fifth Freedom Collection - SUNY Buffalo State
- Chautauqua Women's Club Collection - University at Buffalo
- Medina High School Yearbooks - Lee-Whedon Memorial Library, Nioga Library System
- Organizational Archives, 1994-2022 - Jesus the Liberator of Religious Justice
- Roycroft Collection - University at Buffalo
- University at Buffalo Yearbooks - University at Buffalo

WNY members' contributions now total 133 collections from 44 organizations.

### New York State Historic Newspapers

78,713 pages were digitized and added to the NYSHN database from Western New York members. Titles include:

- Polak amerykański - Polish Genealogical Society of New York
- Polak w Ameryce - Polish Genealogical Society of New York
- The Challenger and related titles - Burchfield Penney Art Center
- Prodigal Sun - University at Buffalo
- The Spectrum - University at Buffalo



In 2023-24, the Hospital Library Services Program provided 11 participating hospital libraries with access to medical databases and research support.

- 1,065 research questions answered
- \$31,000 in grant funds to hospitals for print and e-resources
- \$67,959 spent on the Ovid Discovery Service, containing health, biomedical, and pharmaceutical databases
- 110 registrations sponsored for Medical Library Association webinars



## Member Libraries 2023-2024

Members in good standing as of June 30, 2024

**\*New Members  
in 23-24**

Benjamin and Dr. Edgar R. Cofeld Judaic Museum of Temple Beth Zion  
 Bryant & Stratton College  
 Buffalo AKG Art Museum  
 Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park  
 Buffalo and Erie County Public Library  
 Buffalo Broadcasters Association  
 Buffalo Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora  
 Buffalo General Medical Center  
 Buffalo History Museum  
 Buffalo Irish Genealogical Society  
 Buffalo Museum of Science  
 Buffalo School Library System  
 Burchfield Penney Art Center  
 Canisius University  
 Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier  
 Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University  
 Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES SLS  
 Center for Inquiry Libraries  
 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System  
 ConnectNY  
 D'Youville University  
 Daemen University  
 Erie 1 BOCES SLS  
 Erie 2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES SLS  
 Erie County Medical Center Corp.  
 Fellowships of the Spirit Lakeside Learning Center  
 Forest Lawn - Margaret L. Wendt Archives and Resource Center  
 Genesee Community College  
 Hilbert College  
 Historical Society of the Town of Clarence  
 Houghton University - Buffalo  
 Jamestown Community College  
 Jesus The Liberator Seminary of Religious Justice  
 John R. Oishei Children's Hospital

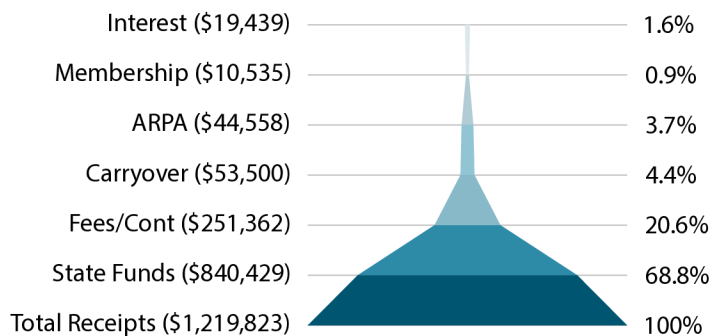
Kenmore Mercy Hospital  
 Library Consortium of Health Institutions in Buffalo  
 Medaille College  
 Mercy Hospital  
 Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital  
 Mount St. Mary's Hospital  
 National Comedy Center\*  
 National Spiritualist Association of Churches\*  
 Network of Religious Communities  
 New York Power Authority Niagara Power Project  
 Niagara County Historical Society  
 Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center  
 Niagara University  
 Nioga Library System  
 Orleans-Niagara BOCES SLS  
 Our Lady of Victory Charities  
 Polish Genealogical Society of New York  
 Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History  
 Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center  
 St. Bonaventure University  
 School Librarians' Association of Western New York (SLAWNY)  
 Sisters of Charity Hospital and St. Joseph Campus  
 SUNY Buffalo State University  
 SUNY Erie  
 SUNY Fredonia  
 SUNY Niagara  
 Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site  
 Town of Niagara Historian  
 Trocaire College  
 United States Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District  
 University of Buffalo, Dept. of Information Science, Graduate School of Education  
 University at Buffalo Libraries  
 Villa Maria College  
 WNY Genealogical Society



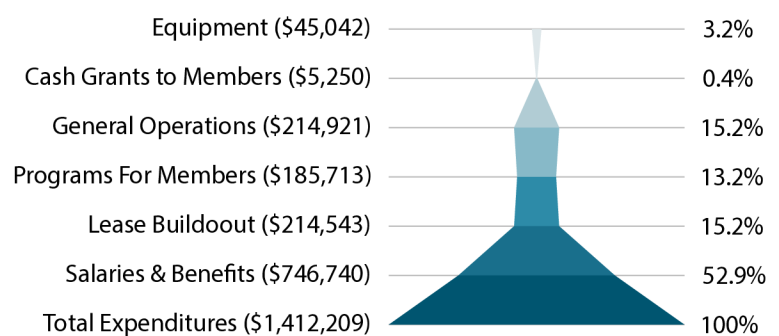
WNYLRC moved to a new office space outfitted with a state-of-the-art training center and conference room. WNYLRC will be able to better serve our members and host in-person events in this new, collaborative workspace.



## Receipts



## Expenditures



## 2024 Board of Trustees

### Board Officers:

President: Kathy Leacock, Buffalo Museum of Science  
 Vice President/President Elect: Janice Dekoff, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System  
 Secretary: Deborah Chiarella, University at Buffalo  
 Treasurer: John Spears, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library  
 Immediate Past President: Alicia Thompson, Buffalo Public Schools

### Board Members:

Dan Albertson, DIS, University at Buffalo  
 Justin Cronise, SUNY Erie  
 Cecelia Fuoco, Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES School Library System  
 Dennis Galucki, Center for the Study of Art, Architecture, History and Nature  
 Heather Gring, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library  
 Kristine Kasbohm, Canisius University  
 Keith Mages, University at Buffalo  
 Ayodele Ojumu, Hutchinson Technical HS, Buffalo Public Schools  
 Gretchen Schweigert, Newfane Public Library  
 Jamie Smith, Research Community  
 Gabby Harrington (Ex officio), Office of Senator Sean Ryan

## WNYLRC Staff

Jay Barone - Technology Services Coordinator  
 Emily Carlin - HLSP Circuit Librarian  
 Grace Di Virgilio - HLSP Coordinator and Circuit Librarian  
 Caitlin Kenney - Research and Reference Services Coordinator  
 Sheryl Knab - Executive Director  
 Debra Lucas-Alfieri - HLSP Circuit Librarian  
 Jenn Northup - Member Engagement Services Coordinator  
 Debra Porter - Finance and Employee Relations Coordinator  
 Heidi Ziemer - Outreach and Digital Equity Coordinator



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