

SPRING 2021

NEWSLETTER

New York-New Jersey Chapter of the Medical Library Association

Message from the Editor

In this issue, Chapter Chair Sarah Jewell gives thoughtful updates on the Chapter at large, including the first ever virtual Annual Meeting held in October as well as the upcoming merger with the MLA-Phil Chapter.

In the *Kudos* column, Robin Wright reports on awards given to members at the Annual Meeting as well as other member news.

Stacy Posillico reflects on the merger with MLA-Phil and her work collaborating on the merger committee, and Robin O'Hanlon covers the important work that the Government Relations Committee has been doing in the past year to advocate for the transparent dissemination of health information.

Claire Joseph reflects on the trials and triumphs of healthcare workers in the past year and provides some further reading for allied health professionals on staying well during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, Latrina Keith recaps a recent continuing education offering on Mental Health First Aid.

I hope that everyone is staying safe and is looking forward to brighter days in the spring! Happy reading!

The Editor
March 2021

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER CHAIR

Dear NY-NJ MLA Chapter members,

First, I want to acknowledge that last year was a tough year for all of us. Our work lives were disrupted, some of us having to reconfigure our services dramatically to serve patrons remotely, others continuing to work in person in hospitals to support those on the frontlines, and some of us rotating in complex schedules to ensure minimal staffing at our libraries. Some of us lost our jobs or had work hours reduced. This isn't even mentioning the dramatic changes in our personal and social lives due to the pandemic, or the many lives lost in our communities.

However, I'm proud that we were able to host our first virtual Annual Meeting for the Chapter in the fall of 2020. I hope you have continued the conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion beyond the meeting, and I know I'm certainly excited to be witnessing positive changes in the larger Medical Library Association. In particular, I'm excited to see a wide array of programming coming from the African American Medical Librarians Caucus, including a focus on self care for library workers.

I'm also happy that our membership and the Phil Chapter membership have voted to merge our two organizations. We are still undergoing the approval process that the larger MLA has in place for us, but the future looks promising for the Liberty Chapter. While this may be a difficult time to plan, many of our committees are starting to work towards the potential merger, and I believe by leveraging our collective power, we can emerge a stronger team.

I encourage each of you to examine your own strengths, and consider playing a role in the merger. Feel free to reach out to me or other board members or committee chairs to learn more about the planning taking place, and where you can help out. Even if all you do is reach out to express a need of yours that the Chapter might be able to help with, that is an important contribution that will help us ensure a welcoming, supportive professional environment for all. Thank you for your participation, and I look forward to engaging the Chapter as we build for our future.

Take care,

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KUDOS FOR MEMBERS

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Congratulations to our members who won awards at the Chapter Annual Meeting: *The Virtual Round Table*, held virtually on BlueJeans by Verizon, on October 16, 2020:

Outstanding Contribution by a New Member:

Andy Hickner

Weill Cornell Medicine
Samuel J. Wood Library & C.V. Starr Biomedical Information Center

For his work on the Website and Nominating Committees.

Outstanding Contribution by a Member:

Sarah Jewell

Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center
Medical Library

For her work with the Program Committee in organizing our first virtual meeting.

This year's recipient for the Chapter Research Grant:

Marie Ascher

New York Medical College
Health Sciences Library

Marie was awarded the Chapter Research Grant for her project: *Validation Study of the CAIFL (Critical Appraisal Institute for Librarians) Tool to Measure Critical Appraisal Knowledge.*

Appointments / Elections / Grants / Presentations:

Jessica Koos

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Library

In February 2020, Jessica was appointed as affiliated faculty to the Program in Public Health for hosting practicum students and for leading the health literacy efforts of the Stony Brook Medicine Healthy Libraries Program.

Laurel Scheinfeld

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Library

Laurel was elected President of MEDLI (Medical and Scientific Libraries of Long Island). Her term runs from July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

Michael Bailou Huang

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Library

Michael presented in August 2020 the Keynote speech, "Responding to COVID-19: Envisaging Role of Libraries," at National Librarians' Day Commemoration & Prof. S. R. Ranganathan Memorial Oration organized by Federation of Health Science Library Associations (India), Rajasthani Medical Library Association (Rajasthan), Health Science Library Association (Gujarat), and Karnataka Health Science Library Association in collaboration with Thieme Publishers (virtual).

Gregg Stevens

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Library

In October 2020, Gregg was appointed a Distinguished Member of the Academy of Health Information Professionals (AHIP).

Jamie Saragossi

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Library

Jamie received a 2020 LILRC (Long Island Library Resources Council) Technology Grant to establish a virtual reference consultation station to continue services during the pandemic.

Elisabeth Marrapodi

Trinitas Regional Medical Center
Medical Library

In April 2020, the Trinitas Medical Library's virtual Health Hacienda's Consumer Health Outreach Project, in Second Life since 2010, added a COVID-19 educational display in English and Spanish. It is continuously updated as the pandemic evolves. The display also features a real time worldwide positive cases counter. Since its creation last spring, over 900 visitors have come to learn about COVID-19 at the Health Hacienda.

Click the link to visit the Health Hacienda and the COVID-19 Information Center:
<https://youtu.be/nyQ-D736Z8I>

To learn more about Second Life: www.secondlife.com

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

The call for Membership Renewal went out in December, along with your 2020-2021 Membership Directory. Payment information is available on the Chapter website at: <http://www.nynjmla.org/blog/membership-information/>, along with a link for PayPal payments. Please note that the mailing address for checks has changed. Again, that information is on the website, and on the form that was sent out in December.

You have until 1 May to renew your membership without being removed from the listserv. If you are not sure that you have paid, feel free to contact me. And please, do pay your dues ASAP.

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TEAMWORK TO MAKE THE PROPOSAL WORK: REFLECTIONS ON BEING PART OF THE MERGER PROCESS

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In 2017, when I had been working as a hospital librarian for just a few months, the MLA NY-NJ Chapter voted to approve a merger with the MLA-Phil Chapter. I had joined the NY-NJ Chapter just a few months prior at the beginning of my job search, in an effort to find job opportunities from those I hoped would be my colleagues one day. What I did not know at the time was that I would find a community of dedicated, passionate professionals who were driven to provide health sciences information to clinicians, students, faculty, and the public in innovative ways.

So when the chance came to represent the members of the NY-NJ Chapter during the merger process as a Committee Member-at-Large, I jumped in and applied. As a new member, I felt like I had found a home in the organization, and I wanted to be a part of helping that feeling continue, not just for our chapter members, but for the Phil Chapter, too.

When we began to meet as a committee in 2018, it was clear that making the new chapter feel like home for all our members was a priority for everyone on the committee. Our first task was to find a name and a logo that would foster a sense of unity, even though we were spread out across four states and many miles. We spent an enormous amount of time getting it just right, and settled on the name: The Liberty Chapter. This new name was intended to represent our commitment to freedom of information and access to resources, while acknowledging each of our States' significance in the history of the founding of our nation. Next, we tackled the laborious task of merging the mechanics of each chapter into one. We kept an eye on respecting each chapter's traditions and long-standing operations. We also had to evaluate where things could evolve and change from the way they had always been.

Presenting our final report in 2020 was a major accomplishment. It was exciting to watch members of both chapters approve the proposal for the merger process and vote to move forward with the merger. I am grateful to have played a part in the creation of the Liberty Chapter, although I know we left a lot on the table for the newly merged chapter to chart its way forward. I anticipate that the Liberty Chapter, once formed, will pursue equity and inclusion initiatives and elect Board Officers that are inclusive of race, ethnicity, class, age, gender, disability, neuro-diversity, and LGBTQIA identities. I am hopeful that the Liberty Chapter will reach out to the small, local organizations that still exist throughout our four states, in order to use their talents and enthusiasm to maintain that local connection in a Chapter that represents so many living far apart. I'm excited to see how our new community leverages the ways we all

now connect online, which will help the Liberty Chapter provide that feeling of home, no matter where its members are. Most of all, I am looking forward to the good things to come for the members of the new Liberty Chapter.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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If you've ever wondered what the role of the [MLA New York New Jersey Chapter Government Relations Committee \(GRC\)](#) is, you're not alone. I didn't really understand its purpose myself until becoming a Governmental Relations Committee Liaison in 2020. To my uninitiated ear, "government relations" sounded a bit like I'd be having clandestine encounters with congress people. But I quickly learned that what government relations really refers to is a concept that most health sciences information professionals are probably familiar with—advocacy. The GRC essentially serves as an advocacy committee that "monitors the progress and development of legislative activities affecting health care information and education, health sciences libraries and librarians, and the public we serve."

In September 2020, [Politico](#) released an [investigation](#) alleging that members of the Trump administration sought to interfere with the release of the [CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports](#). Specifically, former Trump campaign manager Michael Caputo insisted that a [CDC report on the use of hydroxychloroquine](#) be delayed. This report indicated that "current data indicate that the potential benefits of these drugs do not outweigh their risks." Given that hydroxychloroquine was widely touted as a [favored drug of ex-President Trump's](#), the timing of these delayed reports appeared to be particularly egregious.

Shortly thereafter, Kate Nyhan, (Research and Education Librarian, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library, Yale) contacted the MLA NY-NJ chapter GRC to ask if we would issue a statement about political appointees delaying and editing MMWR content. The [American Public Health Association](#) had issued their own letter in May 2020, and in September 2020, [a group of democrats on the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis](#) issued a [letter of concern to Alex Azar \(Department of Health and Human Services Secretary\) and Robert Redfield \(CDC Director\)](#). Galvanized by the potential for the delayed dissemination of biomedical information in the pandemic by political concerns, we decided to act.

Myself, Andy Hickner, and Maggie Ansell (co-chairs of the MLA GRC), Mary M. Langman (GRC staff liaison, MLA) and Chris Shaffer (MLA GRC Member, AAHSL President) worked together on a

letter, [MLA/AAHSL Call for Transparency and Impartiality in the Dissemination of Health Information](#). This letter was sent to Chairman Clyburn and Representative Scalise of the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis by MLA President Lisa K. Traditi, AHIP and AAHSL President Sandra Franklin. It serves as a letter of support and statement calling for transparency and impartiality in the dissemination of health information developed by members of the Medical Library Association and the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries. The letter was also posted by Mary Langman in [MLA Connect](#) and by Chris Shaffer who also posted it to the [AAHSL Advocacy & Initiatives blog](#).

Do you want to get started with advocacy as an information professional, but aren't sure where to start? An easy way to start is by signing up for [ALA's Advocacy and Public Policy alerts](#) and checking out [MLA's Public Policy Center](#) for action alerts, key legislation to watch, and more. If you haven't already, visit the [MLA 2021 Capitol Hill Meetings information page](#). As part of MLA '21, MLA members will have the opportunity to conduct virtual meetings with their elected officials and their congressional staff as part of a group advocacy effort of health sciences librarians across the United States. Let's make our voices heard and continue to advocate for unencumbered access to rigorous, high quality scientific information for all.

In solidarity,

Robin O'Hanlon, MIS

NURSING & ALLIED HEALTH

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone, to a greater or lesser extent, often in unimaginable, never before experienced, and constantly changing ways. Along with heartbreaking loss of life and illness, society has had to suffer and cope with the disruption of daily norms, including loss of employment, closing of schools, and the lack of much-needed socialization opportunities.

Healthcare personnel have been on the front lines grappling with the pandemic and have had to learn how best to cope with often overwhelming situations, leaving them especially vulnerable to the mental and physical manifestations of fear, stress, and doubt. Those of us who work in hospitals (and my library never closed!) were indirectly affected by witnessing daily the atmosphere of urgency and uncertainty.

On the other hand, we also witnessed the outpouring of love, good wishes, and generosity from

the communities we serve. This included drive-by “parades” of well-wishers and daily deliveries of food for hospital workers. The local Stop & Shop supermarket delivered sandwiches, salads, and frozen store-made dinners on a daily basis for months; many local restaurants and stores supplied food, staples, and even candy for spring holidays.

Here at Mount Sinai South Nassau—and I suspect at many healthcare institutions—there has been a concerted effort to provide all staff, especially nurses, with the tools they need for self-care and stress management. Regularly scheduled meditation sessions are held, and the Behavioral Health staff is available for individual or group sessions via Teams.

And how especially fitting that the NFL invited some 7,500 vaccinated healthcare workers to this year’s Super Bowl on February 7, “to thank and honor them for their continued extraordinary service during the pandemic.” In fact, four such healthcare workers from Mount Sinai South Nassau were among them: a physician administrator, a physician, a nurse, and the director of respiratory care!

Among the explosion of COVID-19 literature that many of us are curating for our healthcare professionals, I came across the following articles that I thought would be of special interest:

Haefner, J (2021) Self-Care for Health Professionals During Coronavirus Disease 2019 Crisis. *The Journal of Nurse Practitioners* 2021 Jan 5; doi:10.1016/j.nurpra.2020.12.015. Online ahead of print.

Hossain, F & Clatty, A. (2020) Self-care strategies in response to nurses’ moral injury during COVID-19 pandemic. *Nursing Ethics* Oct 30; doi: 10.1177/0969733020961825. Online ahead of print.

Branden, PS (2020) Who Is Caring for Nurses? *Nursing Economics* 38(6): 320-323.

Coto, J, Restrepo, A, Cejas, I, & Prentiss, S. (2020) The impact of COVID-19 on allied health professionals. *PLOS ONE* October 30: 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0241328>

Hall, AS (2020) Ellen Grass Lecture: Wellness for Allied Healthcare Professionals in the Age of COVID-19. *The Neurodiagnostic Journal* 60:2, 73-77. DOI: 10.1080/21646821.2020.1766306

And for those whose Nursing Research Evidence-Based Practice Resources Council (or whatever name applies) are back to research, here is an article that Mount Sinai South Nassau’s Council appreciated:

Silva de Almeida, IJ, da Silva Lucio, P, Fernandes do Nascimento, M, & Silva Coura, A. (2020) Coronavirus pandemic in light of nursing theories. *Revista Brasileira de Enfermagem* 73(Suppl 2): e20200538. <http://dx/doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2020-0538>

CONTINUING EDUCATION

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The Continuing Education Committee recently held a course on Mental Health First Aid USA for Adults that was held on Wednesday January 20, 2021.



About 1 in 5 adults in the United States will experience a mental health disorder in a single year. However, many people are not knowledgeable or confident to offer assistance to someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis, or someone dealing with substance abuse, depression, or anxiety disorders.

Mental Health First Aid USA is a public education program designed to empower and equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to support a friend, family member, or co-worker experiencing a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis.

The participants who attended the class also learned a five-step action plan, known as ALGEE, for use when providing Mental Health First Aid to an individual in crisis:

A-Assess for risk of suicide or harm

L-Listen non-judgmentally

G-Give reassurance and information

E-Encourage appropriate professional help

E-Encourage self-help and other support strategies

All participants found the class very useful and a great educational experience. Many thanks to Martha Boomer and Angela Taylor of the New York City Administration for Children's Services for their expert instruction.