RAILS Report

Each quarter, RAILS will share a mix of what is happening at RAILS, ILA, and other relevant organizations as it relates to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. If you know of an upcoming learning opportunity, networking group, or resource that we should highlight in our next RAILS Report to the committee, please feel to share with RAILS Associate Executive Director Monica Harris.

This report is intended as both an opportunity to be aware of the wide variety of activities around EDI that RAILS is involved with, as well as an opportunity for EDI Committee members to receive additional training around EDI principles and best practice.

RAILS Climate Team

The RAILS Climate Team continues to work on issues of RAILS internal culture with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion for all RAILS staff. Emphasis is placed on teamwork, a supportive learning environment, sharing of resources, and opportunities for deep discussions. These projects came out of RAILS Climate Team meetings as well as projects identified by the EDI Board Subcommittees.

Projects included:
- Member Training Cohort
- Partnership Evaluation
- Connections Program for New Hires
- Staff Relationships/Staff Engagement Initiative
- Internal projects – information only
    - *Internal HR Practices*
    - *Board Recruitment/Nomination Process*
    - *Presenter/Consultant EDI Directory for Members*

The RAILS Climate Team meets next on February 15, 2023.

RAILS Continuing Education and Training

RAILS Continuing Education Event Grants (Applications received by February 10th receive first consideration)

To support continuing education (CE) for member library staff throughout our service area, RAILS is pleased to offer training grants of **up to $2,000 for individual libraries, networking groups, or library consortia**.

To qualify, CE events must be made available to staff from all RAILS member libraries and of interest to a wide range of library staff. In addition to prioritizing geographic diversity and training for multiple library types in evaluating grant applications, **RAILS will continue to prioritize events focused on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility.**

Additional 2022 Learning Opportunities

- February 28, 1-2pm CST: PLA: Recruiting and Supporting Employees Who Are Neurodivergent. Employees who are neurodivergent bring unique and specific skills to the library, yet too often are faced with accessibility challenges and underutilized by their employers. This webinar will focus on how to successfully attract, retain, and collaborate with coworkers who are neurodivergent in public libraries. It will also cover the benefits of a neurodivergent workforce and provide specific recommendations that managers can use to improve relationships and build trust. At the same time, self-advocates will gain strategies to help when asking for accommodations, guidance on collaborating with coworkers, and insights for improving the work environment for all.

- March 22, 10-11am: CARLI PDA Event: Choosing Happiness. Come out and learn how to be intentional about choosing happiness. We will be challenged to look at various aspects of your life that impact your happiness. We will learn the importance of self-care when focusing on happiness. We will also learn how various relationships impact your happiness long term.

- On-Demand Webinar: Cataloging for Accessibility (Core) This session will introduce accessibility metadata, explaining what it is, where it's found and why it's important. We will then focus on how to include accessibility metadata in library catalog records, discussing specific MARC fields and options for their use in discovery layers to make accessible resources more easily findable.

- On-Demand Webinar: Inclusive Team Visioning: Beyond the Groan Zone (Core) Structural changes in library leadership and services impact how librarians experience their work. When faced with externally imposed change, our public services team did more than adapt and navigate. We partnered management with organizational development to build a more inclusive team through shared visioning. Recognizing that everyone's experience of change is unique, we employed a variety of tools and techniques to discover factors underlying motivation and resistance. We will share how we built our leadership skills to move a large team through change while respecting the identities, professional values, and experiences of each individual in the team.

- On-Demand Webinar: Incorporating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles into Our Metadata (Core) In early 2021, a group of librarians at two university libraries embarked on a journey to review and update harmful subject headings and other metadata in

their catalog, digital library, and finding aids. This session will discuss the background of the project and where the librarians currently stand in the process of remediating these records, including their efforts to create student internships to address problematic language in archival finding aids as well as create a community user advisory group. Special attention will be given to creating organizational buy-in and overcoming unforeseen obstacles and impediments.

Additional Opportunities for Initiatives and Tools

2022 Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholars (Illinois Library Association) Since 2003, ILA has honored former ILA President Sylvia Murphy Williams by awarding ILA Annual Conference scholarships and a one-year membership to the Association to ALA Spectrum Scholars who live in Illinois or who are attending graduate programs in library and information science in the state, thanks to support from a fund established in honor of the late Sylvia Murphy Williams, 2002 ILA President, now known as the Diversity Scholarship Fund. ILA Williams Scholars are also connected with mentors via ILA's Diversity Committee.

ALA Spectrum Scholarship (Applications accepted through March 1, 2023)
Through the Spectrum Scholarship Program, the American Library Association affirms its commitment to diversity and inclusion by seeking the broadest participation of new generations of racially and ethnically diverse librarians to position ALA to provide leadership in the transformation of libraries and library services. The Spectrum Scholarship Program actively recruits and provides scholarships to American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern and North African, and/or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students to assist them with obtaining a graduate degree and leadership positions within the profession and ALA. Spectrum FAQ.

Cross Cultural Communicators in Libraries: Developing Culturally and Linguistically Competent Bilingual Library Professionals. New Jersey State Library. A series of self-paced webinars on topics essential to developing cultural competence: diversity and cultural norms, language and cultural barriers, citizenship and integration.

RAILS Networking Groups

BIPOC Library Workers

This group aims to foster connection, share resources and discuss specific experiences in a safe, welcome, and open space for all library workers members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color. We will meet virtually every other month for two hours via Zoom. Meetings are posted to the L2 calendar and communications about them will be posted to the group's mailing list. If interested in becoming a part of our group, please subscribe by sending a message to BIPOC-join@list.railslibraries.info then you may subsequently post to BIPOC@list.railslibraries.info.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Metadata Networking Group
Would you like to be part of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Metadata Networking Group? The group aims to foster the importance of a shared understanding to create and maintain more equitable, diverse, and inclusive metadata content. This group is open to all library staff of all types and sizes. This group will host regular discussions on DEI topics related to catalog data. Meetings will be listed on the L2 calendar as they are scheduled.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Team in Youth Services
Are you interested in meeting with like-minded Youth Services library staff to discuss diversity of all kinds? Whether it be hiring diverse presenters, planning inclusive programming, selecting diverse materials for collection development and more...we want to discuss it! Join us to help diversify Youth Services.

RAILS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee| February 2022