

TEXAS LIBRARY JOURNAL

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TLA 2026 EXHIBITS DIRECTORY

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Script Analysis and the
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A dedicated resource for job seekers and employers alike.



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President's Perspective

By Valerie Prilop

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL BE LESS THAN TWO WEEKS AWAY

— as will the end of my term as TLA President. I am proud of how our Executive Board, TLA staff, and countless members have come together in support of the association and our members, and I'd like to highlight a few accomplishments.

Last April, Council approved the [2026-2028 Strategic Plan](#), which puts the association on a path of sustained growth and excellence. One project I'm excited about is the formation of a Governance Task Force. This task force, in support of Priority #4: Transforming Governance and Operational Agility, has embarked on a multi-year project to evaluate our current governance structure and documents, review best practices, and chart a path forward that best serves our members and the profession for years to come.

The strategic plan also prioritizes championing intellectual freedom and the value of libraries. I have been in awe of the dedication and bravery of our members across the state as they embody these values, and I'm proud of the work the association has done to support these efforts. In addition to providing members with resources and assistance, TLA continues to provide advocacy tools and training in support of members and the right to read and access information.

This year, I have focused on communication and information sharing. Changes to Council meetings have made room for standing committee updates and allowed time for councilors to engage with one another and discuss how to share information with the units they represent.

Additionally, with the support of my fellow Board members, members receive regular Board updates on unit Engage channels and via my updates to All Members. This communication is intended to share information in a more timely manner and keep you apprised of the work of the association throughout the year.

When the 2026 Conference Planning Committee (CPC) first started their work more than a year ago, I shared a vision: a conference where everyone would feel a sense of belonging, no matter how they got there. Where you would find what you need, whether you're new and taking it all in, have decades of experience to share, or are looking for the support and breathing room that is found when surrounded by people who – simply put – understand.



The CPC, led by the dynamic duo of Kate McNally Carter and Brandi Grant, came up with the perfect theme: *Cultivating Community, Thriving Together*. And you see that spirit in the beautiful imagery: the colorful mosaic, representing the diversity our members bring to the association, and the tree, which has deep roots and wide branches, is powerful and strong, and offers shade and support. This year's program, cultivated from hundreds of submissions, does a great job of supporting the theme and offers a wide range of educational programs and other events.

At that early CPC kickoff, I also talked to the committee about finding joy and courage in our community, and now I challenge you to do the same. If you are attending the conference, I encourage you to branch out and attend a session on a topic that's not normally on your radar. Find the courage to attend a social event even if it makes you a little nervous. No matter if this is your first conference or your fifteenth, talk to someone you don't know. Our association is more powerful when we learn from and support our fellow librarians – no matter their job title, career path, or library type.

And let's have some fun! Kate Bowler, one of our general session speakers, has an upcoming book titled *Joyful, Anyway*, and that seems incredibly appropriate. With joy and courage, we can have an amazing conference, and we can return to our libraries refreshed and invigorated, armed with new information, tools, and connections.

For me, these ideas have shaped far more than the conference. They've been a touchstone throughout this entire year — as I've traveled across the state meeting so many of you and as I've worked with leaders and members to guide the association. I have learned and grown, and it has been a true honor to serve as your TLA president.

Valerie Prilop

Valerie Prilop
2025–26 TLA President

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Building Community with Clarity

By Shirley Robinson, CAE

As the Texas Library Association (TLA) prepares for governance modernization, we began with something foundational — a clarification of who we are and how we engage with one another.

Over the past year, our Executive Board and a dedicated task force invested significant time in reviewing, discussing, and refining both our [Core Values](#) and our [Code of Conduct](#). This revision involved thoughtful debate, careful drafting, and honest conversations about what our members need from their professional association right now. I am deeply grateful for the leadership, candor, and care that shaped this work.

Governance defines structure. Core values define culture. Structure can only succeed when culture is clear.

Our previous Core Values and Code of Conduct served TLA well for more than a decade. They reflected who we were at that time. But expectations evolve. The library professional environment evolves. Our association has evolved. Periodic review is responsible stewardship of a dynamic organization.

One meaningful shift in our revised Core Values is that they now move beyond aspiration to application. Each value includes clear behavioral norms.

Community is not simply something we celebrate. It is something we intentionally build through accessible events, authentic connection, and thoughtful leadership development.



Professional Growth is reflected in varied opportunities for members across job types, career stages, and geographic regions.

Forward-Thinking means we anticipate challenges and adapt proactively.

Intellectual Freedom remains central to our identity, reinforced by our responsibility to stand against censorship and educate others about the right to read.

Libraries are Essential reminds us that every library type and every trusted professional matter in communities across Texas.

Our revised Code of Conduct brings those values into daily practice. It clarifies expectations for respectful communication, inclusion, professional integrity, fairness, and transparency. It applies across our conference and professional development programs, committee meetings, online spaces, and leadership settings.

As we look toward governance modernization, this cultural clarity matters. Transparent processes, equitable leadership opportunities, and accountable decision-making are not just structural changes. They are cultural commitments. Governance updates will help us function more effectively. Our Core Values and Code of Conduct ensure we do so with integrity.

This year's conference theme, *Cultivating Community. Thriving Together* reflects exactly what this work represents. Strong structure supports strong community. Shared expectations help us thrive.

Values become real when they shape how we listen, how we disagree, how we lead, and how we represent TLA. Before we change structure, we clarify culture. That foundation will carry us forward and help our association remain strong and vibrant for years to come.

Shirley Robinson, CAE is the Executive Director of the Texas Library Association

COMMUNITY

TLA creates a community that is inclusive of and accessible to all.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

TLA believes individual professional growth drives a vibrant library community.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

TLA advocates for equitable access to information and ideas for all.

FORWARD THINKING

TLA is a forward-thinking organization that ensures the future of libraries.

LIBRARIES ARE ESSENTIAL

Libraries and trusted library professionals are essential to all Texas communities.



When Stories Become Blueprints for Innovation

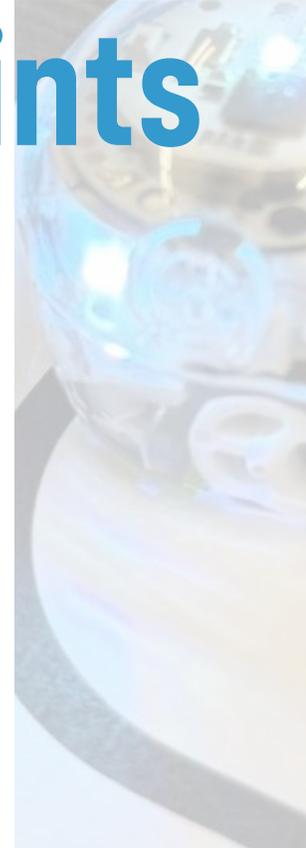
By Elizabeth Lea Suffron

When my students finished reading *A Night Divided* by Jennifer A. Nielsen, their responses varied — some were ready to move on; others wanted to keep discussing the novel. Whichever the case, a typical end-of-book activity did not feel sufficient. I wanted them to engage more deeply, exploring the characters' choices, risks, and what they themselves might have done in similar circumstances. Rather than ending with a traditional discussion, we transformed the novel into an interactive challenge.

IN THE LIBRARY, students were given Ozobot maze templates representing Berlin. Their objective was to use color sequencing to plan a successful route through the maze, detouring to collect essential supplies — key elements pulled directly from the novel — and avoiding the Stasi secret police before reaching the Berlin Wall.

The activity encouraged students to strategize and plan and did not require coding experience. Each color represented a decision, introducing core principles of computational thinking. Students shifted from asking “how” to considering “why,” focusing on order, efficiency, and consequences. More importantly, they justified each move by synthesizing story elements and character motivations. The maze evolved from a simple puzzle into a tangible representation of the plot.

At first, some students were unsure about the connection between coding and the novel. However, as I explained how an Ozobot works — color paths, resetting, and precise sequencing — many began to make connections. In *A Night Divided*, nothing works on the first try. Plans change. Mistakes happen. Clarity comes through revision. The characters adjust and try again. Students quickly recognized the parallel. When a robot failed to reach its destination,





they didn't see it as a failure, but as part of the process. Debugging became a form of problem-solving rooted in the same reasoning they were using to understand the characters' choices. By making this connection visible and hands-on, students began to view reading as an active process rather than a passive one. They were no longer consuming a story; they were modeling, testing, and redesigning it.

I was amazed by how seamlessly the literature linked with the activity. Suddenly, a timeline spanning over sixty years became real. Students compared routes, debated which path was safer, and defended their choices with evidence from life and text. The focus was not about being right but creating the best plan. They advocated for characters they would never meet and found themselves empathizing with them.

All students found ways to lead, regardless of skill level. Visual learners became leaders, confidently pointing to the maze and explaining. Engineering-minded students focused on orientation and navigation. Creative thinkers encouraged peers to explore various routes. Teachers recognized the impact right away. Comprehension improved, but so did engagement. Students were more willing to revisit the text, re-read key scenes, and ask deeper questions. The story became something they could manipulate, not just observe. For many, the mazes became the bridge between understanding the plot and understanding themselves as capable problem-solvers.

One of the greatest strengths of this approach is its flexibility. Librarians do not need advanced technology or coding expertise. The focus is on thinking like a coder, not coding as a prerequisite. Any story with conflict, planning, or obstacles can become a starting point for logic-based exploration — from sequencing tasks and digital design to structural engineering, forensic investigations, and basic algorithms.

These activities can be completed in as little as ten to fifteen minutes and adapted for different grade levels while naturally aligning with library goals of inquiry-based learning, collaboration, and digital literacy. Once I experienced the impact of literature-driven STREAM (science, technology, reading, engineering, art, and math), I began pairing ideas across content areas. A mystery novel became the framework for an ethical decision-making escape-room challenge. A fantasy story evolved into a design challenge where students engineered and tested key features. Even nonfiction felt dynamic thanks to the simulations and infographics that verified facts and sources.

Most significantly, this approach reframes technology as a tool for understanding, not just a product to use. Students learn that technology is not separate from storytelling— it is another way to express it.

Whether students are solving mysteries, designing fantasy worlds, or modeling real-world scientific concepts, literature serves as the blueprint for innovation. In a world that increasingly values creativity and adaptability, students need more than content knowledge; they need to think critically, adapt, and design solutions. When libraries connect literature with computational thinking, we give students a powerful message: stories are not just meant to be read — they are meant to be explored, tested, and built upon.

This approach transformed how our students viewed both reading and problem-solving.

When students realize that every story has a structure and every problem has a narrative, the library becomes more than a place for books. It becomes a community where readers grow into thinkers, and thinkers into innovators.

Elizabeth Lea Suffron is the Library Media Specialist at Deer Park Junior High School in Deer Park ISD.





BUILDING FOR A STRONG FUTURE

By Valerie Prilop

Serving as TLA president over the last year has been one of my greatest professional experiences. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve and represent the members of the Texas Library Association, which has been my professional home for more than 15 years.

Serving on the Executive Board has been a time of growth and excitement as I've worked alongside our incredible Board, members, and staff to move the association forward through challenges and opportunities. This time has also given me insights into areas where we can grow as a community and become stronger through our commitment to TLA's mission.

Throughout this time, I have had many valuable conversations with members across the state, and these conversations were sometimes unfiltered and reflected varying levels of awareness of TLA's opportunities and structure. Out of these chats came ideas for new programs, improved processes, and new ways of thinking, and many of these conversations left me feeling excited, eager, and proud of our profession. I also came away realizing that we have an opportunity to reconnect member expectations with TLA's organizational capacity.

As information professionals, we champion the values of intellectual freedom, curiosity, and literacy. We expect parents who challenge books to read the entire text with an open mind. We want our patrons to treat library staff with respect and grace. We teach students to find quality information and hone their research and literacy skills. We say that libraries are places for everyone. And within TLA, we have the opportunity to apply those values and expectations more intentionally in our interactions with all members, staff, and stakeholders.

In any given year, the association has between 4,000 and 5,000 members, but like many membership organizations, we are seeing fewer members actively engaged in our work.

Throughout the year, members have opportunities to provide feedback, get involved, and help guide TLA's direction and focus. Some of the most visible and accessible ways to do this include surveys, elections, and active participation in our dozens of units, which include districts, divisions, round tables, and discussion groups.

Every year, all members are sent a Membership Survey. This survey is incredibly important in helping the TLA executive board, leadership, and staff understand what would add value to the member experience, and every response is read and considered. This year, just over 10% of members completed the survey, a number which makes it challenging to capture and reflect the perspectives of our broad membership.

Every winter, members elect the Executive Board members who will shape the organization's direction. This year brought encouraging news: voter turnout reached its highest point in several years, with just under 20% of eligible members casting ballots. But that milestone means 80% of members chose not to weigh in on who leads this organization.

And in recent years, a number of units have been dissolved or are struggling to remain active. Sometimes, this is just the natural order as our profession changes, but often it is because volunteer leadership roles go unfilled. Many of these roles require only a few hours each month but are essential to maintaining these groups that make TLA unique.

TLA's success depends on member volunteers and organizational leaders in order to be vibrant and successful. Sometimes the work being done is not headline news, but the time, resources, and dedication given to advance our work run deep and wide. And your input and engagement are vital to sustain our mission.

Often in those member conversations I mentioned — about membership engagement, communication and outreach, the organization's direction, and more — one phrase keeps coming up: "TLA should."

When we say "TLA should," it offers a chance to talk about where change can start.

If you've ever said — or even just *thought* — "TLA should..." I have a simple challenge for you. And since I've said and thought it myself, I'm right there with you.

When you catch yourself thinking "TLA should ...," ask yourself: *how might I be part of that work?*

The answer might take many forms. It might look like voting in elections, completing a survey, or attending a unit business meeting. Consider submitting a program proposal or a *Texas Library Journal* article about your latest project or finding

ways to advocate for libraries in your community. Or it might simply mean staying connected and informed through TLA's communications.

Each of us has different strengths, time, and energy, and not everyone has the capacity to serve in formal leadership roles. But many of us can find small, meaningful ways to be a part of this important work.

TLA is not perfect, and the Board, volunteer leaders, and staff continually work to improve and evolve the organization. Progress happens most effectively when members and leadership work in partnership, sharing responsibility for the association we all value.

The Executive Board also recognizes that our size and complex structure can make it challenging for members to engage or step into volunteer leadership roles. That reality is part of why the association is taking a thoughtful look at our governance model. This endeavor is not about changing who we are, but is about ensuring our structure better supports participation, clarity, and sustainability for the future.

I love this organization. Even as a special librarian in a super special type of library, TLA is my professional home. Its mission, vision, and values, and how we work on behalf of all types of libraries and library workers, speak to me as a librarian, as a community member, and as a parent.

TLA is only as strong as its members — which means the organization's strength lies in how we support each other, how we show up for our colleagues and staff, and how we carry our shared mission forward together.

Let's face it: being a library professional is challenging right now, perhaps harder than it has ever been. Many of us are navigating uncertainty, pressure, and change within our institutions and communities.

But there is also real joy here. Real pride. Real excitement about what we do and why we do it. Let's focus on that and channel it into the community we're building together — and let's keep showing up for each other and for the people we serve. In this way, we can ensure that our association and profession remain resilient and relevant for years to come.

This work is better when it's a conversation. If this resonates or challenges you, I invite you to share your perspective with me. Reach out to me via Engage or [email me directly](#).

Valerie Prilop is the 2025-2026 TLA President and a senior librarian at MD Anderson Cancer Center.

For more on how this connects to TLA's Core Values and Code of Conduct, see Shirley Robinson's guest editorial on page 6.



Are We Credentialed Enough?

LEVERAGING SUPPLEMENTAL
CERTIFICATIONS TO ELEVATE
OUR PRACTICE

By Karina Quilantan-Garza

School librarians have long stood at the intersection of literacy, learning, and leadership. School librarianship is increasingly shaped by evolving digital ecosystems and shifting state legislation. Libraries are no longer defined solely by books or barcodes. They are dynamic hubs of digital inquiry, creation, and exploration. In addition, state laws now require librarians to interpret legal terminology, revise collection or technology policies, and navigate challenges that influence school-wide engagement. In an evolving professional landscape, the question is not whether school librarians must grow; it is how.

SCHOOL LIBRARIANS AS DIGITAL LEADERS

The advancement of digital innovations, such as artificial intelligence (AI), has redefined information literacy. School librarians are expected to facilitate conversations about data privacy, algorithmic bias, misinformation, and responsible or unethical content creation. School districts are revisiting acceptable use policies and engaging in transparent communication with stakeholders. These changes in responsibilities extend beyond traditional preparation in literacy instruction, school programming, and technology management. As schools pursue “future-ready” initiatives, librarians are increasingly positioned as digital leaders. This expertise requires ongoing, targeted professional learning that keeps pace with innovation.

Traditional school library certification programs usually provide a solid foundation in pedagogy, collection development, and leadership. Unfortunately, the structure of many formal academic programs makes it difficult to respond quickly to emerging technologies and evolving educational mandates. Innovation in librarianship often outpaces curriculum revision cycles, leaving gaps between preparation and practice. Consequently, relying solely on initial educator certification may not be sufficient to sustain technological preparedness. School librarians are called to lead digital transformation efforts, support instructional technology initiatives, and model ethical engagement with emerging tools, but meeting these expectations requires timely, focused learning opportunities relevant to school librarianship.

MICROCREDENTIALS AS ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Microcredentials, defined as short, focused, competency-based certifications, allow learning participants to deepen their expertise in targeted areas relevant to their practice. In 2025, I conducted a qualitative study exploring public-school librarians’ motivations for

pursuing educational technology microcredentials. Several themes emerged among the participants. School librarians explained that they sought microcredentials to advocate for their roles as subject-matter experts in technology and engage with digital trends. Many of them self-pursued additional training to understand how emerging technologies may, or may not, complement their responsibilities.

Many emphasized strengthening their capacity to support teachers, foster ethical information practices among students, and participate in professional learning networks. Flexibility and direct applicability to their daily practice were also significant factors. These findings suggested their microcredentials were not pursued simply to accumulate digital badges. Instead, they functioned as tools for professional positioning, credibility, and leadership. Participants felt their role was frequently scrutinized, and visible markers of expertise mattered, ensuring that their new knowledge and skills did not remain theoretical.

WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE PURSUING MICROCREDENTIALS

While microcredentials offer promise, it is important to fully evaluate any program. Is the microcredential program affordable, relevant, and realistic? How much time is required to fulfill the requirements? Some programs are district-supported, while others require personal investment. Evaluating potential returns, such as skill development, leadership opportunities, or career advancement, determines value.

The content should also align with current trends in librarianship and emphasize ethical, transferable skills. Strong programs include performance-based assessments and practical application rather than passive completion. Professional learning is most meaningful when strategies can be implemented immediately in library programming, instruction, training, or policy development.

Equally important is discernment, as not all microcredentials are grounded

in educational integrity. Some are closely tied to corporate initiatives that prioritize product or branding visibility over educators’ pedagogical growth. If a marketing vehicle encourages badge displays or platform promotion without meaningful competency development, it risks diminishing the value of the credential. Librarians should select programs grounded in research-based practice, with transparent assessment criteria and authentic application, to ensure meaningful professional growth.

A PROFESSION BUILT ON LIFELONG LEARNING

School librarianship has always been grounded in professional growth. As our profession continues to evolve, so too must the preparation of those who lead within it. School librarians should remain central to literacy, learning, and leadership, but sustaining that centrality requires intentionality. By embracing and fostering our learning opportunities beyond our formal schooling, we can ensure that our profession remains relevant and indispensable in shaping ethical, inclusive, and future-ready schools.

Dr. Karina Quilantan-Garza is an Assistant Professor in the Library Science and Technology Department at Sam Houston State University.



Finding the Performance

SCRIPT ANALYSIS AND THE READ ALOUD EXPERIENCE

By Katie Thonen

Children’s librarians, educators, and caregivers are well-positioned to be enthusiastic, capable participants in helping children find fun and fabulous new reads. When adults treat read-aloud sessions for young readers like a performance, the reader becomes an actor, prepared to “manipulate features such as their voice quality and gestures” to engage the children and “[stimulate the] children’s curiosity and [enhance] their comprehension.” Here is an outline to help you understand the performative possibilities in children’s literature, including easy-to-follow steps to enhance a child’s connection to the book and to reading as a fun, productive pastime.

Picture books, a quintessential reading staple, “[believe] a complex art form,” making the vetting process essential to the quest for robust read-aloud options. Avoid books that are too wordy, too picture-heavy, or, upon analysis, do not contain enough dynamic, action-based language to assist with characterization. Most importantly, you must want to read the chosen text because “if they [the adults] don’t enjoy telling it, chances are that the audience won’t

enjoy listening to it”. After identifying a potential choice, consider the text as the script for the performance.

A script provides actors with all the essential details needed to perform, allowing them to make and justify performance choices by inferring characterization from textual cues in the narration and dialogue. In children’s literature, passages like “she giggled,” “Eloise shouted,” or “Alexander fumed” provide indicators alerting the reader

to giggle, look shocked, shout, cry/sob, look confused, or infuse a line with an angry voice. Speech tags serve as cues to emotion and action and, when mirrored by a reader, make a performance more engaging.

In addition to words, consider punctuation. In David LaRochelle's book *Moo!*, the periods, commas, exclamation points, double exclamation points, question marks, hyphens, and final question marks fully explain the cow's journey and open the reader to various performance choices, despite the text containing only two words. Through punctuation-based textual clues, readers need not construct characterization; the author has provided it. Vocal changes, pauses, and emphasis inherent in reading punctuation correctly, when combined with the visual cues on the page, go a long way to bring a book to life.

In addition to textual cues, the pictures themselves provide characterization assistance. Since the words and text work in tandem to communicate the plot, themes, and character development, actor readers should use the pictures as additional guidance. If a picture shows a character jumping and screaming, with steam coming from their ears, the reader can infer that an angry voice is appropriate. Jim Panzee, in *Grumpy Monkey*, by Suzanne Lang, looks "slumped. His eyebrows were bunched up, and he was frowning". A reader, mimicking the imposed outward signs shown in the pictures of Jim, leads to a manic, wide-eyed grimace, complete with waving arms (or a single arm in the case of the reader, as one is supporting the book) that look entirely unlike the 'happy'

being Jim is attempting to be.

In *Little Blue Truck*, by Alice Schertle, the antagonist, a dump truck, is introduced through a two-page spread featuring giant tires, angry-looking wiper 'eyebrows,' and motion lines suggesting a zoom through the bucolic landscape. This picture depicts a pushy, impatient, and angry character, prompting readers to adopt a pushy, impatient, or angry tone. Using the text and pictures, readers are given a map of characterization choices, taking much of the guesswork out of a good read-aloud performance. Use these cues to help know when "pitch variability, pitch range, loudness, [and] loudness variability." are necessary while reading. Lean into what is given in the text and pictures, and most readers will find themselves reading more expressively. Trust your interpretations of the pictures and text; there is no way to misread aloud!

Here are a few additional suggestions to consider: add physicality, realize that choices supported by the text will work, and practice. When considering physicality, remember that full-body movements may not be possible, but that does not mean any physical activity is impossible. Find the verbs and do as many of them as possible while holding a book. In *Grumpy Monkey*, Jim is encouraged to do a series of action verbs by his animal friends, including to sing, swing, roll, stroll, lie in the grass, stomp his feet, bathe, make a splash, hug someone, laugh, nap, eat, jump, sit, and dance. This list of actions offers many physical possibilities: sing the word 'sing, swing by moving the free arm back and forth. Roll in the grass by moving your torso in a circle, stroll by

purposefully moving the shoulders back and forth, or lie in the grass by going limp and slumping over. Movement does not have to be in every line or page, but infusing some physicality, where appropriate, will engage the audience.

Make a choice and go with it! If you think a character should have a low-pitched voice, pitch your voice low. Think a character should have an accent, speak slowly or very quickly, or whisper a line, or shout something out, go for it. The children listening will happily support your choice if the pictures and text do as well. Guo suggests that "acting is an act of communication" in which the actor represents a character and believes their audience understands they are acting. The reader should feel empowered to make choices because, if the text supports it and the reader feels comfortable with it, there is no way to read aloud incorrectly.

But the biggest piece of advice, and a standard part of acting, is rehearsal and practice. Readers must anticipate what is happening in the story to guide pacing, rhythm, and flow. By reading the story multiple times, both to themselves and aloud, the story's flow becomes apparent, as do potential characterization choices and trouble spots or tricky wording. Performers spend hours rehearsing, so give yourself the time to practice.

Acting is a learned skill that provides an engaging and energetic read-aloud experience. Learning that comes with doing is part of the acting process, so get out there and read to a kid.

Katie Thonen is the Outreach Librarian at St. Mary's University.

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Libraries Celebrate America250 IN A BIG, TEXAS WAY

By Tim Gleisner



Reading Challenge

celebrate and learn
our nation's history

★★ THROUGH YOUR LIBRARY ★★

Log 2,500 minutes (41.6 hours) of reading, state parks visits, and/or service activity in 2026

#TEXASAMERICA250



Mrs. Peltier, Angleton Junior High School, first known participant to complete the Reading Challenge, on January 16



LIBRARIES STATEWIDE KICKED OFF THEIR 2026 SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS with the [Texas America250 Reading Challenge](#),

organized by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) and the Texas Center for the Book. More than 200 public and school libraries — along with some academic and special libraries, local historical associations, and reading groups — have officially joined the statewide challenge so far. We've enjoyed seeing photos and videos from all parts of the state. At press time, 400 super readers have already completed the challenge.

It's simple: Texans of all ages are invited to log 2,500 minutes—41.6 hours—of reading, exploring Texas state parks, or giving back through service between January 1 and December 31. Readers who complete the challenge earn a special certificate signed by Governor Greg Abbott, available from their local public or school librarian (or by contacting TSLAC directly). We hope the Reading Challenge presents a fun, meaningful way for patrons to connect with history, nature, and the community through their library—while earning Texas-sized bragging rights!



Mosey along the reading trail

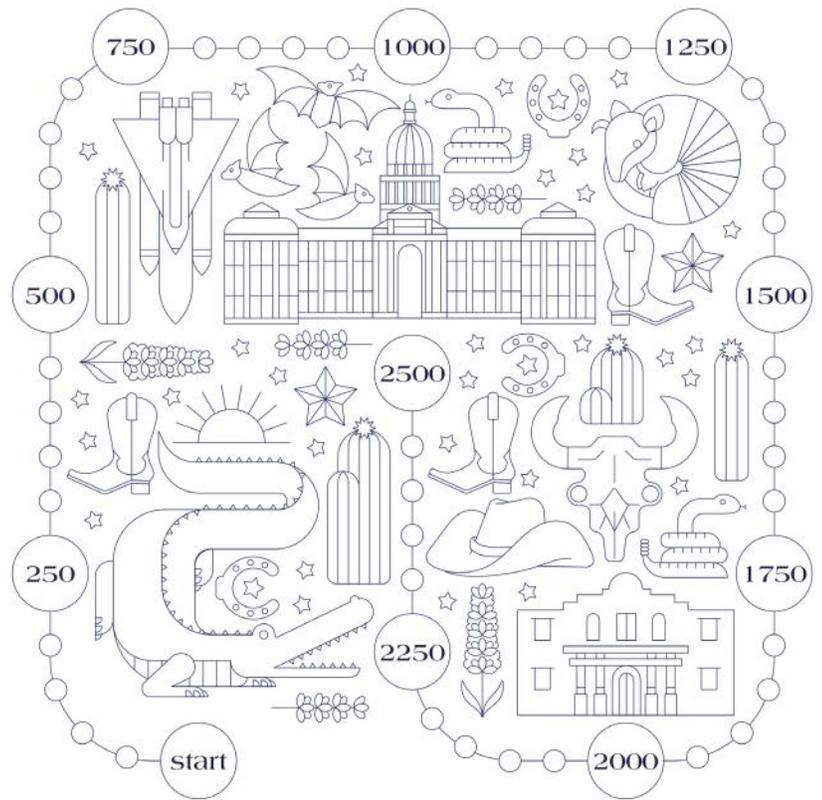
Celebrate and learn our nation's history through your library. Use this chart to track your qualifying minutes until you reach 2,500. You can count the time you spend reading, attending library events, volunteering, or visiting a Texas State Park.

Challenge dates are January 1 – December 31, 2026.

More info at www.tsl.texas.gov/america250/challenge



This Reading Trail belongs to:



In the spirit of the national celebrations, which includes the America Gives volunteer effort, and to encourage Texans to engage with our fellow Texas America250 Commission member agency, Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Reading Challenge includes several categories of qualifying activities:

- Reading books and/or listening to audiobooks. The Texas Center for the Book especially encourages reading about Texas and American history, as well as Texas and American nature, wildlife, and space exploration topics.
- Attending library storytimes or other library events.

Find a library

Note that this tool may not reflect recent changes to library hours or services. Academic and other non-public libraries might not participate in the America250 Reading Challenge. Please contact the library or visit their website for current information.

- Volunteering in the community. [Find a volunteer opportunity](#)
- Visiting a Texas State Park. [Plan your trip](#)

LIBRARIES: REGISTER AND DOWNLOAD COMPLETION CERTIFICATES

The Reading Challenge is self-reported. View the participation guidelines, read the FAQ, download a printable reading log map, and more—on the [program website](#). Libraries are encouraged to [register online with TSLAC](#) (and thus get access to the downloadable official completion certificate.)

DOWNLOAD FREE POSTERS, COLORING PAGES, AND MORE

Celebrate Texas America250 with a treasure trove of free resources—ready to download, share, and print directly from the [TSLAC website](#).

Choose from 21 poster designs featuring six iconic images from the State Archives. Print any of 24 colorful bookmarks showcasing Texas history or 10 fun coloring pages with classic Texas symbols like the Alamo, space shuttle, cowboy boots, and even an armadillo! Want to celebrate online? We've got you covered with a variety of digital graphics perfect for social media and websites.

PROMOTE YOUR READING CHALLENGE ONLINE

We encourage libraries and patrons to

share photos of themselves working on the Reading Challenge, whether they're reading, volunteering, or spending time at a state park. Please tag [@tslac](#) on social media and use the hashtag [#TexasAmerica250!](#)

TRAVELING EXHIBITS UPDATE

In October, TSLAC began distributing more than 500 free *Texas America250* traveling exhibits highlighting historically significant Texas Treasures from our collections to public libraries across Texas, and many are already on display. Additional sets are being distributed on a first-come, first-served basis and will continue to be shipped throughout early spring 2026. Due to limited supply, not all applicants will receive an exhibit. Check with TSLAC to find out if another local institution has a set that your library may be able to display next—just email us at info@tsl.texas.gov.

Tim Gleisner is the Assistant State Librarian at the Texas Library and Archives Commission. Funding for TSLAC's Texas America250 programming is generously provided by the Summerlee Foundation, Texas Library and Archives Foundation, and Institute of Museum and Library Services. www.tsl.texas.gov/america250

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"I appreciate the opportunity to participate in LAUNCH, which consistently exceeds expectations and provides lasting value." - Rene

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Registration deadline: July 20

Hotel Deadline: June 25



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PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR
CERTIFICATE
TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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Hear from librarians and authors about their work, trends shaping libraries, and inspiring insights.

You'll laugh, learn, and might just discover your next big idea.

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TLA★

TLA 2026 Election Results

The Texas Library Association is pleased to announce the results of our 2026 elections. These individuals will take office at the close of the 2026 TLA Annual Conference in March in Houston. Thank you to everyone who ran for office, and to all members who voted.

TLA EXECUTIVE BOARD

- **President-Elect: Kate Horan**, Library Director, McAllen Public Library
- **Treasurer: Daniel Schwartz**, Managing Librarian, Owen R. Hopkins Library, Corpus Christi Public Library
- **Representative-at-Large, School: Wendy Pray**, Librarian, Mission Consolidated Independent School District
- **Representative-at-Large, Special: Megan Firestone**, Head of Distinctive Collections, Archives, and Digital Initiatives, Southwestern University

Thank you to the members who served on the nominating committee for your time and hard work.



Kate Horan



Daniel Schwartz



Wendy Pray



Megan Firestone



2026 Texas Bluebonnet Award Winner

Thousands of students across Texas voted on their favorite book from the Texas Bluebonnet 2025-2026 Reading List, and the results are in! The 2026 Texas Bluebonnet Award winner is ***The Girl Who Figured It Out***, written by Minda Dentler and illustrated by Stephanie Dehennin. [Read the full announcement here.](#)

This year's winner will be celebrated in Houston! Students will present the award to Dentler at the Texas Bluebonnet Award Author Session on **March 31** during the TLA 2026 Annual Conference.

2X2, LARIAT, LITTLE MAVERICK AND TEJAS STAR READING LISTS RELEASED

The 2026 [2x2](#), [Little Maverick](#), [Lariat](#) and [Tejas Star](#) reading lists have been announced! These curated lists offer an incredible selection of books for readers of all ages. Thank you to our dedicated members and committees for their hard work in making this possible.



TALL TEXANS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The TALL Texans Leadership Development Institute (TALL Texans) is a transformational program that helps participants learn and embrace their potential to take new initiatives for their institutions, professions, and stakeholders. The TALL Texans program will be held in person from November 19-21 at [The Bevy Hotel](#) in Boerne, Texas.

The application deadline is June 8.

[Learn more and apply](#)



Helping Here.

TLA ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER AT THE LIBRARY GRANT

Applications are open for the H-E-B Summer at the Library Grant Program! This program supports Texas libraries in expanding and enhancing their summer programming. All library types providing summer programming are encouraged to apply. Learn more and complete the [online application](#) by **April 18**.



(l-r) Dr. LaKeshia Darden, Shirley Robinson, Lucy Podmore

TLA ADVOCATES FOR LIBRARIES AT U.S. CAPITOL

Texas was well represented at the ALA National Library Legislative Day in Washington, DC on February 26. TLA members Dr. LaKeshia Darden and Lucy Podmore, and Executive Director Shirley Robinson connected with advocates from across the country to discuss the issues impacting libraries. In meetings with congressional staff from the offices of Rep. Lloyd Doggett, Rep. Joaquin Castro, Rep. Henry Cuellar, Sen. Ted Cruz, and Sen. John Cornyn, they shared stories highlighting the vital role libraries play and the impact of the \$12.6 million in federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding Texas receives each year.



PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR CERTIFICATE

TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Introducing the New Public Library Director Certificate Program

The TLA Public Library Director Certificate Program is a flexible, competency-based pathway designed to ensure those who serve as public library directors are well-prepared, confident, and supported as they serve their communities in an increasingly complex public library landscape. This program is designed for experienced directors, aspiring directors, and those performing director duties.

Include this certificate program in your upcoming budget to ensure you have the tools to lead with confidence and strengthen your library's future. [Learn more.](#)

2026 TEXAS LIBRARY GRANT CYCLE NOW OPEN



APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL COLLECTION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Applications are now open for one of the Texas Book Festival's signature programs, Texas Library Grants. Every year, the Texas Book Festival awards these collection enhancement grants to public libraries to ensure that reading is accessible and available to all Texans. **The application deadline is Friday, April 17.** [Apply today!](#)

TLA Members Receive H-E-B Strong Texas Libraries Annual Conference Stipend

Thanks to the generous support of H-E-B, the Texas Library Association was able to offer 20 stipends to cover conference registration and help defray the cost of travel to attend the TLA 2026 Annual Conference in Houston, Texas.

These funds support TLA members from all types of libraries working in small institutions with very limited budgets, and those that have been impacted by budget cuts, downsizing and layoffs. Congratulations to this year's recipients!

- Monica Alvarez
- Guadalupe Amaya
- Dana Byrom
- Rebecca Cepeda
- Kylee "Kai" Corral
- Megan Gonzales
- Lourdes Gonzalez
- LaShel Jackson
- Karen Lindner
- Karly Loree
- Ashley Martin
- Walkyria Orellana
- Maciel Perez
- Darby Pilgrim
- Audrey Rodriguez
- Karina Rodriguez
- Savannah Russett
- Rachel Stewart
- Melissa Tom
- Ami Ware



Helping Here.



CONGRATULATIONS TO NICHOLAS P. SIMS LIBRARY, 2025 NATIONAL MEDAL FOR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE WINNER

Since 1994, the National Medal, one of the highest honors a library can receive in the United States, has recognized institutions for their significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. This year, five museums and five libraries received the prestigious award. Each medalist represents the administration's mission of utilizing public resources to increase literacy, enhance local economies, preserve our nation's artifacts and documents and focus upon preparing people to succeed in a changing world.

The [Nicholas P. Sims Library](#) (Waxahachie, TX) was honored for its tireless work to respond to the community's needs through outreach, programming and the beautifully preserved, historic Lyceum performance hall. Congratulations to Director Jennifer Graf and her team!

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CULTIVATING COMMUNITY
THRIVING TOGETHER
TLA★**2026**
TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
HOUSTON ★ MARCH 29-31



CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

2026 Keynote Speakers



GENERAL SESSION I

John Leguizamo

Monday, March 30 | 8:15 – 9:45am

We are thrilled to welcome award-winning actor, writer, and producer **John Leguizamo** to the 2026 Annual Conference. His work across film, theatre, television, and literature has amplified stories that build understanding, identity, and community. John's extensive credits include *Chef*, *Sisters*, *Ride Along*, *The Infiltrator*, and *John Wick: Chapter 2* and his acclaimed one-man show *Latin History for Morons* explored more than 3,000 years of Latin American history while challenging whose stories are taught and remembered. In August 2026, Scholastic will publish *KIKI & THE CAN*, a picture book created with graffiti artist John "Crash" Matos that celebrates creativity, literacy, and cultural pride. Limited complimentary copies of *KIKI & THE CAN* will be available while supplies last.



GENERAL SESSION II

Kate Quinn

Monday, March 30 | 4:00 – 5:00pm

We are excited to have **Kate Quinn**, the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of historical fiction, share insights into her newest book, and first foray into magic realism, *The Astral Library*. A lifelong history buff, she has written four novels in the Empress of Rome Saga and two books set in the Italian Renaissance before turning to the 20th century with *The Alice Network*, *The Huntress*, *The Rose Code*, *The Diamond Eye*, and *The Briar Club*.



GENERAL SESSION III

Kate Bowler

Tuesday, March 31 | 2:15 – 3:15pm

Kate Bowler is the four-time *New York Times* bestselling author of *Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved*, *No Cure for Being Human*, *Good Enough*, *The Lives We Actually Have*, *Blessed* and *The Preacher's Wife*, and hosts the popular podcast *Everything Happens*. She is a professor of history at Duke University and shuttles home to Winnipeg for the summer with her husband and son. Her upcoming book, *Joyful Anyway* offers a profound, funny and deeply human case for joy that doesn't depend on everything getting better. Don't miss this inspiring session!

Conference Program Highlights

Check out the complete [TLA 2026 conference program](#). You can search by audience type and topic to find the education sessions and events of interest to you. With more than 200 education sessions, a vibrant exhibit hall, hundreds of authors signing their latest books, and fun social and networking opportunities, there is something for everyone. The following topics are of interest to various library types, led by presenters from those libraries. But all sessions are open to all attendees!

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Academic Libraries as Partners in Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

Sunday, March 29, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Presenters will share findings from a study on collaboration between academic libraries and post-secondary education (PSE) programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID). Case studies show how libraries repurpose core skills to support these programs, promoting community integration and student success. Explore data-driven strategies for inclusive services that foster belonging. The session highlights libraries as community hubs, strengthening social bonds through innovative partnerships and support for diverse learners.

Cultivating Comunidad: Thriving Library Spaces for Latiné Students

Monday, March 30, 10:00 – 11:00am

As more institutions receive Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation, librarians are seeking innovative, equity-driven approaches to meet the evolving needs of Latiné students. Discover how academic libraries can foster belonging and success for Latiné students through inclusive programming, cross-campus collaboration, and culturally responsive services. Learn practical strategies to position your library as a thriving community hub.

Cultivating Community Health: Building Bridges with Your Local Academic Medical Library

Monday, March 30, 2:30 – 3:30pm

Academic medical libraries play a key role in connecting healthcare professionals, researchers, and communities. This session highlights strategies to leverage these libraries to promote health education and well-being. Attendees will explore how libraries provide trusted information, build community partnerships, and support educational initiatives. Through practical examples, participants will learn effective ways to collaborate with academic medical libraries to enhance health literacy, strengthen outreach, and foster healthier communities through shared knowledge.

Community By Design: Scaffolded Academic Library Programming for Meaningful Connection

Tuesday, March 31, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Students will change instructors over their academic career but will likely have the same librarians. Libraries are uniquely positioned to provide a consistent community for all patrons. Presenters will share their scaffolded outreach program successes from their community college campuses. Leave with tools and tangible ideas that will empower you to create a suite of programs that fit your personality, library, and institution.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Cool Jobs

Monday, March 30, 10:00 – 11:00am

Librarians with atypical jobs will share where they are, what they are doing, and how they got there. Learn about the fascinating jobs found in non-traditional libraries and other organizations that build on library and information science skills.

Birds of a Feather: Conversations about Special Libraries

Tuesday, March 31, 8:00 – 9:00am

Connect with others working in or eyeing a career in special libraries to network and learn from each other. Presented by the TLA Special Libraries Division.

Conference Program Highlights



PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Sensory Festival: Programming for Our Neurodivergent Community

Sunday, March 29, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Libraries should be welcoming spaces for all members of our communities. The Houston Public Library created its first Sensory Festival, a library event featuring crafts, activities, and performances focused on the wants and needs of the neurodivergent community and individuals with sensory sensitivities. Presenters will share the step-by-step process used to create this event and the end results of the program.

Emergency Ready: A Communications Playbook for Libraries in Crisis Response

Sunday, March 29, 12:30 – 1:30pm

Explore how libraries can play a proactive role in local emergency response, not just as cooling or heating centers,

but as vital hubs for information, access, and connection. Drawing on Harris County Public Library's work during local emergencies, presenters will share how libraries can support emergency management and public health agencies through coordinated communications, service delivery, and outreach.

Strengthening Your Community: Creative, Cost-Effective Library Programming with Local Partnerships

Monday, March 30, 10:00 – 11:00am

Learn how libraries can transform into vibrant community hubs by launching low-cost, high-impact programs in partnership with local experts—from CPR classes to car maintenance to financial literacy. Discover real-world examples and step-by-step guidance to start or scale your own initiatives that meet local needs, build social bonds, and reinforce the library's central role in lifelong learning.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Ink and Impact: Nurturing Writing Roots in Elementary School

Tuesday, March 31, 8:00 – 9:00am

Together, let's cultivate the seeds of creative writing in the school library, using the art and story in picture books to spark kids' imaginations and inspire storytelling, expression, and writing. Learn how librarians, teachers, and even local authors can collaborate to help students thrive and shine—beyond the stressful STAAR test. Watch students shift from readers to writers in their library visits with simple techniques and free handcrafted activities.

Curating to Co-Teaching: Taking Teacher Partnerships to the Next Level

Tuesday, March 31, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Want to take your teacher partnerships to the next level? This session explores the four types of collaboration you can

use to connect meaningfully with teachers. You'll learn how simple coaching moves like building trust, asking questions, and giving helpful feedback can strengthen collaborations and deepen the impact on instruction and student learning. You'll also walk away with ideas to build stronger connections and make your library an essential partner.

Content With Character! Educational Manga for Your Library

Monday, March 30, 2:30 – 3:30pm

In collaboration with school and public librarians, this panel of manga enthusiasts will explore and recommend manga titles curated across multiple age ranges that can directly support educational content such as Texas state learning standards, research and information literacy, and social emotional skills.

Conference Program Highlights

FOR EVERYONE

Capitol Update: Insights from Texas Senator Carol Alvarado

Monday, March 30, 10:00 – 11:00am

During the 2025 legislative session, more than 60 bills were filed that would have directly impacted librarians and librarians. Two of those, SB 13 and SB 412 passed, and librarians have been dealing with the consequences since the new laws became effective September 1, 2025. The issues confronting libraries are not going away. What can we expect in the 2027 legislative session? What can librarians do this year to prepare? Senator Carol Alvarado will share her insights and thoughts on what the next legislative session may look like, and how librarians can counter the negative narratives and increase support for the work they do.

Mychal Threats: A Celebration of Library Joy

Monday, March 30, 11:30am – 12:30pm

Discover the power of library joy with the award-winning author and host of *Reading Rainbow*, Mychal Threats. Join Mychal for a conversation about his new book, *I'm So Happy You're Here: A Celebration of Library Joy*, mental health, and finding joy in your work.

Advocacy in the Off Season: Preparing for the 2027 Legislature

Monday, March 30, 2:30 – 3:30pm

Building a network of advocates takes time and we are more effective when we build relationships. An author and librarians, all with experience organizing and testifying during previous legislative sessions, will share ways we can use this time to build and prepare our networks before the Texas Legislature reconvenes in 2027.

Q&A with Q&A: Coffee and Conversation with the Queers & Allies Round Table

Tuesday, March 31, 9:30 – 10:30am

Join the Queers & Allies Round Table for an informal social gathering featuring coffee, conversation, and community building! This networking event offers a welcoming space to connect with colleagues, share ideas, and celebrate the recipient of the 2026 Advocacy Award. Bring your coffee of choice and help us honor outstanding advocacy in our community!

A Library for All: An Informal Meetup with the Library of Congress

Tuesday, March 31, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Join the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Library of Congress for a relaxed, come-and-go meetup with LOC staff. Learn how to use Library of Congress collections, tools, and programs to support local history research and community programming. Ask questions, exchange ideas, and discover practical ways to connect national resources to your library's local collections and storytelling efforts.



First-Time Attendees & Networking

TLA Conference Kick Off

Sunday, March 29 | 9:30 – 10:30am

Start your conference experience with intention and connection at TLA's 2026 Conference Kick Off! Meet fellow TLA members, build your professional network, and make a plan for the days ahead. This upbeat gathering is the perfect place to connect with your community, make new friends, and get ready for a few fun surprises as we cultivate community and thrive together. Open to all conference attendees.

Networking for First Time Attendees

Are you attending the TLA Annual Conference for the first time? We can't wait to welcome you! This year's theme, "Cultivating Connections, Thriving Together," is all about growing relationships that enrich your professional journey—and there's no better place to start than with your fellow first-timers.

Join us for **Caffeinated Connections: Brewing Community from the First Cup** on Sunday, March 29, 8:00 – 9:00am, a relaxed morning meet-up where you can enjoy coffee, conversation, and guidance from experienced TLA members.

Then, keep the momentum going at **Picnic Perspectives: A Lunch Gathering for First-Timers** on Monday, March 30, 12:30 – 1:30pm, where you'll connect with new colleagues, share insights, and swap tips to make the most of your conference experience. Together, we'll kick off a week of learning, laughter, and lasting connections.

JOURNEY MAPS

TLA Conference Journey Maps are guides to help you navigate the conference and make the most of your time there. Journey Maps are created by TLA units to share their recommendations for educational sessions based on topics of interest and library type. Curate your conference experience by browsing session suggestions for Intellectual Freedom, Innovation and Technology, Leadership, New Members, and more! [Find your journey!](#)

SCAVENGER HUNT

Ready to turn your conference experience into an adventure? The **TLA Scavenger Hunt** is back—and it's bigger, bolder, and more fun than ever! Grab your phone and dive into a mobile game packed with challenges, surprises, and friendly competition.

Complete missions, rack up points, and climb the leaderboard for ultimate bragging rights—and yes, prizes are on the line! Stay tuned for details on how to download the app, log in, and unlock a whole new way to explore TLA.

TLA 2026 MOBILE APP

Navigate the TLA conference with ease using the official TLA 2026 Mobile App! Access everything you need in one place—session schedules, speaker details, exhibit hall information, interactive maps, event updates, and more. Plan your experience, build your personal agenda, and receive real-time notifications so you never miss a moment. The app will be available for download about a week before the conference, and you'll receive an email with simple instructions on how to get started.

TRANSPORTATION

Back by popular demand, TLA is going green and offering Lyft credits to attendees staying more than ½ mile away from the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. Attendees who registered for TLA 2026 and booked their hotel room through the official hotel partner, onPeak before March 6 will receive an email from Lyft with a unique code for credits

Exhibiting Companies



2026 EXHIBITS GRAND OPENING

Sunday, March 29 | 2:00 – 5:00pm

Exhibitors will gather in the bustling Exhibit Hall to bring you the best products, services, and support for your library. Take advantage of entrances at both Hall D and Hall E that offer easy access to the Exhibit Hall and enjoy refreshments and activities during the Exhibits Grand Opening. Explore over 200 exhibitors—featuring your favorites as well as exciting new vendors you won't want to miss. The exhibit hall is packed with fantastic exhibitors, activations, educational sessions, delicious lunch options, and so much more.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29
2:00 – 5:00 PM
Exhibit Hall Grand Opening

MONDAY, MARCH 30
10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Exhibits Open

TUESDAY, MARCH 31
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Last Day for Exhibits

AUTHORS, AUTHORS AND MORE AUTHORS

Author signings will take place throughout the Exhibit Hall in the Authors Area, at the TechOps Specialty Vehicles Bookmobile, and at exhibitor booths during exhibit hall hours. Check out the Authors Area schedule in the TLA 2026 [online conference program](#) and see when and where your favorites are signing!

TLA COMMUNITY CORNER (BOOTH 1531) AND TLA MEMBERSHIP (BOOTH 1633)

It's a space just for you – the TLA Community Corner welcomes you to take a break, connect with colleagues, and make new friends! Visit the TLA Membership booth to learn how membership supports your work with professional development, advocacy resources, statewide networking, and member-only tools. Stop by to ask questions, explore benefits, and get connected with opportunities to grow your career and get involved.

EXHIBITOR SHOWCASES

These educational sessions in Exhibit Hall E will introduce you to new products, services, solutions, and concepts that you can take back to your library. Find more information and the schedule in the TLA 2026 [online conference program](#).

THE LAWN AND H-E-B RECHARGE LOUNGE

Relax, chat with friends, catch up on your emails, and charge your devices in one of our comfortable lounges. Thanks to support from H-E-B Read 3 and library furnishings generously provided by Library Interiors of Texas, The Lawn in the main lobby and the H-E-B Read 3 Lounge in Exhibit Hall E offer a break from the hubbub of conference.

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OUR COMMITMENT TO A MORE SUSTAINABLE TLA CONFERENCE

The Texas Library Association is committed to hosting a conference that reflects the values of the library profession—stewardship, community care, and thoughtful use of shared resources.

From early planning through onsite execution, [sustainability](#) is integrated into how we design and deliver this event. We prioritize waste reduction, material reuse, and lower-impact operational choices. This includes reducing single-use materials, transitioning to reusable and recyclable signage, eliminating aisle carpet in the exhibit hall, walkable lodging options and environmentally friendly transportation, and donating usable materials to local nonprofits and libraries.

These decisions are intentional. Conferences can generate significant waste and emissions, and we believe it is our responsibility to minimize that impact wherever possible. At the same time, we aim to create a welcoming, high-quality experience for attendees, exhibitors, and partners.

Sustainability at TLA is not a single initiative, it is an ongoing process. We are developing tools to measure our impact and identify areas for continuous improvement, ensuring that each year builds on the progress of the last.

By participating in the conference—bringing reusable items, choosing lower-impact travel options, and supporting responsible exhibitors—attendees play an important role in this shared effort.

Together, we are cultivating community in a way that considers both present needs and the future we are working to build.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Texas Library Association (TLA) is committed to fostering a professional and welcoming community that reflects our core values. The [TLA Code of Conduct](#) sets expectations for behavior that supports a respectful environment where all members, staff, volunteers, speakers, vendors, and partners can engage meaningfully and safely.

This Code applies to all TLA-related spaces, including conferences, virtual and in-person meetings, online forums, social media, professional development or training, and any situation where individuals are representing the association or participating in TLA activities.

EXPECTATIONS

Respectful Communication and Behavior

Members interact with fellow members, staff, authors, speakers, presenters, and vendors in ways that demonstrate professionalism, kindness, and respect.

Inclusion, Belonging, and Accessibility

TLA is committed to inclusivity of people of all backgrounds, abilities, identities, and perspectives.

Professional Integrity and Accountability

Members are responsible for their actions, commitments, and how they represent TLA.

Fairness, Equity and Transparency

TLA is committed to fair, equitable, and transparent operations and leadership practices.

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