

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

Officers for 2019-2020 were Jenny Silbiger, Chair; James Durham, Vice-Chair; Karen Westwood Secretary-Treasurer; Rob Mead, Joe Lawson, Liz Reppe, Members-at-Large; Christine Morton and Sara V. Pic, Newsletter Co-editors (ex officio); and Joan Bellistri, Past Chair.

The Bethany J. Ochal Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession was given to Steve Anderson, Director, Thurgood Marshall State Law Library; Donna Bausch, Executive Director (retired), Norfolk Public Law Library; and Donna Williams (retired), California Judicial Center Law Library.

The Dr. Joel Fishman Professional Publication Award was given to Amy Small, Assistant Director, Texas State Law Library, for her publication From the Western Frontier to the Digital Frontier: a History of the State Law Library, *Journal of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society*, Summer, 20019, pp 40-52.

Grants were awarded to Sue Ludington of Lane County Law Library to attend the Self Represented Litigation Network conference in Nashville, and to Marcelo Rodriguez, US Courts for the Second Circuit Library (Manhattan) to attend the 2020 AALL Virtual Leadership Academy.

Regarding the GLL sponsored programs for the Annual Meeting: The Education Committee coordinated “Loaves and Fishes: Providing Legal Assistance to SRLs When Resources Are Limited.” Further, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the AALL 2020 Conference in New Orleans was cancelled and converted to a Virtual Conference. “Loaves and Fishes” was then selected from the original programming to be “pre-recorded” and have it offered in conjunction with the Virtual conference (a special distinction; not all original programming could be offered online).

The GLL Committee reports detail their work, some highlights follow. The Best A2J Committee identified topics for new Best Practices Guides: Pro Se appeals and training public librarians about legal information resources (to be continued).

The Strategic Planning Committee recommended updating our expired strategic plan to bring it current with our members’ ideas and goals. To carry this out, the Committee recommends conducting a member survey as well as incorporating a statement of diversity as a value to reflect the diverse voices within our membership, as well as

represent the communities that GLL libraries serve to help dismantle systemic bias and racism within the legal system. The Newsletter continued being published three times a year.

Further, the GLL 2019-2020 year was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that deeply affected our global populations (10,399,000+ infections worldwide and 508,000+ deaths to date, with 127,000+ deaths in the United States as of 6/30/2020). As GLL member libraries are in various states of closure and/or providing services physically and/or remotely to colleagues and staff and/or to the public, we are all challenged to deliver services in ways that ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of both staff and patrons. Weekly videoconferencing meetings via Zoom were hosted by GLL member, Caroline Nevin, where GLL library colleagues across the country and in Canada shared status updates.

Additionally, our Education Committee, using converted LexisNexis sponsorship funds from our cancelled New Orleans GLL Annual Business Meeting, coordinated a special webinar entitled “Re-Opening is Hard to Do” with Dr. Timothy Kowalik, a professor of virology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and his co-presenter, public health colleague, Andy Walsh, Chief Science Officer, Health Monitoring. Helpful resources shared from this webinar and shared among the GLL members in our Zoom calls include:

American Library Association’s (ALA) [COVID-19 Response](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#)
[How to Yourself & Others](#)

GA RPLAC: Georgia Regents Public Library Advisory Council (RPLAC) –
[Recommendations for Library Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates](#)

IMLS/CDC: Webinar with CDC scientists on “[Mitigating COVID-19 when Managing Paper-Based Circulating and other Types of Collections.](#)”

Johns Hopkins University & Medicine: Coronavirus Resource Center’s [COVID-19 Dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering \(CSSE\)](#)

National Air Filtration Association (NAFA): [COVID-19 \(Corona virus\) and Air Filtration FAQs](#)

OCLC study/Webjunction Project : [Reopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums \(REALM\) COVID-19 Research Project](#)

Additionally, in the United States, Black Lives Matter protests against racism and police brutality across our nation, in response to the senseless murder of George Floyd and those before and after him, continue to raise awareness of systemic racism in our cities, counties, and states. Courts and public libraries across the country have come out with [statements](#) in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and staunch commitments to do better, to be better, not only for ourselves in the present, but to create a positive future for our colleagues of tomorrow and beyond.

In light of this, the GLL-Board committed to take actions that we hope will make a positive impact in our libraries and with our fellow colleagues. The Board invited GLL members to participate in the following actions:

Roundtables with AALL:

- 1) A cross-caucus round table will be held on July 8, 2020 hosted by the AALL Affinity Caucuses, D&I Committee, and SR-SIS to address institutional racism, as well as brainstorm how we can dismantle toxic workplaces and make positive systemic changes there. The Board encouraged attendance by GLL members.
- 2) We know that systemic racism is not a one-time conversation, so GLL-SIS and RIPS-SIS will work with the SIS-Council to continue this conversation in a joint SIS effort, hopefully in late summer/early Fall 2020.

Regarding actions specific to GLL, the Board invited members to participate in the following:

- 1) **To create a safe space for diverse voices to speak about personal experiences and viewpoints related to systemic racism and provide a place to be heard.** In light of this, our Newsletter Committee will devote the Fall 2020 issue to this-and will be sending an invitation to share your voices. Our hope is that by sharing experiences, we can show solidarity, amplify voices that may have been hesitant to share previously, and raise the level of awareness of how systemic racism impacts our fellow colleagues.

(Note: This is not to place burden on folks who may be tired of swimming upstream in the system. This is about honoring *lived* experiences and encouraging diverse voices who may be interested in sharing to be heard. Empathy is our way forward-and if we can

empathize, we can be better allies.)

2) **GLL hosted Webinars:** In the same vein as publishing stories, we could take advantage of our video-conferencing tools by hosting GLL webinars which could amplify diverse voices in our membership, topics TBD. This could include sharing experiences in a roundtable format and/or include formal training seminars such as implicit bias in the workforce-ideas are welcome.

3) **George A. Strait Minority Scholarship Fund:** If members are interested in making financial impact on our profession, they are invited to donate to the George A. Strait Minority Scholarship Fund <https://www.aallnet.org/education-training/scholarships/> which would support educational endeavors of a minority student to engage in law librarianship.

4) **Sharing Anti-Racist Resources and Impacting Core Collection**

Development: As librarians-we are great at pulling together resources-lets share our anti-racist reading lists and resource guides. Our libraries are full of information-primary law and secondary law resources, in a variety of formats. Members are invited to address inequities in the justice system by including materials in our core library collections such as [_Just Mercy_](#) as well as resources such as Drake University's listing: <https://libguides.law.drake.edu/c.php?g=1046847&p=7596204>

Last but not least, we celebrate our GLL-SIS members who were honored with AALL 2020 Annual Awards as follows:

AALL Hall of Fame Award: Steven P. Anderson, Director, Thurgood Marshall State Law Library of Maryland, Annapolis, MD, and

Gail Warren, State Law Librarian, Virginia State Law Library, Richmond, VA

Robert L. Oakley Advocacy Award: Scott G. Burgh, Director (Retired), City of Chicago Law Department, Chicago, IL

Emerging Leader Award: Sara V. Pic, Head of Public Services, Law Library of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA

Excellence in Community Engagement Award: Pierce County Law Library, Tacoma Washington, Legal Research Center at Lakewood

GLL-SIS
GOVERNMENT LAW LIBRARIES
SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION

Officers for 2020-2021 will be James Durham, Chair; Miriam Childs, Vice-Chair; Karen Westwood, Secretary-Treasurer; Joe Lawson, Liz Reppe, and Amy Small, Mebers-at-Large; Sara v. Pic, Newsletter Editor (ex-officio); and Jenny Silbiger, Past Chair.

Submitted by:

Jenny Silbiger
GLL-SIS Chair
2019-2020