



**GOVERNMENT LAW LIBRARIES  
SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION**



## **GLL-SIS ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

Officers for 2023-2024 were Karen Westwood, Chair; Holly Riccio, Past Chair, Amy Small, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect; Sara Pixon, Secretary/Treasurer; Patricia Petroccione, Member at Large; Brendan Starkey, Member at Large; Jocelyn Stilwell-Tong, Member at Large and Tara Cunningham, *GLL News* Editor (ex officio).

GLL-SIS award recipients this year were Stefanie Pearlman and Melissa Serfass who won the Dr. Joel Fishman Professional Publication Award for their publication, *Animal Welfare Laws: A Legal Research Guide* (William S. Hein, 2023).

GLL-SIS members were named as recipients of AALL awards as well. The Law Library of Louisiana and the Louisiana State Bar Association won the 2024 Excellence in Community Engagement Award for their work with the Legal Education and Assistance Program (LEAP) and Marcelo Rodriguez, Foreign, Comparative and International Law Librarian at the University of Arizona College of Law Library, won the Emerging Leader Award.

Longevity recognition (20 years in AALL and 10 years in GLL) was given to Cathryn Bowie, Kate Fitz, Teresa Miguel-Stearns, Mary Searles, Su Sirkis, Mary Sparling, and Stephanie Wilson.

GLL-SIS grants were awarded to members to attend meetings and conferences. In 2024, Kristin K. Neri received a grant for the AALL Leadership Academy and Taylor Berkoski, Eric J.H. Chapman, and Alicia Friedman received AALL Annual Meeting grants. The committee plans to award up to two grants for attendance at the Self-Represented Litigant Network Conference in September 2024. The grants are funded by member donations, largely gathered during an annual and highly successful fundraising campaign, spearheaded by the GLL-SIS Grants Committee. This fundraising moved during Covid to an online straight donation campaign to great success. While the silent auction that had been held prior to Covid was a highlight and an enjoyable event, it consumed a lot of time and energy to pull off. The current approach of direct solicitation seems to be working and will continue as long as it is successful. Many thanks to Gail Warren who spearheaded this effort for years but will step down in retirement, and to James Durham who has offered to continue this project.

The Awards Committee secured the keynote speaker for the GLL-SIS Awards and Recognition Event in Chicago: David S. Mao, newly appointed librarian of the United State Supreme Court.

The Best Access to Justice Practices Committee spent considerable time and energy with the *Self-Represented Litigation Network Law Librarians Working Group* to get the updated SRLN Working Group National Self-Help in Libraries Survey results organized into a “Story Map” that is available online for all to use. GLL-SIS committed \$5,000 from GLL reserves to help fund the work needed to create the interactive presentation.

The Membership and Mentoring Committee maintained regular outreach to members in a variety of ways, including gathering newer GLL librarians via an October Zoom meeting with James Durham, Director of the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library in Maryland and former GLL-SIS Chair. About 25 newer law librarians



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participated. This committee also tracks and presents the longevity recognition that is so meaningful to our members each year.

The Newsletter Committee published three regular issues of *GLL News* (Fall, Winter/Spring, and Summer), and the membership heard from grantees about their experiences at the meetings they were able to attend as a result of receiving a grant, news from AALL and news and announcements from GLL-SIS committees and the GLL Executive Board.

The Bylaws Committee proposed some adjustments to the Bylaws which were voted on and passed at the virtual business meeting held on July 9. These changes primarily clarified the use of electronic voting generally (not limiting it to one online technology) for both the SIS business meeting and meetings of the GLL-SIS Executive Committee. These changes were approved by the membership.

The Chair established a task force, the GLL Task Force on Law Library Funding which convened several times over the course of the year to update a spreadsheet of how law libraries in different states are funded and listing the authority for that funding. This spreadsheet had been developed and worked on by the Law Librarians Working Group of the Self-Represented Litigation Network and SCCLL-SIS (the former name of GLL-SIS) but hadn't been updated for more than a decade. The Task Force had a poster accepted for the AALL Annual Meeting in Chicago, and Tom Marsh, Task Force Co-Chair will lead a discussion den at the meeting as well. The Task Force will continue its work in the coming year and hopes to produce an article or other end-product in 2025.

In May, Amy Small (Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect) and Karen Westwood (Chair) received a memo from AALL President June Liebert indicating that AALL planned to shred all GLL-SIS archives material in its possession and that the SIS would not have an opportunity to review the material, nor would the boxes be shipped or otherwise made available to the SIS. Other SIS's who had material in the archives also received this memo. A subsequent online meeting with affected SIS's was held but AALL leadership at that meeting was not receptive to ideas for alternative ways forward. Chair Karen Westwood asked a series of questions of AALL leadership and received some answers (but not to all questions and not complete answers). She then reached out to GLL leadership from the past to determine what was actually in the archives, but with very limited success. This issue was raised at the GLL Business Meeting on July 9 and engendered lively discussion and a request for our GLL members who are on the AALL Executive Board to convey our ongoing concerns about the decision and to again request permission to review the contents of the boxes and they agreed to convey this information. We received no assurances at the meeting (or a subsequent AALL Members Open Forum) that we will be granted access to the boxes. The issue remains unresolved the week before the Annual Meeting. Incoming Chair Amy Small will continue to track this moving forward and may ask GLL leadership and members for input and assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Westwood, 2023-2024 GLL-SIS Chair