



LEGAL INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL INTEREST SECTION

LEGAL INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY SIS ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- OFFICERS

The 2024-2025 Executive Board included Chair: Michael Robak; Vice-Chair/Chair Elect: Tanya Thomas; Secretary/Treasurer: Rebecca Fordon; Members-at-Large: Matthew Braun and Julie Tedjeske Crane; and Immediate-Past Chair: Brian Huffman

- **In Memoriam**

LIT-SIS Executive Board member, Matthew Braun, passed away on May 28, 2025. A short tribute to Matthew, a truly gifted Law Librarian and a gentle and beautiful soul, [was posted to the LIT-SIS Blog](#). It included this memorial from Matthew's Dean at St. Louis University School of Law:

"It is with profound sadness that I share the news of the passing of our colleague, Professor Matthew Braun, who served as Director of our Law Library. Matt's wife, Bernadette Braun, informed me that Matt passed away yesterday morning following a courageous battle with liver cancer. Matt shared his battle with all of us earlier in the semester and I share this news with Bernadette's permission.

Matt was an exceptional librarian and director and a devoted member of our academic community. His commitment to excellence in legal scholarship and research support touched students, faculty, and staff throughout his tenure. Matt possessed a rare combination of intellectual rigor and genuine warmth that made him not only an invaluable professional resource but also a trusted colleague.

Matt consistently demonstrated wisdom and foresight in guiding our library's strategic direction. His expertise in acquisitions, collection development, and institutional stewardship ensured that our library remained a cornerstone of academic excellence. Even during the most challenging conversations, Matt's optimism and collaborative spirit left me—and all who worked with him—feeling confident that our library's future was secure under his guidance. Matt was a wonderful thought partner for me, and I will miss him greatly.

Matt's dedication to others, even in the face of his own adversity, was unwavering. Throughout his illness, he continued to express gratitude for this community's support and



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maintained a hopeful outlook. His grace under pressure and commitment to his colleagues exemplified the very best of our institutional mission and values.

The 2025-2026 Executive Board will be Chair: Tanya Thomas; Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect: Raphael Jackson-Ortiz; Secretary/Treasurer: Janet McKinney; Members-at-Large: Julie Tedjeske Crane and Shira Megerman; and Immediate-Past Chair: Michael Robak

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE

Chair: Ryan Overdorf

Ryan reported there were no Committee projects undertaken this year because of the discussion surrounding the history of the Adaptive Technology resources provided on a web-based tool that is part of the Committee's charge. The Adaptive Technology pages ceased to exist on the SIS website when AALL took control away from SIS webmasters. As a result, Ryan created a new website which he has been maintaining. Discussion was held regarding how to proceed, and this will be taken up by the Executive Board and the Committee next year because it is now included in the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan under Goal 4.

ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair: Syd Stephenson

The Committee fielded requests for sponsoring or co-sponsoring two programs for the 2025 AALL Annual Meeting & Conference. Both programs were accepted.

BLOG COMMITTEE

Chair: Victoria Swindle

This year marked my first term as Chair, following in the footsteps of the wonderful Mari Cheney. The Blog Committee was supported by a strong team of contributors: Mari Cheney, Deborah Ginsberg, Shay Baum, and Shelby Nivitanont. Shelby has chosen to step away for the 2024–2025 term, creating an open position on the committee. We were also fortunate to feature guest contributions from Melanie Knapp (mentor) and Alisa Lazear (mentee).



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Following the AALL Annual Meeting in Portland, I connected with two potential new contributors who expressed interest in joining. I plan to follow up with them and assist in getting them added to the committee.

Blog Activity (August 2024 – July 2025)

We maintained a biweekly posting schedule throughout the year. The most viewed post was *Rain or Shine, You'll Be Fine: AALL Portland Tips for First-Timers* by Mari Cheney, which garnered 347 views. We also collaborated with Committee Chair Michael Robak to publish five posts aligned with the LIT-SIS Strategic Plan.

Looking Ahead (August 2025 – July 2026)

My goals for the coming year include:

1. Continuing the biweekly posting schedule.
2. Increasing blog visibility and readership, particularly among LIT-SIS members, by promoting it through My Communities, AALL newsletters, and targeted email outreach.
3. Onboarding new contributors who expressed interest during the Annual Meeting.

Acknowledgements

A heartfelt thank you to all contributors for sharing their voices and ideas, and to the LIT-SIS Board—especially Michael—for your support and guidance during my first year as Chair. I'm proud to help foster a welcoming platform for members to explore and share their passions.

GRANTS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

Chair: Shannon Kemen

This year the Grants and Awards Committee publicized four awards to LIT-SIS members, reviewed the award applications, and advised the Board on recipients of the awards.

The following awards were granted to:

- ***ABA Techshow Travel Grant (\$1000)***: Nick Hafen, Head of Legal Technology Education, BYU Law School
- ***AALL LIT-SIS Grant for Students and Newer Librarians (\$1000)***: Amber Cain, Seton Hall University School of Law
- ***AALL LIT-SIS Grant for Experienced Librarians (\$1000)***: Marin Dell, Barry University School of Law



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- ***Kenneth J. Hirsh Distinguished Service Award (\$233 engraved award):*** Brian R. Huffman, William S. Richardson School of Law
- ***LIT-SIS Leadership Academy Grant:*** The Leadership Academy was not held this year. The next Leadership Academy will be held in 2026, and grants will be awarded at that time.

I would like to thank the Board, past Chair Marin Dell and Treasurer Rebecca Fordon for all of their help this year. I would also especially like to thank all of the members of the Grants & Awards Committee (Susan Boland, Kristie Chamorro and Debbie Ginsberg) for all of their hard work in making this awards season a success. Thank you all so much!

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair: Brian Huffman

The Nominations Committee successfully carried out its duties for the 2025 election cycle. The committee collaborated to identify a strong and diverse slate of candidates for the LIT-SIS Executive Board. We are pleased to report that the election was held as scheduled, and the following individuals were elected:

- **Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect:** Raphael Jackson-Ortiz
- **Secretary/Treasurer:** Janet McKinney
- **Member-at-Large:** Shira Megerman

The committee thanks all candidates for their willingness to serve and contribute to the continued growth and success of LIT-SIS. We also extend our gratitude to the LIT-SIS membership for participating in the election process.

Committee Members: Brian Huffman, Christopher Collins, Shay Elbaum, and Gordon Russell.

RECRUITMENT & INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Eliza Boles

The membership committee report: we were well represented at AALL, both at the CONELL marketplace and by the poster during exhibit hall breaks. I wanted to thank Brian, Laura Ray and Jennifer Gonzalez for their help manning the stations. Finally, if



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anyone missed out on one of the awesome LIT-SIS stickers, I would be happy to send them one.



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair: Michael Robak

Development of the 2025 -2027 Strategic Plan began with an October 26, 2024 posting to the LIT-SIS My Communities discussion with a Call for members to join the LIT-SIS Strategic Planning Committee. The members who responded to the call were Patricia Barbone, Will Monroe, Susan Azyndar, Teresa Myers, and Victor Chavez. The Committee work commenced in November, 2024.

The final stages of the Committee work were outlined in a series of posts to the LIT-SIS Blog as follows:

[LIT-SIS Blog Post 1:](#)

Igniting Innovation: How AI and Member Wisdom Can Shape the LIT-SIS 2025–2027 Strategic Vision

*The LIT-SIS Strategic Planning Committee is kicking off the journey to our **2025–2027 Strategic Plan** with a fresh and exciting approach: a powerful blend of **AI innovation and community collaboration**. This isn't just another plan. This is a vision—crafted with tools of the future and grounded in the voices of our members.....*

[LIT-SIS Blog Post 2:](#)

LIT-SIS 2025-2027 Strategic Plan – “What’s Past is Prologue”

The first prompt to our AI Co-Pilots about the combined 2001 – 2024 CS/LIT – SIS Strategic plans asked to analyze for common themes across the plans. We started with GPT-4o and then to Boodlebox and Claude Sonnet 3.7 and Llama 4 Maverick (and I did not ask for it to be in the voice of Tom Cruise).....

[LIT-SIS Blog Post 3:](#)



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LIT-SIS Strategic Plan 2025–2027 Mission Statement: Innovating with Purpose. Leading with Expertise

As part of the LIT-SIS strategic planning process for 2025–2027, the following draft Mission Statements have been developed to reflect the values, aspirations, and evolving role of law librarians in all sectors—academic, government, and private practice. They are grounded in AALL’s strategic priorities and inspired by the bold spirit of innovation that defines our membership.

Our ever-intriguing AI co-pilots have some thoughts on a new Mission Statement. Some of the suggestions that we think make a compelling start.....

[LIT-SIS Blog Post 4:](#)

LIT-SIS Strategic Plan 2025–2027 : Innovate. Educate. Elevate. The 2025-207 Goals

[LIT-SIS Blog Post 5:](#)

Reframing the Path Forward: How Law Librarians Can Lead in Legal Innovation and Technology

Setting the Mission: A Call to Reimagine Professional Identity

As we prepare for the LIT-SIS Roundtable on July 20, 2025, it’s essential to focus our attention on a mission that doesn’t merely reflect who we are, but who we must become. Our AI co-pilots helped highlight two core ideas that should serve as anchor points—or “bookends”—to frame our strategic evolution:

1. *Developing Hybrid Expertise*

Law librarians are uniquely positioned to become legal information architects—professionals who integrate legal research expertise with technological fluency. This includes mastery of AI prompt engineering, data curation, and algorithmic literacy, all while retaining the human-centered skills that define our profession: ethical reasoning, contextual analysis, and judgment. This transformation isn’t optional; it is the natural next step for those who wish to remain leaders in the legal information ecosystem.

2. *Redefining Our Value Proposition in the Age of AI*

We must counter the false narrative that AI diminishes the need for human expertise. On the contrary, our role as interpreters, validators, and ethical stewards becomes more critical in an AI-saturated legal environment. Law librarians must embrace and communicate the evolving value we bring—



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helping others navigate complexity, verify accuracy, and uphold justice in an age where information can be generated faster than it can be understood.

These ideas should shape not only our mission statement but also the daily work and strategic direction of our SIS.....

A final discussion of the proposed strategic plan occurred at the LIT-SIS Roundtable on July 20, 2025 at AALL's 2025 Annual Meeting & Conference. Additional thoughts and comments were provided and incorporated into the plan. The Executive Board approved the Committee's plan on July 29, 2025. And, as called for by the SIS charge, the plan was presented for discussion and adoption at the July 31, 2025 LIT-SIS Annual Virtual Business Meeting where it was adopted.

AALL'S 2025 ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

July 19-22, 2025

LIT-SIS Highlights

- CONNELL Marketplace
- Exhibit Hall – Poster exhibition
- LIT-SIS Roundtable – discussing the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan
- Social Event – A gathering of LIT-SIS members was held at the “Love Island” at [WonderLove PDX](#) on Sunday July 20 from 6:30 – 9:00 pm. The venue had Live music & entertainment during Wonderlove's **Dollapalooza** anniversary bash. Members were provided **drink wristbands** and **food tokens** good at any of their **eight on-site food trucks**. **The evening was a** lively, inclusive atmosphere celebrating **community and Pride**. **An excellent time was had by all who attended.**

ANNUAL VIRTUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The 2024-2025 SIS year concluded with the Annual Virtual Business Meeting held July 31, 2025.

There were 31 members in attendance.

The meeting was called to order.



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Rebecca Fordon provided the Treasurer's Report for Fiscal 10/01/24 to 3/31/2025:

LIT-SIS began the fiscal year on 10/01/23 with a balance of \$6,037.10. Our annual membership dues collected as of 3/31/24 were \$1,270.00. As of 3/31/24, we have recorded no expenses.

LIT-SIS sponsored a session at AALL, so our A/V Costs of \$850 will be debited in the coming months.

Additionally, LIT-SIS awarded \$3,000 in grants in 2025 that are not yet reflected in our expenses (the 2025 Student/Newer Librarian Grant, 2025 Experienced Librarian Grant, and the 2025 ABA Tech Show Grant).

Finally, LIT-SIS has also incurred a few other costs, not yet reflected in our balance ending 3/31/24, including approximately \$1,000 for our AALL social event and \$233 for a plaque for our Hirsch Award honoree.

Additionally, one expense appeared in FY23-24 that was unexpected, and thus did not appear in the July 2024 Treasurer's Report. LIT-SIS was assessed a fee of \$3,271.54 for A/V equipment, which included both the expected \$850 fee for the LIT-SIS sponsored session, as well as a \$2,421.54 charge for A/V at the LIT-SIS Roundtable, which took place at the 2024 AALL Annual Meeting & Conference. No one at LIT-SIS requested roundtable charges; rather the charge appeared to have arisen from an error by the hotel A/V vendor. Because AALL already paid the vendor, they informed us they would not reverse the charge. To prevent recurrence, the LIT-SIS Executive Board will require pre-event written estimates and board approval for all A/V charges.

Committee Chairs reported out their activities for the year (see above in the Report). Award winners were recognized. The 2025-2027 Strategic Plan was discussed and approved. Outgoing Board Members Brian Huffman and Rebecca Fordon were recognized and thanked for their service to AALL LIT-SIS. Incoming Board members Raphael Jackson-Ortiz, Janet McKinney, and Shira Megerman were recognized and welcomed.

The virtual beanie was passed from Michael Robak to Tanya Thomas. Tanya announced her plan for Committee Recruitment. The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Robak, LIT-SIS Chair, 2024-2025