JUNE 27, 2024

ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

THE COUNTDOWN IS ON / ONLY 23 MORE DAYS UNTIL AALL 2024

The 2024 AALL Annual Meeting & Conference provides many opportunities to connect, learn, and engage with the legal community. This year's conference promises to be an immersive experience, filled with thought-provoking programs, preconference workshops, and invaluable networking opportunities. Tomorrow, June 28 is the last day to add a preconference workshop to your registration. Plus, explore the latest cutting-edge legal research tools in the exhibit hall where 60+ exhibitors will showcase a myriad of products and services to improve legal research, knowledge management, document delivery, collection management, and more for your organizations. There's still time to register. If you cannot attend the full conference, consider a single-day registration. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

REGISTER NOW

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

REGISTER FOR AALL'S VIRTUAL MEMBERS OPEN FORUM

As part of AALL’s ongoing commitment to fostering open communication and engagement, the Executive Board invites you to join them for a Virtual Members Open Forum on Monday, July 15 from 1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. (CDT). This forum will provide you with the opportunity to connect directly with the Executive Board to learn more about AALL’s activities and ask questions related to the Association. In addition to the live chat feature during the Zoom meeting, you may also submit questions in advance. The Members Open Forum will not be recorded.

REGISTER NOW

SUGGEST A FUTURE COFFEE CHAT TOPIC

Help enrich AALL’s community of experts by sharing trends, best practices, and innovations across a wide spectrum of topics that will inspire your colleagues throughout the profession. Do you have ideas or topics for future coffee chats? If so, please share your ideas with Ashley Laverty by Friday, July 19, 2024.

PARTICIPATE IN AALL'S MENTOR PROGRAM

AALL's Mentor Program provides newer members with advice oncharting their career path, experienced members with an avenue to lend their knowledge and experience to promising new members, and mid-career members with a network when contemplating a move to another library type. Please sign up to participate in the AALL Mentor Program today!

LEADER IN YOU

Each month the Leadership Development Committee highlights a librarian leader and asks them a few questions about their leadership journey.

Matthew Braun
What does leadership mean to you?
I define leadership as the ability and the desire to take responsibility for and to provide guidance for an organization, a concept, or an initiative, within a spirit of partnership and service. The true leader is one who prioritizes and directly facilitates communication, empowerment, ownership, and resultant leadership from within a team, in an egalitarian fashion, with the leader clearly and consistently serving this philosophy and, by extension, serving the team.

This is the embodiment of the concept of servant leadership, as first defined by Robert Greenleaf, a long-time AT&T executive, in his 1970 essay titled “The Servant as Leader.”

Is there a particular AALL product/program/article that was especially helpful for you as you developed as a leader? My first knowledge of servant leadership came from an article titled “Servant Leadership: A New Model for Law Library Leaders,” authored by Filippa Marullo Anzalone, associate dean for library and technology services at Boston College Law School, published in *Law Library Journal* 99, 793 (2007).

This article was published two years into my career as a law librarian and was the impetus for me to define and work toward the leader that I am now. In detailing the background and development of the 10 characteristics of servant leadership, Anzalone emphasized the importance of active listening, authenticity, and holistic concern for both groups and individuals. Each day, I think about these principles and work toward a deeper understanding, application, and realization of them.

Which leadership skills were the most difficult to develop? According to Anzalone’s article, the 10 characteristics of servant leadership are listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. I have found healing and building community to be the two most difficult of these characteristics or skills to develop. Healing is challenging since it requires leadership that recognizes and accepts the characteristics and experiences that each team member brings and attempts, in the words of Robert Greenleaf, to help each team member’s “search for wholeness.” In other words, healing demands that a leader look beyond what a team member may say or do, especially if it reflects resistance or indifference, and find that which will allow the team member to be their best self in the context of the work or initiative.

Similarly, building community can be thwarted by resistance or indifference from team members. According to Anzalone, “[t]he community that the servant leader builds is a team that works synergistically since the true servant leader is interested in developing leaders and does not hoard decision making.”

Libraries often have team members who are not interested in or receptive to a leader’s overtures to them, and I have had my fair share of roadblocks in developing, testing, and sharpening leadership skills that require a degree of substantive buy-in from team members, as opposed to mere surface-level cooperation.

What are the most important attributes of successful leaders today?
The three attributes of successful leaders today are focus, consistency, and relentlessness. A leader must be focused on what is of highest priority to the organization, in terms of both mission and time. It is easy to be sidetracked by interests and initiatives that are worthwhile on some level but are not core to an organization’s purpose. This is not meant to be an excuse for an organization not to be innovative or to take proper and measured risks, but rather is a reminder for an organization to be mindful and respectful of the value it should bring to its primary stakeholders.

A leader must be consistent in applying expectations and policies to team members. One of the easiest ways for discontent and low morale to seep into an organization is for a leader to play favorites or to be perceived as playing favorites. It is vitally important that a leader takes an egalitarian approach to decision-making and to interactions with team members.

A leader must be relentless in working hard and accomplishing tasks and goals. If we follow the truism that “to whom much is given, much is required,” leaders must be present and accounted for, day after day, regardless of how inconvenient that may be. Another common refrain in leadership literature is that a leader should never ask others to do something that the leader would not do herself or himself, thus emphasizing the universal importance of leading by example and leading with humility.

What is something you wish someone had told you about leadership early on in your career?
I wish someone had told me how much true leadership requires a day-to-day commitment and recommitment. It simply is not enough to develop and to apply leadership skills in discrete situations and at discrete times. Leadership is a choice, a vocation, and requires an affirmative decision, daily, to employ effectively and with lasting influence.

What advice would you give someone going into a leadership position for the first time?
I would tell a new leader that it is vital to research, apply, and refine leadership techniques through the remainder of one’s career going forward. It is important to think a lot about leadership, to read and contemplate about how to develop as a leader and how to grow as a better leader, and to make connections with and seek mentorship from effective and ethical leaders. It is also key to acknowledge and appreciate that tough and uncomfortable times are
Do you know a great leader? Recommend a leader for us to spotlight in the Leader in You column. Send your recommendation with a brief description of why you think they are a great leader to Jenny Silbiger, chair of the Leadership Development Committee.

ON-DEMAND LEARNING

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER / REGISTER FOR AALL’S SELF-PACED COURSES

To advance your career, mastering the basics of legal research, strategic thinking, and budgeting is essential. Elevate your skills and career by enrolling in AALL’s self-paced courses. For experienced professionals, these courses also offer an excellent refresher on these crucial topics.

- **Introduction to Law Library Budgets** discusses the concepts of managing a law library budget.
- **Strategic Thinking for Law Librarians** outlines the essentials of strategic thinking and project implementation success.
- **Foundations of Legal Research** provides you with the right tools to successfully approach legal research.

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

UPCOMING WEBINAR

AALL has exciting webinars planned for the next few months, including the Thomson Reuters Partner Webinar: What’s Next After GenAI?, Tuesday, October 8, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (CDT). Visit AALL eLearning to stay up to date on future topics and to register.

Is there a topic you want covered in an AALL webinar? Please submit the webinar proposal form or email elearning@aall.org.

WEBINARS NOW AVAILABLE ON-DEMAND

- AALL GenAI Webinar Series Part 4: Context, Challenges, and Solutions–Implications of AI in Legal Research, Practice, and Instruction
- AALL GenAI Webinar Series Part 2: From and/or to AI: Techniques for Prompting Generative AI Tools

PICK OF THE MONTH

*Selected by AALL’s Continuing Professional Education Committee*

**The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program: Teaching Legal Bibliography to Change Lives**
This 2019 AALL Annual Meeting program promotes research advocacy and information literacy for prison patrons. However, it is as timely as ever in light of the recurring instances of prisoners conducting their own research and crafting their own arguments from that research to overturn their wrongful convictions.

Find many more continuing education programs and webinars on AALL eLearning.

COMMUNITY

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH AALL

AALL wants to know what's happening within your specialized groups. If your caucus, chapter, or SIS has any news items, upcoming events, or would like to highlight members' accomplishments, please contact Heather Haemker, AALL director of marketing & communications.

QUICK LINKS

AALL Events Calendar | AALL eLearning | AALL Education on AALLNET | AALL Body of Knowledge | AALL DEI Resources
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