

The NJ State Library and Talking Book and Braille Center will be closed on Friday, April 18, 2025, for Good Friday.

NJ State Library Sessions at NJLA Conference 2025

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Don't miss connecting with NJ State Library (NJSL) staff members at the conference!

We are counting down the weeks until the [New Jersey Library Association Annual Conference](#) in May, and hope you'll join us at NJSL staff presentations and stop by our booth in the exhibitor's hall. We'll have a schedule of individuals staffing the booth available, so you can time your visit if you'd like to check in with someone in particular.

Breaking Barriers

SIMPLE KINDNESS

The State Librarian's program will be held on Thursday, May 29th, at 4:10 pm this year. Joining us virtually from Australia, the speaker is Daniel Aldrich. Daniel is at Northeastern University and as a trained political scientist, focuses his research and writing on resilience. And don't forget to mark your calendar for the State Librarian's Breakfast on Friday morning at 8 am. As we've done in recent years, you'll hear some updates from the State Library and, importantly, have a chance to connect with colleagues in a low-key environment.

The presentations for this year all look interesting and staff are excited to share their work with you! Check the schedule below to see which sessions including NJSL staff you'd like to attend.

NJ State Library Sessions at NJLA Conference 2025

Wednesday, May 28th, 2025

Where's the Line? Digital Assistance & Patron Privacy – Wildwood 20 & 21

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Helping patrons with technology is a big part of library work—but balancing support with privacy and resources can be tough. This hands-on pre-conference session will cover NJ privacy laws, best practices, and tools for improving digital assistance. Through role-playing

and real-world scenarios, you'll create workflows and training plans to bring back to your library, gaining practical strategies to better assist patrons, remove barriers, and connect them with resources in a compassionate, privacy-focused way.

Speakers: Cynthia Lambert, Law Librarian, New Jersey State Library; Andrea Levandowski, Adult Services Specialist, New Jersey State Library; Heather Lubchansky, Systems Administrator/Head of IT, Sussex County Library System; Rosy Wagner, System Adult Services Coordinator, Burlington County Library System

Equity and Mentorship Task Force – Wildwood 22 & 23

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

NJLA Equity Scholarship recipients are invited to join the first-ever Equity Scholars Summit, where Scholars will have the opportunity to meet key leaders from NJ's statewide library organizations and attend a panel featuring library workers of underrepresented backgrounds from across library types who will share their experiences, challenges, and career path. Scholars will also have time for networking, discussion groups, and community building!

Panelists: Brett Bonfield, NJLA; Ralph Bingham, LibraryLinkNJ; Jennifer Nelson, NJ State Library; Karen Grant, NJASL; Pat Massey, NJ Library Trustees Association; Alison Cole, VALE; Lorraine Ruiz, Kenilworth Public Library; Natalie Lau, Seton Hall University *Tentative*; Reggie Blanding, Newark Public Library James P. Brown African American Room *Tentative*

Thursday, May 29th, 2025

The Freedom to Read Act: What's Next? – Wildwood 8 & 9

9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

In late 2024 Governor Murphy signed into law the Freedom to Read Act, which prohibits the banning of books in school and public libraries. This sweeping legislation is one of only a few such laws in the United States. So what happens next? Join us for an overview of the law, the latest updates on its implementation, and a discussion of what this law means for public library workers in New Jersey. Attendees may submit questions prior to the program via Google form.

Speakers: Senator Andrew Zwicker, primary sponsor of the law and intellectual freedom advocate; Jennifer Nelson, NJ State Librarian and moderator Eileen M. Palmer

Unmasking Local History: A Case Study in Collaboration – Wildwood 20 & 21

9:00 – 9:50 a.m.

In the spirit of the conference’s “Breaking Barriers” theme, Andrew Dauphinee and Regina Fitzpatrick will present on the NJ State Library’s “Get to Know Your Local Historical Society” collaborative project with historical societies throughout the state. Through a combination of informational videos and blog posts, we strive to unmask the critical role that historical societies play as keepers of our local history and important historical and genealogical records, found nowhere else in the state.

Speakers: Andrew Dauphinee, Reference Librarian, New Jersey State Library; Regina Fitzpatrick, Genealogy Librarian, New Jersey State Library

Balancing the eBooks: Fair Licensing Terms for Libraries – Wildwood 10 & 11

11:00 – 11:50 a.m.

New Jersey libraries invest millions each year in eBooks/audiobooks. Yet restrictive licensing models and rising costs impinge on the library mission and jeopardize equitable access to

essential digital content. What would fair pricing and licensing terms look like to better serve library users? Who can collaborate to create sustainable solutions that prioritize the needs of patrons? Librarians? Legislators? Authors? Publishers? Explore the impact of current trends, legislative efforts, and strategies to unite stakeholders, aimed at securing a future where libraries can provide robust digital collections for everyone.

Speakers: Senator Andrew Zwicker, NJ Legislative District 16, Invited Guest; Kyle Courtney, eBook Study Group, Panelist; Juliya Ziskina, eBook Study Group, Panelist; Michael Maziekien (or a representative from the) New Jersey State Library, Moderator

Trials and Tribulations – Wildwood 20 & 21

2:00 – 2:50 p.m.

Court documents are more than the record of a trial, they are primary sources for genealogical research and for understanding the State's relationship with its citizens. By studying historic collections, we see how legal interpretation and social attitudes change over time regarding the rights of marginalized people and powerful institutions. Join us as we discuss the State Library's plan to digitize 2 million pages of appellate court content and make them freely accessible to all.

Speakers: Caitlyn Cook, Digital Librarian, New Jersey State Library; Leigh Clark, Reference Librarian, New Jersey State Library

Why and How to be a Labor Literacy Library – Wildwood 22 & 23

2:00 – 2:50 p.m.

The Labor & Literacy Library Program builds off the success of the NJSL Partner+ Literacy project to provide support to NJ Libraries as they work to improve the lives of their clients seeking digital literacy skills, ABE and ESL gains, and job search assistance. The goal being to

establish first-line digital and adult literacy as a core library service both internally and in the public's perception.

Speakers: Andrea Levandowski, Adult Services Specialist, NJ State Library; Scott Kuchinsky/PPL; Sarah Antonelli/PPL; Colleen Connell; PPL

Poster – Breaking Language Barriers with Accessible Books in International Languages

3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Poster Session

An exploration of the accessible books in international languages offered by the New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center, from Arabic to Vietnamese! Discover the wide range of resources available in Spanish and other international languages. Learn how to connect people of all ages with print disabilities to a wide range of audiobooks (and even braille!) from NJSL TBBC. Find out about NJSL TBBC's community engagement initiatives with the Hispanic and Latino population, including outreach and a summer reading program for adults.

State Librarian's Program: Why Social Capital and Social Infrastructure are Critical in Shocks – Wildwood 3

4:10 – 5:00 p.m.

Much of our policy process focuses on the role of physical infrastructure, that is, structures that hope to mitigate the impact of shocks and disasters such as floods and fires. But a growing body of evidence suggests that social infrastructure – the places and spaces that build and maintain connections, such as libraries, parks, and pubs – hold greater potential to blunt the impact of such events. Using qualitative and quantitative evidence from cases around the world, Aldrich pushes us to appreciate how the modest and often underappreciated field of social infrastructure should be front and center as we confront wicked problems.

An award winning author, Aldrich has published five books including *Building Resilience* and *Black Wave*, more than 110 peer-reviewed articles, and written op-eds for the New York Times, CNN, HuffPost, and many other media outlets. He has spent more than 5 years in India, Japan, and Africa carrying out fieldwork and his work has been funded by the Fulbright Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the Abe Foundation, the Rasmussen Foundation, and the Japan Foundation, among other institutions. In 2021 he was Klein Lecturer at Northeastern University and in 2024 won the college teaching award.

Speaker – Daniel Aldrich

Media Literacy and Civic Engagement – Wildwood 10 & 11

4:10 – 5:00 p.m.

Analyzing the news is a difficult task – major changes to New Jersey’s media ecosystem, the proliferation of misinformation, and the ever-present digital divide present challenges for all who want to stay informed. Libraries, alongside agencies dedicated to enhancing media literacy and access, can work together to amplify community-based journalism projects, help people develop critical evaluation skills, and boost civic engagement. Nonprofit, journalism and library professionals will discuss current, successful initiatives in communities across NJ.

Speakers: Ayinde Merrill, New Jersey Civic Information Consortium, Panelist; Amanda Richardson, Corporation for New Jersey Local Media, Panelist; Laura Bishop, Princeton Public Library, Panelist; Michael Maziekien, New Jersey State Library, Moderator

Friday, May 30th, 2025

State Librarian’s Breakfast

8:00 – 8:50 a.m.

Be Prepared: Getting Your Library Ready for Upcoming Info Lit Standards – Wildwood 12 & 13

11:30 a.m. -12:20 p.m.

Join panelists from the Local Working Group of the IMLS-funded “Teaching Information Literacy” project as we explore how you and your library staff can get prepared for the upcoming Information Literacy New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). We'll discuss what NJSLS are, how Info Lit factors into current requirements, and what libraries can do to be sure they're ready to support students and educators once the standards take effect.

Speakers: Sharon Rawlins, Youth Services Specialist, New Jersey State Library; Ewa Elliott, TCNJ Libraries; Darby Malvey, LibraryLinkNJ; Beth Raff, New Jersey Association of School Librarians

Countdown to the 250th: Opportunities for Libraries – Wildwood 20 & 21

11:30 a.m. -12:20 p.m.

Learn about programs and opportunities available for libraries interested in taking part in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America. Attendees will hear from representatives of RevolutionNJ and the State Library.

Speakers: Andrew Dauphinee, NJ State Library; Marc Lorenc, New Jersey Historical Commission/ RevolutionNJ

Breaking Barriers to Access: Promoting the Statewide Shared Ebook Collection – Wildwood 8 & 9

2:10 – 3:00 p.m.

The statewide shared ebook collection is growing! Join representatives from NJSL and Lyrisis for an update on the statewide shared collection and how libraries are expanding access to ebooks with The Palace Project. We'll discuss how libraries across the country are leveraging their shared collections to combat licensing issues and how you can promote this resource to your communities. Stop by to learn more about this community-driven effort to re-center the library in ebook lending.

Speakers: Jillian Scarson, Lyrisis; Michael Maziekien, Project Specialist, Shared Services, NJ State Library

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Main Library

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Talking Book and Braille Center

2300 Stuyvesant Avenue
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Phone: (609) 406-7179

Toll-Free: (800) 792-8322

Fax: (609) 406-7181

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