



MAALL Markings

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LEADERSHIP IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Cynthia Brown, Senior Director of Research Services, Littler Mendelson, P.C. (CBrown@littler.com)

(Edited by Jill L. Kilgore, Research Librarian, Littler Mendelson, P.C. (JLKilgore@littler.com) & Autumn Collier, Assistant Librarian II, Littler Mendelson, P.C. (ACollier@littler.com))

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“When written in Chinese, the word ‘crisis’ is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity.” - John F. Kennedy

COVID-19, a term that was not in our vocabulary a few months ago, now affects every element of our lives.

Leaders in the librarian community have both a responsibility and an opportunity to shepherd their teams through this crisis.



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COMMUNICATION AND THE ROLE OF TRANSPARENCY

The current crisis underscores the importance of good communication at all levels. When changes are swirling around every aspect of our lives, it is imperative to provide clear, constant, and transparent communication. As a director, team leader, or project head, you need to talk to the people on your team. Working outside of the office means you are missing the small opportunities to chat about work projects and tasks. Those small moments when you pass in the hall or stop by a colleague’s desk can be critical to open communication. Remote working requires you to find a way to replace those opportunities. Options include phone calls, video meetings, virtual messaging, and emails. Be creative and embrace unusual

communication forms. A spark of innovation can come from simply using a new tool and learning a new skill.

“Team” is a frequently used word in today’s workplace—possibly overused. Nevertheless, the individuals you work with are your teammates, and they need to feel accommodated and safe during this crisis. Each of us needs a chance to talk, express fears, share concerns, vent frustrations, and be treated to some fun. Our workforces have been sent home to stare at the same four walls every day with little to no variety in their lives, hour by hour and day by day. We need to communicate with each other, professionally and personally. A strong leader will encourage both.

Patrons need to know what they can expect from their library. Attorneys, professors, judges, whomever makes up your patron group, need to understand what you can and cannot do under these new and quickly changing circumstances. Setting expectations is critical at this time. Maybe you have more bandwidth and have new services to offer, or maybe you will be short staffed with fewer resources. To avoid frustrations on both sides, your patrons need to know what to expect from you.

Uncertainty is hard for all of us; acknowledge that difficulty, and then share everything you can. Tell your team what you know. Open sharing will foster trust and security, which will in turn allow employees to put aside concerns and focus on their work. Also, be open about what you cannot share. Plans are being made and changed daily by the business continuity planning teams, and it is not helpful to speculate. Be just as open about what you do not know as what you do know.

TECHNOLOGY . . . CAN ANYONE HEAR ME?

Do you remember back in March when the world started working from home? Suddenly, video technology that had worked successfully for years was crashing. Likewise, employees who had never joined a video meeting were thrust into the deep end of the pool with little-to-no notice. Employees working from home for the first time will need understanding and time to get set up as they deal with new technology challenges. Home internet is not the same as office internet and learning Citrix or VPN will present a challenge. During this time, it is important to be patient with yourself, with others, and with the technology. Things will not work correctly, and we must let that be okay. Give employees time to work through these issues. Winston Churchill may be helpful to those frustrated by learning new technology: “Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential.”



"Working from Home" by edgeplot, used under a [Creative Commons license](#)

In this new environment, you will likely have both the requirement and the opportunity to learn new tools and technology. As a leader, provide training and support. As an employee, explore tools you have not used in the past and embrace the opportunity to expand your skills.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

In crisis, there are often new opportunities. COVID-19 has brought to our profession numerous changes and challenges, but there have also been new prospects revealed. A watchful leader will carefully consider and seize upon these positive changes. The lack of physical print allows librarians to market and train on electronic resources. COVID-19 legal research is now a part of your organization's taxonomy. New research skills are needed, and new research is being requested on a regular basis.

Additionally, now might also be the perfect time to work on you. Consider allowing your team time for additional professional development. If you are taking on new work that requires specialized skills, request training for your team. Conversely, if your library is not as busy as it would be under normal circumstances, take advantage of the many free or low-cost virtual trainings. Welcome the time you have to learn, and do not be discouraged by canceled conferences. Local organizations and community colleges are offering online classes and CLEs, and you may have new internal training from your attorneys, professors, or other legal professionals. There is much to learn that will help everyone through this time.

THE POSSIBILITY OF FUN

Everyone needs a little levity. Leaders should forge the path into a moment of silliness and fun for the team. Learn to laugh at yourself and be a good sport. No one has a perfectly clean office, everyone has messy hair from the lack of hair salons, and every house has pets, kids, or partners that yell during a meeting or walk across your video screen at inopportune moments. Relax and embrace the wildlife we are all living. Play team bingo, share pictures from home life, have Monday themed meetings, just be sure to have a little bit of fun.

THE FUTURE

The year 2020 may go down as the year of the unknown. When will we go back to the office? How much print will be waiting for us in the office? Will entire staffs ever all be in the office again simultaneously? Are layoffs coming? Are more layoffs coming? Will there be pay cuts? The queries far outweigh the definitive answers available. Leaders must learn to navigate the unknown; indeed, leaders may even need to learn to embrace the unknown. The wisdom of the internet provides the quote, "Old ways won't open new doors." The future belongs to those that can lead with creativity.

MANAGING THE CIRCUS: TIPS FOR JUGGLING STAFF REQUESTS, PATRON ISSUES, AND YOUR OWN NEEDS

Lacy Rakestraw, Law Library Director, Saint Louis County Law Library,
[*\(Lacy.Rakestraw@courts.mo.gov\)*](mailto:Lacy.Rakestraw@courts.mo.gov)

LEARNING HOW TO START OVER

Do you find yourself drawn to the same hobbies/interests you've mastered for the past umpteen years? Maybe it's because you've gotten comfortable with your skill level, and are scared to try something new. Learning something brand new can be intimidating; what if you're really bad? Well, I have news for you. You are going to be bad. Your first attempt at learning something new is going to be so bad that people will talk about your failure for years to come. You will become known as YourName the Bad. Okay, probably not. Likely you'll start off not great, then get better, at which point you'll be known as YourName the They Got Better, which is a much better epitaph.

Where to start. I hardly need to tell a bunch of librarians that the first step is good research, but there it is. You need to mentally make yourself a real student of your new craft. That means reading books and/or articles about your topic is relevant. Watch YouTube videos to see a skilled person engaging in the activity you're interested in (fun fact: I once ripped the side mirror off my car backing out of my garage and ordered a new one on Amazon and watched a YouTube video on how to install it. It worked, and turned a point of shame into a point of pride for me). Even just looking at pictures can sometimes help you get your mind around your new task. You're a mental expert now, right? Time to move on to step two: practice.

Let's face it, you are probably not going to sit down at a piano and start playing the music in front of you perfectly. You'll have to practice. And you'll have to dedicate some serious time to practicing. When one of my kids, who started band this year at school, commented that I was really good at reading music and playing melodies, I told him that's because I spent ten years practicing my instrument. His eyes went wide, but he was comforted when I told him that I started out just like he did, a first year band student who couldn't play a note without my instrument squeaking. Maybe you don't need ten years of practice to get really good at your new hobby/interest, but you do need to devote some serious time to it if you want to see results.

You've done work on your own, now it's time to mine the public knowledge. Join a group devoted to your new interest. Start reading a blog regularly written by someone really skilled at your new hobby. Go to in-person meet-ups, if that's a thing, to learn new skills from others who have been where you are now. And if you have any knowledge they don't, be ready to share that with them too. Just because you're doing things right doesn't mean someone won't come along and show you a better way of doing those things that they've learned through trial and error. Be open to giving and getting shared experience.

By now you've shown some real dedication and persistence to your new craft/hobby/interest. And even after all the time researching, practicing, and learning/teaching you're still not great, just remember that you're still in a better spot than when you started. I'm proud of you YourName the They Got Better, Even Marginally.

DAZED AND INSTRUCTED

Matt Timko, Academic Technologies & Outreach Services Librarian and Assistant Professor, Northern Illinois University College of Law, (mtimko@niu.edu)

WHAT DAY IS IT?

Thus ends the oddest semester of which I have ever been a part. I am thankful that NIU had such a vibrant online teaching infrastructure which allowed me to play around with both remote instruction and remote teaching, and by the end of the semester both the students and I had become accustomed to, if not necessarily happy with, the new normal. We completed seven weeks of completely online instruction, taking advantage of both the synchronous and asynchronous platforms, and based on their final exams, it seems as if the students got it. The process was not perfect, but we made it through the semester and now we need to prepare for the uncertainty of the fall semester. Fortunately, I have a full summer to plan, practice, and prepare for most contingencies.

However, now I am faced with a substantial problem: what day is it!? During the teaching semester my days and weeks revolved around my classes, assignments, and my students. However, my class ended at the end of

April and my grading was done a week after that, and since then it has been hard to find a steady “anchor” in my schedule. I have filled that time catching up on much of the professional organization work I let fall by the wayside (including, I’m ashamed to say it, MAALL work) but this does not provide the steady dose of “regularity” that my class once did. Summers have always been more fluid in scheduled activities for me, but I at least had my office to provide a steady workspace. Working from home has even robbed me of this and combined with a household of three children under five, I have lost all sense of time and space.

Moreover, it is summer and nice out and we are all stuck inside. I tried working outside one day and it was a disaster: I wanted to do anything but work! All these distractions are adding to an already distracting and anxious time in our lives, requiring us to find unique ways to stay on track and keep our productivity high. I have always used a Pomodoro (tomato) timer to keep myself on track, but now I have trained my children to take their cues from the timer: when the screen is blue, feel free to bother me, but when it’s red leave me alone! At my office I usually work on a variety of things, but while at home I have found it best to focus exclusively on one major project every day to ensure I finish at least one thing on my “to-do” list daily: this has had various success since it has given me tunnel vision ignoring some other projects. One last thing I’ve tried is to not ignore my distractions: if I notice something that needs attention that is not “work related” I won’t put it aside since I have found the lingering issue to be more distracting than just taking care of it and getting back to work.



Photo by gerlos, used under a [Creative Commons license](#)

I suspect that I will face other barriers to productivity over the next couple months, but I have settled into the understanding that this is the challenge we all face and will continue to face throughout the summer, into the fall, and possibly 2021. While there are benefits to working from home (it is lovely to see my children when they are not throwing tantrums, whining, or fighting with each other) it is not the most conducive environment for productivity. Therefore, we all (and by “we all” I really mean I) need to be more understanding about how this new work environment operates and avoid trying to fit the old model into the new reality. So, with that I will continue to roll with the punches and try to be as productive as I can be. I hope you all have a great Thanksgiving... or is it Memorial Day? At any rate I hear my kids screaming about something so take care and do your best!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Lacy Rakestraw, Law Library Director, Saint Louis County Law Library,
(Lacy.Rakestraw@courts.mo.gov)*

Normally the President’s message in June goes something like this: Hey all, I’m super pumped about all the Annual Conference submissions! We are going to have a great in-person conference in October, I just know it. I can’t wait to see a bunch of you in July at the AALL Annual Conference!

This year’s June message is going to be a bit different. Okay, a lot different: Hey all, I don’t even know what month it is anymore. I’ve been working from home since mid-March, which is also the last time my kids were in school. Things I am not: a school teacher, principal, IT tech, lunch lady. Things I have become since mid-March: see previous list.

We are all adapting to our new normal in our own ways. MAALL is adapting as well. For example, I WON’T be seeing you all in July at the AALL Annual Conference. While there, we usually hold an in-person business

meeting. This year, I'll instead submit to you all a business report via e-mail in July. Also this year, we are looking at putting together a virtual conference instead of our usual in-person shindig. We may be asking you to become a virtual presenter, which may be one of your own 'things I have become since mid-March.'

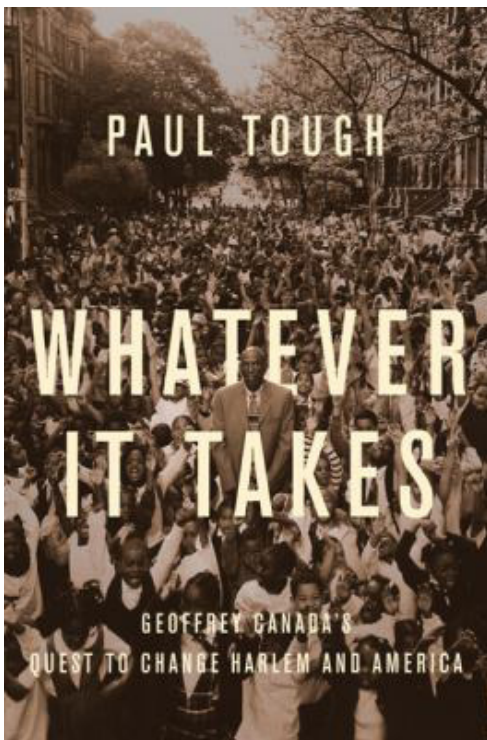
The point is, we are all mindful of keeping the MAALL community alive and well at this extremely chaotic and confusing time. The Exec Board is working on what that might look like, which is why you all have received a survey to complete. That survey will give us some insight into what you all want the virtual conference to look like. If you haven't completed it yet, please do so. As always, feel free to contact me at Lacy.Rakestraw@courts.mo.gov if you have questions or concerns. And stay tuned for more details as we make, break, and re-make plans for MAALL 2020.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Matt Braun, Associate Director for Access and Operations, University of Illinois, Albert E. Jenner, Jr. Memorial Law Library (braun22@illinois.edu)

Well, a lot has happened in the last three months. We started regularly using the phrases "social distancing" and "flattening the curve." Many of us started working from home. Everyday life became and remains challenging and worrisome.

It is against this backdrop that MAALL members continue to amaze. Over two dozen excellent program and poster session proposals were submitted for the Annual Meeting 2020, and while MAALL Executive Officers and the Local Arrangements Committee work through the specifics of how the Annual Meeting can and should proceed, it is inspiring to see the commitment, enthusiasm, and innovation of so many legal information professionals despite these difficult times.



MAALL Book to Action title, *Whatever it Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America*, by Paul Tough, image available [here](#)

While it is long past New Year's Day, and the weather is nothing like January, I keep thinking that a new resolution may help me get through this new normal. Perhaps a resolution to check up on professional colleagues that I have not heard from in a while. Perhaps a resolution to participate in online training that I would have previously overlooked. Perhaps a resolution to remind myself, far more regularly, that I am fortunate to be a law librarian and fortunate to collaborate with outstanding people. Perhaps you are feeling a similar way.

The remainder of 2020 will be quite different from past years. That said, we have many opportunities to connect. From [AALL 2020 Reimagined](#), featuring keynote speaker Jim Kwik, to our own [MAALL Annual Meeting](#), to our [MAALL 2020 Book to Action Program](#), featuring [Whatever it Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America](#) by Paul Tough, to those video chats with colleagues and friends, we can and will continue to learn and grow.

We will continue **Setting the Pace**, for now and for a better future.

STATE MEMBER NEWS

Drake University Law Library

Congratulations to Karen Wallace, whose article [*Does the Past Predict the Future: An Empirical Analysis of Recent Iowa Supreme Court Use of Legislative History as a Window into Statutory Construction in Iowa*](#), 63 Drake L. Rev. 239 (2015) was cited by the Iowa Supreme Court in their May 22, 2020 decision [*State of Iowa v. Jane Doe*](#). This article was also cited by the Iowa Supreme Court in the 2017 decision [*Brakke v. Iowa Department of Natural Resources*](#).



During the law school's annual awards ceremony, Karen Wallace received the Friend of the Law Review award. John Edwards received both the Friend of the Journal of Agricultural Law award and the student bar association's Dean's Service award. The ceremony can be viewed at <https://us-iti.bbcollab.com/recording/34bbb7dadeb54d40a352f21c39089c59>. Congratulations, Karen and John!

In February, John Edwards was also recognized as Clive, Iowa's Outstanding Citizen of the year for 2019. John has served as a Clive City Council member since 1995. Read more about the award and his service to the community at <https://news.drake.edu/2020/03/04/john-edwards-selected-as-outstanding-citizen-of-the-year/>.

University of Iowa Law Library

The University of Iowa Law Library is pleased to announce that Carissa Vogel will be the Law Library's next director. Carissa will join the University of Iowa Law Library in July from Cardozo School of Law, where she is the Associate Dean for Library Services, Director of the Law Library, and Professor of Legal Research. Carissa's prior law library experience includes roles at Cornell and Columbia.



University of Oklahoma, Donald E. Pray Law Library

Darla Jackson has been appointed to the ABA TECHSHOW 2021 Planning Board. If you have ideas for session topics at TECHSHOW 2021 or if you would like to be a speaker, she encourages you to submit a proposal (in June 2020) or contact her to discuss your interest. Darla has also served as the Chair of the CS-SIS for 2019-2020.

In addition to her teaching in the IL LRW program, she also is teaching a Sources of International Law course in OU College of Law's International Business MLS Program.

She is currently completing her thesis for the OU College of Law Indigenous Peoples LL.M. Program. She is serving as the Chair of the Native Peoples Law Caucus and in April 2020, her work, *Caution - Slow Progress Ahead: Accessing and Researching Tribal Court Opinions*, was published in the Oklahoma Bar Journal. The article is available at http://works.bepress.com/darla_jackson/44/. In October 2020, Darla will moderate a webinar, Researching Indigenous People's Law. The webinar is a joint project of the FCIL-SIS Continuing Education Committee and Native Peoples Law Caucus.

Congratulations to our newly-elected MAALL officers!

Vice-President/President Elect: Christopher L. Steadham, Director, University of Kansas School of Law, Wheat Law Library

Secretary: Matt Timko, Academic Technologies and Outreach Services Librarian, Northern Illinois University, David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library

Member-at-Large: Autumn Collier, Assistant Librarian, Littler Mendelson P.C.

MAALL MARKINGS INFORMATION

MAALL Markings is published four times a year by the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries, a chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, and is a benefit of membership. The purpose of MAALL Markings is to publish news of the Chapter, selected news of AALL and other professional associations, and MAALL members, as well as to solicit and publish articles to add to the body of literature in the profession of law librarianship. All articles are copyrighted and any republication or use of any portion of the content for any purpose must have written permission from the author/s.

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The Mid-America Association of Law Libraries assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by the contributors of its publications. Editorial views do not necessarily represent the official position of the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries or AALL.

LINKS TO AALL CHAPTER & SIS PUBLICATIONS

The lists on the following page were originally compiled by Lindsey Carpino for the CALL Bulletin and are reprinted with permission. (Broken links have been omitted.) The original post is available at <http://bulletin.chicagolawlib.org/2016/05/aall-chapter-sis-publications/>.

AALL Chapter	Chapter Links/Newsletter	Blog
Arizona Association of Law Libraries (AZALL)		AzALL Member Blog
Association of Law Libraries of Upstate New York (ALLUNY)	ALLUNY Website	
Atlanta Law Libraries Association (ALLA)	ALLA News	
Chicago Association of Law Libraries (CALL)	CALL Bulletin	
Dallas Association of Law Librarians (DALL)		Lex Scripta
Greater Philadelphia Law Library Association (GPLLA)	GPLLA News	
Houston Area Law Librarians (HALL)	HALL Quarterly	
Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin, Inc. (LLAW)	LLAW Briefs	
Law Librarians of New England (LLNE)		
Law Librarians of Puget Sound (LLOPS)		LLOPS Cited
Law Librarians Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. (LLSDC)	Law Library Lights	
Law Libraries Association of Alabama (LLAA)		LLAA Blog
Law Library Association of Greater New York (LLAGNY)	Law Lines	
Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM)	LLAM Newsletter	
Michigan Association of Law Libraries (MichALL)	MichALL Website	
Mid-America Association of Law Libraries (MAALL)	MAALL Markings	
Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL)		MALL News Blog
New Jersey Law Librarians Association (NJLLA)		NJLLA Blog
New Orleans Association of Law Librarians (NOALL)	NOALL Website	
Northern California Association of Law Libraries (NOCALL)	NOCALL News	
Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries (ORALL)	ORALL Newsletter	
San Diego Area Law Libraries	SANDALL Newsletter	
Southeastern Chapter of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (SEAALL)	SEAALL Website	
Southern California Association of Law Libraries (SCALL)	SCALL Newsletter	
Southern New England Law Librarians Association (SNELLA)	Obiter Dicta	
Southwestern Association of Law Libraries (SWALL)	SWALL Website	
Virginia Association of Law Libraries (VALL)	VALL Newsletter	VALL Talk
Western Pacific Chpr. of the Amer. Assn. of Law Libraries (WestPac)	WestPac Website	
Western Pennsylvania Law Library Association (WPLLA)	WPLLA Website	
AALL SIS	SIS Links/Newsletter	SIS Blog
Academic Law Libraries SIS (ALL-SIS)	ALL-SIS Website	What's New
Computing Services SIS (CS-SIS)	CS-SIS Website	CS-SIS Blog
Digitization and Educational Technology SIS (DET-SIS)	DET-SIS Website	
Foreign, Comparative & International Law SIS (FCIL-SIS)	FCIL-SIS Website	DipLawMatic Dialogues Blog
Government Documents SIS (GD-SIS)	JURISDOCS	
Government Law Libraries SIS (GLL-SIS)	GLL-SIS Website	
Legal History & Rare Books SIS (LHRB-SIS)	LH&RB Newsletter	
Legal Information Services to the Public SIS (LISP-SIS)	LISP-SIS Website	
Online Bibliographic Services SIS (OBS-SIS)	OBS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog
Private Law Librarians & Information Professionals SIS (PLLIP-SIS)	PLLIP E-Newsletter	On Firmer Ground
Professional Engagement, Growth, and Advancement SIS (PEGA-SIS)	PEGA-SIS Website	
Research Instruction & Patron Services SIS (RIPS-SIS)	RIPS-SIS Website	RIPS Law Librarian Blog
Social Responsibilities SIS (SR-SIS)	SR-SIS Website	
Technical Services SIS (TS-SIS)	TS-SIS Website	TSLL TechScans Blog

2019/2020 MAALL Executive Board

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Member-at-Large: Rena Seidler

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Members: TBD

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Melissa Serfass (AR), Rebecca Lutkenhaus (IA), Lindsey Carpino (IL), Pam Crawford (KS), Autumn Collier (MO & NE), Susan Urban (OK), Sarah Kammer (SD), Leslie Behroozi (IN, ND, OH, TN & WI)

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UELMA Task Force

Chair: Ben Keele
Members: Matt Timko & Colleen Williams

Vision Planning Task Force

Chair: Lacy Rakestraw
Members: Heidi Kuehl, Rebecca Lutkenhaus & Allison Reeve Davis

Website Committee

Chair: Matt Timko
Webmaster: Jeannine Linnane
Members: Matt Braun, Jackie Lemmer & Jeannine Linnane

There are still a number of opportunities available to serve MAALL. Please contact Lacy Rakestraw at Lacy.Rakestraw@courts.mo.gov if you would like to serve on a task force or committee.