



MAALL Markings

Mid-America Association of Law Libraries

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MANAGER TO MANAGER: TIPS TO KEEP YOU SANE AND EFFECTIVE

Gail Wechsler, Library Director, Law Library Association of St. Louis (gwechsler@llastl.org)

THE FINE LINE BETWEEN OVERSEEING AND MICROMANAGING

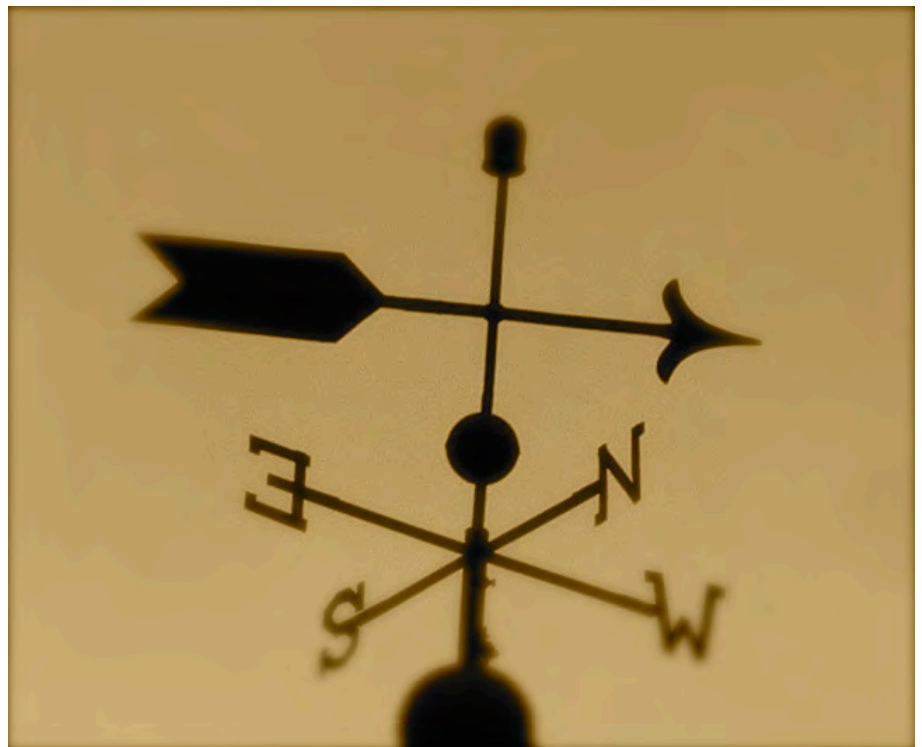
When you are in a supervisory role, it's natural to want to help guide those you supervise. On the other hand, there is nothing worse than having a supervisor constantly looking over your shoulder (literally or figuratively). So it's important to take stock and make sure that you provide the right level of assistance to those to whom you assign projects and duties.

A first step in this process is to know where a particular employee is in terms of job skills and level of comfort. A newer or less experienced employee may well need and want extra help when working on an assignment. When in doubt, be clear and up front about this. Ask the employee how much guidance they want. Let the employee know that you are available to lend a hand if they want it. Have an open door and let the employee know that they won't be judged in any way for coming to you for help. You also might want to check in gently on occasion to see how things are going. Be encouraging rather than heavy-handed. Of course, if the employee is brand new, you probably want to provide more guidance rather than less.

For a more experienced employee who has been on the job and proved their worth, I recommend having a light touch. Let the employee run with the project. Be open to new ideas and outside-the-box thinking.

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This is a wonderful way to let a staff member know you trust them with a lot of responsibility. Again, be available as a resource, but don't make it a point to keep asking for progress reports, unless you have a deadline and you haven't heard a word from your staff member.

Recent research has shown that typically over 50 percent of employees leave jobs due to issues with their supervisors. Undoubtedly, being a micromanager is one way to drive talented library staff elsewhere. Don't be that person!

Having been in prior jobs where I felt stifled due to a micromanaging supervisor, this issue is near and dear to me. I never want to be accused of not giving an employee room to do their job, free from constant oversight and interruption. Follow best practices and you should see lower staff turnover and greater staff satisfaction.

DAZED & INSTRUCTED

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

THE NEW NORMAL BEFORE THE NEW, NEW NORMAL

Walking through our library now is like walking through Chernobyl: mostly vacant, with chairs piled up to be stored, and the people you do see wearing masks. The only place that seems remotely familiar is my office, but there is something off when the lights are dark in the rest of the library. Any way you slice it, a desolate library is a very sad (and kind of ominous) place. Luckily, it appears that things may be turning a corner and there may be people back in the building and perhaps in the library soon. My initial thought was, OMG we are not ready!

This is obviously an exaggeration. Everyone working remotely has done yeoman's work in maintaining library operations, getting materials to students and faculty, and doing all the things that librarians typically do, except for talking to people at the circulation desk, showing people materials in the stacks, or any of the other hundreds of personal interactions that occur in the library every day. Like it or not, the new normal for most libraries has been a lack of patrons in the building. For academic libraries, this also means a lack of students.

Our entire first-year class has never stepped foot inside the library to do any type of research. Traditionally during the semester, the students will complete a statutory exercise to navigate the stacks, come into the library for reference help, or simply navigate the library on their own for study purposes. All of that has been missing, meaning that the entire rising 2L class has no idea about the basic layout or organization of the library.

Similarly, accessibility for students remains a main concern. How many students will be allowed in? Will vaccines be a requirement? How should we arrange the study rooms, tables, and carrels? What sanitizing processes will we have in place? What about air circulation? Do we limit access only to law students? These pressing questions used to be more theoretical and now are far more front of mind. The good news is that libraries have been planning and preparing, under conditions that were far more serious, to reopen; the logistics are in place, though only on paper. The concerning prospect (from my perspective) is what happens when we open the doors and people start coming in.

The hallmark of all libraries is adaptability. We are all able to "roll with the punches" and make sure the

services we provide meet the moment, and I have no doubt that this will also be the case once patrons begin returning. But up until a month ago, that prospect seemed a lot further off. We have talked over the last year about the “new normal” once libraries reopened; I had just not realized that we were in a “intermediary normal” that I had grown quite accustomed to.

AFFIRMATIONS

Autumn Collier, Assistant Librarian II, Littler Mendelson P.C. (acollier@littler.com) & Jill Kilgore, Research Librarian, Littler Mendelson P.C. (jkilgore@littler.com)

REAL TALK: (UN)MOTIVATION

Practicing self-control is tough. It is even more difficult when you’re feeling overwhelmed or exhausted. Why? Simply put, motivation is fleeting. It is not a quality that can be controlled, whereas self-control is measurement of the ability to do or not do something. To practice it, one must develop habits, and those require a healthy amount of discipline. Again, why? Because discipline requires effort—something many of us are struggling to find. The habits we fell into during COVID-19 lockdowns won’t disappear once restrictions lift, nor will the effort needed to continue the fight against racial injustice in the United States.

Denial of where we fall short as a country or as individuals has yet to resolve a deadly virus or achieve an antiracist society. Instead, acceptance of the reality of our state can bring clarity of purpose and motivation within our reach again. If there isn’t a magical cure-all for what ails us or feels beyond our control, we can instead focus our time and what effort we have left on finding meaning in discipline.

If you’re anything like us, time is something you have more of right now. Motivation, self-control, and thoughtfulness? Maybe a bit less of those. But even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, operating without a plan often meant the helpful habits would fade and be replaced with thoughtless habits that left us feeling crummy. One thing that this pandemic has reminded us of and made abundantly clear is this: do not rely on motivation to drive efforts. Assume your motivation is gone and never coming back. That may sound gloomy and bleak, but you’ll have to forgive us. We’re in a pandemic. It’s time to be real with ourselves.

Besides, accessing and accepting your current reality does not intrinsically create harm. In fact, it may actually improve mental flexibility. A great deal of psychological research and therapy suggests that recognizing one’s current state, without attempting to control the situation or experience, improves long-term health and attempts at modifying behavior.¹ So when personal life in 2021 has come to mean shifting to the other side of the couch after closing our laptops, it is quite possible things really *are* a bit bleak.

Over the past year, we have lost many of our valued experiences and autonomy. An inclination toward apathy is not necessarily evidence of a lack of desire or willingness to accomplish personal goals. Back when the “end” of the day meant something tangible, when we would commute to work, host in-person meetings, and enjoy coffee or tea side-by-side with a colleague, we would physically change our environment, leave and return. And now, rather than being greeted by our pets, we merely wander away from the monitor (pets tailing close behind). It seems fair to remind ourselves that “[t]he daily grind sucks, even if it’s working on something you love.”²

Whatever an office used to mean to us, it is now synonymous with home. While technology has revolutionized the way many navigated their workday, we have also used it to bridge the gap in our social lives.

It could never be a replacement. With tenuous internet connections and awkward audio and video delays, our current experience has not always felt like the idea of living we once held. And once lockdowns and social distancing protocols were in place, most of us were inadvertently forced to examine the circumstances of our lives which no longer involved activities outside the home. We wake up to go to work and then . . . continue staying home. For many, discipline and motivation dip. Whatever motivated us or provided a little joy, release, or fulfillment seemed to disappear or was canceled.

With the loss of autonomy, we also lose intrinsic value—the satisfaction we felt after a job well done or helping a colleague finish a project. We look more and more to outside validation and rewards to fill this void. “Going to work, socializing with friends, and doing other activities outside the home help us regulate our mental and physical energy as well as give us a sense of time. Now that we’re lacking those things, time has lost meaning, which can do a number on focus and productivity.”³

It may seem fruitless to look for a silver lining in the situation we find ourselves in. If this is true to your experience, start by being honest with yourself and accept — without attempting to change — this fact. You are now one step closer to building greater mental and emotional flexibility. How? You’ve practiced the habit of being honest with yourself, a discipline worth your time and effort. Now look for the things within your control. Ask yourself: is this worth struggling upstream when a doggy paddle and float would do? This is key. If the fear and heartbreak of the last year’s racial reckoning was not clear enough, learning when to conserve your effort is part and parcel of sustaining it. The work of repairing systemic racism and violence deserves our perseverance. The value of that work also requires our considered effort. So when something else goes right, or we find a chance to give a colleague a pat on the back, we do so because we are choosing to celebrate small wins—and this can release a much needed boost of dopamine and help reinforce the meaning behind our discipline.

¹ Frank W. Bond et al., *Psychological Flexibility, ACT and Organizational Behavior*, 26 J. ORG. BEHAV. MGMT. 25 (2006), https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J075v26n01_02 (abstract); STEVEN C. HAYES ET AL., ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY: AN EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH TO BEHAVIOR CHANGE (1999); Todd B. Kashdan & Jonathan Rottenberg, *Psychological Flexibility as a Fundamental Aspect of Health*, 30 CLINICAL PSYCH. REV. 865 (2010), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2998793/>; Michael E. Levin et al., *The Impact of Treatment Components Suggested by the Psychological Flexibility Model: a Meta-Analysis of Laboratory-Based Component Studies*, 43 BEHAV. THERAPY 741 (2012), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23046777/> (abstract).

² Alison Wojtowecz, *Why Motivation is Crap & Discipline is Your Only Chance at Success*, <https://medium.com/@flabstofitness/why-motivation-is-crap-discipline-is-your-only-chance-at-success-3ecd00b8b090> (last visited June 9, 2021).

³ Alison Hirschlag, *Why the Pandemic is Causing You Motivation Paralysis – and How to Beat It*, <https://thebolditalic.com/why-the-pandemic-is-causing-you-motivation-paralysis-and-how-to-beat-it-655f1fc24465> (last visited June 9, 2021).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Matthew Braun, Associate Director for Administration, University of Illinois, Albert E. Jenner, Jr. Memorial Law Library (braun22@illinois.edu)

Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary defines the adjective *incoherent* as the “lacking [of] orderly continuity, arrangement, or relevance.”

The same dictionary defines the noun *perseverance* as “continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.”

If this had not been a year and a time of incoherence, this column would be sharing details of the upcoming AALL Annual Meeting in Cleveland. We would be anticipating our “MAALL@AALL” luncheon at some wonderful spot around the corner from Public Square or the Great Lakes Science Center or the Rock and Roll

Hall of Fame. We would be publicizing the educational programs coordinated and presented by MAALL members and, of course, preparing to congratulate, in person, MAALL members who have been honored by AALL over the past year with awards, scholarships, and grants.

If this had not been a year and a time requiring perseverance, however, the writer of this column probably would not be as appreciative as he should of the tireless work and selfless dedication of so many in our organization and in our profession. It has been an uncomfortable, unsettling time, and yet educational programs for the AALL and MAALL Annual Meetings have been proposed, created, and sharpened. Articles have been written for [MAALL Markings](#) and dozens of other legal information publications. Innovative services have been proposed, executed, and revamped for law library constituents in all categories.

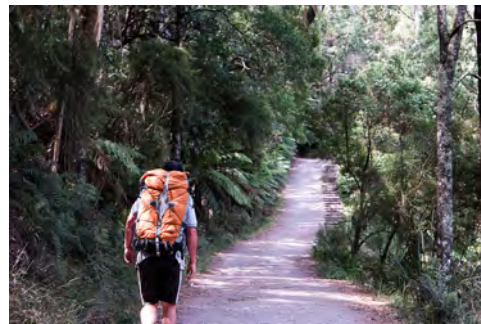
Despite incoherence, our organization and our profession, made from us, have persevered.

The [2021 AALL Virtual Conference](#) will be held July 19-23, and I strongly encourage you to participate in as much of the conference as you can. This will be another chance to learn, to grow, and to persevere.

We also very recently learned that our own MAALL Annual Meeting 2021 will be permitted, in person, at [Indiana University McKinney School of Law](#) in Indianapolis, September 23-25. Registration for the meeting will be open sometime in July, so I hope that you are looking forward to getting “Back on Track” with the association’s premier event.

Finally, if this had not been a year and a time of incoherence, I, for one, probably would not be looking forward to the summer of 2021 as much as I am. I want to connect with as many MAALL members as possible this summer. I want to encourage and assist MAALL committees as much as possible. I want to help us be even more engaged. I want to help us be more inclusive.

The possibilities are there. If I, if we, choose to persevere.



perseverance, by tommy kuo, used under a [Creative Commons license](#)

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Christopher Steadham, Director, Wheat Law Library, University of Kansas School of Law
(csteadham@ku.edu)

As we work to finalize our plans for the MAALL Annual Meeting taking place in **Indianapolis September 23 – 25**, I am so pleased to report that the Education Committee received an impressive array of program proposals in response to our Call for Programs. The members of MAALL are truly **Back on Track** and ready to share their expertise with you on a wide range of timely and relevant topics. Thank you to everyone who submitted a proposal and we look forward to working with you this summer as we prepare for what is sure to be an amazing conference. It will be both a great opportunity for professional development, and a much anticipated reunion of colleagues and friends.





Indianapolis Canal Walk, by Frank Fujimoto, used under a [Creative Commons license](#)

I would also like to congratulate the MAALL members who garnered an impressive collection of AALL awards this year. We all know how remarkable our members are but these accomplishments ensure that our colleagues outside of the Midwest know it too. Congratulations are also in order for all of the candidates who ran in our recent election. We have an impressive group of officers joining the Board later this year and our organization is in great hands moving forward.

I also feel compelled to mention here that my fellow members of the Board have been working tirelessly on a number of fronts in recent months, all because of their well-founded belief in the people and purpose of MAALL. In a time like no other, I consistently

find myself humbled and honored to work with such a talented and dedicated group of professionals. I hope that all MAALL members will continue to join us in this rewarding work, and I look forward to seeing you in Indianapolis!

MOMENT WITH MALLCO

Susan Urban, Assistant Director for Access and Collections, Oklahoma City University School of Law, Chickasaw Nation Law Library & MALLCO Executive Director (seurban@okcu.edu)

Happy summer! In the coming months, MALLCO has two great virtual learning opportunities open to everyone for FREE.

First, on June 30 at 1pm Central, MALLCO, NELLCO, and LIPA are co-hosting "Let Us (Re)Introduce Ourselves." This will be a virtual open discussion and brainstorming session on the ways law libraries are introducing their services and spaces to new patrons or reintroducing them to ones we haven't seen in a while. This one-hour discussion will be broken into two sections. You'll be able to select one topic for each round and join your colleagues in a guided conversation designed to share ideas, brainstorm, and more. If you have ideas for breakout topics, please email Susan Urban at mallcoexecutivedirector@gmail.com.

Coming up in July, "Ignite: Legal Tech Innovation," hosted by Case Western and MALLCO, has been rescheduled for July 14-15, 2021, after the initial event was cancelled due to COVID last year. Wednesday, July 14 will be a half-day "teach-in" with law librarian panelists and speakers discussing teaching emerging legal technologies. Thursday, July 15 will be a full day, with speakers from the legal community discussing how they use key technologies in practice. Topics include e-discovery, artificial intelligence, blockchain, and more!

In the coming weeks, please watch for additional information and registration details for these two virtual events!

STATE MEMBER NEWS



Law Library Association of St. Louis

The library said goodbye to part-time Library Assistant Tiffany Light. Tiffany leaves the library as she graduates from Saint Louis University School of Law. And in late May, we welcomed summer library practicum student Sherry Taylor. Sherry is a student in the Master's Degree Program in Library and Information Science at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Library Director Gail Wechsler's article about the library exhibit "Lawyers Without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in Germany under the Third Reich" was published in the May/June issue of *AJL News and Reviews*, a publication of the Association of Jewish Libraries.

Eighth Circuit Library (& St. Louis County Law Library)

Eric Brust and Lacy Rakestraw welcomed a new family member in April! Please meet Charleton, the black puppy shown with Honey, almost 15 years his senior.

Little Mendelson, P.C.

Amy Backes was promoted to Research Librarian, Jackie Lemmer became our first Assistant Librarian Team Lead, and in April we welcomed three new Assistant Librarians, Alejandra Hutchison, Emma England, and Sarah Baillos. We're thrilled to grow our team.

Cynthia Brown chaired the inaugural PLLIP-SIS Diversity & Inclusion Summit held in February and Allison Reeve Davis received the PLLIP-SIS 2021 Best Blogger/Writer Award.



Charleton (left) and Honey (right)

Schmid Law Library, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (& Nebraska State Library)

Rich Leiter has been appointed to the Depository Library Council (DLC). Council members advise the GPO Director on FDLP-related policy matters. Rich also served as a judge in the "We the People" National Finals Competition.



The Omaha Bar Association awarded the Nebraska Access to Justice Commission and its committees the 2021 Robert M. Spire Public Service Award. Maureen Eck, **Nebraska State Library**, serves on the Self-Represented Litigation Committee and Stefanie Pearlman, **Schmid Law Library**, serves on the Access to Justice Commission.

Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Tennessee:

A big congratulations to the following, who received 2021 AALL awards:

Douglas Lind, Director of the Law Library and Professor of Law, Southern Illinois University School of Law — Joseph L. Andrews Legal Literature Award

John Edwards, Associate Dean for Information Resources and Technology & Director of the Law Library, Drake University School of Law — Hall of Fame Award

Clanitra Stewart Nejdli, Research Services Librarian & Head of Professional Development, Law Library Lecturer in Law, Alyne Queener Massey Law Library, Vanderbilt Law School — AALL Spectrum Article of the Year Award & Emerging Leader Award

Ashley Ames Ahlbrand, Assistant Director for Public Services, Associate Librarian, and Lecturer in Law, Indiana University - Bloomington Maurer School of Law, Law Library — Emerging Leader Award

Matthew Timko, Academic Technologies & Outreach Services Librarian and Assistant Professor, Northern Illinois University College of Law — AALL/LexisNexis Call for Papers Award, New Member Division

To all our other members: We hope no news is good news!

And please let us know of any future news items at <https://forms.gle/aSR9Ru6JVX7SjExx7!>

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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LINKS TO AALL CHAPTER & SIS PUBLICATIONS

Links originally compiled by Lindsey Carpino for the CALL Bulletin and reprinted with permission. *MAALL Markings* updates links on a yearly basis. 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	
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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	
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Legal History & Rare Books SIS (LH&RB-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

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There are a number of opportunities available to serve MAALL. Please contact Matthew Braun at braun22@illinois.edu if you would like to serve on a task force or committee.