



Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative

February 2026



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Initiative

SLI Newsletter

The latest news and updates from
the Sustainable Libraries Initiative

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Congratulations!



Alice L. Pendleton Library

Islesboro, Maine



Windsor Public Library

Windsor, Vermont

on becoming **certified sustainable!** We commend you for your
commitment and achievement. Learn more with the links below!

Alice L. Pendleton Library Press Release

Alice L. Pendleton Library Final Presentation

Windsor Public Library Press Release

Windsor Public Library Final Presentation

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: University of Maryland Libraries

Location: College Park, Maryland

Membership: SLCP Certified Academic Library



To find a baseline for waste reduction work, the University of Maryland Libraries conducted a waste audit at the campus's main library.

Organized by the libraries' former Sustainability Graduate Assistant Julia Ethan, the libraries partnered with the university's Facilities Management Department to host the event.

Ethan's work leading a waste audit for the library attracted nearly two-dozen volunteers made up of both students and library staff, racked up thousands of views on social media, and made headlines in two campus newspapers. In total, about 90 pounds of waste was sorted and analyzed to better inform the library on which items may have more responsible alternatives for disposal.

"The Sustainable Library Certification Program has given the University of Maryland Libraries a valuable seat at the table in advancing sustainability on campus. Sustainability should be a priority in every field, and the SLI shows exactly how it can be embedded into the mission and operations of libraries."

– Julia Ethan



Photo by Dylan Singleton

Have any ideas you'd like to share? Fill out the form below!

[University of Maryland Libraries Sustainability Webpage](#)

[Article: The Dirty Details of McKeldin's Trash](#)

[Want to be featured? Complete the submissions form!](#)

SLI UPDATES

Welcoming Rebecca T. Miller as New Our Sustainability Coordinator



Pictured (left to right): Alex Blend, outgoing Sustainability Coordinator; Rebecca T. Miller, incoming Sustainability Coordinator; Sophia LoCascio, Member Engagement Associate; and Hannah Marcum, Operations Assistant.

We are excited to welcome Rebecca T. Miller as the new Sustainability Coordinator at the Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS). In this role, Rebecca will be responsible for supporting the 56 member libraries of Suffolk County as well as managing the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI) and its Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP).

Formerly a longtime editorial leader and publisher of *Library Journal* and *School Library Journal*, Rebecca has consistently tapped on the evolving conversation around libraries as key players in creating resilient communities. She has written numerous editorials and articles focused on the topic, shaped event programming to explore aspects of it, and spoken on the subject in settings large and small—all to further amplify the potential of prioritizing sustainable thinking as central to responsible stewardship and solid strategic thinking.

Among her contributions, Rebecca developed *LJ's* "Sustainability" column, in collaboration with SLI's Rebekkah Smith Aldrich; envisioned projects such as *LJ's* New Landmark Libraries; and collaborated with funding partners to create award programs such as the Best Small Library in America Award and the Jerry Kline Community Impact Prize. Over her career, she has also served on the boards of Floyd Memorial Library in Greenport, NY, and the Great Neck Library, NY. She earned her MLIS from Pratt Institute, NY.

As one of the SLI's co-creators, Rebecca's deep connection and commitment to the goals of the SLI go back to the beginning.

"Rebecca is a legend in our profession," said Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, SLI Co-Founder & Board President. "We are incredibly lucky to be working with her in this role. Her birds eye view of the library profession, thanks to her years of service at *Library Journal*, makes her a uniquely perfect person to help advance the core value of sustainability in our profession."

Rebecca joined the team on Jan. 5, 2026, and has been working closely with Alex Blend as he moves to a new role in the Outreach Department for SCLS. She can be reached at sliadmin@suffolknet.org or 631.286.1600 Ext. 1369 and will be happy to answer any questions you might have about SLI membership or partnership, joining the Sustainable Library Certification Program, or getting help with certification activities.

SLCP Member Orono Public Library Recognized in National Award



The **I Partner With My Public Library Award** was earned by *Geezers in Sneakers Getting Coffee* for the organization's partnership with its public library in Orono, Maine.

The group aims to incentivize movement and reduce loneliness in the aging population. Each walk, which occur multiple times weekly, is followed by a meet-up for coffee at the Orono Public Library.

The local library also provides staff support and early-morning access to the library to accommodate the group. In symbiosis, the Geezers have increased community library visits and circulation numbers.

Read more about the partnership and the group's achievement with the links below!

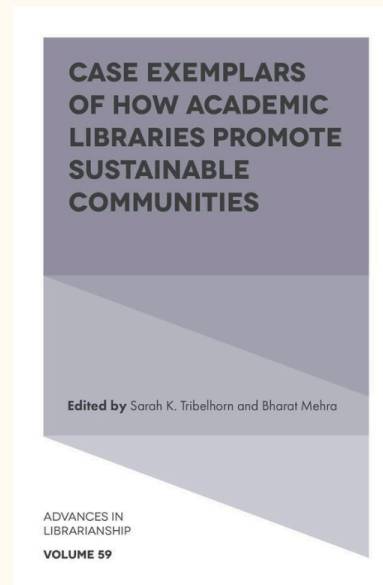
Bangor Daily News — Walking Group in Orono Wins Award for Fighting Senior Loneliness

Let's Move in Libraries: Geezers in Sneakers Getting Coffee

Case Exemplars of How Academic Libraries Promote Sustainable Communities Co-Edited by SLI Advisory Board Member Sarah Tribelhorn

Sarah Tribelhorn, the Sciences and Sustainability Librarian at San Diego State University, co-edited a collection of sustainability efforts in academic libraries published by Emerald Publishing last month.

From the official description: "This volume includes research, case studies, and reflective narratives from academic libraries and their collaborations working with varied partners toward operationalizing the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This collection offers valuable insight into how academic library partnerships, both direct and indirect, contribute to sustainability efforts, with a focus on social equity, economic feasibility, and environmental stewardship to nurture community resilience."



Click the links below for more information.

2025 SLI Annual Report Presentation

Sustainable Libraries Initiative 2025 Annual Report

- March 27, 2026 at 2:00 PM Eastern Time
- Zoom



Join us as leaders of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative present the Sustainable Libraries Initiative's 2025 Annual Report! All are welcome to join us in sharing highlights, statistics, testimonials, and words of wisdom from the past year as an organization.

This presentation will be a cohesive recap of our growth, successes, reach, and impact as a community of practice, and will allow members and non-members alike to see how their involvement contributes (or could contribute) to the bigger picture.

Case Exemplars of How Academic Libraries Promote Sustainable Communities

Upcoming Conferences

New Jersey Library Association Annual Conference

- February 17-19, 2026
- Atlantic City, New Jersey



Join us for our Thursday afternoon program session on the 19th at 2:20PM, *Let's Talk about Sustainability with the Maplewood Memorial Library*, presented by Sarah Lester, Director of the Maplewood Memorial Library and Sophia LoCascio, Member Engagement Associate for the Sustainable Libraries Initiative.

Listen and learn from this candid conversation on how the library's team is using the Sustainable Library Certification Program to improve internal operations, make environmentally conscious decisions, and build stronger connections with its community.

We're also exhibiting! Come have a conversation with SLI Staff at **Booth #410**.

Sustainable Futures Summit

SLI members have an opportunity to attend the Sustainable Futures Summit hosted by Ulster BOCES at no cost (\$300 value)!

The Sustainable Futures Summit (#SFS26) will take place virtually on March 18-19, 2026 from 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM (ET) each day. This annual event brings together students, educators, community agencies, and sustainability-focused vendors to share ideas, showcase innovative solutions, and explore strategies for building a more sustainable future.

The Summit is also looking for presenters with the deadline for proposals being February 14th.

Reach out to Victoria Setaro at vsetaro@ulsterboces.org to take advantage of the free registration, or check out the Summit website with the link below.



Sustainable Futures Summit

Upcoming Webinars

To better serve you, we've curated a series of valuable upcoming sessions. All are welcome! Participants in the SLCP may attend some of these sessions to fulfill certain action items. Links to register can be found below.

Digital Decluttering: For Your Mind and the Planet

- Thursday, February 26 @ 2:00 pm EST

Building on our January webinar regarding AI and the environment, this webinar, presented by Sarah Tribelhorn from the San Diego State University Library, will explore how personal digital habits directly impact the world around us.

Storing vast amounts of data requires significant energy; by deleting unnecessary files and emails, you can reduce energy consumption and lower your carbon footprint. Furthermore, reducing the amount of data we store lessens the need for the massive hardware housed in data centers, helping to minimize e-waste and extend the lifespan of your personal devices.

In addition to environmental sustainability, this webinar will focus on how a "digital detox" supports your mental well-being. A cluttered digital environment often leads to feelings of overwhelm, whereas clearing out digital "junk" can reduce stress and anxiety, improve focus, and boost mental clarity.

We will guide you through simple, actionable steps to start your journey, such as deleting unused apps, organizing and deleting duplicate photos, clearing out downloads, documents and trash folders to free up space. By the end of this session, you will have the tools to foster sustainable digital habits that benefit both your productivity and the planet.

Opportunity for Connecticut Libraries



SLI President and Co-Founder Rebekkah Smith Aldrich is doing a presentation for the Connecticut Library Consortium titled *Current Sustainability Practices for Libraries*.

Learn more with the link below.

Register for the Digital Decluttering Webinar

Connecticut Library Consortium: Current Sustainability Practices for
Libraries

MEMBER NEWS

We welcome our new members to the Sustainable Libraries Initiative! Thank you for your joining our community of practice, and demonstrating your commitment to making the world a better place. We're happy to have you!

Sustainable Library Certification Program Members:



Bethpage Public Library
Bethpage, New York



Dormann Library
Bath, New York



Grinnell College
Grinnell, Iowa



Normal Public Library
Normal, Illinois



Robbins Library
Arlington, Massachusetts



Oxford Library Company
Oxford, Pennsylvania



Washtenaw Community College
Ann Arbor, Michigan

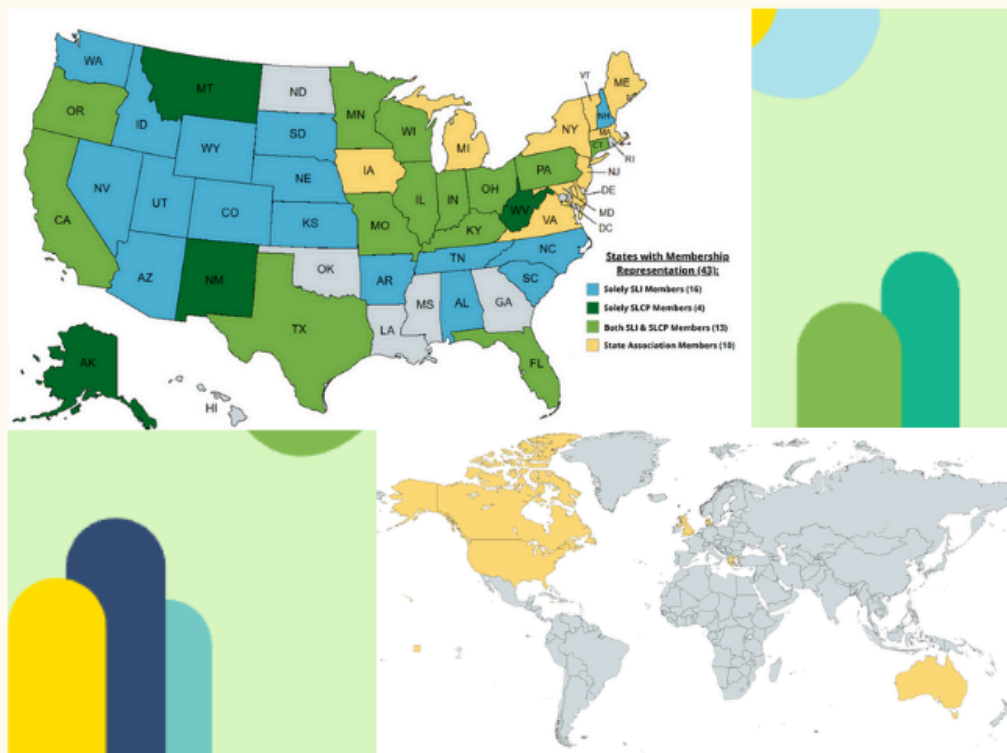
Sustainable Libraries Initiative Members:

Personal:

- Cheyenne Chontos Harrisburg, South Dakota
- Christine Szeluga Cranford, New Jersey

Library Systems:

- Questar III BOCES School Library System Castleton, New York



Did you know you can see a map of all our SLI membership on our participants page? Find the link below to explore our community of practice and see where your resources are coming from across the globe!

SLI Participants

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

February 5

SLCP Meetup: Resilience Planning

1:00 pm EST

Join us to discuss examples of how libraries can work to identify potential hazards and threats to our communities as well as how we can establish adaptation, mitigation, and recovery plans.

REGISTER NOW



March 5

SLCP Meetup: Financial Sustainability

1:00 pm EST

Join SLI staff and guest speakers in a group discussion on financial sustainability: a crucial component of the triple bottom line. All are welcome!

REGISTER NOW



April 9

SLCP Meetup: Collections

1:00 pm EST

Join us to learn helpful tips from fellow SLCP members, join in on a discussion about sustainability, and ask general or topic-specific questions. We hope to see you there! All are welcome

REGISTER NOW



May 14

SLCP Meetup: Final Presentation

1:00 pm EST

Join us to learn helpful tips from fellow SLCP members, join in on a discussion about sustainability, and ask general or topic-specific questions. We hope to see you there! All are welcome!

REGISTER NOW



February SLCP Meetup: Resilience Planning

March SLCP Meetup: Financial Sustainability

April SLCP Meetup: Collections

May SLCP Meetup: Final Presentation

PrintReleaf empowers SLCP members to offset the paper and fiber-based materials consumption of your library, in order to sustain and grow our global forestry system. SLCP members can [submit your paper purchases](#) here.



Thanks to the SLI's partnership with CCP Solutions, Sustainable Library Certification Program members have [collectively offset the equivalent of 29.26M letter pages of paper consumption by reforesting 3.51K trees!](#)
Keep up the good work!



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