



**Sustainable  
Libraries  
Initiative**

August 2025



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Libraries  
Initiative**

# SLI Newsletter

The latest news and updates from  
the Sustainable Libraries Initiative

## Issue Contents:

- Congratulations!
- Member Spotlight
- SLI Updates
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## Congratulations!



**Jacqueline Liesch**  
Meadowview Elementary  
School Librarian,  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin



**Susan Cooper**  
Georgetown High  
School Librarian,  
Georgetown, Texas

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

Jacqueline Liesch Press Release

Jacqueline Liesch Final Presentation

Susan Cooper Press Release

Susan Cooper Final Presentation

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Melissa A. King

**Location:** Gaithersburg, Maryland

**Membership:** SLCP School Librarian



School librarian Melissa King fosters a love of learning about the environment in her students and helps them build environmental literacy skills through partnerships, immersive programming, and experiential learning.



Originally joining the Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP) to support the school's status as a Maryland Green School, Melissa sponsors the Flower Hill Elementary School Green Team and introduces sustainability topics in fun and innovative ways.

As part of the Green Team's work, her students conduct campus-cleanups; manage a pollinator garden; build and monitor bluebird boxes; monitor water samples from a neighborhood pond; harvest lettuce grown in their garden as part of the Nature Forward's Salad Science Program, combining the fresh greens with a rainbow of fruits and veggies, and having a Salad Party; among other learning activities.

Hands-on, experiential learning opportunities create an atmosphere for her students to develop lifelong skills and love for the natural world. One notable program was the *Emma and the Bees* bilingual book walk from Syncretic Press in which Melissa set up in the school's courtyard. The book walk was donated to Montgomery County Public Schools Outdoor Education Department by Conservation Nation. To enhance the experience, Melissa also reached out to a local beekeeper that provided honey for tasting and some equipment to demonstrate beekeeping.

Also important are the partnerships Melissa has formed with local organizations to bring additional resources to her students of all ages on the topics of nature, agriculture, wildlife, mindfulness, sustainability and energy conservation.



Have a great idea you're proud of? Fill out the form linked below to submit your idea for future editions of the newsletter!

Emma and the Bees StoryWalk

Want to be featured?: [form for submissions](#)



# SLI UPDATES

## The Sustainable Libraries Initiative Partners with the Maryland Library Association



A new partnership between the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI) and the Maryland Library Association (MLA) aims to equip MLA members with tools and resources to address the challenges and mitigate the impact of climate change.

Through this partnership, MLA joins 7 other states including in committing to sustainability by ensuring access to sustainability tools, webinars, vendors, program ideas, and educational materials.

"We are very excited to work more closely with MLA and enable all of their members to accelerate their adoption of practices that will help them live their values out loud while adapting in the face of climate change," said Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, SLI Board President. "Positioning the Maryland library community as leaders in this conversation will allow them to follow the lead of hundreds of other libraries in our program, a strong move to ensure libraries contribute to their community's resilience and remain relevant and responsive institutions."

A number of Marylanders are already blazing a trail in their state as early adopters of the Sustainable Library Certification Program, including School Librarian Melissa King (see member spotlight) and the soon-to-be certified University of Maryland Libraries.

Members of the Maryland Library Association who opt-in via the SLI website will receive one free year of annual membership to the Sustainable Libraries Initiative and a 20% discount on the award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program. Cohorts of five or more libraries will receive a 25% discount on certification, supporting the principle that there is power in collective action. An *Introduction to the SLI* webinar will be held on September 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm Eastern. See "**For Your Calendar**" for more details.

[Read the Press Release](#)

## Claudia Depkin Steps Down After a Decade of Service to the SLI Advisory Board

Claudia Depkin is stepping down from the Sustainable Libraries Initiative's Advisory Board after a decade of dedicated service to the project. Claudia is one of the original co-creators of the SLI! She was present at the very first retreat held at the Carey Institute for Global Good in 2015 from which the project emerged.



Claudia's service has helped to shape a community of practice that has grown to encompass thousands of library workers across the globe and the creation of the award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program. Claudia did not just advise on these projects but is a practitioner herself, leading her own library, the Haverstraw King's Daughters Public Library, where she is the director, to complete the Sustainable Library Certification Program in 2022.

In 2019, Claudia was recognized nationally for her efforts on the topic of sustainability when she was named a Library Journal Mover & Shaker. In her M&S profile article she noted, "I've got to walk the walk if I'm going to talk the talk!" Claudia remains committed to the work of the SLI, and will continue to serve as a mentor to several libraries in the Sustainable Library Certification Program and as a member of the SLI Advisory Board's Community of Practice & User Experience Committee.

The Advisory Board extends its sincere gratitude to Claudia for her service to not only the SLI but to our profession. Claudia has exemplified dignified, pragmatic, and professional leadership alongside her colleagues which has inspired thousands of library professionals across the planet.

Claudia Depkin: Mover and Shaker



## SLI Advisory Board Member Sarah Tribelhorn Featured as a “Librarian Luminary” by *Charleston Hub*

In an interview with *Charleston Hub*, Sarah Tribelhorn is recognized for her trailblazing efforts at San Diego State University where she works as the Sustainability Librarian.

Throughout the interview, Sarah discusses her background, her role as a leader of the SDSU Library Green Team, her interests and research throughout her librarianship, as well as her advocacy for sustainable practices in libraries as an SLI Advisory Board member and current coordinator for ALA’s SustainRT.

Click the link to the interview below to learn more about her work and achievements!

**“I think there is more urgency than ever to be doing climate-related work and telling the story, and that this work touches all of our jobs, no matter where we work in libraries.”**

## Sustainability Job Board

The SLI is piloting a job board in our monthly newsletters with a goal of:

- helping sustainably-minded job seekers find sustainable libraries
- allowing libraries to advertise sustainability-related positions

Please reach out to [sliaadmin@suffolknet.org](mailto:sliaadmin@suffolknet.org) with details on open positions to help us build this resource!



Charleston Hub on Sarah Tribelhorn

## Recent SLI Member Features:

### Maplewood Memorial Library




Sustainable Library Certification Program participant Maplewood Memorial Library made multiple news outlets for the reopening of their new, sustainably designed, LEED Gold certified library -- the first library in New Jersey to achieve this designation.

Most notably, CBS News New York did a 15 minute segment with John Elliot exploring the new library and plethora of programs provided to celebrate with the community.

Learn about the improvements to Maplewood Memorial Library with the links below.

### San Diego County Library

San Diego County Library has been nationally recognized with *two* awards from the National Association of Counties – one of which was received specifically for the work they completed during the Sustainable Library Certification Program. Click the link below to read the library's celebratory Facebook post and learn more!



**We are incredibly proud to receive the Sustainable Library Certification, a clear reflection of our dedication to environmental stewardship.**

**-SDCL DIRECTOR  
MIGELL ACOSTA**

Maplewood Memorial Library: CBS NEWS NY

Maplewood Memorial Library: ROI-NJ



Maplewood Memorial Library: The Village Green

San Diego County Library: Facebook Post

## 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:



Arlington Public Library  
Arlington, Virginia



Central Islip Public Library  
Central Islip, New York



Daniel Boone Regional Library  
Columbia, Missouri

Farmingdale Public Library

Farmingdale Public Library  
Farmingdale, New York



Unity Public Library  
Unity, Maine



## **Sustainable Libraries Initiative Members:**

### **Public:**

- |                                      |                        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Anne Arundel County Public Library | Laurel, Maryland       |
| • Indianapolis Public Library        | Indianapolis, Indiana  |
| • Moorestown Library                 | Moorestown, New Jersey |
| • Patten Free Library                | Bath, Maine            |
| • Rockingham Free Public Library     | Bellows Falls, Vermont |
| • Waterford Library                  | Waterford, Maine       |

### **Personal:**

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| • Joan Ruelle  | Salisbury, Maryland    |
| • John Burgess | Tuscaloosa, Alabama    |
| • Witt Salley  | Gaithersburg, Maryland |

### **Library Systems:**

- |                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Westchester Library System | Elmsford, New York |
|------------------------------|--------------------|

### **Academic:**

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • University of Nebraska-Lincoln | Lincoln, Nebraska               |
| • University of Saskatchewan     | Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada |



# FOR YOUR CALENDAR

**August 7**

SLCP Meetup:  
Transportation  
1:00 pm EST

Whether it's managing commuter miles for staff and patrons, offsetting your emissions, or managing a fleet- the sustainability of transportation can be a challenge. Join us in a discussion with your peers and bring questions!

REGISTER NOW



**September 4**

SLCP Meetup: Energy  
1:00 pm EST

In this month's meetup, come learn how libraries are finding ways to reduce electricity expenditure, make heating and cooling systems more efficient, or make the swap to renewable energy solutions!

REGISTER NOW



**September 8**

Introduction to the SLI  
2:00 pm EST

New to the SLI? Learn about the exclusive tools and resources that help library leaders be more authentic and focused in their decision making; resource use; service and program design; and partnerships to align with the triple bottom line of sustainability

REGISTER NOW



**September 25**

Webinar: Libraries as  
Cooling Centers  
2:00 pm EST

Save the date!

Not yet posted, check our website calendar regularly for updates!

REGISTER NOW



August SLCP Meetup: Transportation

September SLCP Meetup: Energy

## Help Us Build Our Community!



The Sustainable Libraries Initiative is putting out a call for idea sharing from our members!

If you have any great **sustainable program ideas, sustainable vendors, policy examples, grant resources, or sustainable book recommendations**, please consider submitting your ideas to share with the SLI community.

As a community of practice, the SLI thrives on the diversity and dedication of our members to uplift and support each other down the same path. By sharing your ideas, you're helping out your peers and positioning yourself as an engaged member of the community.

Submissions are most needed by libraries/librarians located **outside of New York State, or in the school or academic setting**, but we welcome any and all suggestions.

The SLI also welcomes advocates interested in speaking at future SLCP meetups! Every month, the SLI hosts a meeting to discuss one broad aspect of sustainability. Although the meetups follow the pattern of the Sustainable Library Certification Program, all are welcome to join! To be eligible to speak, your library must be partaking in or have completed the SLCP. We are simply looking for volunteers to talk about their experience with the respective section and answer questions. Most presenters speak for 10-15 minutes and some like to provide a visual such as slides or pictures, but there are no strict guidelines: feel free to make it your own!

Thank you for your consideration!



Forms for submissions linked below (**you must be logged in to view them**) or email us at [sladmin@suffolknet.org](mailto:sladmin@suffolknet.org) to make your suggestion.

Program Idea Suggestion Form

[Sustainable Vendor Suggestion Form](#)

[Grant Resource Suggestion Form](#)

[SLCP Meetup Speaker Volunteer Form](#)

All Other Suggestions: Email [sliadmin@suffolknet.org](mailto:sliadmin@suffolknet.org)

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 25.48M letter pages of paper consumption by reforesting 3.06K trees!](#)  
Keep up the good work!



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