

# MHLS Report to Member Library Directors | April 22, 2026

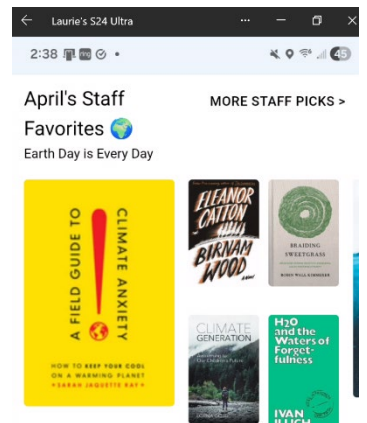
The format of this report is based on the MHLS service priorities as determined by MHLS stakeholders.

## 1. Delivery Services

- a. Please be sure to review "[Forward Sorting Tips for Member Libraries](#)" with new staff to ensure that is being done correctly. We thank member library staff for their attention to this effort, it makes the entire delivery service run more efficiently. If you have any questions about the process, or need a refresher, please contact Chris Herron, Operations Manager: [cherron@midhudson.org](mailto:cherron@midhudson.org).
- b. The Operations Team will conduct its **annual review of the circulation data that influences delivery volume** to determine if any adjustments to the number of stops are necessary to right-size the delivery service routes. This process uses the three year averages of data (2023, 2024, and 2025). If your library had any major anomalies during one of these three years, please reach out to Chris Herron, Operations Manager at [cherron@midhudson.org](mailto:cherron@midhudson.org) or x247.
- c. For your information: Due to the rise in the price of gas, as per our contract, **MHLS is currently paying a gasoline surcharge** to our delivery vendor, Valley Courier. This surcharge helps the drivers manage the increased operating costs so they can continue to provide their high level of service to libraries. Don't forget to thank them for all they do if you happen to cross paths, as that goes a long way too.
- d. MHLS Operations is currently working with the Marlboro Library during their construction project to provide storage of items at MHLS for items normally returning to their shelves while still delivering holds for their patrons at Marlboro. **If your library is also facing renovation/construction or an emergency situation that may impact delivery, just let us know if we can help.**
- e. **Libraries participating in the HomeBoost program:** when a patron brings back their custom energy assessment report, they are eligible for a free weatherization kit from Central Hudson. If you need a resupply of weatherization kits please reach out to Chris Herron, Operations Manager at [cherron@midhudson.org](mailto:cherron@midhudson.org) or x247.

## 2. Integrated Library System & Cataloging Services

- a. Our new version of **Text messaging** is now installed and currently being tested. The new system works with the current email/telephone/print messages to provide an additional text message when the regular circulation notice is sent. Unlike our current system, it does not notify the patron when the item goes on the holdshelf. In its first iteration the service sends messages for holds, overdues and bills. It does not send a text courtesy message. Patrons who are currently enrolled to receive messages will need to enroll in the new product once we go live. At that time, we will end the service of the original system, and patrons will no longer receive texts on the legacy platform. Patrons will enroll in the service on a web page, which we will promote after testing.
- b. **Discover Showcases in the Mobile App**  
If your library is creating showcases or if you would like to promote our new



**Staff Picks** in the mobile app, you can now add Discover showcases within the mobile app. Showcases are added in the Home Screen tab or the Book Carousel Tab of the App content management system (CMS). “Vega Showcase” is now available in the carousel type option menu. To find the code for the showcase you would like to add, select view all link on the showcase in Discover. Then copy the last segment of the url, and paste it into the items section in the CMS instead of a record number or ISBN. For more information about [Carousels and how to implement them see the Training on Demand Tutorial](#)

- c. We are looking forward to our next **Sierra User Group meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>**. The session will be web-based, so please encourage your staff to attend if possible. It is a “user” group, so participation really is the idea. It is an opportunity for staff to ask questions and share ideas as well as an opportunity to hear firsthand what is coming soon to our ILS and related platforms. This year we will be highlighting the next release of Sierra, Vega Reports. We will be fresh back from the Innovative User Group in Chicago and be brimming with exciting news to share. We will be demonstrating how you can use the ILS, Discover and the Mobile app to promote your collection this year.  
[Register for the event on the MHLS Calendar.](#)
- d. **eCommerce:** A resolution to the problem we have been having with online payments in the discover catalog has been found. For more than a month, payments made in the catalog were failing about 80% of the time. This was due to a security timeout in Sierra that was cutting off the PayPal API transaction before it would complete. The issue began when PayPal modified code in the API exchange process globally. Unfortunately, that code was incompatible with Sierra. The solution that was arrived at after weeks of discussion was to revert our setup on the PayPal side back to the original configuration. That was done on April 13th. The next step will be for Innovative to develop their APIs to meet PayPal’s new code in the next Sierra release.
- e. [An Introduction to the Patron Record](#) is now included on the MHLS Training on Demand Technology academy in the circulation category. This is a very intimate and deep dive into the patron record, where every element of the record is reviewed. Staff will learn not only how to enter the fields properly but also why and where the data is used. It will help staff to understand the importance and lasting impact of good entry and accurate coding. It will be a foundational asset for managing patron record cleanup and record management.

### 3. Coordinated IT Services

- a. **Purchasing from Dell Paused** – The high rise in the cost of computer components (thank you AI) and other market instigators like tariffs and shipping fees have raised the cost to unprecedented levels, allowing Dell to exercise an adjustment to the NY State contract pricing. At the time of this report the state and Dell were still negotiating the details of the contract. Until the contract is resolved MHLS is on pause for ordering computers of any type through Dell. Our Rep expects this to soon be completed and when the dust clears the pricing will be significantly higher. As soon as we know, we will post new pricing on our knowledgebase and update you through the MHLS Notices list.
- b. **Another Access Point Renewal Reminder! This affects nearly all MHLS Member Libraries.** Any library who has an MHLS Access point for WiFi will need to repurchase a unit and license to continue using the device for Wifi. The pricing will be negotiated based on the number of units and licenses we will purchase in a group buy, but we expect the price to be near \$1,500 per unit with the license. The

process will begin in June with an action memo to understand who is participating in the buy. At that time, we will provide you with the number of units currently in service at your library. The units will be purchased sometime in July or early August to ensure shipment and implementation prior to the October.

#### 4. Professional Development & Continuing Education

##### a. Horizons Series

- [\*\*Information Literacy in the Age of AI: Learning Opportunities for Public Libraries\*\*](#) | May 7 | 10 – 11 AM | Online

How can libraries stay ahead of the AI curve? Christine Faraday, author of *Information Literacy in the Age of AI*, joins us to share essential techniques for navigating today's messy information landscape. Learn how to master lateral reading, spot AI-generated content, and transform these skills into staff training and public programs. Get the practical strategies you need to lead your community through the AI revolution.

**About the Presenter:** Christine Faraday, has been a part of the SUNY Nassau Community College library faculty for more than 15 years. A Professor and recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship, Christine has spent her career helping both students and educators navigate the complexities of the modern information landscape.

- [\*\*AI in the Workplace\*\*](#) | June 8 | 10:00 – 11:15 AM | Online

AI is changing how work gets done. Join us for a live demonstration of how one librarian is using AI tools to streamline tasks, generate content, and experiment with new ways of working. This session is designed to spark ideas, address questions, and help you think about what AI could mean for your library and community. No prior experience needed.

**About the Presenter:** Bobbi Lee Slossar, Technology Librarian, New Hampshire State Library

- [\*\*Crafting an AI Policy for Your Public Library: Practical, Ethical, Adaptable\*\*](#) | July 9 | 10 – 11 AM | Online

As AI tools become more integrated into library work, clear and thoughtful policies are essential. In this session, we will hear from Adam Di Filippo, Director of the Holderness Free Library in New Hampshire. Adam will share how he developed one of the first public library AI policies in the state; designed to be practical, readable, and patron-facing.

This presentation will walk through key components including privacy, bias, transparency, staff training, and accountability, along with real-world applications and considerations for working with vendors. Attendees will gain a flexible framework they can adapt to their own institutions, along with strategies for keeping policies relevant as technology continues to evolve.

**About the Presenter:** Adam Di Filippo, Director, Holderness Free Library, New Hampshire

##### b. Belonging Series

- **Path-to-Belonging Introductory Session | Online - Registration Coming Soon | Wednesday, May 20 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

Libraries have long enjoyed being popular third places and trusted community anchors. But how can library professionals take the next step, and create places of belonging, where everyone is not only welcome, but invested in the organization's success?

Join us for a one-hour interactive webinar about the Path-to-Belonging initiative, designed for small and rural libraries to work with their communities to create a resilient, healthy future. Participants will learn about the Path-to-Belonging, have a chance to try one of its tools, and learn about an upcoming cohort.

Due to the participatory nature of this webinar, it will not be recorded.

The Path-to-Belonging is designed by NYS Outreach Coordinators from 8 different systems with input from public libraries, groups and consultants nationwide.

- **[MHLS Member Library Friends Groups Meetup](#) | Wednesday, May 13 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM | Boardman Road Branch Library, 141 Boardman Road, Poughkeepsie**

MHLS Member Library Friends Groups are invited to join us at the Poughkeepsie Public Library District's (PPLD) Friends' Bookstore! Attendees will get a tour of the bookstore and an overview from the Friends of PPLD followed by sharing and discussion. This event is open to all MHLS member library Friends Groups. Please register through the MHLS Calendar.

- **[Quality over Quantity! Reimagining your Library's Program Planning](#) | Thursday, May 28 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM | Desmond-Fish Public Library - 472 NY-403 Garrison NY**

Join us at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison for a discussion led by Programming Librarian, Justice McCray focused on Quality over Quantity with program planning. In this discussion, we'll explore some of the unique programs the Desmond-Fish Library has been able to offer and how they came to be. Additionally, we'll discuss:

- ways to adapt to community needs as they change,
- how less can sometimes be more,
- when to sunset programs, and
- how to lean into the unique opportunities your library and area have to offer.

Bring your walking shoes! We will also take a tour of the library grounds and other spaces that the Desmond-Fish Library utilizes for programming.

**About the Presenter:** Justice McCray (they/them) has been working in libraries for over 10 years, starting as a Teen Geek and Page at the Howland Public Library in Beacon New York. In 2019 they began working at the Desmond-Fish Library, supporting patrons with tech help, circulation, managing social media, learning as Assistant Programming Librarian, and finally stepping into their current role as head of programs. Outside of their library work, Justice

organizes the Annual Beacon Juneteenth Riverfront Festival, is a former City Councilperson for the City of Beacon (2022-23) and currently helps run a free breakfast program Tuesdays- Thursdays through their nonprofit, Beacon's Backyard. In their free time, you can find them at the gym, practicing archery, baking, volunteering, or at a drag show.

- **Amuse Bouche - A Taste of Programming:** A new series from MHLS that features 10–15 minute recorded interviews with MHLS library staff talking about programs that are just a little bit different. Want to feature your programmer? Have them submit their program [through this form](#) to sign up for the series.

c. Trustee Ed

- Trustee Handbook Book Club: Laws and Regulations Online | Online | Wednesday, June 17 | 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM | [Register](#)
- Trustee Handbook Book Club: Duties & Responsibilities of Key Officer Roles Online | Online | Thursday, October 29 | 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM | [Register](#)

d. Directors

- Handbook Series
  1. Director Handbook Book Club: Getting Off to a Good Start | Online | Friday, May 15 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | [Register](#)
  2. Director Handbook Book Club: The Director-Board Relationship Online | Online | Friday, September 25 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | [Register](#)
  3. Director Handbook Book Club: Library Network in New York State Online | Online | Wednesday, December 9 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | [Register](#)
- New Director Forums
  1. Wednesday, June 24 | 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM | MHLS Auditorium | [Register](#)
  2. Thursday, October 8 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Online | [Register](#)

## 5. Consulting & Development

- a. In March, the Board of Regents approved an amendment to section 90.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education relating to New York Public and Association Library Minimum Standard #4: Board-approved written policies. The standard now includes specific policies which must be reviewed and updated at least once every five years or earlier if required by law:
- The selection of library materials and reconsideration of such selection
  - Public usage of library space and meeting rooms
  - Codes of conduct
  - Confidentiality of library records
  - Internal library policies related to:
    1. Personnel policies that ensure consistent staff management and fair employment practices
    2. Disaster preparedness
    3. Financial control policies that fulfill the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of the governing body and promote fiscal oversight, accountability, and sustainable management

The Public Library System Directors Organization (PULISDO) and the New York State Library have updated the [Helpful Information for Meeting Minimum Public Library Standards](#) webpage to reflect this.

Support from MHLS:

- If you are seeking examples of policies in this list you are missing, please visit our [Sample Public Library Policies & Policy Development Tips](#) page
  - If you need help keeping track of your policies for development purposes as well as to comply with the requirement all of these policies be reviewed every five years: [Download the MHLS Essential Documents Inventory Workbook](#)
  - Don't forget: each library has free access to [dPlan](#) this year to help you develop your disaster preparedness policy/plan thanks to The Library of Local Project
  - Training
    - The New York State Library will offer a series of trainings throughout May-June on each policy area.
    - From MHLS: On June 10 at 10am we will offer an event to review each of these policies and key attributes of each
  - As always, if you have an immediate questions, just reach out to us!
- b. The Dr. John L. Flatau Voting & Elections Database of New York Act was passed in 2025 and goes into effect this year. The State Board of Elections has ruled that this vote **applies to School District Public Libraries. They seem clear that Association Libraries will not need to comply with this. The understanding for Special District Public Libraries seems less clear so if you are the director of a special district public library you may wish to consult your attorney.** This law states that upon certification of election results and the completion of the voter history file after every election, each election authority shall, by January 1st after such election, or within ten (10) business days, whichever is later, transmit to the New York State Board of Elections, if such election authority is able to maintain the record, copies of:
- election results at the election district level for every statewide election and every election in every political subdivision;
  - contemporaneous voter registration lists;
  - voter history files;
  - maps or other documentation of the configuration of districts in any format or formats as specified by the New York State Board of Elections;
  - tabulations of the number of valid and invalid affidavit ballots, the reasons for which affidavit ballots were invalid, and the quantity and disposition of affidavit ballots subject to the cure procedure prescribed by [Election Law § 9-209\(3\)](#);
  - tabulations of the number of valid and invalid absentee ballots, the reasons for which absentee ballots were invalid and the quantity of absentee ballots invalid for each such reason, and the quantity and disposition of absentee ballots subject to the cure procedure prescribed by [Election Law § 9-209\(3\)](#);
  - lists of election day poll sites and early voting sites and maps or other documentation of the configuration of districts in any format or formats as specified by the New York State Board of Elections of the election districts assigned to each election day poll site or early voting site;
  - adopted districting or redistricting plans for every election in every political subdivision; and

- any other publicly available data as requested by the New York State Board of Elections.
- c. **Municipal Ballot (414 Vote) Advisory:** For libraries that use the municipal ballot option, commonly referred to as the 414 vote, please be advised that Education Law 259 is very clear that *“An increase in library funding provided pursuant to this paragraph shall not apply to a municipal budget adopted prior to the date of such election.”* This means that if a municipality approves their budget before the outcome of the General Election is finalized, the amount approved by the voters does not have to be collected until the second tax cycle after the vote, greatly delaying the receipt of the funds your library is counting on. Be sure to be clear when preparing municipal leaders that they should either earmark the amount in their budget if it is approved prior to Election Day, or, simply wait until after Election Day to approve their budget to ensure the timely collection and transfer of funds to the library board.
- There are **monthly 414 meet-ups** for member library 414 teams to review where they should be in the process along the way, to share info and ask questions. This has been proven to help teams stay on track, avoid common pitfalls, and share information across the region that could help inform a library's 414 campaign.
    - [Tuesday, May 26 at 2pm](#)
    - [Monday, June 22 at 2pm](#)
    - [Thursday, July 16 at 1pm](#)
    - No meet-up in August
    - [Wednesday, September 9 at 2pm](#)
    - [Thursday, October 1 at 2pm](#)
    - Post-Vote Debrief: [Tuesday, November 17 at 2pm](#)
- d. **MHLS has renewed its arrangement with Vision HR.** Options for member libraries range from having an HR consultant on retainer for all manner of HR questions you may have to a fee-for-service model for review of your employee handbook, personnel files, training, or consulting on a particular aspect of this area of work. There is a discount of 33% for having their staff on retainer or a 20% discount on fee-for-service activities such as reviewing your personnel handbook and auditing your personnel files. Please see the information sheet posted to the MHLS Notice list on March 31 for more information.
- e. **Health Insurance Research:** At the DA meeting, Rebekkah will report on her initial findings regarding aggregating member library health insurance policies to seek lower costs.
- f. **2025 Annual Report:** We appreciate the patience and effort you all exhibited during this unusual year. Reports are being checked by MHLS and then submitted for State & Federal review.

## 6. Cooperative Collection Development & Digital Collection Access

- a. OverDrive tools to aid you in OverDrive Marketplace now available in KnowledgeBase

**Filtering OverDrive reports to the “active holds”** is possible in OverDrive Marketplace reports builder. This will help you to review the items that are actively in the queue for filling apart from those items that are suspended. While you will still find it useful to get the big picture for your collection development purposes, fine tuning the report will help you to see immediate demand. If you have set up recommended ordering, the **Holds Manager Tool** can also be set to filter to only active holds. Both have been documented on our Web site

Current holds report options

Run by: Title

Branch: All branches

RLA System: All

User status: All

Weed status: All

Hold status: Active

Availability: All

Website: Suspended

Reset all filters Update Create worksheet Cancel

## Holds Manager

\* Plan name

### Required Criteria

\* When should titles be added to the plan?

When holds ratio exceeds

Holds ratio = holds/number of copies owned.

When number of holds exceeds

\* Which formats should be included?

Ebook

Audiobook

### Optional Criteria

Should suspended holds be included?

Yes

No

- b. The New York Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, Queens Public Library are reportedly in talks to suspend access to their digital (read: OverDrive) collections by non-New York City residents. This is access many of our patrons have become very comfortable with and it will likely be tough news for them if this comes to pass.
- c. Last summer, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHL Executive Director, was invited to join a new working group: The New York State eBook Working Group. The New York State eBook Working Group was established in May 2025, following a regional eBook Summit convened by Library Futures which included 31 participants representing libraries from 6 northeast states: Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island. The goal of the summit was to share experiences with eBook platforms, publishers, and local legislators in seeking to redress unfair pricing in the eBook market and to come up with a unified strategy to continue to seek corrections to the problem.

To facilitate this broader work, and to create a unified approach to the eBook problem within New York State (NYS), the NYS eBook Working Group (hereafter referred to as the “Working Group”) was formed with the initial charge of identifying key issues and concerns related to eContent management in the public library field. Over the initial months of working together the working group identified four goals:

- Creating a Collection Development Best Practices for Digital Lending Guide to help libraries optimize digital lending strategies while balancing print and electronic acquisitions
- Identifying effective negotiation strategies and best practices for eContent contracts.
- Research and recommend an effective solution for a statewide eContent platform
- Create a mechanism for collecting and sharing data about digital collection spending and usage across New York State

Rebekkah serves on the Statewide Collaboration Team. The Statewide Collaboration Team (SCT) has explored how eCollections have been shared statewide; ways to unify current eCollections across Public Library Systems; exploring the best option for a single interface for patrons to access all we have to offer - including the state of eCollection delivery through ILS delivery layers; and how we may leverage the economic power of public libraries in NYS to change the current vendor license practices.

### **Issues to be Addressed**

- Unsustainability of current digital pricing and terms combined with steady growth in usage and perceived need for increased spending
- Diminished paths to digital ownership and control of collections.
- Lack of competition in the marketplace
- Dominance of Libby in the minds of patrons (and libraries), leading to patrons drifting away from physical libraries and their core services
- Status of NYLA legislation: initial bill vetoed by the Governor, new bills uncertain
- Lack of widespread resource sharing/cooperation among the systems
- Reality of the likelihood of the three NYC libraries (Tri-Li) “tightening up” non-city usage of their digital collections.
- Lack of clarity/agreement about how we issue library cards across NYS to patrons not in our direct service area.
- Lack of consensus/adoption among NYS public libraries regarding best practices for leveraging the “power of the purse” to push back against unsustainable licensing terms and pricing.

### **Long-Term Goals Identified**

1. Create a competitive marketplace that allows for more flexible licensing options and includes purchase options
2. Portability of content across vendor platforms + surface discovery across multiple collections (i.e. integration of content into existing catalogs/discovery layers)
3. Support resource sharing across public library systems (ILL of digital collections) / reciprocal lending agreements

At the DA meeting, Rebekkah will provide an update on where things stand with this work and what to expect next.

## **7. Awareness & Advocacy Services**

### **a. Budget Updates**

- State: The state budget, which was supposed to be passed by April 1, is still not done.
- Federal:

1. President Trump has proposed no funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services, consistent with what he has proposed in the past. Currently the House and Senate have strong funding proposals for IMLS in their budget proposals.
  2. The American Library Association and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees have [reached a settlement](#) in *ALA et al. v. Keith Sonderling et al.*, a case to prevent the dismantling of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. On April 9, all the parties agreed to a voluntary dismissal of the case. Legislative Updates
- b. [NYLA Spring on the Hill](#): Tuesday, May 19 from 8:00am-5:00pm at the Albany Capital Center (55 Eagle Street, Albany, NY 12207) Registration Deadline: May 1
- Keynote speaker: Sam Helmick, ALA President
  - Sessions:
    1. Navigating the Seas of the Public Conversation with Joe Bonilla, Managing Partner/Senior Media Director of Relentless Awareness LLC: Learn more about the ever-evolving media landscape and how to make your library into your own "network" to not only promote, but to defend funding and priorities. Hear about tactics to gain more attention not only in the press, but through social and digital media and other tools.
    2. Our Storybridge Listens with Jery Huntly: Founder and President of the nonprofit [OurStoryBridge Inc.](#), will communicate the power of storytelling in advocacy, especially relevant in our divided times. She will share her experience with [OurStoryBridge Listens: Present in the Moment](#), the new, non-partisan Partner Project by OurStoryBridge that documents, through online short-form oral histories, the current circumstances in the United States that are deeply impacting Americans and others around the world and also reflect upon her experience as a librarian and teacher, NYS Assembly and U.S. Congress staff, environmental lobbyist, and association CEO that led her to believe so strongly in stories.
    3. Libraries and the Pursuit of a More Perfect Union with Laurien Moore, State Librarian, and Kent Sopris, NYSED Office of Government Relations: Advocating for libraries is also advocating for a set of ideals. When we talk about the work libraries do to benefit all community members, we have an opportunity to tell a new kind of library story, one that reflects our shared values and aspirations. And our stakeholders are listening!
    4. Formalizing Regional Advocacy – Government Relations Staff at the System Level with Jen Park, RCLS Government Relations Specialist, Kerri Souto, SCLS Government and Community Relations Coordinator and Max Prime, NYLA Director of Government Relations and Advocacy: Hear from Jen Park and Kerri Suoto about how their systems have formalized system-level advocacy structures through the creation of staff positions dedicated to leading local and regional efforts, as well as how those positions interact with and support NYLA’s statewide library advocacy.
    5. Library Training Presentation Fundamentals with Stephanie “Cole” Adams: Want to present, but it’s intimidating? Tried it a few times, but want to improve? You can do it!

In this session, NYLA welcomes newer and presentation-curious library advocates to learn and practice the fundamentals of presenting and training.

6. A National Look at State Advocacy with Amelia Aldred, ALA: Amelia Aldred, Deputy Director of State and Local Advocacy for ALA , will present on state/local library advocacy trends across the US. Hear about what is going on around the nation regarding library funding and legislation, giving context to our statewide advocacy efforts.

## 8. Interlibrary Loan Services

- a. The Recorded Webinar [Interlibrary Loan \(ILL\) Overview](#), has been added to the ILL category of Training on Demand: Technology.

## 9. Construction Program Services

- a. The 2026-2027 Construction Aid Cycle will be accepting applications this summer. Libraries interested in applying must answer [action memo #26-02 Intent to Apply survey by May 1](#).
- b. If you missed the *Introduction to the State Aid for Library Construction* workshop held online on April 14th, a recording will be posted in the Library Sustainability Academy on the MHLS Training on Demand Platform.
- c. 0386-26 projects: have been passed on to the Dormitory Authority of New York (DASNY) for review.

## 10. Communications Among Member Libraries

- a. The deadline to submit job openings to be included in the MHLS Bulletin is Wednesday, 4:00 pm of the week prior to publication. The MHLS Bulletin is published every Tuesday. Please send job ads to [bulletin@midhudson.org](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org).
- b. MHLS is always looking for member spotlights to share in the Bulletin. If you have a program, partnership, grant, collection, etc. that you would like to share with your peers, please let us know, [bulletin@midhudson.org](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org).

## 11. Special Populations

- a. **NYS Talking Book and Braille Library Informational Session.** If you missed the session in March the recording can be accessed through [Library Sustainability Training on Demand Platform](#). Resources from the session as well as the slides from the presentation can be accessed through the [NYS TBBL Informational Session Folder](#). If your library is not yet registered with TBBL you can access the application at <https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl/instit>.
- b. **Know Your Rights Cards:** MHLS has a supply of Know Your Rights cards provided by the New York State Library (NYSL) and the New York Immigration Coalition in a variety of languages. **Please use [the order form](#) to receive these free cards for your library.**
- c. **Do you want to make sure your library is accessible to immigrant New Yorkers?** [View the flyer](#) from the New York Immigration Coalition with helpful tips on how to make the library a welcoming and trusted space. For more resources on immigration services, MHLS has compiled information for your library. [View the document and download](#). All content in this document has last updated dates listed so

you have a reference to the timeframe when it was compiled.

- d. The Poughkeepsie Public Library District in partnership with the Mid-Hudson Library System and Revolucion Radio Online bring the **Consulate on Wheels** to the Mid-Hudson Library System Auditorium (105 Market Street, Poughkeepsie) April 28 – May 2.

The Consulate General of Mexico provides its Consulate on Wheels in places where it may be difficult to travel to the consular headquarters in the United States, so that they can process important documents, such as passports and consular IDs.

We encourage all member libraries to advertise this opportunity to their local communities. [Access the image file](#) to create posts or add to newsletters or print and cut out [postcards to handout](#). All materials are in Spanish.

All sessions are by appointment only between the times of 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Appointments can be made by calling MiConsulado 1-424-309-0009.

- e. **The Hudson Valley Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** offers free educational workshops that can help community members better understand long-term care systems before they or their families need them. Many individuals only learn about the complexities of nursing home care, discharge planning, and resident rights during times of crisis. Providing information earlier can help families make more informed decisions and better advocate for their loved ones.

The program offers educational workshops such as:

**Understanding the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and Volunteer Opportunities**

- What Ombudsmen do and how they advocate for residents
- How residents and families can contact the program
- How community members can become certified Ombudsman volunteers

**Residents' Rights in Nursing Homes and Adult Care Facilities**

- Key rights guaranteed under federal and state law
- Common concerns residents experience in long-term care
- How residents and families can address concerns and seek assistance

**Understanding Short-Term Rehabilitation (STR) Before a Nursing Home Stay**

- What short-term rehabilitation is and how it differs from long-term care
- Medicare coverage and common misunderstandings about rehab stays
- Discharge planning and appeal rights residents should know about

**How Families Can Advocate for Loved Ones in Long-Term Care**

- Communicating effectively with facility staff
- Understanding care plans and resident participation
- When and how to contact the Ombudsman for assistance

If your library is interested in holding one or more of these programs please contact Theresa Norbom, Regional Program Director Region 5, NYS Certified Ombudsman | 845-229-4680 x 3 | [tnorbom@ltccc.org](mailto:tnorbom@ltccc.org) | [nursinghome411.org](http://nursinghome411.org). Region 5 covers Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange,

Sullivan, and Ulster. Libraries in Putnam County that are interested in this program should contact Kerstin Cruger, [kcruger@midhudson.org](mailto:kcruger@midhudson.org).

f.

## 12. Cooperative Efforts with Other Library Systems

- a. **Banned Books Symposium: Proactive, Reactive, and Supportive | Saturday, May 16 | 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM | Dutchess BOCES Conference Center in Poughkeepsie, NY.** The cost to attend is \$30 and includes lunch. [Access the list of sessions and event registration](#).

This half-day conference will feature presentations in all capacities of banned and challenged books and programs as well as Keynote Speaker Kasey Meehan from PEN America. This Symposium is in partnership with Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, Ramapo Catskill Library System, Mid-Hudson Library System, Mount Saint Mary College, SUNY New Paltz and BOCES School Library Systems of Dutchess and Ulster.

Kasey Meehan is the Freedom to Read Program Director at PEN America, leading our initiatives to protect the right of students to freely access literature in schools. Previously, Kasey served as the Associate Director of Postsecondary Policy at a mission-driven education research organization in Philadelphia, Research for Action. Kasey's research centers students, educators, and school leaders' experiences in identifying strategies for reform and capturing emerging best practices and strives to connect research to policy and program change. Kasey holds a BA from the University of Pennsylvania and an MPA from the Fels Institute at the University of Pennsylvania, along with a Certificate in Politics.

- b. **The 27th annual Fall into Books Conference will take place in-person on October 22, 2026 at [The Venue Uptown](#) in Kingston, NY.** Held annually, Fall Into Books brings together school and public librarians from eight counties within the Hudson Valley for a day of literacy, discussion, networking, and insight. This collaborative event features book discussion sessions (ranging from picture books to young adult), a morning speaker, a keynote author presentation, a book sale, and catered breakfast and lunch. This conference provides an excellent opportunity for attendees to engage in collaborative discussions on children's and teen literature. Library workers and educators of all types are welcome. Registration information for this event will open in May.

## 13. Administrative

- a. **2027-2031 Plan of Service Development:** Thank you to all who participated in our Plan of Service Focus Groups, the System Services Satisfaction Survey and the ranking of our service priorities. The input from these three activities will be presented to both the MHLS DA's System Services Advisory Committee and the MHLS Board's Personnel & Planning Committee to help inform both the Plan of Service document submitted to both bodies and NYS as well as the annual Action Plans the MHLS staff develop to bring the Plan of Service to life for members.
- b. **MHLS has received the Excellence in Community Engagement Award** from Central Hudson for 2026. This award acknowledges the cooperation between MHLS and Central Hudson to pilot [the Home Energy Assessment program](#) to help homeowners throughout the region conduct their own energy assessments with the use of a thermal imaging camera they borrow at their local library. Central Hudson underwrote

the cameras, a professional report that is produced from the data the homeowner collects, and a weatherization kit that helps a homeowner tackle many of the recommendations they get in the report.

- c. Save the Date! **The 2026 MHLS Annual Membership Meeting** will take place on Friday, October 23 at The Wallace Center of the FDR Presidential Library & Museum. Our keynotes speaker will be [Jennie Rose Halperin, Executive Director of Library Futures](#).
  
- d. We are sad to share the news that **Thomas Silvious, a representative for Greene County on the MHLS Board of Trustees**, has passed away. Thomas was previously the long-term board president of the Heermance Memorial Library in Coxsackie. Thomas had a distinguished career in information technology, serving as an IT Architect and Director for Civil & Health Care Services at General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT). He was deeply committed to improving systems that support public service and healthcare. In addition to his professional work, and his service to the Mid-Hudson Library System, Thomas served as Chairman of the Board for the Hudson Center for Health Equity and Quality, where he dedicated his time and leadership to advancing equitable and high-quality care for all.