2021 Regional Conference
July 29, 2021

Whose Library is it Anyway
Improvisation in Improbable Times

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Callan Bignoli

Changes: Turn and Face the Strange

www.seflin.org/2021conference
Keynote Presentation
10:00am - 11:00am

Callan Bignoli
Changes: Turn and Face the Strange

Libraries find themselves in a strange spot as things get back to some semblance of “normal.” It could be tempting to put new service models developed in response to COVID-19 behind us and return to the same old practices and routines. But before reinstating business as usual, we should think about whether what we are doing (or what we were doing) is relevant, necessary, and in alignment with our values. We can’t just keep adding more and more to our plates and doing more with less, but we should take the time to learn from the gaps COVID revealed and the pivoting it required of us. By realigning our deeply held values and user needs with library goals and services, we can withstand much of what the changing world throws at us. We just need to remain creative, flexible, and open to what the library can be.

CALLAN BIGNOLI is the director of the library at Olin College of Engineering in Needham, Massachusetts. She gathers inspiration from everywhere to inform user-centered practices and push the profession forward. Callan studies and speaks about user experience design, library management, and social issues in technology, challenging students and colleagues to fight for a more just and human future.
Breakout Sessions

11:00am - 12:00pm

The Important Role Libraries Play in Supporting Local Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses
Ginny Sterpka

We’ll Come to You: Outside Library Services and COVID
Kathy Hage, Jennifer McQuown, and Lisa Hataway

Citizenship Inspired
Kathryn Thorp

Improvising During a Pandemic: Bring the Archives and the life of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune to Life
Clarissa West-White, Brandon Nightingale, Tasha Youmans and Ebony Sampson

1:00pm - 2:00pm

English as a Second Language Program Flourishes at South Holiday Library
Claudia Ratay

Whose Program Is It Anyway? Pivoting to Virtual Events and Take-and-Make Kits: Improvisation in Improbable Times
Nancy Keough, Darlene Encomio, and Riki Donnelly

Uncommon Projects for the Common Reader
Danielle Campbell, Iris Fiallos-Finstad, and Dr. David Pena

Responding in a Crisis: Pivoting to a Tele-Reference Service Model during Improbable Times
Sandy Avila, Sarah Norris, Min Tong and Richard Harrison
Breakout Sessions

2:00pm - 3:00pm

The Candy Corn Question: Passive Programming That Pulls People Closer
Paula Willey, Andria Amaral

Fabulous Five: Successful Outreach Programs During the Pandemic
Oyuki Poletz, Amanda Liebl

Pivot! Pivot!
Antoinette Giamalva, Faith Wahlers

Lightning Rounds

Virtual Volunteering at the Public Library for Community Service Credit
Ellen Book

Improvisation and Adaptation in Developing a Successful Long-Term Laptop Lending Program
John Buckard

Staff Development Day at a Distance
Mo Curley

Virtual School Outreach: Successfully Reaching Teachers and Parents
Jennifer Schock

Virtual Instruction Delivery – Workshops and Consultations
Thilani Samarakoon
Poster Presentations

Virtual Student Exhibits
Shamsha Karim

Innovation on the Road: Pasco County Libraries’ Mobile Makerspace
Mary Kate R. Downing

Weeding Out Walls! Time to Be Bold and Rethink Library Programs
Veronica Gonzalez, Ximena Valdivia, and Sarah Hammill

Open Hour with a Librarian
Cynthia Velasco

The Student-Driven Space: Using Student Advisory Board Conversations to Shape our Learning Environment
Cori Wilhelm

The R2 Digital Library Reserve Shelf
Janet Naughton
Presenters

Andria Amaral is a young adult librarian in Charleston, SC. For the past 25 years she has been creating library programs for young people and professional development opportunities for librarians. She can make a passive program out of a pile of pencil shavings and a dirty gym sock.

Sandy Avila is the Science Librarian in the Research and Information Services Department at the University of Central Florida Libraries. Her research interests include emerging technologies in education, online learning, and STEM-related programming and instruction. Sandy handles library instruction, research consultations, and collection development to her assigned subject liaison departments. She is also currently working on the pursuit of a Ph.D and enjoys the outdoors, traveling, and seeking adventure!

Danielle Campbell is a Faculty Librarian at Palm Beach State College. She earned an MA in English and an MSLIS from FSU and has work experience as a classroom teacher and a public librarian. Her research interests include information literacy, pedagogy in librarianship, and accessibility.

Mo Curley is the Library Development Specialist for the Martin County Library System. Mo’s pronouns are she/her/hers. She has been in this position at the library system for the past 2 years and brings fresh insight and innovation to her organization. Mo spearheads the training and onboarding of all the staff in the Martin County Library System.

Oyuki De Santiago Poletz started her library career as a Youth Services Librarian. She is currently the Program Services Librarian III at the Boca Raton Public Library and chairs the Program, Outreach, Events and Marketing committee. She currently leads the Events & Community Engagement, Maintenance, and Youth Services teams. As a senior librarian, she is part of the Strategy and Management team that creates policies and sets direction for the library. In her role as Program Services Librarian III, she has led the library in yearlong initiatives focusing on Cultural Connections, Civic Engagement, and Sustainability and has helped shape the outreach team. Ms. Poletz completed her MLIS at the University of South Florida.

Riki Donelly has worked with the Martin County Library System for 8 years. Riki has a Bachelors degree in Information Technology and Cyber Security. Riki’s goal is to shake off some stereotypes about libraries when it comes to technology. While some may see libraries as an antiquated institution, Riki would like to show they are actually at the forefront of technological innovation.

Mary Kate R. Downing. Nothing brings Mary Kate more professional joy than meeting the previously unmet needs of a community! Mary Kate has been working in public libraries for seven years, both as a paraprofessional and as a librarian. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Media and Communication Studies from Florida State University and a master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida. After earning her master’s degree, Mary Kate worked as a Youth Services librarian before being promoted to the role of branch manager, which she currently holds at the Regency Park Branch Library in Pasco County, Florida. Her professional interests include promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in librarianship; reaching out to underserved communities; teaching digital and media literacy; and pursuing non-traditional library services.

Darlene Encomio received MLIS at USF and has been a Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute mentor.
Presenters

Iris Fiallos-Finstad has been a community college librarian since 2004. I have a special interest in promoting libraries by finding creative ways to collaborate with other faculty members and departments. This is my attempt to blur the lines of learning as a reminder that libraries belong to everyone and everywhere.

Verónica A. González is a librarian in the Sound and Image Resources Department in the Green Library at Florida International University. Her research focuses on Cuban and Latin American music, as well as community engagement. She has coordinated and collaborated in university events in the national and international context. She is currently in charge of one of the most extensive publicly available collections of Cuban music in the United States, the Díaz-Ayala Cuban and Latin American Popular Music Collection (DAC), which she utilizes to support research and advance efforts in preservation, access, and digitization.

Kathy Hage is the Youth Services Supervisor for the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach where she looks after outreach and partnerships and works to leverage library and community resources to support youth, families and educators. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in English from Oakland University and a Master’s in Library and Information Science from Wayne State University.

Sarah J. Hammill is the Business & Online Learning Librarian at the Florida International University Libraries. Her research interests include information-seeking behavior, usability, online learning, and mindful and meditation activities. She is devoted to library advocacy and enjoys coordinating library outreach events.

Richard Harrison has been an Associate University Librarian in the Research and Information Services department of the UCF Libraries since April 2001. During the 2003-2004 academic year, he served as a Senior Faculty Fellow in the Provost’s office, working with the then Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. John F. “Rick” Schell, on a variety of undergraduate research initiatives, including the planning and coordination of UCF’s inaugural Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence (popularly known as SURE). Mr. Harrison is a charter member of the UCF Undergraduate Research Council. He also served on UCF’s NSSE Academic Rigor Working Group. Currently he serves on the University Honors committee of the Faculty Senate. Richard holds a B.A. in English from The College of Wooster (Ohio) and the M.L.S. from Vanderbilt University.

Lisa Hathaway is Library Director of the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach where she oversees a world-class library that provides resources to engage the citizens of West Palm Beach in all aspects of their lives. Ms. Hathaway’s vision is to not only encourage a love of literacy for people of all ages and backgrounds, but to promote the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach as a vital community gathering space that supports job-seekers, small businesses, economic redevelopment and life-long learning, while addressing race and social equity issues within our community. She holds Bachelor’s Degrees in Sociology and Information Studies and a Master’s in Library and Information Studies from Florida State University. She has worked with the City of West Palm Beach for over 17 years.

Rebecca Hyman is a reference librarian for the Orange County Library System. Prior to working in a public...
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library, she was an elementary school media specialist and academic reference librarian. Her interests include developing and facilitating programs that promote lifelong learning and readers advisory.

Shamsha Karim is a Learning Resources Professional at the Kendall Campus of Miami Dade College and serves as the collegewide liaison for the business disciplines. Her educational background includes a Master of Business Administration from Florida International University and a Master of Library Science from the University of North Texas. Previously, she worked at Forsyth County Public Library in Georgia as an Information Services Librarian. Before moving to Georgia, Shamsha served as the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs at Miami Dade College. Currently, Shamsha teaches information literacy courses and conducts financial literacy workshops. During the pandemic, she assisted faculty with identifying and evaluating Open Educational Resources (OER) and embedding digital resources and digital classroom engagement tools in their online courses.

Nancy Keough has had the privilege of working for MCLS for almost 2 years. She also had the pleasure of working in a library system in Canada for 13 years prior to coming to sunny Florida. To which many said... Florida...you’re going to work? Isn’t that where you go to retire? Nancy believes that libraries are limitless. She is passionate about creating the experience, through the things we seek and helping others reach their full potential.

Amanda Liebl has worked for the City of Boca Raton since 2004, beginning her career as the Youth Programs Director. She is currently the head of the Events & Community Engagement department at the Boca Raton Public Library. This department focuses on yearlong initiatives such as, Cultural Connections, Civic Engagement and Sustainability, while bringing the importance of the library out into the community. Ms. Liebl has a BS in Psychology from Florida Atlantic University.

Dr. Tasha Lucas-Youmans is the Dean of Libraries/Chief Librarian of the Learning Resources Center for Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU). She began her career at Bethune-Cookman in 2005. As Dean, she is responsible for the main campus library in Daytona Beach, the Hastings campus library, the B-CU Archives, and the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation: National Historic Landmark. She is interested in the future of private academic libraries in a rapidly-changing world and actively engages in activities that consider and respond to such change. Dr. Lucas-Youmans serves on the Board of Directors for the HBCU Library Alliance and the Board of Directors for the Volusia Literacy Council. She is also an active member of the Daytona Beach Chapter of the Links Incorporated and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She is also active in a homeless ministry and other community service projects.

Jennifer McQuown has over 15 years of experience working with children and teenagers in West Palm Beach. She is a passionate advocate of reading and believes in getting books into the hands of every child and teenager. As the youth services manager of the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach, Florida, McQuown has worked tirelessly to develop programs and partnerships for children and teens through her library and the community. She is the 2020 recipient of American Library Association’s Scholastic Library Publishing Award. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Art History and a Master’s in Library and Information Sciences from the University of South Florida.
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Janet DeVries Naughton is a Librarian and Professor I at Palm Beach State College. She holds master’s degrees in Library and Information Studies and American History. Her interests include library outreach and advocacy, information literacy, assessment, gamification, genetic genealogy, Florida history, Palm Beach County history, African American history, and women’s history.

Brandon Nightingale was born and raised in Jacksonville Florida. He earned his B.A. in History with a minor in Writing & Rhetoric from the University of Central Florida (UCF) in 2016. Brandon went on to earn his M.A. in History in 2019 from UCF where his thesis focused on the CME Church in the Civil Rights Movement. Brandon recently graduated from Florida State University with his M.S. degree in Information. Mr. Nightingale is currently the Archival Coordinator and adjunct professor of African American History at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Florida. Brandon recently signed on as a public history contractor with the National Parks Service as a part of the project “Connecting African American History to Cumberland Island.”

Sarah Norris is Scholarly Communication Librarian at the UCF Libraries. In this role, she leads the Libraries’ Scholarly Communication and open access efforts, with an emphasis on scholarly publishing and copyright training and education. Her research interests include digital humanities and copyright implications in the digital environment, as well as open access including the expanded use of OERs in the classroom and open data.

Claudia Ratay has been a Library Associate for Pasco County Public Libraries at the South Holiday branch for 2.5 years where she is responsible for adult services including educational and social programming. She currently teaches a successful virtual English as a Second Language program. Prior to joining the library system, Claudia worked as a corporate product development chemist as well as a public school teacher, adjunct professor, and ice skating coach. Her lifelong passion is languages. Claudia first discovered foreign language study in middle school and began her university career as a French major. Her current linguistic focus is learning Welsh, the heritage language of Wales. Claudia holds a doctoral degree in Polymer Science from Clemson University.

Ebony Sampson-Hilbert is the Coordinator of the Mary McLeod Bethune Home, located on the campus of Bethune-Cookman University. She earned his B.A. in Criminal Justice from American Military University, and she recently received her M.A. in Business with a minor in Organizational Leadership from Johnson Wales University. Mrs. Sampson-Hilbert has a little over 12 years of experience working in the Miami Dade County Public School system, and 6 years of experience working for Bethune-Cookman University.

Ginny Sterpka is the Community Based and Creative Placemaking Programs Manager at Creative Startups, the leading global business accelerator for creative entrepreneurs. She leads the growth and development of the Libraries as Launchpads program which seeks to transform libraries into vibrant creative entrepreneurship hubs.

Kathryn Thorp is currently the Assistant Manager of the South Trail Branch of the Orange County Library System. She recently graduated from Florida State University with her Master of Science in Information. She and her husband Kyle live in Orlando with their three cats Duke, Elfird (named after the former Magic basketball player), and Atticus (named after Atticus Finch). In her spare time, Kathryn enjoys reading,
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yoga, video games, beach days, and vegan cooking.

Min Tong is the Business Librarian at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Prior to becoming the Business Librarian for UCF, she has worked as a Campus Librarian on two regional campuses at UCF from 2007-2017. As the Business Librarian, Min’s mission is to support the research needs of students and faculty in the College of Business Administration.

Ximena Valdivia serves as a Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at Florida International University. Ximena holds a BS in Library Science from the Metropolitan University of Technology in Santiago, Chile, and a MLIS from the University of South Florida. In her position, she is responsible for providing original and complex copy cataloging, creating metadata to maximize discovery of digital content, and providing authority control for library materials and collections with a focus on Special Collections. She has previously worked with Barry University and the University of Miami in a number of capacities on significant historical collections.

Cynthia Velasco is the Digital Media Specialist for Orange County Library System. She is an award-winning digital content creator and writer with 10 years’ experience in marketing.

Faith Wahlers is a Reference and Programming Librarian at the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach. Wahlers graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2019 with her MLIS, with a concentration on public libraries and accessibility. Starting out as a Circulation Page at UNC’s Davis Library, Wahlers’ later worked as a Reference Assistant and Social Media Coordinator at the same library. Wahlers now coordinates art programs for Studio 411, facilitates exercise programs, and generally tries to keep patron’s fingers safe from hot glue and sewing needles.

Dr. Clarissa West-White is a Reference Librarian & Instructor at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Florida. She has degrees in Creative Writing, Curriculum & Instruction English Education and Information from Florida State University. Dr. West-White has experience as a middle and high school English teacher, program coordinator, adult literacy director, university English department chair, and assistant professor and adjunct at a number of public and private universities in the state of Florida and online. Her areas of research are as vast as her experiences, but focus primarily on the intersections of African Americans’ educational attainment and use of information and technology.

Cori Wilhelm is the Director of Library Services at SUNY Canton’s Southworth Library Learning Commons, where she has worked for the past nine years.

Paula Willey is a librarian in Baltimore. She is the author of countless reviews and articles for publications such as School Library Journal, the Baltimore Sun, and Booklist, and is a speaker on such topics as book illustration, trends in children’s literature, and what it means when a kid is totally into truly creepy books. Her whiteboard game is tight.
Special Thanks

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