



2024/2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the 2024 WNYLRC Board President



*Janice Dekoff,
Chautauqua-
Cattaraugus Library
System*

It is an honor to share this message with the members of WNYLRC in our Annual Report to the Membership. WNYLRC is fortunate to have a talented and dedicated team committed to supporting libraries throughout Western New York. Their work each day directly impacts the libraries and communities in Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, and Orleans counties. I am proud to serve as President of the WNYLRC Board and to support our outstanding staff in their mission.

This report highlights the many ways WNYLRC continues to live out its five core values: facilitating collaboration, embracing experimentation, cultivating learning, advocating for libraries, and building community. Within these pages, you'll find examples of the impactful and innovative work carried out by the WNYLRC team throughout 2024–2025.

In June, we began the planning process for WNYLRC's next five-year Plan of Service with a strategic meeting held at the Buffalo Yacht Club. This planning process gives us the chance to reflect on our current services and priorities and to consider new directions based on the evolving needs of our members. As we move forward, our values will remain central to the development of this plan, along with a focus on the challenges facing libraries both regionally and nationwide.

In recent years, libraries across the country have faced increasing threats, including coordinated book challenges, funding shortfalls, and political pressures. This year alone, we have seen efforts to defund the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), as well as the politically motivated firing of Dr. Carla Hayden, the Librarian of Congress. These developments underscore the importance of strong advocacy. WNYLRC remains deeply committed to championing libraries, and we invite all of our members to stand with us as we work to increase support for libraries and raise awareness of the vital role library staff play in every community.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support.

Advocating for Libraries

Diverse Collections Development Grant

The High School to College Committee distributed grants of \$500 each to Cayuga Heights Elementary School and Union East Elementary School to help purchase new titles for their collections and ensure equitable access to resources that reflect the varied experiences, cultures, and perspectives of their communities.

State Legislative Advocacy

- A total of 141 staff, trustees, and patrons attended 12 in-person meetings with Western New York State Assembly and Senate members throughout the winter. These meetings were held in member locations around the region including Hilbert College, University at Buffalo, Youngstown Free Library, Olean Public Library, and Kenmore Mercy Hospital.
- Staff met with Bonnie Kane Lockwood, Regional Director of Western New York for the Governor's Office.
- Staff from member libraries and WNYLRC attended NYLA's Advocacy Day in Albany on February 5, 2025, and met with all 17 members of the Western NY delegation. These meetings resulted in a statewide increase for Library Operating Aid and the continuation of Library Construction Aid, Library Materials Aid, and funding NovelNY.
- The Freedom To Read Act was passed by the NYS Legislature.

Building Community

- 90 library jobs were posted on WNYLRC's job board in 2024-25.
- Staff made 15 site visits to member libraries, affiliate libraries, and non-member organizations. These included: New York Power Authority, Robert H. Jackson Center, Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History, Richmond Memorial Library, Forest Lawn Cemetery, University at Buffalo Archives, Olmsted Parks, Niagara University, and Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park.
- Academic library leaders from both WNYLRC and the Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) met together at SUNY Geneseo's Milne Library on May 30th for a day of sharing and connecting with new colleagues. Directors discussed shared challenges and opportunities across New York State, including budgets, staffing and succession planning, enrollment pressures, federal funding changes, AI, and the evolving role of academic libraries within their institutions.

Program and Service Highlights



Cultivating Learning

Events and Workshops

- 44 workshops and webinars were provided to 1,165 attendees.
- WNYLRC members accessed the Tech-Talk database 175 times.
- The well-attended programs this year covered a wide range of timely topics including artificial intelligence, collection development, marketing and communications, advocacy, and tours of special libraries in the region.

Intersect Unconference

The Continuing Education Committee hosted the 7th annual Intersect Unconference on October 11, 2024, at the B&ECPL's Central Library, which was attended by 57 people and featured 9 presentations by members.

Traveling Exhibits

- Member libraries hosted traveling exhibits 24 times.
- A new traveling exhibit was added this year, bringing the total to 6 traveling exhibits! "Urban Renewal in New York State" is now available to borrow by any members.

Embracing Experimentation

ESLN AIR

4 WNYLRC member institutions participate in the ESLN Academic Institutional Repository. Collectively the service hosts over 2,400 uploaded items from these institutions. WNYLRC's newsletters are now available on the platform.

Facilitating Collaboration

Archival Services

- WNY Archivists convened at WNYLRC in the winter and at St. Bonaventure University in the spring to discuss the current state of archives and special collections in the region.
- WNYLRC provided grants to 14 library staff from member libraries to attend NEDCC webinars.
- Ask the Archivist staff answered 14 archival questions statewide.



Facilitating Collaboration

Ask the Lawyer

- Attorney Stephanie "Cole" Adams answered 47 questions from library staff statewide, and 42 questions were added to the Recently Asked Questions (RAQs) database.
- The lawyer provided a combination of 7 webinars and resources about topics including accommodations, human resources, law enforcement, and risk management in libraries.

Ask Us 24/7

44 libraries now participate in this collaborative, virtual reference program. 20,955 questions from patrons and students were answered through this service, with 19,066 of those questions answered by participating NY librarians.

Coordinated Collection Development Aid (CCDA)

WNYLRC facilitated the distribution of \$153,592 in state funds to 15 participating academic institutions to enhance regional collections available for resource sharing.

Empire State Immersive Experiences

This collection of 360° images includes 40 panorama tours with 695 digital objects. Members added one panorama tour:

- Erie Canal Boat "Seneca Chief" Construction - Buffalo Maritime Center

New York Heritage

This portal hosts 131 collections from 45 participating members in WNY. Staff updated these collections:

- Hidden Views: Salvaging Historic Images at the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences - Buffalo Museum of Science
- Minutes of the Network of Religious Communities (NRC) and Predecessor Organizations - Network of Religious Communities
- Newsletters of the Network of Religious Communities (NRC) and Predecessor Organizations - Network of Religious Communities
- Special Projects and Committees of the Network of Religious Communities (NRC) and Predecessor Organizations - Network of Religious Communities

New York State Historic Newspapers

Staff digitized an additional 105,327 pages from members for the NYSHN database, which hosts 14M pages. Titles include:

- Dziennik Dla Wszystkich - Polish Genealogical Society of New York
- The Reporter - University at Buffalo
- The Spectrum - University at Buffalo



In 2024-25, the Hospital Library Services Program provided 11 participating hospital libraries with access to medical databases and research support.

- 1,225 research questions answered
- \$17,200 in grant funds to hospitals for print and e-resources
- \$71,630 spent on the Ovid Discovery Service, which provides access to health & biomedical databases and full-text electronic journal and book content
- 77 registrations were sponsored for Medical Library Association webinars at a cost of \$2,968



Member Libraries 2024-2025

Members in good standing as of June 30, 2025

***New Members
in 24-25**

Benjamin and Dr. Edgar R. Cofeld Judaic Museum of Temple Beth Zion
 Bryant & Stratton College
 Buffalo AKG Art Museum
 Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park
 Buffalo and Erie County Public Library
 Buffalo Broadcasters Association
 Buffalo Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora
 Buffalo General Medical Center
 Buffalo History Museum
 Buffalo Irish Genealogical Society
 Buffalo Museum of Science
 Buffalo School Library System
 Burchfield Penney Art Center
 Canisius University
 Carousel Society of the Niagara Frontier
 Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES SLS
 Center for Inquiry Libraries
 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System
 D'Youville University
 Daemen University
 Erie 1 BOCES SLS
 Erie 2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES SLS
 Erie County Medical Center Corp.
 Fellowships of the Spirit Lakeside Learning Center
 Fenton Historical Society*
 Forest Lawn - Margaret L. Wendt Archives and Resource Center
 Genesee Community College
 Hilbert College
 Historical Society of the Town of Clarence
 Jamestown Community College
 Jesus The Liberator Seminary of Religious Justice
 John R. Oishei Children's Hospital
 Kenmore Mercy Hospital
 Library Consortium of Health Institutions in Buffalo

Mercy Hospital
 Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital
 Mount St. Mary's Hospital
 Network of Religious Communities
 New York Power Authority Niagara Power Project
 Niagara Aerospace Museum*
 Niagara County Historical Society
 Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center
 Niagara University
 Nioga Library System
 Orleans-Niagara BOCES SLS
 Our Lady of Victory Charities
 Polish Genealogical Society of New York
 Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History
 Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center
 St. Bonaventure University
 School Librarians' Association of Western New York (SLAWNY)
 Sisters of Charity Hospital and St. Joseph Campus
 SUNY Buffalo State University
 SUNY Erie
 SUNY Fredonia
 SUNY Niagara
 Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site
 Trocaire College
 United States Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District
 University of Buffalo, Dept. of Information Science, Graduate School of Education
 University at Buffalo Libraries
 Villa Maria College
 WNY Genealogical Society



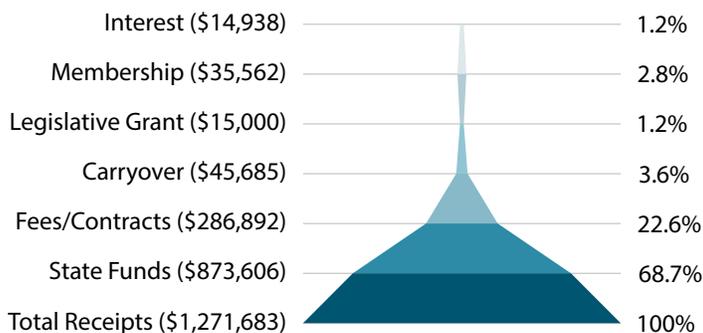
WNYLRC 58th Annual Meeting of the Membership held at the National Comedy Center, Jamestown, NY



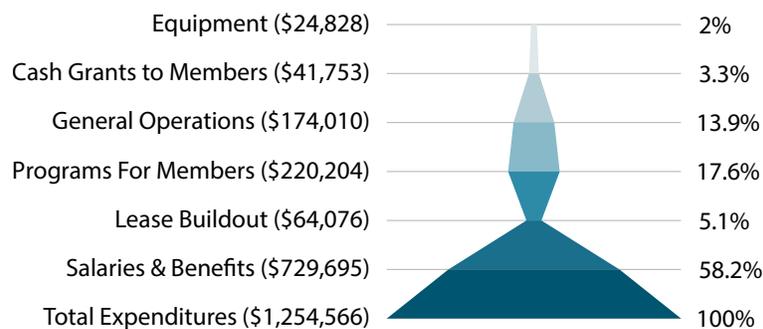
WNYLRC held a strategic planning retreat at the Buffalo Launch Club. Members met to network and brainstorm ideas for the new WNYLRC Strategic Plan of Service 2026-2031. Thank you to all who attended the retreat or our focus groups throughout the spring. Your time and input are much appreciated!



Receipts



Expenditures



2024 Board of Trustees

Board Officers:

President: Janice Dekoff, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System
 Vice President/President Elect: Keith Mages, University at Buffalo
 Secretary: Gretchen Schweigert, Newfane Public Library
 Treasurer: Scott Hollander, University at Buffalo
 Immediate Past President: Kathy Leacock, Buffalo Museum of Science

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 Heather Gring, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
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 Ayodele Ojumu, Hutchinson Technical HS, Buffalo Public Schools
 Dr. Jamie Smith, JDSmith Solution LLC
 John Spears, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
 Alicia Thompson, Buffalo Public Schools
 Gabby Harrington (Ex officio), Office of Senator Sean Ryan

WNYLRC Staff

Jay Barone - Technology Services Coordinator
 Emily Carlin - HLSP Circuit Librarian
 Grace Di Virgilio - HLSP Coordinator and Circuit Librarian
 Michael Green - Special Collections Librarian
 Caitlin Kenney - Research and Reference Services Coordinator
 Sheryl Knab - Executive Director
 Debra Lucas-Alfieri - HLSP Circuit Librarian
 Jenn Northup - Member Engagement Services Coordinator
 Debra Porter - Finance and Employee Relations Coordinator
 Heidi Ziemer - Outreach and Digital Equity Coordinator



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