

## We Are ALSC

### Profiles from the Field

*Bios compiled by the following members of the ALSC Membership Committee: Allison Knight, branch manager, MidPointe Library System (OH); Deidre Winterhalter, assistant manager of youth services, St. Charles (IL) Public Library District; and Jennifer Knight, youth services librarian, North Olympic Library System, Port Angeles, WA.*

**W**hat does ALSC membership mean? It could depend on a person's stage in their career or how long they've been a member. Here's a glimpse of several ALSC members—from a new member to one in the ALSC fold for almost four decades.



Christina Carpino, Connecticut, Children's Library Assistant, Bristol (CT) Public Library. ALSC Member for 2 years, 2.5 years on job.

#### **How have you been involved in ALSC?**

I'm participating in the ALSC mentorship program as a mentee. I've also been a live blogger for the ALA Midwinter Meeting and participated in several of the ALSC meetings at the conference. I'm looking forward to getting more involved in the coming months, especially if more things become virtual.

#### **Why did you join ALSC?**

To connect with other children's librarians and learn more about the field I was entering. I found myself looking things up and being referred to the ALA and ALSC websites a lot, so I decided to join!

#### **What's your best ALSC memory?**

When I attended an ALA Midwinter Meeting—from getting to meet others at the member dinner to attending the Youth Media Awards to being energized by all of the great children's librarians I met!

#### **What makes you want to work with young people?**

Before working in libraries, I was an elementary school teacher. I've always loved working with kids and watching them learn. As a librarian, I have the ability to work with the whole family and really build that life-long learning drive.

#### **How has your ALSC work benefited your day job?**

I utilize a lot of the ALSC resources when doing program planning, especially when I first started working in libraries. Reading about others' experiences on the blog or watching the recorded webinars is really helpful for getting an idea of what others are doing and what best practices are.

#### **Five words to describe your ALSC involvement.**

We're better and stronger together.



**Hadeal Salamah, lower/middle school librarian, Georgetown Day School, Washington, DC. ALSC member for five years.**

**How have you been involved in ALSC?**

In 2017, I was a member of the Building Partnerships Committee and in 2018 became co-chair of the Membership Committee. Additionally, I participated in the 2020 Morris Seminar, and it was a fantastic experience that would not have been possible without ALSC! I will also be serving on the 2022 Newbery Award Committee.

**Why did you join ALSC?**

When I first started working in libraries and attending local youth services meetings, I was fascinated by how much children’s librarians shared with one another. There was so much to learn and so many professionals who were transparent and willing to share programming ideas, successes, failures and simply just brainstorm together. It felt great to be part of such a wonderful community.

I was already happy to be part of a local group of libraries and didn’t think much about joining a national organization, but then I attended the 2014 ALSC National Institute. I once again saw the same collaboration, but bigger. I learned so much about children’s services and programming, networking, and connecting. I was excited to join the ALSC community. Being involved in ALSC has helped me advocate for myself and for libraries, as well as connected me to so many other supportive librarians and provided many professional development opportunities.

**How has your ALSC work benefited your day job?**

I’m now at a school, and I have used so much of the information I gained from committee work as a children’s librarian in a public library—from partnering with a local firehouse and police station to collaborating with teachers to promote library resources and so much more. I’ve learned and strengthened my skills as an everyday advocate for libraries, children, and children’s programming. The Building Partnerships Committee created the Imagine Infographic ([www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2020/07/imagine-building-partnerships](http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2020/07/imagine-building-partnerships)) to help libraries assess, plan, and manage community partnerships. This was a great guide, especially for summer programming.

Because the committee is responsible for researching and creating tools on best practices for library partnerships, my knowledge has changed, and I’ve learned a variety of different ways to communicate and work with others in the community and to bring more resources to patrons. I’ve enjoyed listening to committee members share their expertise and experiences from different backgrounds and areas.

**What’s your best ALSC memory?**

Attending the 2014 ALSC National Institute (so much fun at the conference, specifically going to Children’s Fairyland with other librarians).

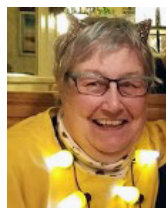
**What makes you want to be a children’s librarian?**

Helping children, tweens, teens, and their families find the resources they need to succeed. I chose to become a children’s librarian because I love connecting books and readers.

**Five words to describe your ALSC involvement.**

Community, support, collaboration, connections, knowledge.

**Tish (Letitia A.) Wilson, retired after more than 43 years as children’s librarian/assistant, director of youth services, Dayton (OH) Metro Library. ALSC member for more than 35 years.**



**How has your ALSC work benefited your day job?**

I have served on/chaired more ALSC committees than I can remember. I regularly used incredible amounts of programming ideas, information, and management skills picked up at ALA/ALSC conferences, institutes, and workshops, which I attended for the last 31 years. I cannot thank ALSC enough for the many management and administration lessons I learned by serving and leading.

**Why did you join ALSC?**

Every profession has an association that one belongs to if one wants to “affect change” and be a contributing professional. In my first job as a children’s librarian, I was involved in the Ohio Library Counsel (OLC). I got involved, quickly, in the children’s division and held every office, even serving on the board of trustees during my first two years as coordinator of youth services in the Dayton library system. As a present, at the end of my first year as coordinator, my retired boss in Greene County, Ohio, paid my ALA membership dues if I would then pay my ALSC division dues. Who could turn that down?

During my time on the OLC Board, I met and made friends throughout Ohio’s public libraries. One of the people I had worked with in Ohio was Linda Silver, then head of youth services at Cuyahoga County Public Library System. About that time, she was serving as president-elect of ALSC and was appointing people to committees; she appointed me to serve on the Randolph Caldecott Committee. And that was the beginning of my involvement in ALSC.

**What’s your best ALSC memory?**

In 1986, the book awards committees attended the Monday morning ALSC Board Meeting at the ALA Midwinter Meeting

and the chairs announced the award and honor books. I don't recall us getting together in the early morning hours as a committee to call the winners. There was no well-attended press conference in the largest capacity meeting room like today. Back then, we all were crammed into a small room in the Palmer House in Chicago. Besides the members of the ALSC Board, and the members of the awards committees, a few editors of the publishing houses were there, too. My, how times have changed. There was still loud cheering, though.

#### **What made you want to be a children's librarian?**

I wanted to be just like the children's librarians I had when I was a child. Mrs. Ridings and Mrs. Bjella in Syracuse, Indiana, greeted me every afternoon after school with good books and little tasks to keep me out of trouble. I was an original "latch-key child" back in 1960.

When I was old enough to work, the children's manager of the Elkhart (IN) Public Library hired me during the summer months while I was home from college. Since I had taken a children's literature course as an education major, I got hired to work the circulation/reference desk. One of my tasks was to file new library card applications for children getting their first library cards. And would you believe . . . I found my very own, poorly printed first name, parent-signed library card application one day while I was filing applications. Of course, Mrs. Webb gave it to me.

#### **Can you share an anecdote about your committee experience?**

My best ALSC memory was one year at Annual Conference in Chicago at a swanky luncheon held by a publisher. Two very important-to-me people were at that luncheon—Linda Hahus, who taught my children's literature class at St. Mary-of-the-Woods (IN) College and Andrew Medlar, then children's librarian at Chicago Public Library, but he had been one of my kids at the Trotwood (OH) Library in 1983. I got to introduce one of my children's librarians to one of my kids who was also a children's librarian. Talk about COOL.

#### **How have you been involved in ALSC?**

I had the incredibly good fortune to be appointed to several book award committees, including the Sibert Award; the Legacy Award (previously the Wilder) twice; Newbery Award twice; and the Caldecott Award Committee, twice, once as a member and once as chair. I look on the many winners and honor books from those committees as "my children." I hope those many books will enrich the lives of all the children who find or are guided towards them in the children's rooms of public libraries and elementary school media centers.

#### **Five words to describe your ALSC involvement**

Friendships, travel, professional contributions (giving back), lifelong learning, joy! &