

We Are ALSC Profiles from the Field

Bios compiled by the ALSC Membership Committee, which includes Allison Knight, branch manager, MidPointe Library System Ohio; 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.

What does ALSC membership mean to our members? It may depend on what aspect of librarianship they're working in! Here's a glimpse from three members who've taken three different paths.



Jennifer Clemons, Curator, Butler Children's Literature Center, Dominican University, River Forest (IL)

Why did you join ALSC?

For the community and connection with other librarians. Now that I work in an academic setting instead of a children's department, ALSC membership is an invaluable way to stay involved in the conversation and with other children's librarians.

What's your best ALSC memory?

I attended my first ALA Annual Conference in 2018 and packed my schedule with ALSC activities, probably more than was good for my tired feet. What I found at each and every event was an enthusiasm for our work, boundless creativity, and a commitment to connecting with kids was (and still is) an inspiration.

What makes you want to be a children's librarian?

Literature was my gateway to the field. When I realized that I could combine my love for books with an affinity for public service and connecting with students—I was hooked! Now the Butler Center allows me to support the librarians, teachers, and caregivers who engage young people with great books through continuing education events, lectures, and promoting the newest and best in books for youth. And while library and education graduate students are a bit older than those in the children's department, their curiosity and love for reading are just as genuine, and I feel just as privileged to support them.



Anna Coats, Head of Youth Services, Livingston (NJ) Public Library

What is your best ALSC memory?

Attending the Youth Media Awards in person, multiple years!

What makes you want to be a children's librarian?

When I was pursuing my MS in library and information science, I was planning to be an adult librarian, but all of my classmates told me I seemed like I would be good with children. This had never occurred to me before! I did my practicum in a teen department and absolutely loved it. I then became a youth services librarian and love working with both children and teens.



Kristin Piepho, Managing Librarian, Sno-Isle Libraries, Mountlake Terrace (WA)

Why did you join ALSC?

Children's librarians are my people. I wanted a way to connect with other passionate professionals who enjoy being silly and sharing stories.

What's your best ALSC memory?

When I attended the ALSC National Institute in Oakland several years ago, I was so inspired. It was the first conference I'd been to where I was excited about every single session, and I came home with scads of things that I wanted to implement within my own library.

What makes you want to be a children's librarian?

When I was growing up, I never considered that I should be a children's librarian. In retrospect it was obvious. My sister and I put spine labels on our books and tried to check them out to my friends, my favorite summer days included going to both my local Seattle Public Library and King County Library branches, and I read aloud regularly to my much younger brother. I love the way kids' brains work. They always make me laugh when I'm feeling grouchy and I love making them laugh with just the right book. &