

Membership Profiles

Compiled by Sarah Jo Zaharako



Rosie Camargo



Aryssa Damron



Sally Battle

Rosie Camargo, Cultural Literacy Specialist, South Holland (IL) Public Library

How has ALSC contributed to your work in libraries?

I created a whole program centered around ALSC Babies Need Words Every Day called “Bienvenido bebe!” I host it once a year for parents who only speak Spanish to visit the library with their new baby, enjoy a storytime and tour of the library; they leave with a goodie bag filled with items that support ECRR tenets.

What project are you excited to be working on?

I started a new storytime inspired by the world of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* called “It’s YOU I Like.” It is centered on self-love, affirmations, kindness, and being a good neighbor. Instead of the usual post-storytime craft, we will be creating Kindness Projects to give back to our community. Some of the projects will be collecting mittens for our library mitten drive for the winter, making holiday cards for our senior centers, and a welcome banner for our big grand opening of our newly renovated Youth Services department.

What challenges you in librarianship?

Creating new programs. You want people to have fun and you want attendance. A good day and time and hope and a prayer for people to show up. I try to make at least one new storytime to roll out every year. I think families enjoy routine, but they also enjoy something new and unexpected. Once a month I host Family Fiesta, a forty-minute dance party with a mix of English and world music.

What brings you joy?

My job. I make connections with families and bring happiness to children. Creating new programs and events is so much fun.

What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?

Right now, I like using *Build a Burrito: A Counting Book in English and Spanish* by Denise Vega. It is great for a movement storytime!

Aryssa Damron, Children’s Librarian, Washington, DC, Public Library System

How has ALSC contributed to your work in libraries?

ALSC has helped me learn to be a children’s librarian and expand my own experiences in research, in member engagement, and in book evaluation through ALSC and ALSC adjacent work.

What project are you excited to be working on?

I am excited to be working on the team bringing virtual membership gatherings to the whole ALSC community because it is a simple way to get engaged with ALSC without having to do anything more than join a Zoom, and we are able to connect ourselves and other members with amazing resources and people within the organization.

What challenges you in librarianship?

I think the hardest thing for me in librarianship right now is finding the balance between how much I love my job and how bureaucratic a large library system can be and wondering how to balance my time so that I am maximizing the work I can do with the children I serve with extended hours, admin work, etc. It's hard to remember that libraries are so many different things when I'm lost in the joy of doing storytime and craft hours and readers advisory.

What brings you joy?

I love getting the right book into the hands of the right reader. Seeing a baby light up over a Sandra Boynton book that features an animal at the zoo they visited, or a middle grade reader with a book that will help them cope with bullying or family drama—both are so important and bring me joy.

What are you looking forward to?

In August, I'll visit Cornwall, England, where I'll not only spend a week immersed in reading *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier as a sacred text, but also shopping for gorgeous UK editions of my favorite books.

What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?

I love getting the Nevermoor series by Jessica Townsend into the hands of readers who love fantasy or cool worlds and may have already read J. K. Rowling and Rick Riordan. It's a charming series that I love myself, and love how excited they get to dive into a new, magical world.

Sally Battle, Youth Programming Librarian, Mount Prospect (IL) Public Library

What project are you excited to be working on?

In 2021 and 2022, a team of us at Evanston Public Library created a series of hands-on workshops for families to play, talk, and learn about race. I learned so much! We rolled out the newest iteration of the program just before I changed jobs, and participants seemed to get a lot out of our racial literacy workshop. It's not perfect by any stretch, but we've made all of our pretty extensive curricular resources available free by request on our website, <https://dedicatedtothedreamtogether.com/>.

What challenges you in librarianship?

The challenges of librarianship for me are the same as what I love about the field. There's so much variety in what we do! I was so inspired by Jason Reynolds' 2021 Zena Sutherland lecture—the kids we serve do deserve the best. I'm learning that a part of that is recognizing that I'm human and have limits; sometimes I have to say no to great projects so that I can give and be my best. That's tricky for me.

What brings you joy?

Hearing kids play and talk to each other. Admiring my excellent colleagues. The sound of my dog plopping on the couch after a long day of, well, laying on the couch. Creating fun and playful moments for kids and caregivers. Lake Michigan, the sky, trees, and the wind. Laughing with family and friends.

What are you looking forward to?

I'm newer to the podcast world and now I'm a believer. I'm hoping to figure out ways to connect people and podcasts, in real life, through the library.

What is your favorite book(s) to share with children?

I love putting *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper or *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt into kids' hands. &