



OUT & ABOUT



The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services Quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Hello, my ABOS family,

Our 15th Anniversary celebration has come and gone. For those of you who joined us virtually, I sincerely hope that you have taken away vast amounts of new ideas from your peers, enjoyed our virtual networking opportunities, connected with our vendors and were able to not only renew friendships but make new ones. For those of you who were unable to join us, this issue of Out and About should fill you in on many of the highlights of our first virtual conference.

I want to again thank our amazing vendors for their continued support of this organization. They are truly a part of our outreach family and their continued generosity toward ABOS is to be commended. Each year our vendor supporter list grows as we reach out to new suppliers and organizations with similar interests.

We have seen so much growth in 2020 despite dealing with a pandemic and social injustice. You all stayed your course and continued to provide services when others shut their doors. I am so proud of the way you found new avenues for patron services and brought the library and its services to those in need. We may never know what we called “normal” again, but as an organization and a profession, we have survived and continue to move forward.

As we finish 2020, I want to wish you all continued success, health for you and your family and peace in your respective communities. This year has prepared us for whatever may lie ahead - we have proven that we are “Out-Doing Outreach” and can move ahead stronger and with great confidence in our profession.

As I look toward 2021, I cannot wait to see each of you next October in St. Louis as we “Jazz Up Your Outreach”. I have every confidence in your President Elect, David Kelsey, and the 2021 Board of Directors as they continue to lead ABOS down a path to an expanded and bright future.

Thank you all for being a part of the ABOS family. It has been my great honor and privilege to be your 15th ABOS President.

Cathy Zimmerman, 2020 ABOS President



Cathy Zimmerman

IN THIS ISSUE:

Rising Stars Award Winners	2-3
John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award Winners	4-5
Oh, Deer!: Maintaining a Positive Outlook When Things Go Horribly Wrong	6
Outstanding Bookmobile Librarian	7
Innovation in Outreach Programming	7
Bernard Vavrek Scholarship	8
NNLM <i>All of Us</i> Health Outreach Award Winner List	8
International Neighborhood 2020: Community Partnerships and COVID-19	9-10
Carol Hole Conference Attendance Award Winners	10-14

2020 ABOS Virtual Conference Highlights

This year's conference made history by going virtual and having a record-breaking attendance rate. Attendees participated by using Whova, an all-inclusive conferencing app. Participants could attend sessions, view exhibits, and connect using discussion boards and meeting rooms. The sense of community in outreach has never been stronger and hundreds of people came together for this very special conference.

Here are a few of the many memorable highlights of events and attendee comments from this four-day event.

"Hoping for in person, but the virtual option will be a nice option for so many! Our numbers reflect that this year!"

- Jenn Koetz, Wisconsin

"The sessions have far exceeded my expectations and now I can go back and watch some of the other presentations. What a bonus!"

- Anne Rhodes, Ohio

"Thank you for sharing so many excellent articles! I've got months of reading ahead of me!"

- Laura Antolin, Illinois

On the (virtual) agenda:

The ABOS Conference boasted a roster of outstanding presenters in topics that are important to bookmobile and outreach professionals and their communities including vendor presentations, and sessions focused on youth services, vehicles, community engagement, underserved communities, and senior services.

Conference attendees could view greetings by ABOS Past Presidents and could view an inspiring message from special guest, Tracie Hall, Executive Director of the American Library Association.

The session Q&A option let attendees to ask the presenters questions, allowing a space for valuable insights and advice.

The Board Meeting announced awards to well-deserving winners and shared the accomplishments of the year, of which there were many, including the passing of the Bylaws, the launch of the Bookmobile and Outreach Information Repository (BOIR), and of course, transitioning from an in-person conference to an all-virtual conference.

All sessions were recorded and are currently archived on the app, available to view on Whova for up to 6 months!

Professional enrichment and networking opportunities:

This year's conference attendees had many opportunities to make connections with their fellow colleagues including Networking Night, discussion boards, and meetup events. An icebreaker feature helped to get the conversations going with introductions and common interests.

Some of the most popular topics on the community board included the Exhibitor Showcase, Session Q&As, Article Sharing, dementia friendly library/outreach ideas, how WiFi access points can help address the digital divide, and a discussion on favorite storytime books. There were many, many more conversations going on, making for a well-rounded assortment.

"The app is easy to use. First timer here. I love seeing the commitment of my fellow bookmobile and outreach people! We are fortunate to have dedicated members and committees!" - Kerri Messinger, New Jersey

Continued from Page 2

Special Events:

Featured in this conference were special events where attendees could participate in a series of online games and contests such as ABOS’s famous Networking Nite. The executive board also organized a virtual cocktail party hosted by FE Technologies which included a fun mixology demonstration with delicious themed drinks and a pet photo captioning contest.

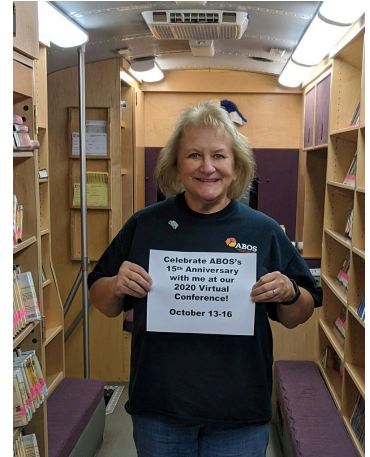
Acore Shelving held a book truck photo contest and received creative entries from libraries all over the US.

Participants could use the Passport feature to enter door prize contests and connect with exhibitors. And the most active users competed in a points-based contest to be in one of the top six spots to win a cash prize. ABOS President Cathy Zimmerman also hosted a library tour of her library in Eldridge, Iowa, the Scott County Library.

Attendees could also shop on the Swag Hotline for ABOS merchandise to help support the organization.

Other special events included a Spectrum Scholar Meet and Greet with the Executive Committee, a session by Katherine Trujillo from Libraries Without Borders in Washington D.C. titled “Learning in Laundromats: Libraries Without Borders in the US,” and a demonstration of Reminiscence Kits by Sally Inglett of MEternally, LLC.

Last but not least, virtual bookmobile tours were offered by several libraries and gave attendees the chance to check out some of the types of library vehicles that are out-doing outreach.



“I learned so much last week. I'm grateful to ABOS for all your hard work and effort, and also to the attendees for the great tips, suggestions, and information shared.”

- Laura Cashell, Maine



As per tradition, ABOS President Cathy Zimmerman passes the tablecloth to President-Elect David Kelsey at the end of the general session.

CONFERENCE SPECIAL: AWARD WINNER PROFILES

This issue of Out & About will highlight the winners selected for this year's award ceremony at the ABOS Virtual Conference. Read on to learn about Carol Hole scholarship winners, the rising stars of ABOS, professionals who have achieved excellence in outreach, and those who have reached estimable career milestones. Congratulations to all of this year's winners!

RISING STARS AWARD WINNERS



Glenna Godinsky, Life Enrichment Liaison at Gail Borden Public Library District in Illinois

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach/bookmobile field?

A: This is my fourth year of designing and taking community engagement programming to senior and developmental communities within our library district. It is our second year of having the Dementia Friendly Elgin designation, and offering dementia awareness training to businesses and organizations in our community. It is our second year of reaching home care partners and their loved ones with chronic conditions through memory cafes in English and Spanish (now virtual), and it is our first year of being able to offer virtual Stressbusting for Caregivers™ and Music

and Memory programs via zoom to those with chronic conditions who are socially isolated. Our community engagement team truly strives to make the library's rich resources available to all!

Q: When did you discover a passion for outreach?

A: It was Gail Borden Public Library District that taught me, as a child, to love the library. I was a part of their summer reading program, every year, growing up. Then my kids and their friends were part of the program. With a psychology background, I worked for a non-profit organization in our community where at-risk students created original operas from scratch, using the arts to do so. They were reinforcing what they were learning during the school day through our program. I could see what an important influence our library had on building success in their lives. We held some of our programming at the library, and it was always a place that was seen as welcoming. But not everyone has their own transportation to be able to visit the library. Not everyone is in a physical/social-emotional space to be able to do so. Drawing upon my years in special education, I could see how community engagement programming - meeting people where they are - could be transformative to so many. The seed for relying on library resources has always been a part of my life, and the opportunity to share the library out into the community is what blossomed from that seed.

Q: What is your secret for outreach success?

A: Mutual respect. I love libraries because they are safe spaces for the sharing of diverse ideas. In a nutshell, this is what our Community Engagement team promotes and benefits from every time we get to meet with members of our community.

Volunteerism is the other special ingredient. A favorite example that I have of outreach success is our BOOKmobile run in October, 2019. We laid the groundwork in July when, during one of our monthly programs with a developmental group of 20-somethings, we asked them to help us write a puppet skit. We gave the prompts; they gave the story. Next, we needed, puppets. We asked our seniors in assisted living, memory care, and skilled care if they would help us color paper puppets to be used in a future program. We came away with over 60 puppets. In October, our Elgin Police Senior Liaison boarded our bookmobile and rode with library staff to one of our senior living communities. There, we had a library volunteer who usually plays piano in our library rotunda. She had brought her keyboard, and she provided us with spooky and fun Halloween tunes. Our police liaison spoke about ways seniors can avoid scams over the phone. Two other library volunteers read the story of the first bookmobile in America. I led a craft project where seniors cut out teachers' examples of spiral ghost decorations. We did the Monster Mash, left

Continued from Page 4

some donated library materials for residents to enjoy, and then it was back on the road to our next stop: a kindergarten class. Teachers were given the spiral ghost examples and worksheets for their students to practice their scissors skills later, so they could take home the ghost decorations. Teachers were also given the offer from the seniors that if the teachers needed help cutting out things for their classroom bulletin boards, the seniors in assisted living would be happy to help - just drop the materials off with a due date! The Kindergartners boarded the BOOKmobile and watched the puppet show that was presented in both English and Spanish by our library staff. We did the Monster Mash again, with the students, and we felt pretty great about having connected the community through volunteerism.

We paired up five senior care communities with neighboring Kindergartens across our library district last October - all through the use of a puppet skit provided by a developmental group of 20-somethings. It is a blast to be out doing outreach!



Rick Medrano, Outreach Librarian at High Plains Library District in Colorado

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach/bookmobile field?

A: I have worked in Outreach/Mobile Services for about four years. I started working on the bookmobile, two days per month, in 2017 slowly expanding with more routes through that year. In 2018 I began as a substitute Outreach Librarian and was hired as a full Outreach Librarian in 2019.

Q: When did you discover a passion for outreach?

A: I discovered my passion for outreach when I first began working on the bookmobile. I had worked in the virtual services arm of our district for a few years at that point, and I was excited to help people who had barriers to service, use our services. When I began working on the bookmobile for school stops, I loved the fast-paced and exciting atmosphere of the stop. As a person of color who grew up in a mostly white, wealthier area, I knew the importance of what having someone who understood the hidden challenges of life had for me. I wanted to offer that same support to other disadvantaged kiddos, and when I started as a librarian in outreach, I knew I wanted to help even more. Now, I focus on connecting with patrons experiencing homelessness and those in reentry, and I love my work.

Q: What is your secret for outreach success?

A: Outreach is messy. It is challenging, ever-changing, and inconsistent—at best. Being flexible and adapting to circumstances is key. When things get hard, remember who you are helping and why. Recognize your own growth and potential and consider your impact.



EvaLyn Flores, Early Literacy Outreach Specialist at Laramie County Library System in Wyoming

I am so honored to have been selected for the Rising Star award. I have worked in the outreach/bookmobile field for a total of four years. The first two years were at Early Head Start working as a family engagement professional/home visitor. This is where I discovered my passion for outreach! It is such a wonderful feeling to model literacy and connect families with needed resources. This led me to Laramie County Library where I am honored to be coordinating the First Steps: Early Literacy Begins at Home program. The past two years have been full of amazing strides! It is a wonderful opportunity to implement such a great program. I believe I am successful in my career in outreach because I have a strong passion to help children and families find the tools they need to be successful.

JOHN PHILIP EXCELLENCE IN OUTREACH AWARD WINNER Q&A



Eletha Davis, Mobile Library Services Manager at Williamsburg Regional Library in Virginia

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach field?

A: 36 years (I have some academic library experience, too)

Q: What is your favorite outreach service or activity?

A: Working with neighborhoods and the community at large.

Q: The John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award is the highest honor in the outreach field. Do you have anything in the planning stages to increase your outreach success?

I am passionate about providing reliable broadband service to everyone. One thing the pandemic has taught us is that high-speed broadband internet service is an essential service.

Q: How has ABOS made a difference to you and your work?

A: Mr. John Philip was my mentor, and I feel ABOS embodies his spirit. ABOS taught me how to advocate for service, the importance of maintaining a collective body of knowledge, how to overcome the challenges of providing library services beyond the walls, and how to turn challenges into opportunities.

Q: What words of wisdom can you offer to those new to outreach?

A: Never turn down training or any educational opportunity; share your knowledge and experiences; always remember that you and those you serve are worth fighting for (perhaps, advocating is a better word), and take good physical care of yourself—outreach is hard on your body—put that coat on when you are running in and out of buildings—protect your eyes when driving—learn to lift without hurting your back and knees.



Ann Plazek, Outreach Services Manager at Medina County District Library in Ohio

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach field?

A: I have been working in outreach at my current library for 12 years, but in high school and college I was blessed to work with my home town library's summer bookmobile program for five years.

Q: What is your favorite outreach service or activity?

A: I love each and every opportunity to take the library beyond the walls and one of the things I like most about my job is the variety of ways I can do that. Some days it is a storytime to preschoolers, other days it is taking the bookmobile to a rural stop, delivering materials to a senior in their home, or manning a pop-up library at a special event. On rare days it might even be all of those things in one day. It certainly is never boring!

Q: The John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award is the highest honor in the outreach field. Do you have anything in the planning stages to increase your outreach success?

A: We are anticipating the arrival of our new bookmobile early next year. Our original plan was to merge some aspects of our home delivery to folks living in senior care centers with lobby stops which we have never done. Since we are dealing with the pandemic I, unfortunately, don't see the senior care facilities wanting us in their buildings any time soon. We are doing our best to continue to get the word out in the community to reach those who have health issues and might be afraid to be out even to do a curbside pick-up and letting them know we are happy to do no-contact door drop delivery and trying our best to plan some virtual programming.

Continued from Page 6

Q: How has ABOS made a difference to you and your work?

A: ABOS has had such a huge influence on my work on many levels. As a newbie, it was wonderful to just lurk on the listserv and find my way. I never had the opportunity or desire to practice public speaking in front of a group of adults, but the ABOS conference was such a friendly and supportive place to jumpstart that aspect of my career. The opportunity to serve on a national board and then serve as president was an incredible blessing. It was a humbling experience and confirmed my experience that success is always a team effort.

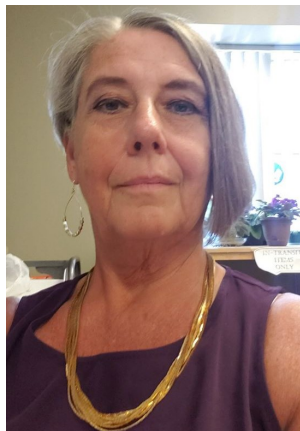
Q: What words of wisdom can you offer to those new to outreach?

A: Connect, connect, connect! Connect by phone or email with others who provide similar services through ABOS and in your region. If there is not an outreach networking group in your region – create one! I can honestly say I have never met an unhelpful library outreach person! Look for other agencies in your area who provide similar types of services, get involved in local leadership programs to forge strong community ties, and be sure to have an elevator pitch ready wherever you go.

Cathy Zimmerman, Bookmobile Associate at Scott County Library in Iowa

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach field?

A: I have been in Outreach for 14 years as a bookmobile associate and senior programmer.



Q: What is your favorite outreach service or activity?

A: My favorite is programming with the senior population. I love doing armchair travel and other topic programs for them. Most recently, due to COVID-19, I have replaced in-person visits with virtual and my seniors are really enjoying old school games like Jeopardy, Wheel of Fortune, and Friendly Feud.

Q: The John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award is the highest honor in the outreach field. Do you have anything in the planning stages to increase your outreach success?

A: One of the projects I was beginning to put together before COVID-19 is a memory cafe for in-home caregivers working with them on techniques for interaction.

Q: How has ABOS made a difference to you and your work?

A: Without my affiliation with ABOS, I would not have had the chance to broaden my library's outreach experiences. For many years, the bookmobile in rural neighborhoods was the only outreach in the county. I am now connected to so many outreach people across the world - connected to their programs and their ideas, none of this would have been possible without ABOS.

Q: What words of wisdom can you offer to those new to outreach?

A: Never be afraid to expand your program--everyone will benefit in one way or another. Never be afraid to ask questions of those who are already doing what you want to do--we are all in outreach together. Every idea that is shared becomes a connection with someone who is in need.

Join the ABOS Board!

Find out how by visiting

abos-outreach.com/ABOS-Elections

ABOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ABOS Executive Board

President: Cathy Zimmerman

Vice President/President Elect: David Kelsey

Treasurer: Brooke Bahnsen

Secretary: Lori Berezovsky

Past President: Susan Parkins

Board Members '20

Katrina Ford

Wendy Ramsey

Zach Roberts

Board Members '21

Liana Morales

Robin Rousu

Karen Bradley

OH, DEER!: MAINTAINING A POSITIVE OUTLOOK WHEN THINGS GO HORRIBLY WRONG



By Danny Rice
 Manager of Bookmobile Services
 Gail Borden Public Library District

I hope you have been fortunate enough to experience the kind of magical day where everything goes well and seems to work itself out. I have. It is among the most wonderful and energizing feelings in the world. But for me and my Bookmobile Crew, Wednesday, October 23rd, 2019 was not one of those days. At around 4:00 a.m. that morning I drove our green bus-style bookmobile to the houses of Ana Devine, Director of Neighborhood Services, and Shannon Loredo, Bookmobile Associate, grabbed a big coffee, put on the soundtrack to "Hamilton," and began the supposedly 6.5 hour drive from Western Chicago suburb Elgin, IL to Omaha, NE for the annual ABOS Conference. "This will probably be an uneventful bonding experience," I thought.



A few hours later we were about 30 minutes west of Iowa City, cruising right along. It began to gently rain, but I was more interested in whether Eliza Schuyler Hamilton would ever get Phillip to play the correct notes on the piano in the song "Take a Break." The cornfields were being harvested, so there were two plains of dark brown corn on either side of the dark brown concrete road. Before I could react (beyond the quick expletive) there was a flash flying through the air directly in front of our bus, with an unmistakable white tail pointing straight up. WHAM! I let off the accelerator, put on my hazards, and coasted to a stop on the shoulder.



Ana, Shannon, and I got out to inspect the damage. We had hit a deer which blended in perfectly to the surrounding landscape, an unintended consequence of camouflage. Now, I have always been an optimist, but I think my masterpiece of positivity came next. "I think we can still make it," I said to Ana and Shannon as I was holding up the grille panel attached to the windshield wiper and watching steam float out of the bus's radiator.

Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and we did not try to drive the bus another four hours in this condition. In fact, there was a bus mechanic only a few miles away in Williamsburg, Iowa. We waited in the Just Automotive lobby like nervous patients waiting for a prognosis. This is when Ana realized my socks, which had the phrase "Killin' It" emblazoned on the side. "Really, you had to wear those socks today?" she asked wryly.

Good news: the needed parts are available. Bad news: they are currently in Georgia and it will take a few days for them to reach Iowa. We were

supposed to showcase our Bookmobile to other ABOS attendees. We left the bookmobile behind and drove a rental car the rest of the way to Omaha. After a 14-hour trip, we arrived just in time for Networking Nite and enjoyed some much-needed laughter and relaxation with colleagues. We even won some free hats.

Looking back at this day, I must admit that this trip was certainly a bonding experience. Though definitely not "uneventful."



OUTSTANDING BOOKMOBILE LIBRARIAN: JERI GILHAM



Jeri Gilham is the Head of Outreach Services at Montrose Regional Library District in Colorado.

Q: How long have you worked in the outreach/bookmobile services?

A: I was one of those graduates in the seventies that said, “What am I going to do with an undergraduate creative writing degree?” I did the next best thing and celebrated words by becoming a librarian with an MLS from Denver University in 1975. I know that dates me, but so many things from the seventies are current again and outreach programming is stronger than ever. My first opportunity for outreach on a vehicle came in the early eighties, in Detroit (MI) Public Library Bookmobile. An experience I have been forever grateful for and I’m indebted to Detroit for the chance to identify my passion and cement my career path.

Q: What is it about bookmobile services that inspires you?

A: I recently asked one of my outreach assistants what he thought our outreach tagline should be for this unexpected year and he said, “no one is out of reach...everyone is in reach and bring everyone within reach.” That spoke volumes to me. Going outside of our walls and being that bridge and that smile and that open hand that helps someone come into the brick and mortar building is just part of the mission. The other part is to follow through with creative, effective programming for all ages. Our communities see the bookmobile, and if we have done our jobs with excellence, they wave and honk and ask us to come to their festivals, their parades, their nursing homes, their schools, their civic centers, their parks, and their homes. During COVID-19, because outreach librarians live in real-time where spontaneity, creativity, and laser-sharp librarian skills are our norm, we have been invaluable to our communities and we know how to react to most unexpected situations. We know how to engage audiences of all ages and we know how to prepare for inclement weather and untimely mechanical issues. We know how to be extraordinary in the most challenging of times. So we came prepared and we went forth and helped.

Q: If you could add one service or program to your schedule, what would it be?

A: I would like to be able to sponsor “A Day in the Life of the Outreach/Bookmobile Librarian.” since I have been asked so many times “can I ride with you?” by children, parents, seniors, Friends of the Library, and board members. We lead exciting lives on the bookmobile and we give our books a run for their money.



INNOVATION IN OUTREACH PROGRAMMING: ERICA FREUDENBERGER

The Innovation in Outreach Programming Award will be presented to **Erica Freudenberger** of the Southern Adirondack Library System in New York for the Farm-2-Library initiative. This program was created to address the challenges of food waste, food scarcity, and food access. The Southern Adirondack Library System partnered with the Glens Falls Hospital and Comfort Food Community Food pantry to allocate fresh produce through small, rural libraries. This program has had a measurable impact on the regional community, with more than 3,000 pounds of fresh produce distributed to library visitors from July-November 2019.

BERNARD VAVREK SCHOLARSHIP WINNER: TRACI JOY



Q: Where are you getting your MLS? When will you graduate?

A: I attend San Jose State University's School of Information (iSchool) and will receive my MLIS May 2021. That means I have this fall semester and then...ONE more semester! During my final semester, I will be working on my thesis project and working a remote internship through the San Francisco Public Library's Jails and Re-entry Services (SFPL JARS program) where I will be answering reference letters from inmates housed within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. This is a form of outreach that I am very excited about.

Q: What sparked your interest in outreach services?

A: I am interested in providing information to those who have barriers to finding or retrieving the information they seek. That means rural populations that need access to books and Wi-Fi and lack ease of access, it means our vulnerable populations within prisons, corrections, and jails, who need access to the courts, literacy services, and holistic approaches to programming. I believe all people should have access to the information they seek--and the materials they need in order to live a more fulfilling life. Information professionals have the advantage of being creative innovators and I hope to continue working on outreach services throughout my --hopefully-- long career. My dream would be to own a bookmobile that I could fashion with Wi-Fi hotspots and use in areas most in need.

Q: What do you hope to gain from the ABOS conference this year?

A: I am really excited about the conference workshops, particularly: "Procuring an Outreach Vehicle: A Guide to the Process, Procedures and Pitfalls of Buying a New Library Outreach Vehicle" and "Bookin' It on the Boardwalk: Building Partnerships, Attracting New Users, and Running Down a Dream" as well as "Friends in Rural Places: Dementia-Friendly Community Initiative." I hope to learn how to be a better librarian and how to use my limited resources in a way that will advance others' wellbeing. I also hope to figure out how bookmobile vehicle ownership and operations work, how to work with my library in order to start a mobile outreach program, and I hope to learn from others during this virtual conference.

NNLM *ALL OF US* HEALTH OUTREACH AWARD WINNER LIST

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine has awarded conference scholarships to the following recipients:

- Diane Brunson
- Katie Ball
- Aaron Smith
- Sharon Coronado
- Marcia Siehr
- Bridget O'Donnell
- Nancy Kishpaugh
- Laura Cashell
- Marlan Brinkley
- Claire Williams

Congratulations to all the winners!



International Neighborhood 2020: Community Partnerships and COVID-19

By Christina Hernandez
Outreach Librarian
High Plains Library District in Colorado



This year, I was excited to continue a program we implemented last summer called “International Neighborhood” where Outreach library staff would take library services and programs to underserved populations. This started from a conversation with Gloria Galindo, an agency partner who works for Centennial Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) primarily with the immigrant and refugee community, who mentioned how the families she worked with would love to come to the libraries to have their children attend storytimes and programs, but they did not have transportation necessary and/or faced other barriers. She told me about how she and her late husband would take activities and games to families in mainly immigrant and refugee communities in the evening and play with the children in the courtyard; the families loved it. I asked myself, could this be something the library might do? Could we take the library to their neighborhood?

After brainstorming and working with community ambassadors we identified three neighborhoods we would take our Early Literacy Vehicle Ford Transit Van to and provide library services and programming to families each weekend from June to September. We were able to build relationships by getting to know each other while providing lots of engaging hands-on activities such as crafts, STEM activities, games, and other literacy activities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the big question was can we continue this service? How could we do it safely? What library services could we provide? And, most importantly, would families want to come? Because everything happens outside, we decided to give it a go.

This year we implemented a grab-and-go service model. Each week we provided grab-and-go meals provided by the Weld County Food Bank, take-and-make activities from our district’s Summer Reading Adventure Program, and signed patrons up for library cards and the Summer Reading Program. We also brought our Pop-Up Library vehicle so attendees could check out and return material. We set up canopies and tables behind sneeze guards and implemented controls for social distancing..



The big success of the program this summer was partnering with different agencies throughout the community in order to provide resources and basic needs to families. Besides partnering with the Weld Food Bank and being able to provide meals each week to any one 18 years or younger, we partnered with United Way, Bright by Three. They were able to come out twice and provide diapers to families in need. After the first time Bright by Three attended, families kept asking when we would have them back, because they appreciated that we were able to bring resources to them especially during the COVID-19 pandemic—when many places were closed and it is harder to access resources. In total, we provided over 900 meals, 750 book donations, 730 make-and-take kits, and 3000 diapers! And, they began telling other friends and families about how the library helped them, too!

Continued from Page 11



We also provided disposable masks each week, but we got feedback that many families were needing more masks and cloth masks that they could wear to work and school. I decided to coordinate a mask donation drive and ask our community to make masks for those in need. Patrons could make homemade cloth masks and drop them off at any branch library across our district. We collected over 1000 masks! We distributed 600 during our International Neighborhood stops and others throughout the community—to shelters for people experiencing homelessness, senior facilities, and reentry facilities. The first week we distributed masks we ran out in 15 minutes because there was so much demand. Our last weekend of International Neighborhood I partnered with Bright by Three again to distribute diapers, we gave out cloth masks, and also partnered with University of Northern Colorado

Department of Audiology & Speech Language Sciences who brought snacks and brand new books for families to keep. Each person got to pick out two books to take home allowing families who are afraid to check out books from the library—because they are afraid the books will get destroyed—the opportunity to teach their children how to take care of books and not have to worry about returning them. Families who don't have books in their household are often delayed in literacy building.

Allowing the library to have one of our stops at the Union Colony Elementary School helped us promote and advertise the program to more families. Another way we got the word out was with our partnership with the Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado, I would let them know when and where the library would be and which services we would be providing, and the staff and teachers helped us promote it in their ESL and citizenship classes. Centennial BOCES was a great partnership with this program and helped us determine which locations in the community would benefit the most from the library coming to them to help promote the library and build trusting relationships. The big take away: in times of extreme struggle for our communities, agency partnerships are key in building community and helping those most in need.

CAROL HOLE CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AWARD WINNERS

ABOS Secretary Lori Berezovsky reached out to the winners of the Carol Hole Conference Award with the following questions: *How long have you worked in outreach services? What do you hope to get out of the ABOS conference this year? What is your favorite outreach activity or service? How many patrons do you serve each month (on average)?*

Here are the winners and their responses:

Mary Beth Adams

Outreach Coordinator at Alamance County Public Libraries in North Carolina

This is my second year in outreach. I worked one year as a school librarian while I was still in graduate school, but realized it was not the job for me! That did give me the opportunity to take a couple of classes designed for those who want to work in public libraries the next year. My husband found the job listing for an outreach coordinator, and told me I had to apply. I have a background in communications (my undergraduate degree is in Journalism and Mass Communication), and one of my favorite jobs was working for a non-profit that helped older adults and their caregivers. So for me, outreach is the perfect combination of my library skills, my communication skills, and my love of older adults.

I hope to learn what others are doing in outreach. Right now, we have a small staff (just me and one other person), but we have big dreams. Being new to the field, I want to know what we can do to further meet the needs of our patrons and our community. I want to hear about innovative programs in facilities, on bookmobiles, and out in the community.

I love, love, love, reader's advisory. I love talking to my patrons and learning what they liked and what they didn't like. I also love going to community events and telling others what the library can do for them. During the pandemic, obviously we can't go anywhere, and right now, no one can come in the library. I've been making videos to share our new books and old favorites, which has been a fun way to interact with the community. Our Mobile Café is providing free Internet access to rural and disadvantaged neighborhoods in our county. Providing this service, even though our four hours every other week at each stop is a drop in the bucket, makes us feel like we are making a difference.

We have about 120 people in our home delivery program. We have several volunteers who deliver to the same people each month. With the pandemic, some volunteers have had to quit (either because of health conditions or because they have their kids all day), and I am delivering more. I'm trying to look at this as the blessing it is rather than focusing on the amount of time it takes me!

Jessica Cantarero

Outreach Services Manager at Aurora Public Library in Illinois

In outreach services since August 2019.

I am very excited about the opportunity to attend my first ABOS conference! I'm eager to hear Laura Cashell's presentation "Creative and Alternative Bookmobile Uses in Response to COVID-19" and Eletha Davis's topic "Connectivity During the Pandemic." Pre-pandemic, my department provided bookmobile service at 18 schools and eight community stops on a three-week rotation. Right now, we have six community stops planned; however, we are not able to visit elementary schools at this time. It will be fantastic to learn what my colleagues across the country are planning for services this fall and winter.

Since I am new to the field, I hope to identify additional outreach opportunities and expand programming, especially to senior residents. The session "Maximizing Your Library's Impact Through Strategic Partnerships" will be particularly helpful.

Prior to joining the library, I was employed as a reading tutor in a local elementary school. Visiting the bookmobile with students was always an exciting event. My current position is especially fulfilling when I get to see my former students and help them select books...only this time I get to ride in the front seat of the bookmobile!!

Pre-pandemic we served approximately 2000 people.

Katy Farrell

Manager of Mobile Services at Geauga County Public Library in Ohio

In outreach services since July 2019.

I'm excited to learn from the experience of my peers and especially how everyone is handling the shift in services due to COVID-19.

In my job there are so many things I enjoy that it's hard to pick just one! I enjoy taking the bookmobile to community events where we interact with patrons who are not already familiar with our services. It's fun to see people light up when they learn of all the amazing services the library offers.

In 2019, we served an average of 5,600 patrons per month. Since we returned from our closure this year, we average 500 patrons per month.

Michelle Fernandez

Senior Librarian—Bookmobile (Bronx) at New York Public Library in New York

I've been doing outreach in different forms since I became a public librarian in 2016. My first role out of library school was as director of a small public library in Upstate New York, where I really learned the value of community engagement early on. Through a variety of roles in different library systems, I've found outreach to be both my greatest strength and my passion. As one of the first full-time librarians hired to staff the New York Public Library's Bronx Bookmobile in December 2019, I am new to bookmobile services, and so is my library system! I am looking forward to engaging with more seasoned bookmobile professionals and gaining knowledge that I can use to improve and strengthen our developing program. I love providing curbside bookmobile service on the streets of the Bronx. The surprise and delight on people's faces when they have an unexpected encounter with the bookmobile is priceless, and the work we do to bring library resources to underserved communities is invaluable.

Lesley Garrett**Bookmobile Coordinator at McCracken County Public Library in Kentucky**

I've been in my current bookmobile coordinator position for just over a year now.

Since I'm still new to this aspect of library work, I'm really excited to learn from folks who've been in the game for a while. I'm always excited to learn new strategies and gather program ideas, so I look forward to (virtually) meeting and exchanging notes with people doing great things.

Our books-by-mail service is one of my favorites, and it's proven especially vital during the Covid-19 pandemic. Including children's artwork has been a wholesome addition to the books-by-mail service. Providing a bit of care in the form of good books to our patrons during tough times has been really nourishing work to have.

On average, we serve under 150 between books-by-mail and deliveries to assisted-living facilities.

Heather Harrison**Library Supervisor II/Supervisor of Mobile Supervisor of Mobile Services at Sacramento Public Library in California**

I actually just started as the mobile services supervisor for Sacramento Public Library in March, right before the quarantine started! We have been fortunate to be able to resume our services in the last couple months so I have had the chance to go out with my team and meet our patrons. It's been so fun! Even with all the necessary COVID-19 precautions!

Since I'm a newbie in outreach services, I am excited for learning as much as I possibly can from the ABOS conference this year. I'm excited to hear funny, sweet, and rewarding stories of successful outreach from bookmobile drivers around the country.

My favorite part of outreach is talking to our patrons when we are checking out books to them. It is so rewarding to see how happy they are to have books delivered to them. Especially now with so many of us stuck inside, it is especially satisfying to bring books to our school-age patrons, as well as our senior patrons.

We serve between 300-400 patrons each month.

Tamara Hurst**Outreach Assistant (Library to You) at Olathe Public Library in Kansas**

I've been with the Olathe Public Library for 21 years now. I've done outreach the past four years, so I'm relatively new to it.

I'm hoping from the conference to get ideas on ways to improve our current services and ideas on new programs we might try. My favorite programs are Tales and Travel Memories and Reminiscence Groups. We're fortunate here in Olathe, KS that we can do our deliveries in person. Getting to know our patrons as individuals and learning about their life stories is the best part of my job!

I coordinate what we call the "Library to You" service which is free delivery of library materials to individuals who can't physically get to the library. 99% of our patrons are older adults. We deliver to about 200 patrons each month and prior to COVID-19, we also did programming at five memory care facilities.

Nicole Klein**Community Engagement Librarian at Cobb County Public Library System in Georgia**

I started working in an official outreach role as Cobb County Library's community engagement librarian in December 2019, though I've been out and about visiting schools, farmers markets, and community events for many years.

I have a couple things I'm hoping to learn more about at this year's ABOS conference, specifically book bikes and creative ways to serve our aging, incarcerated, and/or our veteran populations.

My favorite outreach activities are those that take me out into the community in unexpected places, like a farmers market, where people aren't expecting to see a librarian. It's really fun to provide entertainment for their children, materials to check out, or just engage in a friendly conversation with someone who hasn't been to the library in a long time, especially those folks that haven't

visited a library since they were kids or since they had kids. I'd like to think they are surprised to see such a friendly face representing their library today.

Currently my department is serving about 2,000 patrons a month handing out supplies and craft kits at a church's drive-thru food distribution site. In the past, we would see 50-60 children and adults at each of our biweekly bookmobile stops for a total of 250-300 patrons on average. I am fortunate to work in such a dynamic capacity for my library system that trying to come up with an average number of patrons we serve each month is actually pretty difficult!

Jenn Koetz

Bookmobile Operator at Brown County Library in Wisconsin

I have served in my current role for two years as of this November, and prior to that served as the bookmobile back-up for seven-and-a-half years.

Through this conference I am looking forward to gaining more information and ideas in all aspects of outreach services. I also look forward to meeting others throughout the outreach community, and hoping to put faces to names with individuals that I have been able to connect with through the ABOS listserv.

My favorite aspect of serving in outreach is connecting with people, and being able to bring the library to them. I especially enjoy connecting with seniors and children, as those age groups are both so eager to learn and explore all that the library has to offer.

700 patrons served each month on average.

Sarah Lucero

Programming and Outreach Assistant at Nicholas P. Sims Library in Texas

I have been working in outreach services for about 20 months.

I am so excited about the conference, I can't wait to hear new ways of outreach and how to make my outreach more effective.

I don't think there is an outreach activity/service I don't love! Prior to COVID-19, visiting the nursing homes in town was definitely a high point, though.

Prior to COVID-19, we averaged about 400 patrons per month. Now with the restrictions, we haven't been able to do outreach at all at our normal locations, so we average about 200.

Diana Marthey

Youth Services Librarian at Akron-Summit County Public Library in Ohio

I've been in the mobile services department for 9.5 years, working in public libraries for 25 years.

I hope to get a lot out of the ABOS conference, especially in the area of early literacy.

My favorite part of outreach is definitely giving kids a fun book to read and enhancing the teacher's lesson plans.

We serve 5000 patrons per month on average. This is during a regular year. This year due to the pandemic, some of our stops aren't open yet, some have adults there but no kids, some wanted to be on the summer schedule, and some wanted to wait until fall to start because they were still trying to figure out how to do things at their center. We're not starting back at our bigger elementary for at least the first nine weeks, because so many of them are online school only. Another thing that is different this year is that our preschools and daycares have school-aged kids there, in addition to the littles.

Kathleen Montgomery

Outreach Manager at Charleston County Public Library in South Carolina

I have been the outreach manager at Charleston County Public Library for one year and was an outreach librarian in the adult services department at one of our branches for two years before that.

I hope to learn the ways in which I can expand our services to vulnerable populations and learn about the innovating work of my

colleagues around the country.

I love when we do community events. We get to see a wide variety of people in our community who might not necessarily be library users and explain to them why the library is great and what services we can offer them.

On average, we see 400 patrons through mobile library visits, senior living community visits, and community events.

Heather Ogilvie

Outreach Librarian at Northwest Regional Library System in Florida

I've been a librarian for about 25 years, and for the last four and a half years, I have been focused completely on outreach services.

I am so excited to meet the ABOS people! I've been a groupie since I got the title outreach librarian and googled "outreach services!" ABOS is at the top of this innovative wave of library work.

I love it all! I get extraordinary love and laughter at my Out of the Box Book Clubs in assisted living facilities and I have more fun than is imaginable at riotous baby storytimes in unlikely locations. Meanwhile, I put the library at every roundtable discussion and have amazing connections.

As the solo outreach librarian, I have 800-1000 participants in my programs, and I engage another 200-2000 in partnership programs. Of course, things are very different right now... but we are all staying connected.

Anne Rhodes

Outreach Librarian at Mansfield/Richland County Public Library in Ohio

I have been in my current position as outreach librarian for three years. Prior to that I was a teen librarian but often assisted the outreach department with community events when needed. I love being in the community and am very happy to be in my current job.

I am excited to see how libraries from around the country are serving their communities in unique and unusual ways. I am also looking forward to learning about ways to identify groups or communities that we are overlooking. Finally, we have ordered a bookmobile and I am hoping to get some ideas about how we can best use this resource to serve our community. Although there won't be as many opportunities for visiting and networking at this year's conference, the virtual format will allow me to view more of the offered sessions and gain that much more information.

Pre-pandemic, lobby stops were my favorite outreach activity. We bring library materials to almost 30 nursing homes and assisted living facilities and it is so wonderful to visit with and talk to the residents. This is what I miss most about my current COVID-19 restricted job. We are still able to bring materials to 21 places, and I am still choosing things for them, but I have no contact with any of the residents. I really miss their smiling faces.

We serve about 145 patrons/month. This includes abbreviated lobby stops and books by mail.

Jennifer Siron

Senior Librarian at Los Angeles Public Library in California

I've been working at my current organization for five years and this is my first year supervising a team dedicated to outreach services in the Engagement and Outreach Department at the Los Angeles Public Library.

I hope to grow and strengthen my network by attending the conference. I also hope my staff and I gain new ideas to continuously develop our outreach strategies.

It's hard to choose just one outreach activity that is my favorite. I am looking forward to going out in the field and meeting the community in their space. Mobile outreach services give us the ability to reach communities that would not or could not make it into a brick and mortar facility.

Depending on the month and season, our team can serve over 3,800 patrons. With the addition of our Street Fleet vehicles, that number can grow.

Closing Letter from the President-Elect



To my ABOS family,

Thank you for attending the 2020 ABOS Virtual Conference, “Out-Doing Outreach!” I hope you found the experience meaningful and inspirational, and that you came away with creative ideas to expand and strengthen your library’s outreach.

In 2021 we will hold the ABOS Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. I sincerely hope that you will be able to join us and discover how you can “Jazz Up Your Outreach.” Now is the time to begin advocating for your attendance with your library director and manager. More details about the 2021 ABOS Conference, including registration and accommodations costs, will be announced in early 2021. We will also have a virtual option if you prefer to attend the conference remotely.

Thank you to Cathy Zimmerman, our 2020 ABOS President, for her phenomenal year of leadership under extraordinary circumstances. And thank you to Susan Parkins, our 2020 ABOS Past President, for her dedication and commitment to the organization these past four years. Our organization has grown this year in multiple ways and launched several new initiatives.

My goal as President during 2021 is for ABOS to continue to expand our “reach” to include everyone who facilitates bookmobile (or any type of vehicle) and outreach services for their library, with a special focus on school outreach services. Please continue to promote ABOS and our conference to your colleagues, library association, state library, and local outreach interest groups. ABOS is the national organization for anyone and everyone that does any type of bookmobile and outreach services. ABOS is a family, and we welcome all those who want to join.

Thank you again for joining us for the 2020 ABOS Virtual Conference and celebrating our 15th Anniversary!

See you in 2021!

Your President-Elect,

David Kelsey

Save the Date!



Make plans to attend next year’s conference! October 12-14, 2021





Get involved! Join a committee today! Contact the committee chair to express your interest or ask questions.

- Advocacy—board1@abos-outreach.com
- Awards—vicepresident@abos-outreach.com
- By-Laws—board2@abos-outreach.com
- Bookmobile/Outreach Information Repository (BOIR) - board3@abos.outreach.com
- Conference Planning—president@abos-outreach.com
- Continuing Education—pastpresident@abos-outreach.com
- Finance—treasurer@abos-outreach.com
- Long Range Planning—board7@abos-outreach.com
- Marketing—secretary@abos-outreach.com
- Membership—board6@abos-outreach.com
- Nominations—pastpresident@abos-outreach.com
- Technology—president@abos-outreach.com

For submissions to *Out & About*,

contact the marketing committee chair via email: board1@abos-outreach.com or secretary@abos-outreach.com. Also, look for postings on Facebook and the ABOS listserv calling for submissions. *Out & About* is published quarterly.

ABOS MARKETING COMMITTEE

**This newsletter is brought to you by the
ABOS Marketing Committee**

Mary Beth Adams

Lori Berezovsky

Glenna Godinsky

Rachel Hadidi

Barbra Krueger

Liana Morales

Michelle Parrish

Heather Sturm

The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is comprised of libraries of all types and sizes. Library administrators, support staff, library staff, governmental officials, trustees, friends of libraries, and professionals from other fields comprise this movement.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental values of ABOS and its members.

The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.