

WINTER
2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

DLA Updates

DLA and the Sustainable Libraries Initiative	1
Help Lead DLA!	2
Apply for a Community Engagement Grant	3
CRLD Board Vacancies and Event	4
YSD Board Vacancies and Blue Hen Cmte	5
2026 MLA/DLA Conference Information	6
DASL Professional Development Day	7
Delaware Diamond Book Award	8
Conference Sponsorship Recap 2025	9

News

Baby Storytimes for Improved Maternal Health	10
125 Years of Delaware Libraries!	11
Friends of Delaware Libraries Update	12

Write for the DLA Bulletin!

DLA has 4 divisions, 9 committees, and 1 interest group, all in 1 awesome organization! Read on to see what they've all been up to lately.

DLA Partners with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative



Submitted by Scott Businsky, DLA President

The Delaware Library Association (DLA) has joined a growing list of state library Associations that have partnered with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI). A benefit of DLA membership is one-year access to the plethora of resources curated by SLI.

From the press release: "Through this partnership, DLA members will join a nationwide community of practice who are using SLI-curated tools to uncover ways that their libraries and communities can understand, adapt to, and help lessen the effects of climate change. These tools include hundreds of best practices proven by peers, access to an archive of professional

development focused on the core value of sustainability, program examples, a vetted vendor list, and a custom CO₂ calculator to help members estimate their current institutional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and measure reductions, and custom publicity pieces to help libraries tell their sustainability story."

For more information about this partnership, please refer to the [November 2025 press release](#).

Help Lead DLA!

Vice-President/ President-Elect

Duties:

1. Must be a personal member of DLA
2. Serves as the chair of the DLA Conference Planning Committee.
3. In the absence of the president to assume his/her duties.
4. To perform duties as assigned by the president.
5. DLA experience required

Social Justice Chair

Duties:

1. Attend the monthly Executive Board meetings.
2. To draw attention to discrimination and injustices, especially those that occur in Delaware libraries and communities, against people.
3. To recommend policy and appropriate action that serves to right injustices and inequalities targeting people of these communities.

Please reach out to Susan Elizabeth Cordle (SusanElizabeth.Cordle@lib.de.us), Nominating Chair, for more information.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANT

Up To \$2,000 Award | DLA Members Only

The objective of a DLA funded grant is to provide funds that help cover library programs or exhibitions that foster a sense of community engagement, and/or present timely topics of interest in areas such as civics, humanities, pop culture, world events, literature, health, family, or other areas as deemed appropriate.

REQUIREMENTS

- Application must be submitted by an active DLA member or from a library with an active DLA institution membership.
- Total grant funds available is \$2,000. The expectation is that multiple awards will be issued, typically in the \$500-1,000 range.
- The grant application must be completed online.
- Mailed applications will not be accepted
- All promotional pieces must include the DLA logo and mission statement.
- Final report must be submitted after conclusion of awarded program.

HOW TO APPLY

- Visit dla.lib.de.us/grant
- Review the grant applicant fact sheet.
- Complete the online application.
- Application period is **February 23 - March 30, 2026**
- Applicants will be notified mid to late May 2026.

Applications can be submitted for new & ongoing programs.

dla.lib.de.us/grant

Join Us!



CRLD Board Vacancies and Event

CRLD is seeking candidates for the roles of **Vice President** and **Treasurer**. We are also planning an exciting professional development event for March!

Vice-President/President/Past President

Term: 3 years

As Vice President of CRLD, you will be the liaison between CRLD and the DLA Conference Committee. As President, you will lead the Division's work, plan the annual President's Program, and support the incoming Vice President with conference planning. As Past President, you will serve on the Long-Range Planning Committee, a group dedicated to researching lasting changes at DLA.

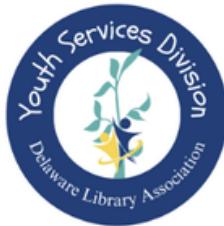
Treasurer

Term: 2 years

The Treasurer assists the Board with financial accounting and communication with the DLA Treasurer. The Treasurer is also a key member of the CRLD Board and participates in discussions about budgeting and program planning.



YSD Board Vacancies and Blue Hen Committee



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Executive Board Candidates and
Blue Hen Book Award Committee Members

email DelawareYSD@gmail.com for info or to volunteer!

Submitted by Rachel West, YSD President

The Youth Services Division has some Executive Board vacancies coming up, as well as some vacancies on the 2028 Blue Hen Book Award Committees.

For the **Blue Hen Book Award Committees**, committee members are required to read each book nominated for their category and submit ratings to their Chair by February 28 of each year. These vacancies are for two-year terms.

For the 2028 award, you will need to read books submitted this calendar year by February 28, 2027. For the second year of your term, you'll read books nominated in 2027 by February 28, 2028.

Openings for committee members can be found here: [2028 Blue Hen Book Award Committee Members](#)

We also have openings upcoming on our **Executive Board**. Terms begin at the DLA/MLA Annual Conference in May. We are seeking candidates for Secretary/Treasurer (a two-year commitment) and Vice President/President-Elect (a six-year commitment, since this position moves from Vice President to President to Past President, each of which is a two-year term). Candidates for these positions must be members in good standing of the Youth Services Division.

Please email DelawareYSD@gmail.com if you have any questions or are interested in serving.

Register for the 2026 Conference!

Submitted by Kathryn Hatfield, DLA
Vice-President

We hope you're planning on joining DLA at our 2026 Conference, May 6-8, at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, Maryland. This year's theme "Our Stories, Our Shelves" celebrates the power of stories within our communities. We'll explore how libraries serve as both keepers and creators of local narratives, examining the ways our shelves reflect, preserve, and amplify voices within our neighborhoods and regions.



OUR STORIES, OUR SHELVES

MLA • DLA Conference 2026

You can register [here](#).

Once you register, your confirmation will include the hotel booking link.

New this year! We're offering a Full Conference PLUS package that includes access to both days of the conference, plus one morning and one afternoon preconference session, and a boxed lunch on Wednesday's preconference day at a discounted rate compared to purchasing preconference sessions separately.

Use these codes on the billing page to receive member rates:

Full Conference PLUS: DLA-PLUS

Two-Day: DLA-TWO

One-Day: DLA-ONE

Wednesday Preconference ONLY: DLA-PRECONF

DLA Member Prices

Early Bird Prices

By 3/23/26

- \$400 Full Conference PLUS
- \$280 Two-Day (Thursday and Friday)
- \$240 One Day (Thursday OR Friday)
- \$150 Wednesday (Preconference ONLY)

Regular Registration Prices

Between 3/24/26 and 4/30/26

- \$450 Full Conference PLUS
- \$330 Two-Day (Thursday and Friday)
- \$290 One Day (Thursday OR Friday)
- \$200 Wednesday (Preconference ONLY)

Late Registration Prices

After 4/30/26

- \$500 Full Conference PLUS
- \$380 Two-Day (Thursday and Friday)
- \$340 One Day (Thursday OR Friday)
- \$250 Wednesday (Preconference ONLY)

DASL Professional Development Day

Submitted by *Stephanie Saggione, DASL President*

DASL hosted our first annual professional development day on October 10, 2025 for school librarians! Everyone was invited, regardless of membership, and we gathered in two buildings- ASPIRA Academy in Newark and Central Elementary in Dover.

During the morning's in-person session, we shared ideas and information about many library topics such as author visits, book fairs, curriculum support, and advocacy. People met and exchanged contact info, learned from each other, and recommended books. Door prizes were given out and many people also took home free books!

Our afternoon session was held virtually - several people presented about topics of interest: serving on the Caldecott Committee, how to use social media effectively, an introduction to BookBreaks, a tour from Follett, news about the consortium, ways to partner up with the public libraries, and how our DSCYF libraries serve students. According to the follow up survey, about 50% of attendees are now considering joining DASL and 97% of them want to continue this event every year!



Work with students? Help choose the next Delaware Diamond Book Winner

Submitted by *Stephanie Saggione, DASL President*

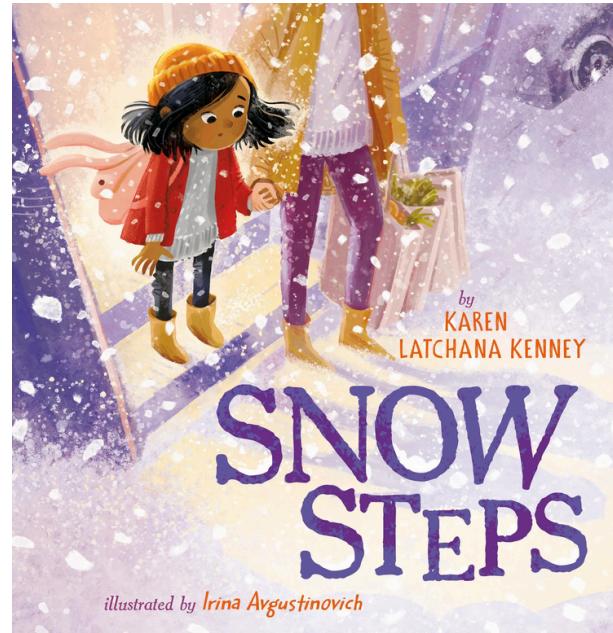
Join Us To Choose The Next Delaware Diamond Book Winner!

Have you thought about participating in the Delaware Diamonds book award program? It's easy- just read aloud several of the [picture books on the current list](#) and have your students vote for their favorite. If you are worried that you do not have enough time to do this with your students, try one of these ideas:

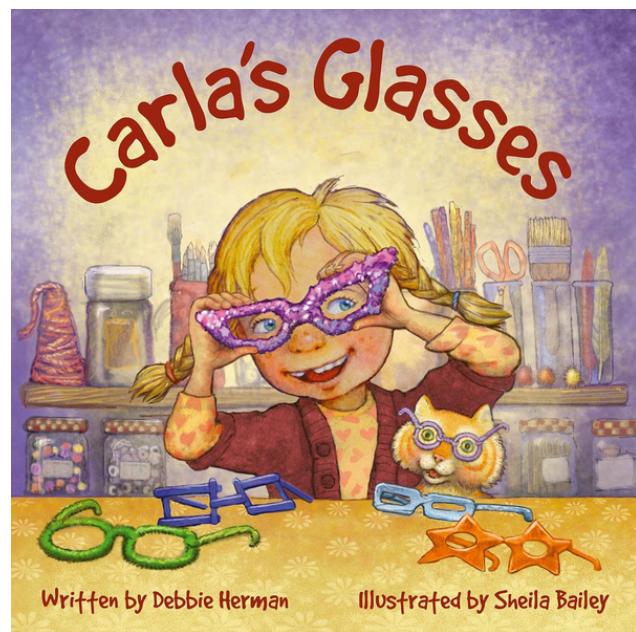
- Participate with just one grade level or one class from each grade level
- Send a letter to your teachers inviting them to participate instead
- Make a display in your library so that students can participate independently
- Make it a family initiative- send home the info and ask families to find the books and tell you their favorite

Email stephanie.saggione@laaa.k12.de.us if you have questions, need a sample letter, or need help finding the 2025 Book List!!

[View the current list of candidates.](#)



One of the current candidates for the Delaware Diamond Book Award



One of the current candidates for the Delaware Diamond Book Award

Conference Sponsorship Recap 2025

Submitted by Scott Businsky, DLA President

In 2025, the DLA Executive Board selected one individual to attend the 2025 DLA/MLA Conference in Ocean City, MD. We asked the awardee, Jean Darnell, to write about their experience.

"I had the pleasure of attending the 2025 MLA/DLA Annual Library Conference in Ocean City, MD. I can honestly say I was impressed with the conference in its entirety.

My conference choices focused on executive leadership sessions, but before I delve into my experience there, I must give a most gracious thanks to the Delaware Library Association for granting me a scholarship for my 1st conference attendance.

The opening keynote by Lady Brion inspired me as she spoke of the powerful impact of librarians in her journey through life. The way she recited her poems bellowed and echoed through my spirit. Additionally, she took my question on how the current advancements in artificial intelligence and how it could never replace human ingenuity. Additionally, she responded that AI has a place in art, if it proceeds forward ethically and with full credit and transparency given to an artist's original content.

After networking with so many new faces, I attended the "Leading While Black" session on surviving executive leadership. The insights and strategies they offered from their experiences

gave this e-suite leader (me) a moment of empathy and self-awareness. After listening and seeing commonalities, I left feeling renewed and seen. Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop advised the importance of being seen through the "windows and mirrors" of representation. I'm truly grateful, MLA/DLA provided this local amplification of leadership.

I also enjoyed the "Addressing Privacy Issues in Youth and Tech Use." As a director, the constant monitoring for safety and ethical uses with technology stays at the top of my professional development schedule. Maintaining current and useful knowledge is what keeps our communities informed and safe.

Lastly, the conference location and atmosphere were so relaxing. As a Houstonian, my 2nd home was Galveston, TX. Though I love my boots in muddy shores and big city amenities, nothing beats putting those same boots on the crystal blue shoreline in Ocean City. Beachside sunsets are visual therapy that soothes the soul. Thank you for the amazing opportunity and great locale.

Best regards,

Jean Darnell

<https://awakenlibrarian.com>"

Information about the 2026 DLA/MLA Conference Sponsorship will be coming soon!

Baby Storytimes for Improved Maternal Health

*Submitted by Renee O'Donnell, Manager,
Brandywine Hundred*

Bernadette Davis, Childrens Librarian at the Brandywine Hundred Library, was inspired to write a blog post for the Association for Library Service to Children after a mother of a five-month-old shared how deeply she missed attending story time. In the article, Bernadette Davis emphasized how this familiar library program does far more than promote early literacy, it supports mental health and strengthens family well-being by helping to reduce maternal loneliness. The popularity of story times at the Brandywine Hundred Library, and others across the State underscore the very real, and often unseen, impact these programs have on our community.

Excerpt from the blog post:

Book Babies, our library's weekly story time for infants, had just wrapped when a mom approached me with her five-month-old daughter in her arms. "I'm so sorry we haven't been here for a while," she began, "but her

naps changed, and we couldn't get out the door on time..."

She paused and I saw that she was beginning to tear up, so I jumped in with über-cheerfulness. "It's fine! I'm so glad you're here today!" I assured her. "Look, you made it out the door, and you're both dressed; that's huge! Congrats!"

The mom relaxed a bit, and spoke like she was making a confession. "This has been so great for us, this program. I've really missed coming."

I noticed the mom said **she** had missed attending, not the baby. This was an important reminder for me that library programs offered for babies are not just beneficial for the infants; they serve as critical support for the parents caring for those children.

Read the rest of this post on the [Association for Library Service to Children blog](#).

125 Years of Delaware Libraries!



DelawareLibraries.org




Friends of Delaware Libraries Update

Submitted by Tiffany Geyer Lydon and Vivian Erickson

Greetings from The Friends of Delaware Libraries Board and our newly elected Co-Presidents, Tiffany Geyer Lydon and Vivian Erickson! At our productive annual meeting in November, we also elected Mary Chute as Secretary and Sue Gooden as Treasurer. Our eleven-person board gathers monthly to discuss how we can advocate for DE libraries and local Friends groups all over the state and help them address their concerns.

The Friends of Delaware Libraries regularly discuss funding and membership needs as to our own group and individual Friends groups. In fact, this year we are again planning on holding County Friends gatherings in Sussex, Kent and New Castle. We frequently hear how useful collaboration among Friends groups would be, so our county-wide meetings will allow plenty of time to pick the brains of fellow Friends group members to find out what does and does not work in achieving Friends groups' goals. Our plan is to help groups find new ways to partner and share resources and workloads.

We are also working to make it possible for you to join our group online. Keep an eye out for updates! Please note that our membership dues will be increasing soon, so if you have been considering joining FODL, this is the perfect time to do so. Your membership dues and donations

make it possible for us to conduct our advocacy efforts, as well as provide supplies, refreshments, promotional materials, etc. for our gatherings. Thank you for considering membership in the Friends of Delaware Libraries!

Also, if you are curious about joining our board, please let us know. We always welcome interested folks, especially from Kent County! We can be reached at defriendslib@gmail.com.

Tiffany & Vivian

Learn more about the Friends [online](#).

Write for the DLA Bulletin!

The DLA Bulletin is an excellent way to let other DLA members know what's going on your in library! All Bulletin content is written by **you, DLA members**. Things you could share:

- A recap of a successful library program
- A division, committee, or working group update -- what is your group working on right now?
- A cool collection or program you have at your library
- A call for participation -- need volunteers for a DLA-adjacent event? Or a collaborator for a project?
- Awards or recognitions of DLA members
- Upcoming professional development opportunities for DLA members
- Events for DLA members
- In Memoriam pieces - remember a Delaware librarian who has passed away



Next call goes out in Spring 2026

You can [submit here](#) for the next
Bulletin.

Contact the Bulletin Editor, Kayla Abner, with any questions (kabner@udel.edu).
