

Library Programs to Support Autism Acceptance Month
Amelia Anderson, University of South Florida

Formerly known as Autism Awareness Month, April is now largely recognized as Autism Acceptance Month. Public libraries in the US provide programs for their communities, some of which center such public awareness campaigns.

This poster presents an exploration into how public libraries across the US provide autism programming in April, along with associated language choices that indicate inclusive practices. While autism events in April are not widespread, those libraries that do celebrate autism have the opportunity to share valuable information with parents, caregivers, educators, and members of the community at large. Some also provide important opportunities for Autistic patrons to gather and learn from one another, telling their stories in a structured but informal environment. However, many event descriptions use language that is not in alignment with Autistic individuals' preferences, and opportunities for Autistic patrons of all ages are limited.

This poster will both showcase exemplar programs and highlight gaps in public library programming, inspiring session attendees to celebrate Autism in April and beyond through inclusive programs at their own libraries. Attendees will be able to:

1. Apply new knowledge in creating autism-inclusive programs at their own libraries;
2. Recognize the need for autism programs across the lifespan and design relevant programming for all ages;
3. Identify language that should be avoided in marketing materials for autism programming.

Listening to Autistic Patrons to Develop More Inclusive Libraries
Amelia Anderson, University of South Florida

Autistic library patrons have a story to tell about their library experiences, and we have a responsibility to listen, learn, and create more autism-inclusive spaces. A recent survey of Autistic adults asked them to reflect on their time in school libraries. This poster presents the stories they shared about how they spent time in their school libraries, what attributes of the library and their librarians they found to be helpful, and how they believe their school librarians could have provided better support. These survey participants indicated that librarians should be knowledgeable about autism and listed many areas in which librarians should be able to offer support, all of which will be outlined for session attendees. Of particular interest, and beyond specific autism knowledge, many emphasized the value of librarian qualities such as patience and kindness. While this survey focused on school library patrons, the messages apply to all librarians and this poster will be relevant to all. Session attendees will be encouraged to share their own experiences, and conversations will be tailored to address attendees' questions.

Attendees will be able to:

1. Recognize the value of librarian disposition in providing inclusive services.
2. Analyze their current library services through the lens of Autistic experiences.
3. Prioritize areas of support valued by Autistic library patrons in their own libraries.
4. Develop library services in alignment with Autistic preferences.

Including Students in the Archives: Telling the University's Story One Item at a Time
Clarissa West-White, Bethune-Cookman University

This poster explores the collaborative relationship between the university's archivist and a student worker at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) in Florida. By engaging students in the processing and digitization of materials related to the university's founder and early history, the archives move from a "silent warehouse" to a dynamic classroom. Students act as co-interpreters of the university's narrative. Each document, photograph, or artifact handled by a student provides a direct link to the founder's vision, allowing the student to see their own academic journey as a continuation of a century-long legacy. Objectives: 1. Examine the collaborative working relationship between a university archivist and a student worker within an HBCU archival setting. 2. Reframe the role of student workers as co-interpreters of institutional narratives rather than solely as labor support for technical tasks. 3. Analyze the educational and identity-building impact of hands-on archival engagement on students' understanding of their place within a historic institutional legacy. 4. Acknowledge and contextualize the challenges of employing student workers in archival settings—including scheduling, turnover, workload, and stamina—while emphasizing their long-term value to archival missions, while highlighting best practices for leveraging student labor in ways that are mutually beneficial for institutional memory, student learning, and archival sustainability.

Cynthia Beardsley, Florida Department of Corrections

The Florida Department of Corrections (FDOC) operates over 134 facilities statewide, including 49 major institutions over four regions. Region III comprises 15 major facilities and in total, these 15 facilities can accommodate approximately 17,000 inmates. FDOC provides educational and recreational programming through the Office of Programs and Re-Entry. Institutional library services are coordinated through this office to provide inmate access to library services at all major institutions. While libraries at these facilities may not offer all the services and materials Florida public libraries do, programs at prison libraries are available. Patrons are encouraged to partake in programs, ranging from general education to enrichment role-playing games and personal journaling sessions.

FDOC/Region III library facilities provide a variety of programs, much like public libraries. The development, coordination, and execution of FDOC library programs highlight the innovation and forward thinking of these library professionals as well as volunteers and the patrons themselves. My poster presentation highlights FDOC/Region III programs, library professionals, and patrons and how these aspects work together to provide "equity through visibility" and "connection thorough community" in our library programming to our patrons.

They See Me Rollin': Navigating Library Outreach as a Team of One
Morgan Strickland, Walton County Public Library System

Public library outreach captures the heart of communities through Bookmobiles, outreach programming, and access to the library beyond its walls. Behind this charm is careful planning, logistical coordination, and tireless effort, especially when managed by a team of one. This poster follows 3 years since the Walton County Public Library System's Words on Wheels Bookmobile relaunch and the creation of its Library Outreach program. It shares growing community connections, expanding accessibility, adapting library programs, and creative ways to attract new patrons. Route adjustments and collaboration with branch staff allowed the Bookmobile and Outreach program to serve patrons from the FL-AL border to the Gulf Coast while maintaining initiatives. Designed as both a narrative and interactive experience, this features a visual roadmap of outreach milestones, operational realities, and pivots when encountering potholes. The map leads visitors to the Outreach Exchange to explore, share, and trade ideas and solutions while reflecting on real-world experiences in outreach. Participants will understand building, tracking, and sustaining on-the-go services for setting realistic goals; identify challenges like mechanical issues and burnout while exploring practical solutions; discover collaborative strategies to expand outreach impact. Attendees become active participants,

fostering peer discussions while making the complex work of library outreach tangible and immediately applicable.

Leading Teen Voices in Libraries

Jennifer Shipley, MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Every library has a story—and today's teens are essential co-authors of it. This poster session demonstrates how intentional Teen and Young Adult Advisory Boards transformed teen programming across multiple branches into sustainable youth leadership initiatives. By shifting from traditional programming to teen-driven collaboration, libraries created spaces where young people could tell their stories through service, creativity, and decision-making.

Through visual storytelling, impact snapshots, and practical models, this poster highlights how teens helped shape collections, design programs, and influence library services. It also addresses timely challenges such as recruiting diverse teen participation, sustaining engagement post-pandemic, and creating inclusive leadership opportunities.

Attendees will be invited to share their own experiences, reflect on their library's youth engagement story, and explore adaptable strategies that can be implemented in libraries of varying sizes and resources.

Objectives:

- Illustrate how centering teen voice strengthens library relevance and community impact
- Share practical, scalable strategies for recruiting and sustaining teen leadership
- Inspire attendees to identify one actionable step to begin or deepen youth leadership in their own libraries

Beyond Numbers: The UWF Story Project

Kellie Sparks, University of West Florida Libraries

The UWF Library Story project reimagines how we document library value by moving beyond gate counts and into the heart of the student experience. This poster presents a dual-purpose survey experiment designed to capture the "why" behind library usage. By gathering personalized narratives, we gained deeper context into how our libraries impact students' academic journeys and identified specific problems our services solved.

This tool functioned as a two-prong strategy: it successfully collected rich qualitative data while simultaneously identifying library advocates for our #ScholarlyArgos social media campaign.

This poster presentation will explore the specific methodology used to solicit these stories, a curated sampling of the data collected, and the resulting visuals from our social media outreach. Our objectives are to demonstrate how libraries can bridge the gap between feedback and advocacy, using student voices as powerful social proof. This poster presentation will help librarians understand how to transform user testimonials into a cohesive narrative that resonates with stakeholders and builds community trust. This proposal aligns with the conference theme by proving that when we empower users to tell their stories, we create a more compelling and authentic library narrative.

The Case of the Missing Documents

Niall Williams, Florida State University

Accessing government documents can require a lot of detective work. Last year saw the widespread removal of information from federal government websites and databases. Digital tools, research, and datasets we had previously taken for granted disappeared overnight. All information tells an important story, just as the vanishing of information conveys other stories about our institutions, our histories, and our communities. This mystery-themed poster presentation will give users the tools they need to find documents that have been removed and narratives that have been buried. From professional data saving initiatives to crowd-sourced digital archives, the resources are out there for any sleuths who follow the clues.

America 250 Booklists: The Methods, Merits, and Many Voices
Ashton Maggard, Orange County Library System

In preparation for the national initiative marking the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence (America 250), Orange County Library System partnered with the Florida Humanities Council to create three book lists for: Children, Young Adult, and Adult age groups. Each list reflects diverse perspectives while emphasizing literary merit, historical significance, and the founding principles of the nation.

The poster presents the lists and explains the librarians' selection process. This included gathering suggestions, ranking titles on a 1-10 scale, confirming availability and print status, reviewing scope alignment, checking availability across Florida libraries, and consulting professional reviews. A funnel chart will visualize how titles were narrowed. Special consideration was given to historically underrepresented perspectives, including enslaved people, women, and Indigenous communities during the Revolutionary War era.

The poster also addresses how potentially biased or inaccurate works were evaluated, highlighting intellectual freedom and informed civic engagement in alignment with the American Library Association's commitment to the Public Good.

Audience takeaways include identifying a clear process for developing a statewide book list, learning strategies for incorporating diverse perspectives related to Revolutionary War history, and understanding how curated collections uphold ALA's values of informed and balanced civic engagement.

StoryBridge: Empowering At-Risk Teens Through Transformative Storytelling
Jennifer Shipley, MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

StoryBridge was a week-long teen storytelling pilot program developed at the Miami-Dade Public Library System to amplify the voices of at-risk youth living in a local residential shelter. Designed by the Library Operations Manager over Young Adult Services implemented with teen services librarians and storytelling-trained staff, the program created a structured, supportive space for teens to craft and share authentic personal narratives.

Adjunct Professor Christie Koontz of Florida State University developed a focused curriculum rooted in Moth-style storytelling principles. During four days of guided workshops, teens practiced memory recall, narrative structure (beginning, middle, end), voice modulation, transitions, descriptive language, and confidence-building techniques. On the fifth day, participants chose how—or whether—to share their stories: live presentation, small group, one-on-one, audio recording, or opting out, ensuring emotional safety and agency. Meals, snacks, and interactive activities fostered trust and community. StoryBridge demonstrates how libraries can be transformative spaces where vulnerable youth build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and reclaim their voices.

Objectives:

- Show how storytelling frameworks empower at-risk teens
- Provide a replicable model for short-term, high-impact youth programs
- Highlight trauma-informed strategies and participant choice
- Encourage partnerships to expand services to underserved youth

Tabletop Roleplaying Games for Teens and Adults
Shannon Dann, Volusia County Public Library

Volusia County Public Library offers a variety of enriching programming to meet the needs of a diverse wide-reaching community. When asked about underserved groups, a staff member well versed in role playing games brought the idea of offering monthly separate adult (ages 18+) and teen (grades 6-12) role-playing events to New Smyrna Beach Regional Library. This would provide a venue for adults (ages 18+) and teens (grades 6-12) to create and build worlds while making community connections and socializing. Over the course of one year, both groups have gained popularity. Some participants have even taken leadership roles by becoming Dungeon Masters during monthly game play. Participants enjoy creating characters to represent themselves and bring new and fantastic worlds to life through collaborative storytelling in game play. The program format was developed to include progression to encourage ongoing regular participation.

This program also acts as a possible “branching” point into other programs such as fiction writing, game development, strategy gaming, and more, all of which serve to grow connections in the community and encourage people to tell their own stories.

The Library as a Success Partner: Advocating for Integrated Research Support
Kaitlyn Hodge, Pasco-Hernando State College

This poster shares a case study of a partnered assignment in English Composition I (ENC1101) at Pasco-Hernando State College, North Campus. Over several years, we redesigned how students engage with research by requiring them to review their Works Cited with an embedded librarian, moving from an optional service to a structured curriculum checkpoint.

Our objective was to provide individualized instruction tailored to each student’s specific needs before final papers are submitted. While optional meetings previously peaked at 16.07%, by Fall 2025, 80.7% of students in participating sections received librarian assistance, and 94.5% of those students passed. This approach creates space for one-on-one instruction on evaluating and synthesizing sources through various forms of direct support, including synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid formats. The primary goals are to demonstrate the impact of required library checkpoints and to highlight how personalized feedback supports student success, while also considering how prioritizing research ownership can serve as a proactive response to concerns about unethical AI use. The poster outlines the project’s development, shares participation and pass-rate data through three Excel charts, includes partner reflections, and discusses utilizing the Works Cited review as a practical tool for teaching information literacy.

Read, Reflect, Respond: Building a Faculty Learning Community
Mary Beth Isaacson, Pasco-Hernando State College

In the age of generative AI, academic integrity is an area of major concern for teaching faculty. Assignments that were carefully crafted to assess the student's knowledge of the subject can now be answered in minutes by using a chatbot. Faculty often feel isolated and overwhelmed as they try to navigate rapidly changing technology while still maintaining the validity of their assessments.

This poster session details a successful cross-functional project at Pasco-Hernando State College where the Libraries and Instructional Design teams co-facilitated a faculty book club focused on *The Opposite of Cheating: Teaching for Integrity in the Age of AI* by Tricia Bertram Gallant and David A. Rettinger, which presents a research-backed vision for academic integrity and offers practical tips for instructors. We will explore the logistics of this model, including recruitment strategies, discussion facilitation techniques and materials, and assessment.

Poster session attendees will learn techniques for implementing a cross-functional professional development event. Although PHSC is a state college, this project could easily be adapted for use in city/county government as well as other academic institutions. This project will also be of interest to LIS and other graduate students who may be interested in teaching.

More Than Manga: Fandom Events in Library Spaces
Rachel Morrison, Osceola Library System - Buenaventura Lakes Library

Anime After Hours at the Buenaventura Lakes Library showcases how libraries can support personal and community storytelling through creativity, fandom, and intergenerational participation. This multi-station, drop-in event engages patrons of all ages with activities like 3-D printed Pokémon painting, hidden Pokémon hunts, button making, and glass panel painting. The event culminates in an intergenerational cosplay contest judged on creativity and accuracy, with prizes from program partners and local vendors. By inviting small businesses and creatives to host vendor tables, the library strengthens community connections and supports local artists. Attendance has grown as anime and manga popularity rises, demonstrating libraries' role in fostering identity, creative expression, and nontraditional literacy. Conference attendees will learn practical strategies for designing inclusive, engaging, and scalable fandom-based programs, building community partnerships, and creating spaces where stories, talents, and passions intersect. The poster itself will model interactive engagement using visuals, samples, and handouts to guide discussion and inspire attendees.

Planting your future: Notes from a staff-to-librarian success story
Hillary Arieux, Florida Southern College

This poster by an early career academic librarian shares a personal journey from a full-time staff role to professional librarian. A visual journey of the progression from paraprofessional and library school student to librarian, this poster will focus on how one librarian navigated new expectations, responsibilities, and built confidence in their professional identity as an early career librarian. Personal experience is used to share lessons learned, advice, and practical tips applicable to others considering becoming a librarian, those in library school, and those just starting their professional librarian careers. A QR code will be included for all conference participants to ask questions on the topic or to share their own advice and experiences. Handouts listing practical first steps will be provided for those considering moving from a staff to a librarian role. The aim is to foster discussion among conference participants of all career paths and to provide a starting point through one librarian's experience for those considering or working towards a similar switch. NOTE: this poster is based on the FLA webinar presented on Jan 27, 2026 under the same title of 'Planting your future.'

Telling Stories, Sharing Stories: Enhancing Access Through Inclusive Metadata
Amirah Flynn, Pasco-Hernando State College

Libraries strive to be places where everyone feels like they are welcomed and represented. We curate materials that reflect our individual and collective stories, culture, viewpoints, and values. To maximize user discoverability of our collections, it is crucial that the metadata be as accurate and inclusive as the items they contain. Adapted from a webinar created for an MLIS capstone course, this poster presentation will focus on the ways in which metadata affects the user, and how information professionals can use controlled vocabularies to enhance access for all members of the community.

Attendees will learn current best practices for inclusive metadata and cataloging work and will learn techniques for implementing an inclusive metadata project at their institution. The presentation will include a hands-on activity to facilitate interaction and conversation, as well as a digital resource sheet with practical tools.

Next Chapter Book Club: Building Inclusive Communities, One Story at a Time
JB Bishop, Maitland Public Library

Next Chapter Book Club (NCBC) builds inclusive communities through the power of shared stories. Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities meet regularly to read together, build friendships, and strengthen their place in the community.

Since 2002, NCBC has grown from a handful of Ohio clubs to over 300 worldwide. The model is beautifully simple: Members meet regularly as a group with trained facilitators to read aloud and discuss books together. NCBC members range from those who read proficiently to those who cannot read at all. Everyone has the ability to connect to a story and a right to share theirs.

Simply put, NCBC meets adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities where they are, enabling them to create new and lasting friendships, gain confidence, develop self-advocacy skills, and build better connections within their communities.

Session attendees will learn that it's not about literacy. It's about connection. I will provide resources for starting new chapters and share real stories from the Maitland, FL, club.

Our Maitland members include Special Olympics athletes, actors, retail workers, couples, confident (and less confident) readers, and those who just love a good story. Disabilities and differences fade away when everyone gathers to share the human experience through books.

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to be safe spaces for lifelong learning and authentic inclusion. NCBC shows us how, one story at a time.

Library Collaboration for Community Narratives
John Abresch, University of South Florida Libraries

The growth of comic book conventions and other fandom gatherings has created an information ecosystem that libraries of all types are well positioned to take part in. Libraries can encourage innovation, provide information access, promote dialogue, and offer neutral spaces for social interactions for individuals and groups from the various fandoms. In 2026, Librarians from the University of South Florida (USF), Pasco-Hernando State College (PHSC) and Pinellas Public Library Cooperative (PPLC) developed an outreach framework that used digital resources, library collection holdings, and inter-library loan services to offer essential information services to popular culture community members. The framework was put into practice during a librarian panel event at the St. Pete Comic Con. Librarians interacted with members of the panel audience and offered how distinct collections, activities such as gaming, resources for costuming and unique library spaces could support fan endeavors. Outcomes of the librarian panel informed planning for library participation at future popular culture events. The outreach framework and its focus on complementary information resources and services are replicable across different library types both academic and public. The approach among libraries would allow for librarians to overcome institutional barriers to offer custom solutions for individual and community popular culture fandom members to express their identities in creative ways.

Poetry Programming as a Platform for Voice and Expression
Elida Velado Salazar, University of Miami Libraries

This poster presentation highlights a series of National Poetry Month (April) events designed to advocate for and share diverse voices through poetry. In light of the increasing presence of artificial intelligence in academic spaces, this poetry programming offered the university community an opportunity to nurture creativity through human-centered, expressive practices. The programming combined low-barrier, passive engagement opportunities with hands-on, creative participation—such as a generative poetry workshop (blackout poetry), to amplify the voices of underrepresented writers while inviting participants to explore their own creativity.

Aligned with the conference theme, "Tell Your Story," the poster presents a practical, scalable approach to planning poetry programming across a range of effort levels (e.g., open mics, "poems on the rock," poetry toy machines, and generative workshops), ensuring accessibility for diverse audiences. The poster also summarizes key metrics (attendance) and qualitative feedback (participant and community reception) to illustrate impact and provide transferable ideas for other libraries.

Learning Objectives:

Adapt scalable poetry programming ideas, such as open mics, generative workshops, and micro engagement activities, to their own library or campus context.

Describe key implementation and assessment considerations for poetry programming, including outreach, accessibility, facilitation, and simple methods for evaluating impact.

Quantifying Librarianship: Visualizing the Work of an Academic Librarian
Mary Rubin, University of Central Florida

Mary Rubin tracked all of her meetings, Ask A Librarian shifts, reference desk shifts, research consultations, events, and instruction sessions during her first two years as an academic librarian. By carefully documenting where her time was spent, she created a dataset that captures the rhythms and responsibilities of her daily work. Quantifying how work hours were distributed across different types of service and engagement, this data visualization tells just one part of her professional story. It reveals patterns of outreach, instruction, and support that might otherwise remain invisible in the daily flow of academic life.

In academic libraries, much of the work librarians perform is relational and service-oriented, making it difficult to represent in traditional reports or metrics. Tracking these interactions offers a way to make that labor visible. The resulting visualization highlights the volume of activity and the diversity of roles librarians occupy: instructor, research partner, event organizer, and point of contact for students and faculty.

Data visualization has become increasingly popular as a creative endeavor to represent personal data. This project transforms routine professional record-keeping into a broader reflection on labor, time, and visibility in librarianship. By turning two years of tracked activities into a visual representation, the work invites viewers to consider how data can illuminate the often unseen patterns that shape professional practice.