

FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT DOUGLAS CRANE



This past week was the annual conference of the [Florida Library Association](#). At the end of the conference, my term as President of the association concluded. It was a bittersweet moment as I enjoyed leading the organization but was also ready to pass along the responsibilities.

Looking back over the past year, I am proud of the work that our members accomplished to advance Florida libraries. Given the political pressure targeting the association, and local issues impacting many of our members, we still had robust participation across our committees. Each one had a highlight for the year:

- The Advocacy Committee completed another successful legislative day at that Florida Capital in January, seeing funding for new library construction grants for the second year in a row.
- The Communications Committee launched our [first online shop](#), selling t-shirts, magnets, and more!
- The Professional Development committee held events including a get ready for conference webinar.
- The DEIA Committee put on successful and highly attended webinars and issued an informative monthly newsletter.
- The Membership Development Committee did the important work reaching out to lapsed members to encourage them to renew and identified ways to recruit new members.
- The Intellectual Freedom Committee tracked the many book challenges across the state and the county to keep our members informed.
- The Awards and Honors Committee ranked and recommended the winners for our many awards and three MLIS scholarships.
- The Conference Planning Committee completed a huge amount of work behind the scenes to make our annual conference a great success, from scheduling breakout sessions to recruiting vendors.

The opening session featured two great speakers. Jaena Rae Cabrera – APALA President, joined us all the way from San Francisco to talk about the [Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association](#). Our keynote speaker was [Kris McGuigan](#), who shared her inspirational story and the importance of courage in the face of fear.

Thank you to all of conference [sponsors and exhibitors](#). We could not have done it without your support. My deepest appreciation goes to the outgoing [FLA Board of Directors](#). Their dedication to the association was very much appreciated throughout our many discussions.

FLA could not operate without the tireless work of its staff. My sincere admiration goes out to our Executive Director Jenny Abdelnour and office assistant Niall Williams for keeping FLA running day-to-day.

Finally, I wish all the best to our new President, Jorge Perez. I look forward to serving with him on the Board as the Immediate Past President.

If you want to support Florida libraries, [please consider joining FLA](#). Membership is reasonable and goes a long way to ensure the success of our profession in Florida.

DOUGLAS CRANE

FLA PRESIDENT 2023-2024

