

## OPLA 2019 Annual Report - Elizabeth Malak

It has been a privilege serving OPLA Council as President this year. With the dedicated support of OLA staff, I have had the opportunity to engage and collaborate with an incredible group of library leaders from across the province. OPLA Council and Committees have had a busy 2019 with many member-engagement endeavours and professional development events. Here is a snapshot of Council's activities this year.

Nicole Zummach's first year as **HoOPLA** editor and has done a tremendous job soliciting content from libraries across the province. Nicole's work on HoOPLA highlights the tremendous impact Ontario public libraries have in their communities.

The **Reader's Advisory Committee** planned this year's RA in a Day, Out of the Shadows: Taking the "Scary" out of Horror Reader's Advisory. Sessions included author Nick Cutter, film expert Alexandra West, and the Dewey Divas & Dudes. Plans are underway for 2020, which will have the theme 'Past, Present and Future.'

The **Best Bets Committee** has been working hard reading over 250 titles to award the 2019 Top Ten best in Canadian fiction and non-fiction for children and teens. The committee is also working on a webinar for the New Year, so keep an eye out for it on the Education Institute.

The **Community-Led Libraries Committee** planned the Community-Led Think Tank. "Mindful Communities" took place at London PL with a keynote from Oakville PL's Marcus Logan, entitled "It's Not Just Drag Queen Storytime." Attendees participated in roundtable sessions on decolonizing collections, ageing populations, customer service for homeless patrons, bibliotherapy, measuring impact, and embedding mental health services.

The **Child and Youth Committee** planned the Child & Youth Expo, which took place at Thunder Bay PL. The program featured a variety of local talent including a keynote from Jean Pendziwol, a puppetry session from RECE Don McMahon, a grant writing session offered by Ontario Arts Council, and a Drag Queen Storytime.

The **Research and Evaluation Committee** supported the Patron Registration Survey administered in July and completed by 122 library systems. Results will be presented at a Super Conference 2020 session led by Douglas Davey and Gillian Byrne.

Lisa Worobec's ***Kickstart to Participation*** project focused on the service needs of migrant workers. Lisa's work included an extensive environmental scan, presentations to OPLA Council and stakeholder engagement with greenbelt libraries and agencies. Lisa's project served as the impetus for important conversations on who to best serve this underserved population and will inform future OPLA work.

***Northern Outreach and Engagement*** has been an ongoing OPLA focus area. Dayna DeBenedet conducted a survey of to identify needs such as funding, staffing and professional development. The survey led to a Northern Outreach Teleconference where participants discussed barriers to engagement, including costs when attending OLA events and management support to attend. Participants also discussed ways in which OLA can support smaller regional events. Teleconferences will continue and a meetup will take place onsite during Super Conference.

OPLA libraries supported OLA with ***Ontario Public Library Week*** by hosting "Library Day in Your Riding" with local MPPs. The meetings communicated the impact of library service in their communities.

OPLA has supported OLA and FOPL in meetings with ***ServiceOntario***, who are exploring their future service delivery. Super Conference Roundtables will give public libraries attending the opportunity to give their input.

This year's ***Super Conference*** theme, "Dream Here," truly describes my time on council. I have learned, on a completely different level, the various ways one can engage colleagues, partners and funders. I look forward to continued dreaming with incoming OPLA President Erika Heeson. Thank-you to OPLA Super Conference Planners, Hamid Printer and Megan Paquette for their tireless efforts in working with the OLA staff and Super Conference Team in building a program that balances the professional development needs of all Ontario libraries and beyond.

Have a great Super Conference!