

REPORT OF ANDREA CECCHETTO

2021 PRESIDENT, ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



2021 has been another extraordinary year. As we mark the end of year-two of the pandemic, OLA looks forward to the upcoming 2022 Super Conference where we will once again come together virtually to showcase the exceptional contributions of our profession. This year's Super Conference builds on the exceptional work of the

2021 OLA Super Conference Planning committee who initiated this transition to a virtual platform. While we all missed seeing our friends and colleagues in person, the virtual conference created opportunities for new attendees who may not have otherwise been able to attend, resulting in an inclusive and energetic conference. This year's theme Gather/Se rassembler is a reminder that despite the isolation of the pandemic, we continue to come together and share our collective wisdom. Not only are we gathering together, we are doing so to gather our knowledge, our shared passions, and our connections to each other and our community. In the depths of another pandemic winter, the 2022 Super Conference gathering is a moment to reflect and celebrate, and I cannot wait to see you there.

The OLA Board worked throughout 2021 on a number of transformative projects. OLA is launching a new Strategic Plan in 2022 to ensure the association continues to pursue priorities relevant to our members. Many of you contributed by participating in our members' survey to identify the areas of significance for the association. This input directly supported the development of the association's strategic goals for the upcoming years. Additionally, the Board undertook a process with the Ontario Nonprofit Association called "Reimagining Governance". This workshop asked the Board to reflect deeply on our leadership and consider how we may approach the governance of the association in new and transformational ways. The Board's priority in this was making sure that our leadership best represents the membership and its ideals, priorities and needs. One of the Board's most pressing concerns is to support OLA's work on anti-racism, equity and inclusion by ensuring the Board itself reflects these values both functionally and structurally. This process was a rich exploration of who needs a voice in OLA's leadership and in what way can the Board be responsive and dynamic in its role. 2022 will be an exciting year as the work of these projects take root.

OLA continued its lobbying work with the province, strongly advocating for the value of libraries, particularly in supporting communities through the pandemic. In the 2021 provincial budget processes, OLA demonstrated how libraries in all sectors provided vital support for digital learning and working, addressed inequities in digital access and supported the economic and social recovery of communities. OLA lobbied in the 2022 budget for sustainable provincial funding for public libraries, recognizing that this funding is critical especially as municipalities struggle with the financial impact of COVID-19. OLA further presented the need for an annual investment in the Ontario Digital Public Library to ensure equitable and affordable access to digital content across the province. Further, OLA highlighted the urgent need to support First Nation Libraries, both through the development of a new funding model that addresses inequities in funding for First Nation Libraries as well as to support the revitalization and perseverance of First Nation Languages. OLA additionally presented the need immediately to double funding to First Nation Libraries to provide appropriate income for their staff.

In the midst of this important work, OLA staff continued to maintain its' excellent service whilst undergoing some significant changes, most notably the move from its' Toronto offices. Staff have demonstrated resilience and commitment through another turbulent year and under the leadership of executive director Shelagh Paterson, were able to continue to provide stability and service to the membership. As I conclude my term as president, I am deeply grateful to the staff, Board and division council members and committees for their dedication, perseverance and passion, and send my thoughts to all OLA members for a safe, healthy, and fulfilling year ahead.



ASSOCIATION DES BIBLIOTHEQUES DE L'ONTARIO-FRANCO

HÉLÈNE CARRIER, PRÉSIDENTE

ABO-FRANCO

Membres ABO 2021 : 97

La pandémie a continué d'avoir un impact considérable sur tous les aspects de nos organisations et de nos vies au cours de l'année. Comme tant d'organismes à but non lucratif, l'OLA a dû se réinventer passer en mode virtuel et faire preuve d'une formidable résilience. Les élections pour les postes de conseillers des divisions et membres du comité directeur d'OLA ont dû être exceptionnellement reportés. Je tiens donc à remercier chaleureusement les membres du Conseil de l'ABO-Franco qui, pour la plupart, ont accepté de demeurer en poste pour une année supplémentaire. Je remercie également la responsable de la programmation francophone des ateliers de la Super Conférence 2021 et tout le personnel de l'OLA pour leur engagement et leur appui indéfectible malgré les circonstances difficiles de la pandémie. Ce fût un plaisir et un privilège de travailler avec vous tous! Voici donc un sommaire des réalisations de l'ABO-Franco fondées sur les priorités de l'association et sur les intérêts de nos membres: éducation, recherche, mobilisation et partenariats.

Éducation

La Super Conférence 2021 tenue pour la toute première fois en format virtuel fût un franc succès. Avec plus de 7000 participants, elle a réuni des collègues de tous les coins de la province et de l'ensemble de la francophonie canadienne. La participation aux trois ateliers virtuels du volet francophone a doublé et la séance *Pleins feux* avec la conférencière Khate Lessard nous a convié à une réflexion sur le thème de l'équité, diversité et inclusion.

En mai 2021, les Journées Congrès de l'ABO-Franco ont eu lieu en virtuel sous le thème « Archives et bibliothèques dans les communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire (CLOSM) : enjeux et devenir ». Gratuite et ouverte à tous, la conférence était organisée en partenariat avec Bibliothèque et Archives Canada (BAC), le Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française (CRCCF) de l'Université d'Ottawa avec le soutien des réseaux archivistique et de bibliothèques des CLOSM de BAC.

Dans le cadre de la programmation de l'Éducation Institute, nos collègues de la Bibliothèque publique de Vaughan ont présenté en mai 2021 l'atelier de formation « French Services in an Anglophone Community » qui offrait des conseils pratiques aux bibliothèques souhaitant offrir des services en français à leurs communautés en croissance et en évolution avant, pendant et après la pandémie. À l'occasion de la parution en français de [La Trousse](#)

[d'outils de défense des droits de l'OLA](#), l'ABO a organisé au deuxième forum #ONLibChat intitulé « Comment défendre les droits de sa bibliothèque? Un partage d'expériences et d'inspirations » en juin 2021. Les panelistes Céline Marcoux-Hamade, Catherina Rouse, Mélanie Raymond et Maryse Laflamme ont éloquentement démontré comment la défense des droits consiste à tisser des relations positives avec les décideurs et dirigeants locaux et à promouvoir la bibliothèque comme un atout important pour nos communautés ou nos écoles.

Recherche

L'ABO a collaboré à une enquête pancanadienne sur le développement des collections en français dans les bibliothèques publiques en situation minoritaire. Le sondage a été mené au printemps 2021 auprès des bibliothécaires et employés de bibliothèques publiques au Canada ayant des responsabilités de développement de collections en français en situation linguistique minoritaire. Le projet de recherche a fait l'objet d'un reportage dans [Francopresse](#) et les résultats de l'enquête seront soumis pour publication dans un ouvrage collectif en accès libre à paraître aux Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa.

La revue *Open Shelf* a publié des articles en français au cours de l'année 2021, dont la série « Library Lexique » ainsi qu'un portrait de Micheline Persaud, pionnière des services en français dans les bibliothèques de l'Ontario. Grâce au projet d'amélioration des métadonnées, il est désormais plus facile de découvrir les articles publiés en français dans la revue: <https://open-shelf.ca/columns/publications-en-francais/>

Mobilisation et partenariats

L'ABO-Franco siège désormais au Comité de mentorat de l'OLA et poursuit son implication au Réseau des bibliothèques et archives desservant les CLOSM. L'ABO a participé à la campagne « le 25 septembre, j'achète un livre franco-ontarien » initiée par l'autrice jeunesse Mireille Messier dont l'objectif est de faire rayonner la culture franco-ontarienne.

Des projets de modernisation de la Loi sur les langues officielles au fédéral et de la Loi sur les services en français en Ontario seront au menu législatif de 2022; plus que jamais, c'est le temps de s'impliquer dans l'ABO-Franco et de travailler ensemble au développement et à la promotion des services de bibliothèque en français en Ontario!



ONTARIO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ANGELA HENSHILWOOD, PRESIDENT

OCULA

2021 OCULA Membership: 336

Despite another difficult year, I am grateful to be able to write another president's message! As you know, OCULA Council members agreed to stay on for an additional year due to the pandemic and I feel fortunate to have had the extra time with our wonderful group.

As I write this, we are in the midst of a fifth wave including increased restrictions, school closures, and record high COVID-19 numbers. The stress and strain of the pandemic was the impetus for the theme of our OCULA Conference that we were able to host: *Switching Gears: Finding Time to Check In and Check Out*. It was an amazing day filled with sessions designed to help OCULA members reflect, recharge, take stock of the difficult times we are enduring, and acknowledge how the pandemic has highlighted the inequities in our society. As the conference description said: "We must... take time to acknowledge and validate this year of hardship, and the difficult labour of keeping well". While several council members contributed to the planning, a special shout-out goes to Aliya Dalfen who came up with the idea and took on much of the organization. Thank you also to Michelle Arbuckle, Destiny Laldeo and all the OLA staff who made the day possible.

The 2021 Super Conference was also a great success and while most attendees missed seeing colleagues and friends in person, the conference planning committee and OLA staff did an amazing job making the virtual experience just as fulfilling. I want to thank the OCULA conference planners, Andrew Colgoni and Mikayla Redden, who both also stayed on for an additional year, for planning the academic library stream. It's always a pleasure to learn from colleagues and Andrew and Mikayla selected talks that highlighted the major trends and interests of the academic library world. The OCULA Spotlight Speaker, author Angela Misri, gave an engaging presentation and led a lively discussion on issues related to social justice and social media platforms. I am sure this Super Conference will be just as thought-provoking and stimulating.

OCULA's recently formed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee continues its excellent work. In regular meetings, the group grapples with the difficult questions around race, equity and social justice in academic librarianship. After hosting the two open conversations for OCULA membership last year, the committee is working on a regular speaker series or webinar series so that our members can continue to learn and take practical steps to make libraries more equitable for library staff and users. I want to thank Heather Buchansky and Melanie Mills for their wonderful leadership of this group and I look forward to continuing to be a member even as I transition into a new role on Council.

Since this will be my final message as president, I want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank-you to all the current members of OCULA Council. It has been a pleasure to get to work with you and I look forward to continuing our connection and making a point of working together again in the future. I especially want to acknowledge and thank our outgoing OCULA Council members, Abeer Siddiqui and Aliya Dalfan. You are a dream team and bright lights for all who work with you. Thank you for your dedication and effort in all you did for OCULA. Also, I want to thank Zack Osborne for being a wonderful VP! You are a gifted leader and OCULA Council is very fortunate to have you at the helm. Finally, thank you to our members for your engagement and continued support. I see your commitment to making our academic libraries safe and equitable spaces for everyone and I know we will get there one day soon because of all of you!



ONTARIO LIBRARY BOARDS' ASSOCIATION

CAROLINE GOULDING, PRESIDENT

OLBA

2021 OLBA Membership: 726

This past year the OLBA had focused on the current and upcoming needs of our members. We started the year with a survey, looking to find out more information about the impact COVID-19 had on library budgets and municipal relationships. The results of the survey were reported in an Inside OLBA article. We used the results of the survey to guide our action plan over the year. It was fascinating to get a glimpse into how different boards and local governments work together across the province.

OLBA Bootcamp 2021 was not to be missed. Attendance at the virtual event was higher than we had hoped and it was wonderful to see so many able to access the event virtually. The day centred on some of the core governance principles for boards as well as CEO performance and financial oversight.

Cut to the Chase

Our main area of focus has been updating Cut to the Chase / Le vif du sujet. The document is a foundation for many board orientations and a quick reference document throughout their term. OLBA has been working with our partners, including the team at the Ontario Library Service, to modernize and update the resource.

The new Cut to the Chase will include a refreshed chart of the responsibilities and has been updated with the changes to the Public Libraries Act as well as other provincial legislation. Be sure to be on the lookout for the new version in later 2022.

Board Transition Planning

As your library board moves into its final year, OLBA encourages you to spend time throughout the coming year reviewing Year 4 of the Governance Hub, "Legacy and Transition Readiness". By spending the time planning for succession and development legacy documentation you can help ensure that next year's board is positioned for success.

In addition to the board transition resources found on the Governance Hub in Year 4, there are also sections on how to advocate for the library during the municipal election as well the board appointments process. The Governance Hub will be updated over the coming year. Be sure to check back frequently to see the updated resources.

On top of the resources posted on the Governance Hub, the Ontario Library Service will be facilitating a number of sessions on board transitions through Learn HQ. These sessions will be open to board members and CEOs alike, and will be offered throughout the year.

Change in Council

2022 will be a transition year for the OLBA. A number of our council members have reached the end of their terms. We are incredibly grateful for all that Ben Hendriks, Mariam Hamou, Doug Thompson, and Joan Duke have done for the OLBA over the years that they have served. Their contributions will be sorely missed.

We are looking forward to welcoming a number of new council members – Marj Poirer will be representing the Northwest and Nathan Etherington will be representing Central West. Thomas Sandor is our incoming Vice president and S. S. Ahmad is the incoming president. We wish them all the best during their terms.



ONTARIO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION

SARAH MACINTYRE, PRESIDENT

OLITA

2021 OLITA Membership: 544

This past year, I had the pleasure of continuing my role as OLITA president for a second time (one of the positive side effects of the pandemic!). As always, I continue to be so impressed by the outstanding OLA staff team, who have supported OLITA in countless ways throughout 2021. Despite not being able to gather in-person, we were still able to accomplish a lot over the past year!

The year began with the first-ever virtual OLA Super Conference and the first virtual OLITA AGM! Unlike in years past, we did not issue an OLITA award, but through OLA's online recognition wall, we were thrilled to see the wide variety of ways that libraries implemented innovative technologies to support their communities during the pandemic. I am so pleased that at the upcoming OLA Super Conference in February 2022, OLITA will be presenting a winner for the OLITA technology award. It is nice to return to some of our regular annual activities again.

In 2020, OLITA was not able to hold a regular Digital Odyssey conference, but this past June, we were delighted to host a full-day virtual conference on the theme of Accessibility (How to Get IT Right: Tackling Accessible Tech). We were so fortunate to spend the day with interesting speakers, such as Luke Anderson, Beverly Dooley, Alexis Hillyard, and Regine Gilbert, among others. Now that we have experience with hosting our conference online, OLITA is looking forward to planning a virtual Digital Odyssey in June of 2022. While the theme and exact date is still yet to be determined, we expect to be able to share more details in the spring!

In the summer, OLITA started a project to engage with members and library employees working with technology. The OLITA Membership Profiles Project captured videos from OLITA council members, and library workers from across the province, who shared comments about the work that they do, the technology they use, and some of the projects they have spearheaded. We were thrilled to be able to feature these videos on OLA's social media platforms, and I would like to extend a special thank you to all those who participated!

Looking ahead to 2022, OLITA is excited to be bringing back the Tech Lending Library service! We had hoped to resume lending this past year, but due to ongoing constraints, we were unable to do so. In 2022 we plan on refreshing our collection, and we are going to connect with OLITA members as we identify new items for purchase. We want to ensure that any new items we add to our collection will meet the needs of our membership, and we hope that folks will be excited to try out the tech we will have to offer when we resume lending!

As I write this, we are gearing up for Super Conference 2022, and I am really looking forward to the outstanding sessions organized by our OLA Super Conference planners, Jen Corrin and Amanda French. I am so grateful to have such a dedicated team planning the OLITA sessions this year and cannot wait for you all to see what they have in store! Finally, I would like to thank my fellow OLITA council members from 2021 – despite continuing to navigate uncertain times in both our workplaces and personal lives, I continue to be amazed and impressed by your thoughtfulness, commitment, and enthusiasm. 2022 will bring change for OLITA – OLA will be launching a new strategic plan, we will have 4 new members on council, and Michelle Goodridge will be stepping in as president. All I can say is that 2022 is going to be another great year for OLITA, and I can't wait to see what gets accomplished!



ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ERIKA HEESSEN, PRESIDENT

OPLA

2021 OPLA Membership: 729

It has been an honour to serve OPLA Council as President again this year. While we had high hopes, we continue to cope with the global pandemic. We have all become very adept at changing directions and services as needed to meet people where they are, either virtually or physically. OLA has continued to advocate the value of public libraries to the provincial government by showcasing ongoing stories about public library work such as our response to the provision of vaccine certificates.

Here is a snapshot of Council's activities this year.

Nicole Zummach's work with *HoOPLA* has continued to highlight how public libraries have adapted during this time. As editor, she has solicited stories on your strategies for coping, change, and the innovative ways that you are reaching out to your communities.

This year, the Reader's Advisory Committee brought RA in a Day online for an incredible learning experience in April 2021. Topics included Anti-Racist Library Services, Bibliotherapy, Diversity and Inclusion Titles and Indigenous Representation.

The Best Bets Committee, as ever, has been hard at work reading to award the 2021 Top Ten Best in Canadian Fiction and Non-Fiction for children and teens. Check out their "Book Tasting" session during the Super Conference for their picks!

Community-Led Libraries launched a popular series of online conversations about equity, engaging online storytimes, and Discord for teens.

The OPLA Child and Youth Services Committee and OLA staff hosted a phenomenal Child & Youth Services Expo. This year's online event ran for two days, with a focus on different voices and representation matters, and had overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Are you part of a public library that's gone fine-free? Still thinking about it and trying to make your pitch? The OPLA Research and Evaluations Committee (OREC) has handy infographics and a myth-busting slide deck that you can customize and use for your library. Download here: <https://accessola.com/fines-free-libraries/>. OREC also began preparatory work for a 2022 survey around resilience and the future of libraries.

With the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), OLA has continued to regularly advocate for public library services and funding, particularly during this precarious time. Members and supporters are encouraged to reuse any of our advocacy resources: <https://accessola.com/public-library-advocacy/>

This year's [Super Conference](#) theme (Gather / Se rassembler) strikes a particular chord - I must admit, I am very much looking forward to gathering with the library community, even if it must be virtually! The Super Conference will be such an important time for us as a community to come together, to share, to learn, to revitalize our work and to continue to build towards a better future. I am delighted to continue to work with OPLA Vice-President (and 2022 President) Douglas Davey and the entire OPLA Council to connect with the public library community and meet their changing needs this year. Thank you to OPLA Super Conference Planners, Hamid Printer and Ashleigh Dronyk for their tireless efforts in working with the OLA staff and Super Conference Team in building a program for our new reality. Have a great Super Conference!



ONTARIO SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

MAUREEN MCGRATH, PRESIDENT

OSLA

2021 OSLA Membership: 426

2021 was another unprecedented time in the school library sector, and the work of OSLA Council. With elections on hold, our group agreed to hold their council roles for an extra year. This brought welcome continuity in uncertain times. The job however was less certain as school libraries are still in states of flux as we move from virtual to in-person learning and respond to the many restrictions and limitations that impact our work with students and educators. Your council worked to be responsive in these tumultuous times.

The feeling of disconnection was prevalent in our members as we worked in isolation either from home or our closed spaces. Social media can help to fill this gap and OSLA council tried to stay connected through our messages on @OSLAcouncil and through your sharing #schoollibraryjoy. It is always amazing to see the incredible work of our members! We provided the virtual opportunity to connect in #ONLibChats to discuss the work of dismantling structures of oppression in our library, long range planning in the School Library Learning Commons (SLLC) and professional learning in pandemic times. These were great opportunities to connect with a range of library professionals across the province. To offer professional support, council members actively ran webinars in their own communities as well as through the OLA Education Institute and in partnership with Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF). Current and past members of OSLA contributed to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Summer Institute, ECCO Camp 2021, and BIT 21. We also continue to represent our members on The Association of Library Consultants of Ontario (TALCO), OTF and the Indigenous Advisory Council. An incredible resource to our members through this year has been *The Teaching Librarian* magazine, which has continued in a virtual format, led by editors Caroline Freibauer and Kasey Whalley.

We continued to advocate to the Ministry of Education to keep School Library Learning Commons in mind as they plan and allocate funding. Good news arrived on May 4 when the Ministry of Education released its [2021-22 Grants for Student Needs \(GSN\)](#). Included in this year's GSN are new, enhanced reporting requirements for library staff funding:

- These reporting requirements are intended to provide the ministry with greater insight into how school boards are funding school libraries;
- They will apply to both the funding provided for library staffing through the Pupil Foundation Grant, as well as the enveloping provision of the Library Staff Allocation in the School Foundation Grant, which also remains in place.
- School boards that are not fully utilizing the funding

provided for library staffing through both grants will be asked by the Ministry of Education to prepare and submit a multi-year plan highlighting their vision and next steps to address any underspending.

OLA is advocating on our behalf to ensure the government strengthens these allocations by establishing a clear reporting system by boards on monies spent.

OSLA continues to take a stand on the importance of trained professionals in the SLLC and encourages our members to advocate with their unions. Council member Johanna Lawler has been at the forefront of this advocacy partnership and is an invaluable resource for those who would like to work with their union to do the same. The letters we sent to Directors of School boards in August and Trustees in December to remind them of the important role of the school library on student achievement and to urge them, as planning moves forward for the 2021-2 school year, to protect funding for the school library program in their school boards elicited a good response. We met with many boards to discuss their school library learning commons programs, and promoted OLA and OSLA services.

The Save School Libraries Coalition created through the initiative of a dedicated and passionate group of Canadian publishers, educators and authors who recognize the impact the loss of school libraries will have on children continues its work. With the help of OSLA council they have initiated a social media campaign and outreach plan to the ministry, news organizations and parents.

OSLA Council committed to anti-Black racism work which began with our commitment to learning and the initial session with Dr. Andrew B. Campbell brought to you at Super Conference last year. We hosted two more sessions for our members during the year and have plans to continue learning from him this year. We have a powerful and pivotal role as leaders of change in our schools; we must take on this responsibility with humility and passion.

This year has certainly been full of challenges, and I give great thanks for the unending collaborative spirit, commitment and support of OSLA council. A special thank you OSLA Super Conference planners Kate Johnson-McGregor and Dawn Telfer for their resiliency, hard work, and enthusiasm in building an amazing program for year two of a virtual conference. I am honoured to have served as your president of OSLA for 2021, wholeheartedly welcome Beth into the role of president, and will continue to serve as past president in the year to come.



ONTARIO HEALTH LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

JULIE WADDICK, PRESIDENT

OHLIA

2021 OHLIA Membership: 45

It's been an honour to serve as president for the Ontario Health Library and Information Association (OHLIA). The last couple of years have seen an unprecedented need for high quality health information and health information literacy. We are now entering the third calendar year of a global pandemic. Governments, institutions, and scientists across the world have been doing their best to respond to a complex situation. All of this has had a tremendous impact on health care workers and also the general public. We've all been challenged. In these times and in all, OHLIA aims to be the voice of current and upcoming health information professionals, as well as any information workers who negotiate health information.

This year, I had the pleasure of working with a strong OHLIA executive team. I couldn't have asked for more dedicated, talented and also fun people to work with. In this report I wish to highlight some of the things we accomplished together in 2021.

OHLIA officially joined OLA as its newest division only in 2020. Being fairly new to the table some of this year was spent completing transitional tasks. One project was the transitioning of content from our former website to our new divisional pages on accessola.com/ohlia/. This included shifting our archival material to OLA where we live now. Members of the OHLIA executive also worked with legal counsel and OLA executive members to finalize the process for distribution of funds from the former Ontario Health Libraries Association (OHLA) over to OLA. As part of our gratitude to OHLIA members and also as a gesture of welcoming new members we were able to offer a 50% discount for OHLIA membership in 2022.

Beyond administrative tasks, we also succeeded in producing some excellent content and programming. This includes consumer health emails produced by our Continuing Education Coordinator, Amanda Caputo on the topic of Free Online Reference Texts, and iMD Free Patient Consumer Health. Two webinars were also coordinated including Cognitive Biases and Our Relationship to Information, and The Art & Science of Finding Quality Health Information Online. Content for OLA's publication Open Shelf was also created by our past president Sarah Bonato on Consumer Health and also an OHLIA Council Member Interview.

One of the original motivations for us to join OLA was to broaden our scope. It was the vision of former leaders that joining a large association would strengthen our impact on other library sectors and also our members. As such, OHLIA participated in various outreach and partnership activities this year in addition to serving on the OLA board. For example, members of OHLIA and OPLA met and discussed needs and opportunities of each sector. A couple of areas of focus for potential future collaborations were identified – mental health and health information literacy. OHLIA also began working with representatives of the public library sector including OLA's Community Led Sub-committee to produce a session for 2022 Super Conference, 'Fighting Misinformation: Partnering for Better Consumer Health Information'. Speaking of which, our Conference Coordinators Carolyn Pecoskie and Jo-Anne Petropoulos have been busy at work. Some of the highlights planned for 2022 include Spotlight Speaker Dr. Joe Schwarcz on 'Misinformation and Disinformation in the Age of COVID-19'. They have also worked out sponsored meal coupons, as OHLIA has a wonderful tradition of sponsored meals during the conference in non-pandemic times. Other session topics slated include Open-licensed Information Literacy Modules, Patient Librarian Helping Vaccination in Ontario, Tips for Consumer Health Requests, Knowledge Syntheses in Health Sciences, and Visibility in Libraries in the Time of COVID-19. Also continuing are our annual Career Chats. Stay tuned!

I'd like to say a big thank you to the whole OHLIA executive team. This has been a wonderful few years for me and I wish you all the best going forward. I wish incoming president Kimberley Aslett much success and enjoyment. And a special thank you to outgoing Past president Sarah Bonato for the great adventure! Finally, I'd like to also extend my gratitude to the OHLIA members. Thank you for the opportunity to represent and serve you this past year. Looking forward to many future endeavors with you in the health library community!

REPORT OF SHELAGH PATERSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



2021 was another very unusual year for the association (and most organizations!)

To set the context for future readers of this report, it is important to note that for much of the first half of 2021, Ontario was in some form of shut-down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and vaccination was not widely available in Canada until late spring. Impacts included retail

and restaurants closed, public libraries with limited on-site access, and most academic institutions and school boards primarily delivering remote learning and library services. As more people received their vaccination, summer through to fall was a time of more freedom and mobility. Libraries could ease restrictions and K-12 students went back to the in-person classroom. More school library professionals went back into the school library, but the re-allocation of school library staff remained a concern in many areas of the province. At the end of 2021, the Omicron subvariant of COVID-19 (less severe but highly contagious) caused the province to go back into shutdown.

OLA made its own history in 2021:

- Delivered the first-ever virtual OLA Super Conference and exceeded registration numbers compared to an in-person conference. The majority joined via their institution's site license which provided professional development for months following the conference.
- To provide some stability to OLA, the OLA Board and Divisional Councils extended their terms and elections (with some exceptions) were suspended. This was an extraordinary commitment.
- The Ontario Health Library and Information Association completed its first year as OLA's newest division.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, there were a number of highlights:

- At the 2021 OLA Super Conference, Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure announced that the Ontario government would invest more than \$4.8 million to upgrade broadband in up to 50 public libraries in unserved and underserved communities. Kudos to Ontario Library Service who are implementing the project.
- We witnessed a wave of fine-free policies across public libraries in Ontario and the rest of Canada ensuring barrier-free access to public library services.

- Members got more comfortable and adept at using web-based meeting and virtual program platforms. "Zoom fatigue" persisted, but folks expressed appreciation for connecting with more people at events and meetings without the barrier of geography.
- A second year of the virtual Forest of Reading Award ceremonies in partnership with CBC Books – thus ensuring kids across the country could attend.

Under the leadership of Andrea Cecchetto, OLA President, the board took a deep dive on two initiatives that will serve OLA well over the next 3 – 4 years:

- With extensive member input, approval of a new 3-year strategic plan.
- As part of this, a goal is to pursue a new governance framework for the association in conjunction with member input.

I would also like to thank Bennett Steinburg for his exceptional work as Deputy Editor for *Open Shelf*, OLA's online publication, during the Editor-in-Chief vacancy.

After almost 9 years at this location, we said goodbye to 2 Toronto Street in downtown Toronto. While staff primarily had been working from home, and while this was a prudent fiscal move for OLA, we will miss this space. I have such appreciation for the OLA Staff team who helped get OLA through some precarious financial times. In addition to clearing out, organizing, and archiving the entire OLA office in November, until mid-October they were all working a reduced workweek as a further means to contain expenses.

As we head into a new year, the 2022 Conference theme captures what we want to do more of—Gather / Se rassembler—and hopefully, we can see more of each other in person!