

REPORT OF SHELAGH PATERSON

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Creatively prudent is how I would characterize OLA's approach in 2022. These seem like mismatched concepts, but they capture how we approached the vision and operation of OLA during a year when we continued to be plagued by the plague.

OLA Advocacy:

OLA, along with advocacy partner the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, worked to ensure provincial government was apprised of the value, and the needs of libraries:

- As a result of engagement in the 2022 provincial election process, for the first time in more than 20 years, 3 of the 4 major parties included recommendations for public libraries. OLA also produced the election tool-kit to support member engagement.
- We submitted input into two acts that intersect with public libraries:
 - Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022 – to emphasize the need for clarity about the statutory relationship between municipal government and public libraries.
 - More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022. We highlighted the importance of development charges in supporting public library capital needs in growing communities across Ontario
- Monitoring the Ministry of Education directive to school boards regarding reporting the spending of the ministry school library allocation.
- Celebration of Ontario Public Library Week, October 2022 with the theme “One card, one million possibilities.” As part of this The Hon. Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, attended the OPLW launch at the Valley Park Branch, Hamilton Public Library.

Programs and Research:

The Forest of Reading Festival was delivered virtually in May for the third year in partnership with CBC Books. Nine ceremonies were presented in French and English, hosted by CBC comedian Ali Hassan.

Kudos to the planning team and a big thank you to the attendees for the first OLA in-person event since the 2020 OLA Super Conference. ‘Libraries that Work’, was the theme for the Annual Institute on the Library as Place held

in July in Toronto and with tours of branches at Vaughan Public Libraries, Richmond Hill Public Library, Toronto Public Library and University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus. An interesting side note is that the nation-wide Rogers internet outage happened on the library tour day of the conference. Tour attendees witnessed the value of the library in action as community members flocked to the library for internet access.

Sector Employment Survey 2022

OLA periodically conducts a survey to help the association to better understand employment trends for new graduates from Master or Library Technician programs. The 2021 survey results, released in 2022, capture the experience of graduates who completed their studies during the period of COVID-19 lockdowns and hiring freezes. While general employment trends now have changed since 2021, this report provides key insight into the impacts of the pandemic on recent graduates entering the library sector during a very disruptive time in our history.

New initiatives:

In 2022 OLA struck a new Climate Action Group and co-proposed with the British Columbia Library Association (BCLA) that the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) form a committee at the national level

OLA joined the National Indigenous Knowledge and Language Alliance (NIKLA). This alliance is currently working on creating a national framework for respectful terminology. Kudos to OLA members Sabrina Saunders and Feather Maracle for their work in implementing this new organization.

Road to recovery:

OLA, like many other organizations, experienced staffing changes for those who were ready, following the worst of the pandemic, for a fresh experience and advancing their careers. We are so grateful for the support of the entire OLA staff team during a challenging time, and I would like to thank the following who are now OLA Staff Alumni and lifetime library champions: Robert Nishimura, Lauren Hummel, Destiny Laldeo, Meagan Anderi and Sarah Roberts.

Thank you to the OLA staff team, countless OLA leadership volunteers and the tireless OLA Board members led by Sabrina Saunders for their support of the association in 2022. You are all such a pleasure to work with and the reason we have emerged so well from the challenges of the past few years.