

OLA Executive Director Shelagh Paterson Shares Intention to Depart Her Role in August 2023

NEWS RELEASE

TORONTO, ON (April 5, 2023): Successfully stewarding Canada's largest and longest running library and information services non-profit organization, the Ontario Library Association (OLA), is no small feat. Doing so with the grace and aplomb consistently demonstrated over the course of fifteen years (and fifteen consecutive OLA Boards and Divisional Councils) will be the legacy left by Shelagh Paterson, the Association's Executive Director, when she departs her role in August 2023.

This spring, Shelagh shared with the OLA's Executive and Board her intention to resign her role as Executive Director, noting her excitement for whatever may come next in her career journey. Shelagh will continue on as Executive Director for the OLA in the coming months to help the Board and the OLA Team with the coming period of transition, as a search for the Association's next Executive Director is undertaken. We are grateful to Shelagh for her continued spirit of generosity and partnership, even as she approaches the close of her time with the OLA.

Not one to seek the spotlight but rather to insist on shining the light on the hard work and immeasurable contributions of many hundreds of OLA volunteers over the years, Shelagh shares that "as an Association, we have had a lot of success and wins and over the years and that we have all done this together. My job has been to ensure it all happens (including getting out of the way, on occasion!) but the detailed work that results in our successes has been the work of staff and volunteers."

Under Shelagh's direction, these successes have included: planning and executing four strategic plans; advocacy and government relations achievements resulting in initiatives including 'Library Day at Queen's Park' and policy directives in support of public and school libraries; the establishment and implementation of committees such as the Indigenous Advisory Council, the Advocacy Committee, the Copyright User Committee, and the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Committee; and finally, forging partnerships through outreach efforts that have strengthened the library community within and beyond Ontario (e.g., Treasure Mountain Canada, the founding of the CFLA-FCAB, and collaborations with FOPL, OLS, TALCO, and The Partnership).

As a bookend to her contribution to the OLA, Shelagh guided the Association through the unprecedented period that has characterized these last three years. During the worst of the pandemic, Shelagh ensured the OLA's continued viability as a non-profit, charity organization.

The Board will find a way to mark and to celebrate Shelagh Paterson's tenure as Executive Director of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) in the very near future. In the meantime, we know that library champions and partners from across the province and beyond will join



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us in extending our deep gratitude and very best wishes to Shelagh.

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Melanie Mills
2023 President, Ontario Library Association (OLA)

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About the Ontario Library Association: The Ontario Library Association (OLA) is a centre of excellence for the library and information sector, with more than 4,000 members who work in public, school, academic and special libraries. OLA members advocate for the right of individuals to have free and equitable access to information. Our members research, develop and participate in educational programs designed to provide exemplary library services. Signature OLA events include the annual Super Conference and the Forest of Reading® program.

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