



Enoch Pratt Free Library and State Library Resource Center 2025 Spring Disability, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Libraries (DIAL) Conference

Tuesday, May 27 & Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Day One: Virtual - Tuesday, May 27, 2025

09:30 AM - 10:30 AM:

Welcome: Liz Sundermann-Zinger, Chief of the Central Library & State Library Resource Center

Keynote Speaker: Ryan Honick, Disability Advocate, Speaker, and Professional Persuader

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM:

Beyond 36 Inches: How to Conduct an Accessibility Audit

Speaker: Babak Zarin, Access Services Librarian, Central Rappahannock Regional Library

As awareness of accessibility needs in library settings grow, many libraries wonder about how to begin assessing their spaces to ensure they meet these needs. This presentation will go over how to conduct an accessibility audit and follow-ups to them, drawing on Babak's experience in conducting an audit at Central Rappahannock Regional Library.

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM:

Storytime for Adults

Speaker: Yesenia Garcia-Navarro, Library Associate, Washington County Free Library

Storytime for Adults with All Abilities was organized to create a safe space for adults with all levels of abilities to come engage with their community, while also learning and enjoying their time. Training to compose such programs can be beneficial, but the bottom-line is that there is no training that can make you be inclusive or kind. Every month, patrons learn something new in an engaging way, in a space where they can also make new friends and share their ideas openly. This space is for anyone and everyone. There have been multiple adults from all levels of abilities who attend and discover something new. Through the program, we listen to stories and create arts and crafts. Although the activities we do in the program may traditionally be targeted towards children, there is much we can discuss and learn, because adults continue learning no matter their age or ability.

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM:

Unintentional Accommodations: Supporting Hidden Disabilities with Universal Design

Speakers:

- Hannah Erickson, Librarian II, Prince George's County Memorial Library System
- Ella Alonso, Library Consultant

The phrases "hidden disability" and "invisible disability" are loose terms used to capture an entire spectrum of physical, emotional, mental and neurological disabilities that are not immediately apparent. With more than 40 million disabled Americans categorizing their disabilities as invisible, or 96% of the disabled community, chances are high that you work with someone who is invisibly disabled. Using a mixture of research and lived experiences, join us as we explore common hidden disabilities, discuss why simply offering accommodations is not enough, and share how universal design principles can ease many hidden disabilities.

For more information, please contact: slrcprogramsandtraining@prattlibrary.org or visit <https://www.slrc.info/professional-development/conferences/spring-conference>.



Enoch Pratt Free Library and State Library Resource Center 2025 Spring Disability, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Libraries (DIAL) Conference

Tuesday, May 27 & Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Day Two: In-Person - Wednesday May 28, 2025

08:00 AM: Doors open for registration and breakfast

09:00 - 10:00 AM: Welcome and Keynote

Welcome: Morgan Miller, State Librarian, Maryland State Library Agency

Keynote Speaker: John Brennan, Assistant Secretary, Operations, Maryland Department of Disabilities

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM: Session One - Choose One

1a: Adults Just Want to Have Fun

Speakers:

- Karla Dorsey, Library Associate, Carroll County Public Library
- Maria Vilcek, Library Associate, Carroll County Public Library

This interactive discussion is designed for library staff seeking to develop and implement effective library programs tailored for adults with intellectual disabilities. Participants will explore best practices for creating inclusive and engaging activities that cater to the unique needs and interests of this diverse population.

1b: The Library is for Everyone: The Accessibility Expansion Program

Speakers:

- Shelby Singleton, Assistive Technology Coordinator, District of Columbia Public Library
- Jennifer Cavallero, Manager of Center for Accessibility, District of Columbia Public Library

In conjunction with modernizing many of DC Public Library's 26 locations, including the central Martin Luther King Jr. Library, expanding accessibility features for customers was a high priority. The Center for Accessibility at DCPL conducted an assessment of community needs and current accessibility features throughout the city's locations, leveraging this data to implement new assistive technology, best practices, and creating an Accessibility Ambassador program for branch staff. Through this multi-year process, our libraries have expanded and enhanced library service to patrons with various disabilities and access needs.

Shelby Singleton, Assistive Technology Coordinator, and Jenny Cavallero, Manager of the Center for Accessibility, will present on implementing their Accessibility Expansion Program, a three-part plan to expand accessibility and create a more socially inclusive environment, and how other library systems might take on this work.



1c: The Little Program That Could

Speakers:

- Joseph Beckett, Maryland Accessible Textbook (MAT) Program, Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, Maryland State Library Agency
- Lisa Washington, Management Associate, MAT Program, Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, Maryland State Library Agency
- Brittany Grasser, Management Associate, MAT Program, Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, Maryland State Library Agency

The Maryland Accessible Textbook (MAT) Program, created in 2010 by Jim McCarthy and his team at the formerly named Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, provides accessible textbooks to print-disabled Maryland college students. Our principal purpose is to level the academic "playing field" for students who need specialized accommodations, primarily in textbook accessibility. With a team of three, the MAT Program provides textbooks to students in the formats of PDF, WORD, MP3, and EPub. In our 14-year history, the MAT Program, although little known, has converted over a thousand textbooks for hundreds of print-disabled students.

1d: SPIRIT Club: Fitness for All

Speaker: Jared Ciner, SPIRIT Club's Founder and Director

If you are looking for a program that will create community movement, engagement, and overall fitness, join the Spirit Club! In this session, we will share techniques to create inclusive fitness that accommodates people of ALL abilities. Attendees will learn techniques: To enhance accessibility in fitness and improve spatial awareness and body control; Help participants build confidence in movement without reliance on visual cues, focusing on verbal, auditory, and tactile guidance; equip participants with strategies to exercise safely and effectively on their own or with minimal assistance; strengthen community connection; and highlight the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of adaptive fitness, reinforcing that movement is a powerful tool for overall wellness.

1e: Introduction to SLRC

Join a SLRC leader for this overview of SLRC's different services and roles. In addition to learning about all of our behind-the-scenes work, you'll find out how SLRC can support your work with programs, training and materials.

1f: Tour of SLRC (20 Attendees Maximum)

Join SLRC staff for this express tour of SLRC. View building highlights, and find out how SLRC can support your work with programs, training and materials.

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM: Session Two - Choose One

2a: Assistive Technology to Increase Access to Both Digital and Print Materials in Libraries

Speaker: James A. Whitney, OTR/L, OTD, AT Clinician, Maryland Department of Disabilities Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP)

This presentation will cover who the Maryland Department of Disabilities Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP) is and how we help our Maryland residents with disabilities. Assistive Technology (AT) devices can help customers with various disabilities interact better with library staff. AT devices include magnification, OCR devices and braille accessibility for the blind and low vision, captioning devices and visual alert systems for the deaf and hard of hearing, different peripheral devices for computer access (mice and keyboards), and some accessibility software / settings that exist within computers. Attendees will leave the session with a better global understanding of what AT is, and how MDTAP can help library staff be proficient in AT.



2b: Empowering Creativity: Making the Arts Accessible for All

Speaker: Heather Kerner, Librarian II & Artist in Residence Coordinator, Enoch Pratt Free Library/SLRC
Developing accessible art programs for individuals with disabilities in our libraries is a powerful way to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, can experience and contribute to creative expression. These programs not only provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to engage in the arts but also foster a sense of belonging and empowerment. By offering adaptive tools, specialized support, and inclusive spaces, libraries can break down the barriers that often prevent patrons from participating in artistic programming. Additionally, these initiatives enhance the cultural landscape by fostering diverse perspectives and showcasing a wide range of talents. Libraries, as vital community spaces, are uniquely positioned to advocate for accessibility in the arts, enabling individuals of all backgrounds to express their creativity, acquire new skills, and experience the joy of artistic expression.

2c: Community First

Speakers:

- Danielle Navarro, Calvert Library
- Stacy Allen, Calvert Library
- Missy DeCesaris, Calvert Library

The library is a community space intended for all, but at times the design of the physical space and the programs offered unintentionally creates barriers. To bridge this gap and embrace and celebrate all members of our community, Calvert Library created programming and modified our physical space so that it is inclusive and provides an enriching library experience. We will discuss how we collaborate with community partners to create programming for various age groups, and how participants can modify their physical space and ways to get the funds to do so. We will also discuss the importance of staff training and the significance of everyone seeing the library as a safe and welcoming space. By using current resources and creative problem solving, we will demonstrate how to put the needs of your community first and show that providing access for one improves access for all.

2d: Accessible Virtual Programming and Collaborations with the Deaf Community

Speakers:

- Keith Delk, Program Specialist, Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL)
- Brandt Van Unen, Library Coordinator, Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL)

This session from the Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL) will explore how to create accessible virtual programs and effectively collaborate with Deaf community organizations. Through real-world examples and best practices, the presentation will cover inclusive design, reasonable accommodations, effective use of interpreters and captions, and strategies for building authentic partnerships with Deaf organizations. Attendees will leave with checklists, planning tips, and engagement strategies they can immediately apply to make their virtual events more accessible, inclusive, and community-centered.

2e: Tour of SLRC (20 Attendees Maximum)

Join SLRC staff for this express tour of SLRC. View building highlights, and find out how SLRC can support your work with programs, training and materials.

2f: Tour of the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD) (20 Attendees Maximum)

Go behind the scenes and explore the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, an award-winning library serving citizens in every county across the state. Learn about our services and programs, view our collections and assistive technology, experience our recording studio, and discover how you can partner with us.

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM: Lunch



1:30 PM – 2:30 PM: Session Three - Choose One

3a: Welcoming All: Designing Accessible and Inclusive Libraries

Speakers:

- Jillian Storms, AIA, Executive Director, Office of School Facilities, Maryland State Department of Education
- Rima Namek, AIA, Principal, Quinn Evans Architects
- Allison McElheny, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Senior Associate, Senior Architect, Quinn Evans Architects

In this presentation, participants will develop an understanding of the principles of universal design, become familiar with current accessibility design standards, and learn of potential barriers for people with disabilities within a library setting and how to address them so library spaces are welcoming to all users.

3b: Did You Hear That? Using Audio Supplements in Newsletters to Engage and Inspire

Speakers:

- Alice O'Reilly, Chief, Collections Division, National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, Library of Congress
- Rheagan Martin, Digital Projects Coordinator, National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, Library of Congress

Have you struggled to reach patrons with traditional print newsletters? Are you looking for something to excite patrons and improve your newsletter open rate? Are you interested in exploring multimodal communication strategies for reaching out to patrons? Then this session is for you!

The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled has developed a monthly multimedia reading guide called "Collections Connections." The email newsletter informs patrons about new titles and "hidden gems" through a curated list of collection items that draw broader connections to upcoming programming, historical material in the Library of Congress, upcoming holidays, new releases, disability activism, and more. "Collections Connections" also includes a quarterly "audio supplement" offering richly textured visual descriptions, author interviews, and tours of library spaces, taking readers on a 15-minute deep-dive into that issue's topic. This content also directs patrons to digital services, helping to bridge the gap between the 18% of users who actively engage with digital content and the 52% of patrons who have provided an email address. In this session, you'll experience excerpts from the audio supplements, learn how we develop monthly topics, explore how to create audio-driven content, and understand how an archive of past issues is a resource for our reader advisors.

3c: Fusion Training (20 Attendees Maximum)

Speaker: Jerry Price, Accessible Technology Education Program Coordinator, Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled

Want to learn more about the "ultimate accessibility tool for individuals with any level of vision impairment"? Fusion™ is a screen magnification and screen reading software manufactured by Freedom Scientific. In this presentation, you will learn its components and features, how to incorporate braille, additional training and tools, and how to acquire a free Fusion™ license for your library.



3d: Creating Empowerment Opportunities: In Here and Out There

Speakers:

- Mariana Torres, Program Coordinator, B'More Clubhouse
- River Quodomine

B'More Clubhouse invites individuals with mental illness to rejoin the momentum of daily life. In our presentation we will be sharing about B'More Clubhouse and the Clubhouse Model in general. We will spend some time sharing what it is and what makes it unique to other programs in the city. We will then shift to presenting some ways that libraries could utilize the clubhouse philosophy to empower more adults with mental illness within the library space.

3e: Tour of the Annex (20 Attendees Maximum)

In this session, participants will receive an informative guided tour of the unique departments included in the Annex: the Maryland Department, the African American Department, and the Special Collections Department. Expert librarians will provide an overview of the African American and Maryland Departments, followed by a Q&A session. The tour will conclude with a Special Collections Department "Petting Zoo," where participants can get up close and personal with some of the most popular items in our collection.

2:30 PM – 3:35 PM: Session Four - Choose One

Sneak Peek: Vendor Fair in the Creative Arts Center

4a: RightHear - Making the World, and Libraries, More Accessible for All

Speakers:

- Idan Meir, CEO and Co-Founder
- Darren Gladstone, US Operations Director
- Lou Smith, State of Maryland, Computer Help Desk Technician

What if signs could talk? Since its inception in 2016, RightHear has been at the forefront of creating a more inclusive world, pioneering the revolutionary category of "Indoor Orientation." Our innovative approach has transformed over 2,500 venues worldwide, making them accessible to people with low vision or orientation challenges. By redefining access, we've unlocked thousands of previously inaccessible places, fostering independence in over 30 different languages. Join us as we showcase RightHear and show you how we are transforming public spaces, and libraries, into more accessible spaces for all.

4b: Grant Finding & Writing w/ a DIAL Lens

Speaker: Mary Rayme, Grants Coordinator, Maryland State Library Agency

In this slide presentation, we will learn about grant finding basics and resources, and the importance of using research and compelling statistics to strengthen a grant application. All of this will be through a DIAL lens.



4c: Storytime with ASL Interpretation – A Pilot Series: Creating a Welcoming Space for the Deaf Community

Speakers:

- Kristina Banks, Programs & Outreach Coordinator, Anne Arundel County Public Library
- Kathy MacMillan, writer, nationally certified American Sign Language interpreter, librarian, editor, and signing storyteller

How can libraries foster a welcoming environment for the Deaf community? One solution is rooted in thoughtful programming. By incorporating ASL interpretation directly into our programs, we offer more accessibility and reduce frustration by removing the need for attendees to request an interpreter in advance. Open-access programs like these also serve as a strategic outreach and marketing tool, helping libraries connect with the Deaf community and encourage wider participation. In this session, we'll walk you through the process of developing a Storytime with ASL Interpretation series, including securing funding, effective marketing strategies, and lessons learned from both successes and challenges. We'll also share valuable tips from an ASL expert, as well as important resources and a customizable template for your library to use.

4d: Tour of the Annex (20 Attendees Maximum)

In this session, participants will receive an informative guided tour of the unique departments included in the Annex: the Maryland Department, the African American Department, and the Special Collections Department. Expert librarians will provide an overview of the African American and Maryland Departments, followed by a Q&A session. The tour will conclude with a Special Collections Department "Petting Zoo," where participants can get up close and personal with some of the most popular items in our collection.

3:35 PM – 5:00 PM: Vendor Fair

- Vendor 1:** [University of Maryland. Marylanders Online](#)
Vendor 2: [Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library \(DCDL\)](#)
Vendor 3: [MD Accessible Telecommunications and Maryland Relay](#)
Vendor 4: [Maryland Department of Disabilities Assistive Technology Program \(MDTAP\)](#)
Vendor 5: [B'More Clubhouse](#)
Vendor 6: [Mid-Atlantic ADA Center](#)
Vendor 7: [The Spirit Club: Inclusive Fitness](#)
Vendor 8: [Recite Me](#)
Vendor 9: [Brain Injury Association of MD \(BIAMD\)](#)
Vendor 10: [Blind Industries and Services of Maryland \(BISM\)](#)
Vendor 11: [Create Arts Center](#)
Vendor 12: [Maryland Department of Labor](#)
Vendor 13: [Maryland State Library for the Blind & Print Disabled \(LBPD\)](#)
Vendor 14: [Maryland State Library Resource Center \(SLRC\)](#)

For more information, please contact: slrcprogramsandtraining@prattlibrary.org or visit <https://www.slrc.info/professional-development/conferences/spring-conference>.