

Calendar of Events

August 20, 2025

Time Management: Scheduling and Prioritization

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Do you ever feel like there aren't enough hours in the day? This session helps participants take back control of their time by learning how to schedule effectively and prioritize what truly matters. With practical tools and strategies, attendees will learn to break overwhelming workloads into manageable tasks. By understanding the difference between urgent and important, and applying proven prioritization techniques like the Eisenhower Matrix or ABC method, participants will be better equipped to align their daily actions with long-term goals. Expect a high-impact hour full of actionable insights.

Learning Objectives:

*Learn to assess daily responsibilities based on urgency and importance
Identify common scheduling mistakes and how to avoid them
Practice prioritization techniques for smarter task management
Build a framework for consistent daily planning*

Presenter:

Amy B. Shannon, President, Pinnacle Leadership Solutions, LLC, and a Partner in Your Partner in HR has specialized in Organizational Development, Human Resources and Training for over 25 years. For the past 13 years, Amy has been an Organizational Development consultant working with clients in manufacturing, service, financial and healthcare industries. Most recently, Amy served as the Executive Director II/Vice President of Corporate College where she built robust leadership training curriculum to serve her clients. Amy also holds certifications with numerous nationally known training vendors. She is a regular speaker at national conferences such as The Corporate University Week at the Disney Institute. She is a seasoned speaker for the HR Star Conference Cleveland. As a result of her high ratings, she has also been a key speaker at the HR Star Atlanta and received the Gold Medal Award three years in a row for best session speaker. Amy was a recipient of the 2015 HR Awards presented by ERC & CSHRM.

August 27, 2025

Chair Yoga for Library Workers Series: Change the Narrative by Cultivating Opposite Thought

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

Support your well-being with this chair yoga series designed specifically for library staff. Each session combines gentle physical postures, breathing techniques, and basic meditation practices to help ease physical tension, manage stress, and build flexibility. Whether you're new to yoga or a seasoned practitioner, this series welcomes all levels and abilities—no special clothing or equipment required. Just bring yourself and a chair!

Learning Objectives:

Explore the yogic principle of pratipaksha bhavana (cultivating opposite thought) to reframe internal narratives and foster a more compassionate inner dialogue.

Apply mindfulness and reflection exercises to real workplace scenarios.

Identify thought patterns that contribute to stress, self-doubt, or burnout, particularly in service-oriented work environments.

Practice physical postures that embody balance and help cultivate a balanced mindset.

Presenter:

Hillary Brown, Program and Services Associate, NEO-RLS, is also a certified yoga teacher and former children's librarian with over a decade of experience in public libraries. She specializes in making yoga accessible to all and is passionate about supporting the well-being of library workers through mindful movement, meditation and breath work. Hillary believes that, like libraries, yoga should be welcoming to everyone.

September 3, 2025

Cybersecurity for Library Staff

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

Be Aware and Be Prepared - Learn the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the current cyber security risks, attacks, concerns and what you can do to protect not only yourself, your company but also your family, friends and other relations from becoming a statistic. For all library staff.

Presenter:

Ed Slusarski, President of Regarding Your Systems, LLC (Cyber Consulting Company) - He graduated college with a triple major in Accounting, Finance, and Management and a minor in Computer Science. He started his business career in public accounting, serving very diverse set of clientele. In his career, he continued to focus on becoming an integrated consulting expert as he progressed through various industries - manufacturing, financial, retail, and mining - which were US and internationally based companies. He continued to refine his skills by: 1) obtaining his MBA/MSMIS degree from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management; and 2) conducting research, analysis, and studies in the business, operational, and IT fields with the culmination of certifications in key IT security and governance, risk management, and business management fields. He continues to learn and adapt to the ever-changing business/IT environment by obtaining training and seeking certifications in his areas of study and interest (Dark Web, Artificial Intelligence, IoT devices, quantum computing). While his consulting practice does address large companies (Eaton, Timken Steel, Hyster Yale), he strives to help the medium to small businesses the most.

September 3, 2025

Genealogy Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

We're excited to unveil a fresh approach to professional connection and collaboration. Our traditional networking meetings are now Active Learning Communities—dynamic spaces designed for shared learning, real conversation, and practical support.

Join your peers to exchange ideas, celebrate successes, and discover new solutions to common challenges. You'll also get a guided introduction to our new message boards, which will help keep the conversation going long after the meeting ends.

This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Hillary Brown.

September 10, 2025

Lead with Clarity: Intentional Communication for Library Supervisors

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Supervisors and leaders set the tone for communication in the workplace. This webinar focuses on strengthening leadership communication through intentional dialogue, supportive feedback, and responsive listening. You will learn how to reduce communication apprehension (for you and your staff), navigate challenging conversations with empathy and clarity, and foster a culture of open, respectful feedback.

Learning Objectives:

Recognize and address communication apprehension to foster a more open communication environment.

Use intentional communication techniques to give developmental and appreciative feedback effectively.

Model and promote active listening to support staff engagement and conflict management.

Presenter:

Dr. Stevie M. Munz is an award-winning teacher and researcher with 13+ years of experience in the communication field. She has led hundreds of discussion forums, presentations, trainings, and workshops. As a published author, her work appears in numerous peer-reviewed publications and popular press outlets.

As a communication expert, she is passionate about developing your communication power skills. From public speaking to relationship communication, conflict, group communication, and so much more—Dr. Munz supports you in transforming your personal and professional communication life!

The Power of Civility: Elevating Standards and Transforming Service

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Tired of workplace friction impacting productivity and morale? The solution lies in embracing a revitalized understanding of civility. This isn't about superficial niceties; it's about deeply respecting the diverse perspectives, needs, and identities of your colleagues while honoring your own. As discourtesy increasingly disrupts our workplaces, leading to turnover and poor performance, embedding internal customer service standards that are rooted in civility can make a powerful difference. This workshop offers the next critical step towards strong internal customer service skills: learning what this new civility means, why it's indispensable for a positive and productive environment, and how you can actively cultivate these vital skills.

Learning Objectives:

Attendees will have a deeper knowledge of the modern definition, and role, of civility within the scope of internal customer service.

Attendees will understand the skills necessary for a workplace that prioritizes civility.

Attendees will be able to develop their own civility skills and know how to put them into practice in the workplace.

Presenters:

Mary Frankenfield has worked in the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library system for more than 20 years. During her time at MRCPL, Mary has worked as a page, a clerk, a children's librarian, and a branch manager. She has been in her current position as Deputy Director for a little over seven years. Among her many other duties, Mary has an active role in employee training and development and has presented workshops for NEO-RLS, OLC, and the MRCPL staff.

Beth Donaldson started her library career as a page in 2006 at Westlake Porter Library. She worked her way up to Children's Services and earned her MLIS in 2010. Currently she is a Branch Manager with Mansfield-Richland County Public Library as well as a Customer Service trainer for new hires. She likes to say that she learned about the importance of Internal Customer Service the hard way, and she's here today to share some insights and a story or two.

September 11, 2025

Makerspace Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Melissa Lattanzi.

September 12, 2025

Human Resource/Fiscal Officer Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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Canva II: Designing Impactful Flyers and Print Materials

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Print materials remain essential tools to inform, engage, and inspire their communities. This intermediate-level course focuses on creating effective, professional-quality print pieces such as flyers, posters, and other print materials using Canva.

We will explore layout strategies, content development, and visual branding techniques to produce materials that stand out. Whether promoting events, services, or seasonal campaigns, you'll gain the skills to create polished print materials that reflect your library's mission and voice.

This course is beneficial for those with basic Canva knowledge.

Learning Objectives:

Design visually appealing and brand-consistent flyers using features like custom templates, brand kits, and Canva elements.

Optimize print layouts for different formats such as letter-size flyers, half-sheets, posters, brochures) to meet varied library needs and display spaces.

Incorporate design best practices including visual hierarchy, accessibility, and layout techniques to improve flyer readability and effectiveness across print and digital formats.

Presenter:

Heather Feenaughty is the PR/Marketing Manager at Westlake Porter Public Library. Heather brings over 14 years' experience in marketing and public relations. She served as a Public Affairs Broadcast Journalist in the U.S. Army for five years and spent seven years at Case Western Reserve University's Undergraduate Admissions marketing team. Heather has been in the library world for almost 3 years and plans to add many more. Heather has yet to receive the prestigious Cannes Lions Award for Creative Effectiveness but is a five-time local scarecrow contest winner (should be six), won a Rosette at the Cuyahoga County Fair in the crochet division, and spear-headed WPPL's 2024 Westlake in Bloom first place win.

Do More with Less: Modern Category2 E-Rate Strategies for Libraries

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

In today's climate of tightening budgets and growing community needs, libraries are expected to do more with less. Despite the overwhelming need for funding, millions of dollars in federal E-Rate funding, specifically Category 2 dollars, go unused each year. This webinar will explore how libraries can reframe technology as a strategic utility and leverage available funding to enhance community services, modernize collections, and strengthen digital infrastructure.

Join us as we review funding usage across Ohio libraries, share insights on eligible services, and offer practical guidance on how to apply E-Rate more effectively to support your library's mission.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, attendees will be able to:

Recognize the untapped potential of E-Rate Category 2 funding by reviewing actual library usage data across Ohio.

Understand which services and technologies are eligible under Category 2, with a special emphasis on Managed Internal Broadband Services (MIBS).

Rethink budgeting and staffing priorities by treating technology as a utility, thus freeing up personnel to focus on strategic community impact, collection development, and service delivery.

Presenters:

Suzy Nash is a SLED Account Executive at DataServ, living and working in Northeast Ohio. With over 25 years of experience in the public and education sectors, Suzy has dedicated her career to supporting organizations that serve communities.

Her professional journey spans workforce development with the City of Cleveland, higher education recruitment and counseling, and K–12 support through digital content and library resources. Today, she partners with school districts, public libraries and municipal entities to deliver the technology infrastructure and cybersecurity solutions they need to fulfill their missions.

In an environment of limited resources and rising demands on public institutions, Suzy helps her partners focus on what matters most—service delivery—by managing the complex technology that powers it.

Tom Munson has held various sales and sales leadership positions at technology companies serving public sector entities over his 41-year career. He believes that public institutions play a critical role in improving lives and that technology is key to delivering those services efficiently and effectively.

Tom resides in Dublin, Ohio with his wife. They have three grown children, all thriving in their careers. Outside of work, Tom enjoys sports, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. He is also a long-time youth sports coach and currently officiates varsity high school basketball in Ohio.

Introduction to Storytime: Planning for Success

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

This webinar will help you build the skills and confidence needed to deliver successful storytimes. Whether you are a brand new storytime leader or a seasoned pro looking for a fresh approach, this session will guide you through the process of planning an engaging storytime, including selecting great books, incorporating early literacy practices, and using interactive elements with different age groups.

Learning Objectives:

Identify the core components of an effective storytime, including early literacy practices and age-appropriate activities.

Develop a structured storytime plan with interactive elements that can be delivered confidently and adapted on the fly.

Explore a variety of practical tools, tips, and resources created by librarians to support effective and engaging storytime.

Michelle Todd has worked in public libraries for over 20 years, specializing in children's services. She started at Lakewood Public Library, then moved to Cuyahoga County Public Library, working in several branches for 15 years, obtaining her MLIS, and finding her intense passion for children's programming – particularly in serving at-risk communities as a Children's Services Supervisor. Her passion for programming, early literacy, and helping children find the joy in reading infuses everything she does. Michelle has served on the Youth Services Advisory Committee of Northeast Ohio Regional Library System for a couple years, and presented at the 2024 School Library Journal Youth Leadership Summit.

September 24, 2025

Chair Yoga for Library Workers Series: Roles and Right Actions

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

Support your well-being with this chair yoga series designed specifically for library staff. Each session combines gentle physical postures, breathing techniques, and basic meditation practices to help ease physical tension, manage stress, and build flexibility. Whether you're new to yoga or a seasoned practitioner, this series welcomes all levels and abilities—no special clothing or equipment required. Just bring yourself and a chair!

Learning Objectives:

Explore the yogic principle of dharma (right action) to reflect on healthy, sustainable ways to serve your community without experiencing burnout.

Examine the concept of “vocational awe” in libraries and its impact on personal well-being.

Use mindful movement and meditation to reconnect with intrinsic motivation, purpose, and inner alignment in one's professional role.

Develop tools for self-compassion and boundary-setting that support quality service while honoring personal needs and limitations.

Presenter:

Hillary Brown, Program and Services Associate, NEO-RLS, is also a certified yoga teacher and former children's librarian with over a decade of experience in public libraries. She specializes in making yoga accessible to all and is passionate about supporting the well-being of library workers through mindful movement, meditation and breath work. Hillary believes that, like libraries, yoga should be welcoming to everyone.

September 25, 2025

Public Relations and Marketing Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Jill Grunenwald,

jill.grunenwald@neo-rls.org

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This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Jill Grunenwald.

Time Management: Overcoming Procrastination

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Why do we delay even the simplest tasks? This session explores the psychology behind procrastination and how to break the cycle. Through interactive discussion and self-reflection, participants will identify their personal procrastination triggers and the hidden costs of delay. Using practical techniques like time-blocking, the 5-minute rule, and accountability tools, this session equips attendees with the skills to turn intention into action. It's not just about getting things done—it's about building momentum and confidence in your workflow.

Learning Objectives:

*Understand the root causes of procrastination
Identify your procrastination patterns and triggers
Apply quick-start strategies to overcome task avoidance
Create a personal action plan to maintain motivation*

Presenter:

Amy B. Shannon, President, Pinnacle Leadership Solutions, LLC, and a Partner in Your Partner in HR has specialized in Organizational Development, Human Resources and Training for over 25 years. For the past 13 years, Amy has been an Organizational Development consultant working with clients in manufacturing, service, financial and healthcare industries. Most recently, Amy served as the Executive Director II/Vice President of Corporate College where she built robust leadership training curriculum to serve her clients. Amy also holds certifications with numerous nationally known training vendors. She is a regular speaker at national conferences such as The Corporate University Week at the Disney Institute. She is a seasoned speaker for the HR Star Conference Cleveland. As a result of her high ratings, she has also been a key speaker at the HR Star Atlanta and received the Gold Medal Award three years in a row for best session speaker. Amy was a recipient of the 2015 HR Awards presented by ERC & CSHRM.

October 1, 2025

2025-2026 Leadership Academy

Twinsburg Public Library

10050 Ravenna Rd.

Twinsburg, OH 44087

Times are listed for each workshop and webinar

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

NEO-RLS Introduces the 2025-2026 Leadership Academy

What does it mean to be a leader and how do the skills needed differ from those needed to be a good manager? Many people struggle with how to leave behind former priorities and mindsets when they enter a leadership role. Learning how to balance implementation with vision, connect with others in order to achieve goals, become an effective decision-maker and develop others are all important skills that help build alignment with direct reports and across an organization. The Leadership Academy will focus on enhancing the skills you already have and building new ones in order to assist you in developing a vision of how you can confidently move into the future as a leader.

The Academy is a blended course which runs from October through May and consists of 5 face-to-face workshops, plus 3 webinars.

We recommend that you attend the Academy in its entirety in order to maximize your learning

Archives of live webinars will be available at your convenience for those attending the Academy in its entirety and experiencing a scheduling conflict

Live webinars will be available individually for registration for those NOT attending the Academy in its entirety

Session 1

Wednesday, October 1, 2025 - Twinsburg Public Library

9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Everything DiSC® on Catalyst™

Everything DiSC® on Catalyst™ is a personal development learning experience that equips people with the social and emotional know-how for more effective interactions at work—no matter who or where they are.

Learning Objectives:

Better understand themselves

Appreciate and value differences in perspective and approach

Adapt to the unique needs of each person or situation they encounter

Connect with colleagues through the Catalyst platform

Gain access tips to help work better with different DiSC styles in a variety of situations

Presenter:

Ned Parks has had a rich and varied life that has taken him from police officer to helicopter pilot to successful entrepreneur with management and leadership positions in the journey.

He brings this experience to his consulting practice as a global provider of business consulting and staff development services that help organizations improve management and strategic competencies enhance customer service and improve employee engagement efforts.

Session 2:

*Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at Bainbridge Branch of Geauga County Public Library
9:30 am - 3:30 pm*

*Morning Session: Get Smart About Emotional Intelligence: Enhance Your Effectiveness
People with higher emotional intelligence tend to be better decision makers, more effective leaders, more resilient, better communicators, have more self-awareness and self-control, and more success in life overall. Emotional intelligence is being able to identify and manage your emotions and those of others. It is crucial for working collaboratively and effectively and having difficult conversations.*

In this interactive workshop we will discuss emotional intelligence and ways to improve it. The exercises will walk you through activities that help you explore your emotions, improve communication skills, and build empathy.

Discover how to harness the power of emotions for more effective interactions!

Learning Objectives:

Define emotional intelligence and describe the 5 elements of it

Explain the benefits of emotional intelligence in the workplace

Describe 4 ways you can improve EI

Identify personal areas for improvement (and resources for working on them)

Presenter:

Laura Greco is a certified wellness coach, author, and speaker/trainer with a 20+ year background in nursing who helps professionals eliminate burnout, manage stress, create life balance, and rekindle their sense of purpose and joy. She believes that self-care (body, mind, and spirit) is the basis for well-being and that we all have the capacity to make positive lifestyle changes. Her books include Wellness Made Simple, and Wellness Made Simple-for Residents. For more information please visit her website www.YouBloomWellness.com.

Laura has a BSN (University of Michigan), Master in Adult Education (Penn State), training from HeartMath and the Mass General Benson Henry Mind Body Institute, and certifications in wellness coaching from both Wellcoaches and Center for Credentialing and Education.

*Afternoon Session: We Need to Talk: A Step by Step Guide to Difficult Conversations
This highly interactive session will give participants the tools for having difficult conversations that achieve results. Participants will learn, and practice, a step by step process for managing difficult conversations about a variety of workplace issues.*

Learning Objectives:

*Learn steps for successful difficult conversations
Understand the essence of difficult conversations
Practice difficult conversation scenarios
Discuss the sources and costs of workplace conflict*

Presenter:

Barbara Baker is a former Commissioner with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) in Independence, Ohio. As a Federal Mediator, she assisted parties in collective bargaining negotiations and mediated labor and employment disputes in the private, public and federal sectors. In addition, Ms. Baker trains labor advocates and management in collective bargaining including bargaining processes, contract administration, steward/supervisor training and developing effective labor management committees. She also provides training in communication skills such as conflict resolution, active listening and communication dynamics. Ms. Baker facilitates person to person dialogues as well as group discussions to promote strong workplace relationships.

Session 3

Thursday, December 4, 2025 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am From Your Desktop

You're Not Alone: The Power of Peer Support in Management

Becoming a manager is a significant step, bringing exciting new challenges and shifts in how you approach your work yet, it often comes with a surprising sense of isolation. The familiar camaraderie with coworkers fades, leaving you feeling alone when navigating tough decisions or problem-solving. This feeling is especially true for middle managers, who often find themselves caught balancing the needs of front-line staff with the directives of administration. In this interactive workshop, we'll dive into the key issues faced by managers, particularly those in middle management, and explore practical strategies for building stronger peer support. You'll leave the workshop with a clear understanding of the mutual respect, open communication, and shared sense of purpose needed for robust peer relationships. You'll also be equipped with actionable strategies to cultivate an environment where you and other managers can freely share experiences, learn from one another, and collaboratively find solutions that benefit everyone.

Presenter:

Mary Frankenfield has worked in the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library system for more than 20 years. During her time at MRCPL, Mary has worked as a page, a clerk, a children's librarian, and a branch manager. She has been in her current position as Deputy Director for a little over seven years. Among her many other duties, Mary has an active role in employee training and development and has presented workshops for NEO-RLS, OLC, and the

Session 4

Thursday, January 8, 2026 from 10:00 am - 11:30 am From Your Desktop

Strategic Leadership

In today's dynamic library environment, mastering the art of strategic leadership is more crucial than ever. As libraries evolve to meet the challenges of a digital era, leaders must adeptly navigate the intersection of strategy, leadership, operations, and management. This webinar offers participants a comprehensive understanding of how strategic vision and effective leadership can shape the future of library services

Learning objectives:

Participants will learn the difference between strategy and leadership skills vs operations and management skills, and will understand the importance of weaving these critical skills together.

Participants will learn several integral tools for infusing their management style with strategic thinking.

Participants will discuss trends emanating from the pandemic and discuss potential impacts on future library operations

Presenter:

Paula Miller has served as Director/Administrator in four states –Baltimore County Public Library and Eastern Shore Regional Library (both MD), Pikes Peak Library District (CO), Westlake Porter Public Library (OH), and Dover Public Library (DE). Most recently, she molded BCPL's role as a community hub and instrument of democracy, and she oversaw the development and opening of award-winning and state-of-the-art Library 21c in Colorado Springs. Enamored by libraries since her first shelving job at age 16 at Kent Free Library, she believes our public libraries are critical community resources that bring people together and that serve as bridges to opportunities in individuals' lives. She is focused on identifying new and emerging needs, roles, and connections that keep our libraries relevant and effective.

Session 5

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 from 10 am - 11:15 am from YOUR Desktop

Leading from the Middle: Managing Up and Down Simultaneously

Do you have more than one boss at your library? Do you have lots of responsibility but

little authority? Are you working between multiple departments? Are you looking to improve your communication skills with your managers and your direct reports? If you said yes to any of these questions then this webinar can help you communicate better and manage up, and down.

Learning Objectives:

Communication techniques for communicating with upper management and employees

Prioritizing tasks and setting goals

Performance evaluation strategies: How to better give and receive feedback

Time management concerns: How to organize and prioritize your time to meet multiple (and sometimes competing) goals

Planning and organizing meetings from "the middle"

Presenter:

Carrie Rogers-Whitehead worked in libraries for nearly a decade and now consults and trains librarians. She regularly researches and writes for librarians, educators and parents. Carrie has published 5 books, with two coming out in 2022 including a new book co-authored with two school librarians with ABC-CLIO: Advocating Digital Citizenship: Resources for Library and Classroom. In 2021 she received an Outstanding Reference Title award from the Reference & User Services Association of ALA. Carrie is the founder of Digital Respons-Ability, a mission-based company that has educated tens of thousands of students, parents and educators in digital citizenship. Her company's curriculum and work can be found in multiple states and countries. Carrie is a sought after trainer, former TEDx speaker, adjunct instructor and loves to teach others.

Session 6 -

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 - Location TBA

9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Morning Session: Leading Through Transitions

Change is never easy, but understanding the transition process that leads to adopting a change is a critical skill for library leaders. This session will help you understand the stages of a transition process, where people get stuck (and how to help them if they do!), and how to develop strong team dynamics that support the change. Drawing on the transition theory work of Bruce Feiler, William Bridges, and Susan Bridges, participants will deeply consider the elements of each stage of a transition and how to support themselves, their team, and their colleagues each step of the way, as well as how to head off tension and conflict along the way. While change may never be easy, understanding the transition process that leads to change helps library leaders become more intentional and effective.

Learning Objectives:

Gain skills to better communicate about change

Navigate unintended consequences

Ensure that the change sticks

Afternoon Session: Develop Your Teams by Building on Strengths

Teams are a critical unit at your library - it's where people learn, share, and feel connected. How can we better develop our teams to ensure positive working relationships and job satisfaction? This session will go deep into team building (but not in a "let's do a ropes course!" way!). We'll share the theory behind how teams develop their dynamics and cultures and several proven approaches to using a strengths-based approach for intentionally cultivating a productive environment.

Learning Objectives:

Understand the vital role teams play in organizational development and job satisfaction

Understand the team development model and how to use it with teams

How to increase job engagement through team connection

Keys for developing team strengths

Presenter:

Amanda Standerfer's passion is helping libraries and nonprofit organizations advance so they can create meaningful impact in their communities. Since 2002, Amanda's consulting practice Fast Forward Libraries has worked with libraries and nonprofits on strategic planning, fundraising, organizational development, and capacity building. Amanda has 15 years of experience at various positions in public libraries, most recently as the Director of Community Engagement for The Urbana (IL) Free Library. She also has 7 years of experience working in the philanthropy sector. She has a BA and MA in History from Eastern Illinois University and a MLIS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Session 7

Thursday, April 16, 2026 - Location TBA

9:30 am - 4:00 pm

Morning Session: Accountability at the Core: Manager's Response to Pride and

Entitlement in the Workplace

In the complex landscape of the post pandemic, fostering a culture of accountability is not just a goal; it's a necessity!

A midst the comprehensive interplay of organizational dynamics, few threads are as complex and pervasive as pride and entitlement. These two formidable barriers have the potential to obstruct the path to accountability, stifling progress, and hindering growth.

Now, more than ever, leaders must confront these challenges head-on, charting a course towards a future defined by humility, integrity, and unwavering accountability. In this session tailored for HR professionals, we will embark on a journey to unravel the intricacies of pride and entitlement, exploring how they intersect with accountability and, more importantly, how we can overcome them to cultivate a culture of responsibility and excellence within our organizations.

Learning Objectives:

Understand the impact of pride and entitlement on organizational culture and accountability.

Recognize signs and symptoms of entitlement and pride in themselves and their employees.

Explore root causes that contribute to entitlement and pride, such as upbringing, societal influences, and organizational culture.

Learn practical strategies for addressing entitlement and pride.

Discover actionable steps and techniques for promoting a culture of humility, empathy, and accountability in the workplace.

Afternoon Session: Create a Growth Mindset: Guiding your Employees to Resiliency, Grit, Optimism & Forgiveness

Our mindset is the way we think, filter our thoughts and make meaning of a situation. Is mindset fixed, or can we change it – and help others change theirs?

Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck developed the term “growth mindset” after researching motivation, personality and development. Dweck suggests that a growth mindset evolves from an attitude of hard work, learning, training and perseverance. In comparison, individuals with a fixed mindset believe that success comes from innate ability, focus on the rewards of immediate success and dread failure.

Because mindsets are shaped by our environments, organizations can do quite a bit to foster a growth mindset within. The growth mindset is all about learning, growing and continuing to work hard despite setbacks, while a person with a fixed mindset may be embarrassed by and not willing to admit their personal or professional failures.

Growing out of a fixed mindset does not happen overnight. It takes conscious effort to move to a different way of thinking. As Leaders, we can help ourselves, colleagues and ultimately the organization by promoting a growth mindset throughout.

Learning Objectives:

Identify the difference of a fixed mindset vs. growth mindset, take a self-assessment to determine your mindset

Realize the importance and define five characteristics of a growth mindset workplace and its' impact on goal setting and feedback

Learn the two biggest obstacles to organizational growth mindset and how to overcome them

Recognize the three common misconceptions that contribute to a false growth mindset and spot your fixed-mindset triggers

Understand what Neuroplasticity is and how it relates to re-wiring the brain to grow in areas such as resilient, grit, optimism and forgiveness

Acquire strategies to foster a growth mindset and practice four habits to cultivate a growth mindset in yourself

Presenter:

Amy B. Shannon, President, Pinnacle Leadership Solutions, LLC, and a Partner in Your Partner in HR has specialized in Organizational Development, Human Resources and Training for over 25 years. For the past 13 years, Amy has been an Organizational Development consultant working with clients in manufacturing, service, financial and healthcare industries. Most recently, Amy served as the Executive Director II/Vice President of Corporate College where she built robust leadership training curriculum to serve her clients. Amy also holds certifications with numerous nationally known training vendors. She is a regular speaker at national conferences such as The Corporate University Week at the Disney Institute. She is a seasoned speaker for the HR Star Conference Cleveland. As a result of her high ratings, she has also been a key speaker at the HR Star Atlanta and received the Gold Medal Award three years in a row for best session speaker. Amy was a recipient of the 2015 HR Awards presented by ERC & CSHRM.

Session 8

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 - Location TBA

9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Morning Session: Empathetic Leadership: Fostering Trust and Psychological Safety in the Workplace

Leadership styles have evolved significantly over the past several decades, making space for more human-centered and emotionally intelligent approaches.

Person-Centered Leadership models, such as Empathetic Leadership, not only strengthen connection and trust—but also play a critical role in creating psychologically

safe work environments where team members feel valued, respected, and heard.

Please join this engaging conversation to explore the tools and characteristics of Psychological Safety and Empathetic Leadership that help leaders respond effectively to the needs of their employees while cultivating a culture of safety, openness, and inclusion.

Presenter:

Erin Turner, LISW-S, is the Intensive Services Program Manager at Crossroads/Beacon Health in Lake County and Adjunct Faculty for Youngstown State School of Social Work Graduate Program. She has worked in community mental health settings for over 20 years as a volunteer, direct service provider, clinical supervisor and program manager. She has extensive experience working with children, adolescents, families and adults with a variety of mental health issues, including trauma, mood disorders and crisis situations. Erin specializes in community-based crisis intervention. Erin has provided multiple trainings within the context of Social Work including Risk Assessment, Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Motivational Interviewing.

Afternoon Session: Guided Conversations

Here is your opportunity to ask questions of your peers and share your successes and challenges.

October 2, 2025

Cybersecurity for IT and Managers

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

Things to be Aware of Going Forward - Join us for a deeper dive for IT staff into what are the risks coming down the road for everyone (deep fakes, voice overs, AI attacks) and the compliance requirements that will be or are being imposed by the States, Governments and Nations that will impact everyone. For IT staff and managers.

Presenter:

Ed Slusarski, President of Regarding Your Systems, LLC (Cyber Consulting Company) - He graduated college with a triple major in Accounting, Finance, and Management and a minor in Computer Science. He started his business career in public accounting, serving very diverse set of clientele. In his career, he continued to focus on becoming an integrated consulting expert as he progressed through various industries - manufacturing, financial, retail, and mining - which were US and internationally based companies. He continued to refine his skills by: 1) obtaining his MBA/MSMIS degree from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management; and 2) conducting research, analysis, and studies in the business, operational, and IT fields with the culmination of certifications in key IT security and governance, risk management, and business management fields. He continues to learn and adapt to the ever-changing business/IT environment by obtaining training and seeking certifications in his areas of study and interest (Dark Web, Artificial Intelligence, IoT devices, quantum computing). While his consulting practice does address large companies (Eaton, Timken Steel, Hyster Yale), he strives to help the medium to small businesses the most.

October 7, 2025

Training / Staff Development Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

We're excited to unveil a fresh approach to professional connection and collaboration. Our traditional networking meetings are now Active Learning Communities—dynamic spaces designed for shared learning, real conversation, and practical support.

Join your peers to exchange ideas, celebrate successes, and discover new solutions to common challenges. You'll also get a guided introduction to our new message boards, which will help keep the conversation going long after the meeting ends.

This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Melissa Lattanzi.

October 8, 2025

Doing What Matters: Values in the Library

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Our values are the lens through which we interpret the world. They are the principles that guide our thoughts, actions, and behaviors. When we consciously and intentionally leverage our core values in our work, it gives us a sense of confidence, meaning, and purpose. It also helps us navigate conflict and consensus with grace and courage. In this workshop, individuals will reflect on the core values they bring to their work and how to use their values with more intention. Walk away ready to plan for how to use values with more intention in communication, work activities, and interactions with others.

Learning Objectives:

- *Identify personal core values*
- *Plan for how to use core values in daily work for more meaning, satisfaction, and excellence*
- *Understanding and techniques for dealing with values conflicts*

Presenter:

Sharon Morris has worked in library development for over 20 years and conducts workshops, courses, and leadership institutes throughout the country. Her interests are leadership, research, management, supervision, communications, wellness & libraries, play, values, improv comedy, and insight. Sharon takes an asset-based approach to learning and invites all to engage. She has earned an MLIS and PhD in Managerial Leadership in Libraries. Her workshops and webinars are designed based on adult learning theory and include experiential learning, content informed by research, "fun" aspects, and time for reflection and planning to apply concepts in the workplace.

October 8, 2025

Directors/Deputy Directors Active Learning Community Meeting

Online

Via Zoom

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03:30 PM - 04:30 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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October 9, 2025

Back to the Book XXIV: Blurred Lines: A Genre-Blending Discussion

Hilton Garden Inn

8971 Wilcox Dr

Twinsburg, OH 44087

09:30 AM - 04:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

We're thrilled to invite you to this year's Back to the Book, where we'll explore the exciting world of genre-blending in modern literature.

The day kicks off with Lainey Mays from HarperCollins, who will share insights into current trends in genre fusion and offer a sneak peek at what's next in the publishing world. Next, we dive into the comeback of Cozy Everything,

After lunch, we will have a collaborative brainstorming session where we'll exchange ideas on genre-blending and book discussions. Next, we will explore the ever-popular rise of romantasy—where romance meets fantasy in bold, unexpected ways.

We'll close the day with an exciting virtual author talk featuring Kara Loo and Jennifer Young, co-authors of Alice Chen's Reality Check, as they discuss their unique approach to storytelling and genre-crossing narratives. You won't want to miss this one!

Genre Blending

What makes a book stand out in its genre? Does it need to blend different tropes? Does it need a certain ending? Genre mashing is ever-present and won't be going anywhere soon. In this session, we will dive into some current trends in several genres and how they overlap. There will be a discussion of forthcoming books that fall into these categories as well as a display of all the FREE resources HarperCollins has for librarians to stay up-to-date on HarperCollins offerings.

Presenter:

Lainey Mays is the Assistant Manager for Library Marketing at HarperCollins Publishers. Originally from Mississippi, she came to New York to study for a Masters in Publishing. She enjoys reading any and all things as long as she can learn something new. She represents all adult titles for HarperCollins by scheduling author visits to libraries across the country, offering title presentations, and conducting author interviews. Her job allows her to hang out with librarians all day and talk about books...can life get much better than that?

Cozy Everything

Cozy is making a comeback and expanding beyond mystery into many other genres. The challenge for librarians and readers is finding a novel that celebrates the elements of cozy fiction while staying true to the things we love best about genre fiction. In this session, we will discuss the hallmarks of cozy fiction, take a fresh approach to the idea of cozy across genres, and build a book list of conceptually cozy reads for your patrons. (Spoiler alert: cozy horror is still horror.)

Presenter:

Mary Olson is Readers' Advisory Librarian at Medina County District Library. Her duties include training, direct service to book clubs, promotional writing, collection development, and programming. She is the 2015 Allie Beth Martin award winner and the 2016 Pat Carterette Award winner.

Your most popular holds lists, and E-book purchases are filled with fae, dragons, vampires, witches, and shifters. A beloved genre has seen new life thanks to an explosion of interest on social media. Romantasy readers savor a book where the love story is just as important as the world building and plot. In this session, we will discuss the tropes, acronyms, authors, and series that define romantasy. You will come away with a list of books to recommend, from introductions to popular series, to deep cuts for your most avid romantasy readers

Presenters:

Kelly Halleen is the Supervisor of the Brunswick Library Children's Department, a branch of Medina County District Library. She has worked 12 years at MCDL. She is currently the Assistant Coordinator of Ohio Library Council's Children's Services Division. She has presented at several OLC conferences including Convention & Expo, Storytime Foundations Workshop, and the Youth Services Conference. She loves cheering on her library staff, storytime, and connecting with all the families in her community. Beyond her children's experience, Kelly is a devoted reader of adult romance, fantasy, and excited to work with the "grown-ups" at this training.

Kaitlin Booth is the Collection Development Coordinator for Akron-Summit County Public Library. She supervises the librarians and support staff who select and manage ASCPL's physical and digital collections. She previously worked as a Collection Development Librarian at Cuyahoga County Public Library, an Acquisitions Librarian at Medina County District Library, and has been a librarian in the youth services, reference, and genealogy departments at Stark County District Library.

We will end the day with a virtual author visit from Kara Loo and Jennifer Young, co-authors of Alice Chen's Reality Check.

October 14, 2025

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility Active Learning Community Meeting Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

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Join your peers to exchange ideas, celebrate successes, and discover new solutions to common challenges. You'll also get a guided introduction to our new message boards, which will help keep the conversation going long after the meeting ends.

This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Hillary Brown.

October 15, 2025

Marketing and Outreach: Creating Engagement and Awareness

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:15 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Explore how library marketing and communications intersect with community engagement to build stronger connections with your audience. In this webinar, participants will identify goals for awareness, engagement, and usage while creating a comprehensive “map” of the library’s community touchpoints. Learn strategies to communicate consistently, craft compelling content, and strengthen partnerships for maximum impact. This session provides actionable steps to enhance engagement and ensure alignment with your library’s strategic priorities.

Learning Objectives:

Identify and define outreach, marketing, and engagement goals aligned with their library’s mission.

Map out key community touchpoints and explore techniques to build and sustain partnerships that increase visibility and usage.

Leave with practical tools and next steps tailored to their own library context.

Presenter:

*Cordelia Anderson has a strong reputation as a thought leader and communications professional in the library industry. She is the author of *Library Marketing and Communications: Strategies to Increase Relevance and Results* from ALA Editions, and has received recognition such as *Library Journal Marketer of the Year* (2016) and *John Cotton Dana awards* (2016 and 2006). She has served as a jury member for the *John Cotton Dana PR award*; an advisory board member for *UNC Charlotte’s Atkins Library*; and a board member for the *Library Marketing & Communications Conference*. Cordelia worked in public libraries for 15 years, serving for a decade as *Director of Marketing & Communications* at *Charlotte Mecklenburg Library*.*

October 15, 2025

Circulation Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,
hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

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October 16, 2025

A Deeper Dive into the Science of Reading-Repeated

Mentor Public Library

8215 Mentor Ave

Mentor, OH 44060

09:30 AM - 04:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

We will dive a little deeper into the actionable strategies for libraries to support the science of reading in their communities. Explore how libraries can integrate the key principles of phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension into programming and services. Learn how to create environments that foster early literacy development for children and caregivers through outreach, storytimes, resources, and other programming. You will leave with a toolkit of ideas and resources to help enhance your library's early literacy efforts.

Learning Objectives:

Understand what the science of reading is and what it tells us about how children learn to read

Learn how to share literacy messages with families in storytime and other programming

Discuss how libraries can support students, families, and schools through collection development and programming

***While it's not required, background knowledge of the Every Child Ready to Read program is encouraged or attending an Early Literacy 101 workshop in the past would be helpful. The EL101 (ECRR) workshop goes over the six early literacy skills which are also the main components behind the science of reading.*

The afternoon will consist of a round-table discussion of storytimes and sharing. Bring your best storytime to share with the group. Be prepared to share a storytime with a small group at your table.

Presenter:

Julia Shaheen is the Literacy Manager at Stark Library where she oversees the Ready for School program. Through this program, staff visit parents and caregivers to help prepare families for school. She oversees library literacy efforts by providing staff, parent, and educator workshops. She is an Every Child Ready to Read and Reimagining School Readiness trainer presenting workshops throughout Ohio. She provided storytime and other programming in both in-person and virtual capacities. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Education as well as several certificates in reading and early literacy education. She has presented at numerous regional, state and national conferences. She also presents for local schools and organizations and represents Stark Library on radio and television programming.

October 21, 2025

Holding My Own: Lessons Learned as a Neurodivergent Library Leader

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:15 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Neurodivergent librarians face unique challenges in the workplace, particularly as they climb the leadership ladder. In this honest and straightforward conversation rooted in her real-world experiences, Librarian and Accessibility Consultant Renee Grassi discusses lessons learned, navigating her nearly twenty years in libraries and thirteen years in management and administration. Whether you are a neurodivergent library leader yourself or supervise one as a Board Trustee, Director, or Manager, leave this presentation with new perspectives about the strengths and challenges of your neurodivergent peers and recommendations for advocacy and support.

Learning Objectives:

Attendees will increase awareness about relevant language and information to discuss disabilities and neurodiversity through the lens of the speaker's personal lived experiences.

Attendees will understand the benefits of a strengths-based person-centered approach to supporting, managing, and supervising neurodivergent library leaders.

"Attendees who identify as neurodivergent will leave with at least 5 strategies to assist themselves with being a neurodivergent leader."

Presenter:

Renee Grassi, Librarian and Accessibility Consultant Speaker

Librarian, author, trainer, administrator, teacher, and consultant Renee Grassi is an advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in libraries, schools, and communities. As a neurodivergent librarian herself, Renee has worked in public libraries for nearly twenty years, developing award-winning library initiatives that welcome, support, and welcome disabled re

Safe Space - LGBTQ+ Cultural Competence Training

Twinsburg Public Library

10050 Ravenna Rd.

Twinsburg, OH 44087

09:30 AM - 12:30 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

LGBTQ+ Cultural Competence Training is designed to foster safer, more inclusive communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This training equips participants with the knowledge and tools to recognize and address bias, understand current terminology, and engage in respectful and informed conversations around gender and sexuality. Upon completion, participants are invited to display a Safe Space Ally sign in their workspace—demonstrating visible support for the LGBTQ+ community and a commitment to inclusion.

No matter where you work or live, if you interact with others, you're likely to engage with individuals who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Having a foundational understanding of inclusive language and what it means to be a supportive ally isn't just helpful—it's essential for fostering respect, equity, and belonging for everyone.

Learning Objectives:

Develop greater self-awareness of personal beliefs, stereotypes, and assumptions related to LGBTQ+ individuals.

Increase comfort and confidence in discussing concepts and using inclusive language related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Gain knowledge of resources and services that support LGBTQ+ individuals and their allies.

Explore opportunities to build a network of community support that embraces all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Presenter:

Ken Ditlevson is a dedicated trainer and facilitator specializing in LGBTQ+ education and advocacy. He served as the inaugural Director of Kent State University's LGBTQ+ Center, a position he held for nearly 11 years. In this role, Ken led numerous initiatives to support LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty, building a more inclusive campus environment. Ken currently serves as the Assistant Dean of Students, and Director of CARES Center at Kent State University.

Ken is a two-time graduate of Kent State University, holding a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Education in Community Counseling. Before joining Kent State, he spent nearly two decades working in mental health and social services, most recently serving as Assistant Vice President at Child Guidance & Family Solutions in Akron, Ohio.

A passionate advocate, Ken has received numerous awards for his leadership in LGBTQ+ advocacy and for developing innovative programs that foster inclusion and community support. He lives in the Highland Square/West Akron area with his husband of 25 years and their two dogs, Luna and Piper.

A passionate advocate, Ken has received numerous awards for his leadership in LGBTQ+ advocacy and for developing innovative programs that foster inclusion and community support. He lives in the Highland Square/West Akron area with his husband

of 25 years and their two dogs, Luna and Piper.

October 28, 2025

NEO-RLS Open House -Featuring Mychal Threets

Hilton Garden Inn

8971 Wilcox Dr

Twinsburg, OH 44087

08:30 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Join Us for NEO-RLS Open House

We invite library staff, administrators, and trustees to the NEO-RLS Open House on Tuesday, October 28, 2025. This special event is your opportunity to gain insight into NEO-RLS's financial progress and achievements over the last year, learn about our services and strategic priorities, and receive a special update from the State Library. We'll celebrate the contributions of our members and recognize the 2025 Rising Star, Shooting Star, and Super Star Award recipients. Attendees will also have the opportunity to connect with members of the Board of Trustees, Board Committees, Advisory Groups, and Active Learning Communities to explore ways to get involved. We look forward to celebrating with you and sharing what's next for NEO-RLS!

What to Expect at the Open House:

Breakfast

Time to mingle and network with library staff from across the region

Interactive stations to explore ways to get involved with the Board, Advisory Committees, Active Learning Communities, and more

A recap of NEO-RLS achievements from the past year

An update from the State Library of Ohio

Congratulate the Star Award nominees and winners in-person

Featured Presentation in-person - A Journey of Library Joy

Mychal's thank you and honoring of library staff as a library kid-turned-librarian dealing with life and humanity, while seeking the ever-present joy.

Presenter:

Mychal Threets is a librarian, literary ambassador, and the library's number one fan (according to himself, admittedly). He grew up in Fairfield, CA, right between Sacramento and San Francisco. He was raised in his local library as a home-school kid.

He got his first library card at the age of five and was hooked on libraries from there. He got his first library job as a library shelver at the library he grew up in and worked his way up to become Supervising Librarian of that very same library.

He is very open about his mental health. He talks about it in hopes that it'll help others in their mental health journey. He is adamant about encouraging people to believe him when he says he's happy they are here.

He considers it an honor to the library people who raised him that he is a recipient of the 2024 "I Love My Librarian" award from the American Library Association, one of School Library Journal's 2024 Movers and Shakers, one of TIME Magazine's 2024 Next Generation Leaders, and a 2025 The Webby Awards winner for social impact."

October 29, 2025

Book Discussion Active Learning Community Meeting

Online

Via Zoom

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02:00 PM - 03:30 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send Carrie Kibby any items you would like to discuss.

October 30, 2025

Thriving at Work: Practical Strategies for Better Days in the Library

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Do your work days feel like a blur? Between patron demands, programming pressures, and shifting priorities, it's easy to fall into survival mode. This one-hour introductory webinar will offer practical strategies to help you reconnect with what you love about library work. We'll explore how to manage time and tasks, navigate workplace conflict, and rediscover purpose in your daily routine—so you can thrive, not just get through the day.

Learning Objectives:

*How to identify and reframe the parts of your job you enjoy.
Practical tips for managing time and tasks to reduce overwhelm.
A glimpse into resolving common workplace conflicts.
A foundation for thriving in your role and setting the stage for future growth*

Presenter:

*Crystal Trice, CSM, CSM@Scale, Library Consultant, Scissors & Glue, LLC
Crystal Trice, founder of Scissors & Glue, LLC, has over 20 years of experience in education and local government, with a focus on improving collaboration and handling challenging situations with patrons and coworkers. She is passionate about creating environments where people work together more effectively.*

With certifications as a Scrum Master and in Scrum at Scale for Government, Crystal holds a Master's in Library & Information Science and a Bachelor's in Elementary Education and Psychology. Her dedication to community enrichment fuels her work in supporting organizations to achieve their goals.

Crystal lives near Portland, Oregon, and enjoys organizing her thoughts (and tasks) with Sharpies, Flair pens, and sticky notes. She shares her home with her husband and a quirky mix of animals.

October 30, 2025

Construction and Facilities Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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November 4, 2025

Time Management: Eliminating Time Wasters and Staying Organized

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Time leaks can sabotage even the most productive days. In this session, participants will uncover the sneaky time wasters—both digital and interpersonal—that interrupt their focus and flow. They'll also learn how to manage interruptions with tact and clarity. Beyond identifying distractions, we'll explore systems to organize tasks, emails, and workspace for smoother, more efficient days. This training is perfect for anyone ready to reclaim their time and build sustainable habits for staying organized and in control.

Learning Objectives:

*Recognize the top time-wasting habits in your workday
Learn strategies to manage and minimize interruptions
Discover tools to improve organization and workflow
Build a personalized strategy to reduce distractions and boost efficiency*

Presenter:

Amy B. Shannon, President, Pinnacle Leadership Solutions, LLC, and a Partner in Your Partner in HR has specialized in Organizational Development, Human Resources and Training for over 25 years. For the past 13 years, Amy has been an Organizational Development consultant working with clients in manufacturing, service, financial and healthcare industries. Most recently, Amy served as the Executive Director II/Vice President of Corporate College where she built robust leadership training curriculum to serve her clients. Amy also holds certifications with numerous nationally known training vendors. She is a regular speaker at national conferences such as The Corporate University Week at the Disney Institute. She is a seasoned speaker for the HR Star Conference Cleveland. As a result of her high ratings, she has also been a key speaker at the HR Star Atlanta and received the Gold Medal Award three years in a row for best session speaker. Amy was a recipient of the 2015 HR Awards presented by ERC & CSHRM.

November 4, 2025

Adult Services Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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November 12, 2025

Supporting Neurodivergent Library Users

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:15 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

How can you create neuroinclusive library experiences for your users? This presentation will discuss ways to make programs, collections, and services more accessible for neurodivergent people. Leave with ideas for how to create a welcoming environment at your library and an understanding of how to support neurodivergent people across the age span.

Learning Objectives:

Attendees will understand relevant language and information to discuss disabilities and neurodiversity.

Attendees will gather at least five strategies to make their approach to customer service more welcoming to neurodivergent users.

Attendees will learn at least five ideas to make library programs, collections, and services more inclusive to neurodivergent users

Presenter:

Renee Grassi, Librarian and Accessibility Consultant Speaker

Librarian, author, trainer, administrator, teacher, and consultant Renee Grassi is an advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in libraries, schools, and communities. As a neurodivergent librarian herself, Renee has worked in public libraries for nearly twenty years, developing award-winning library initiatives that welcome, support, and welcome disabled residents and their families and caregivers. Learn more at reneegrassi.com.

November 13, 2025

Youth Services (Children & Teen) Active Learning Community Meeting

Online

Via Zoom

01:00 PM - 02:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi, 3306550531
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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Building Strong Volunteer Programs: Library & Friends Group Perspectives

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Join us for a practical and engaging webinar designed for library staff and administrators seeking to enhance their recruitment, retention, and management of volunteers. This session offers a dual perspective: Debbie will discuss best practices and lessons learned from managing a successful in-library volunteer program, while Gloria will share insights on engaging volunteers through a Friends of the Library group.

Together, we'll explore how strong volunteer engagement can enhance library services, support special events, and deepen community connections. Whether you're just starting a volunteer program or seeking to revitalize an existing one, this session will provide strategies, tools, and inspiration to build a program that works.

Learning Objectives:

Recognize key components of a successful library volunteer program, from onboarding to recognition.

Compare volunteer engagement through the library system and Friends group to determine the best fit for their organization's needs.

Apply recruitment and retention strategies tailored to diverse volunteer motivations and schedules.

Implement practical approaches to volunteer management, including communication, training, and task design.

Leverage community partnerships and internal support to grow and sustain volunteer initiatives.

Presenters:

Gloria Brach, Foundation Member and Friends Committee Co-Chair, Geauga County Public Library

Debbie Schrock is the Development Coordinator for the Geauga County Public Library and has been involved in libraries since she was 16. She began volunteering at the Burton Log Cabin at age 12, sparking a lifelong passion for service. Debbie earned her Bachelor's degree in Technical and Applied Studies with a concentration in Business Management from Kent State University. She is deeply committed to volunteerism and believes in the power of community engagement to strengthen and support library services.

November 18, 2025

IT Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

We're excited to unveil a fresh approach to professional connection and collaboration. Our traditional networking meetings are now Active Learning Communities—dynamic spaces designed for shared learning, real conversation, and practical support.

Join your peers to exchange ideas, celebrate successes, and discover new solutions to common challenges. You'll also get a guided introduction to our new message boards, which will help keep the conversation going long after the meeting ends.

This meeting will be held through Zoom which is user friendly to all devices. You will receive a link in your confirmation email a reminder 2 hours before the meeting. We hope you will join us. Please send agenda items/questions to Hillary Brown.

December 2, 2025

Guided Reading Round Table (GRRT): Historical Literary Fiction

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Modeled off the Chicago-area Adult Reading Round Table, the Guided Reading Round Table (GRRT) will lead library staff through an in-depth genre study. Over the course of a year, we will explore historical fiction, with a specific focus on the biographical, fantasy, literary, mystery, and romance subgenres. This penultimate session will explore historical literary fiction through guided discussions to identify popular authors, titles, tropes, & trends. A reading list & questions will be supplied; while it is not required, it is recommended to read through some of the titles and questions. The GRRT is dedicated to the development of readers' advisory skills and the promotion of reading for pleasure.

December 4, 2025

You're Not Alone: The Power of Peer Support in Management

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Becoming a manager is a significant step, bringing exciting new challenges and shifts in how you approach your work yet, it often comes with a surprising sense of isolation. The familiar camaraderie with coworkers fades, leaving you feeling alone when navigating tough decisions or problem-solving. This feeling is especially true for middle managers, who often find themselves caught balancing the needs of front-line staff with the directives of administration. In this interactive workshop, we'll dive into the key issues faced by managers, particularly those in middle management, and explore practical strategies for building stronger peer support. You'll leave the workshop with a clear understanding of the mutual respect, open communication, and shared sense of purpose needed for robust peer relationships. You'll also be equipped with actionable strategies to cultivate an environment where you and other managers can freely share experiences, learn from one another, and collaboratively find solutions that benefit everyone.

Learning Objectives:

Have a clear understanding of the mutual respect, open communication, and shared sense of purpose

Cultivate an environment of sharing, learning, and collaborating

Presenter:

Mary Frankenfield has worked in the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library system for more than 20 years. During her time at MRCPL, Mary has worked as a page, a clerk, a children's librarian, and a branch manager. She has been in her current position as Deputy Director for a little over seven years. Among her many other duties, Mary has an active role in employee training and development and has presented workshops for NEO-RLS, OLC, and the

December 9, 2025

Outreach Active Learning Community Meeting

Online

Via Zoom

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02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,
lattanzm@neo-rls.org

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The Power of Storytelling and Empathy-Centered Communication

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

Storytelling and empathetic communication are powerful, often underestimated tools in marketing and outreach. Centering empathy for your patrons' needs and experiences in your communication strategies will enhance the efficacy of your reach and will help you better understand who you're serving. Applying storytelling best practices alongside empathy-centered communication will ensure you're drawing in your audience meaningfully and sustaining their engagement, and your patrons will better understand how your library can meet their needs. You'll leave this session with clear communication strategies and tools that simultaneously support your community and your services.

Learning objectives:

Identify your unique audiences.

Understand how to better communicate how your library can meet your audience's needs.

Gain confidence in interviewing and storytelling.

Presenter:

Deborah Hakes leads marketing and communications for Georgia Public Library Service, which was named Library Journal's 2020 Marketer of the Year. She is a communications leader with expertise in storytelling and building brands for nonprofits, public health, and libraries. Hakes has served on the board for the Library Marketing and Communications Group since 2021, including currently as vice president.

She has a passion for amplifying the voices of those who do good and telling stories that drive people to take action and has spent her career at state, national, and globally-focused nonprofit organizations. She began her career at The Carter Center in former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's communications office, telling stories and raising awareness of international programming. At Welcoming America, she built the communications department from the ground up for a growing, new nonprofit. Currently at Georgia Public Library Service, she works to broaden awareness of the value of public libraries to build engagement and support, and she provides counsel to libraries to build their own communications expertise.

December 10, 2025

Special Libraries Active Learning Community Meeting

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:00 PM EST

Hillary Brown,

hillary.brown@neo-rls.org

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December 11, 2025

Life Art: A New Horizon, Library Edition

Online via Zoom

02:00 PM - 03:15 PM EST

Melissa Lattanzi,

lattanzm@neo-rls.org

This presentation will plumb the depths of human potential by asking folks, what if we consider our contemporary society through the lens of living life as art? And what if libraries are the perfect synergistically aligned conduits for this enriching energy? What if art has been with us since the dawn of civilization as a gift just waiting to be opened completely and utilized to its fullest extent? What if the concept and practice of living life as art offers us a mind and heart opening portal to better understand the nature of reality and the full capacities that human beings hold within themselves?

Learning Objectives:

Learn about the very beginning of art history to our current day and age showing how art has gone through a transformation from object to concept to now possibly people as art

Explore how this eureka understanding unlocks an infinite well of powerful energy that can be harnessed to good ends to live one's life in the most inspired and fulfilling way

Begin to see how this gift energy can potentially strengthen, support, catalyze, revitalize, renew and supercharge library workers and libraries all around the world

Tap into the awesome power of the gift energy that the understanding and practice of life art truly offers and see how it aligns perfectly with the mission, vision and values of libraries

Presenter:

Jon Keppel holds a Bachelor of Fine Art in Sound Art from The Ohio State University where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with Distinction and a Master of Library and Information Science from Kent State University with a focus on adult services in the context of public libraries through the lens of living life as art. He is currently a librarian which is how he expresses his life art professionally in addition to independently inspiring through his writings, talks, guided meditations, music, and art.