

Below are bios and interviews of six ARL member representatives who will be retiring or stepping down in fall or winter 2022.

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### Alberta Davis Comer



In December, Alberta Comer will retire as dean of libraries at The University of Utah, a position she has held since 2013. In her nine years as dean, she has steered the libraries through a bedbug infestation (two months after she started), an earthquake, and the ongoing COVID pandemic.

Alberta and her development team have been especially successful, raising more than \$15 million in cash donations and more than \$30 million in gifts-in-kind. These donations supported many of the projects listed below, and more.

Early on in Alberta's tenure as dean, the library created a family reading room and lactation space, one of the first on campus. In addition, the library launched an expanded graduate reading room and writing center and greatly increased the number of its student study spaces. In 2018, the library opened Katherine's Courtyard, an outdoor space that invites creative expression and research across the arts, which includes a four-season enclosure that fully opens to the outdoors for warmer months and fully closes and has radiant floor heating in the winter.

Alberta led the development of ProtoSpace, a space that hosts a variety of digital scholarship and fabrication activities. This space also hosts Digital Matters, a joint venture with the colleges of Humanities, Fine Arts, Architecture+Planning, and the School for Cultural and Social Transformation; it serves as the locus for computationally enhanced humanities and arts research and pedagogy. With demand for new programming space a top priority, more than one-third of the print collection was relocated to compact shelving.

In collaboration with the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (UMFA), Alberta served as co-principal investigator on a four-year joint research and scholarly engagement initiative between the UMFA and the Marriott Library, generously funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional funds from The University of Utah's Office of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and the colleges of Humanities, Mines and Earth Sciences, Fine Arts, and Health. The recently completed grant enabled UMFA and Marriott Library staff to collaborate on shared exhibitions and programming, emphasizing the ongoing relevance of the UMFA's and Marriott's collections in scholarly and creative endeavors and illustrating the synergetic possibilities that unfold when museum and library objects are used in tandem.

As dean, Alberta also oversaw The University of Utah Press, which began in 1949 and is the oldest university press in the state. With a dedicated full-time staff of seven, the

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press currently publishes numerous award-winning titles in subject areas that include anthropology; archaeology; environmental studies; and Western, Utah, and Mormon history, among others.

The library houses the Book Arts Program, which has partnered with the College of Fine Arts to offer a minor and certificate in book arts since 2011 and plans to introduce a major in 2024. The fine press, Red Butte Press, also publishes under the Book Arts Program.

Alberta has demonstrated a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) by creating the position for—and hiring—an assistant dean to oversee EDI efforts in the library. Through Alberta's leadership, the university's three libraries, Marriott, Eccles Health Sciences, and Faust Law, have increased collaboration to best serve students, faculty, and staff. In addition, during her tenure, salaries have increased significantly for staff and faculty.

Alberta has served on a number of ARL committees, including the Member Engagement and Outreach Committee (2018–2021), the Diversity and Leadership Committee (2014–2016), and as chair of the ARL Academy Advisory Group (2016–2017). She served on the LYRISIS Board of Trustees and on the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) Board as a member-at-large and as treasurer. She also served on the Salt Lake City Public Library Board and served as secretary on its executive board. She has been an active member in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), serving on its Management and Marketing Committee.

In 2019, Alberta and the library's associate deans, co-authored the book, *Strategic Planning for Academic Libraries: A Step-by-Step Guide*, published by the American Library Association (ALA).

Over the past nine years, the library's marketing and public relations department expanded, providing the means for expansive outreach and exposure. A social media program was fully established, large-scale student events and programming—both for campus and the external community—were launched, and a 50-year library anniversary was celebrated campus-wide.

This fall she will co-teach, for the fifth time, a one-credit in-person class, History and Geology of Utah's National Parks, at The University of Utah's Asia Campus in South Korea.

Formerly the library dean at Cunningham Memorial Library, Indiana State University, Alberta served as editor of *Indiana Libraries* as well as editor of *Cognotes*, the daily paper for the ALA Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting.

### Jon E. Cawthorne

Jon Cawthorne served as dean of Wayne State University (WSU) Libraries and School of Information Science (SIS) from August 2017 through June 2022. Jon was privileged to serve as Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) president, 2020–2021. Throughout his career, Jon mentored and designed pathways for diverse, underrepresented individuals to enter the academic and research library profession. The Diversity Alliance is now supported by ACRL and may lead our profession to welcome, support, and promote talented professionals. In fall 2021, Jon led SIS in review of all recruitment, enrollment, and scholarship policies during the pandemic; as a result, the enrollment in the School of Information Science increased by 102%. Within ARL, Jon served on the Board of Directors (2021–2022), the Task Force on Structural Equity and Inclusion (2020–2021), and the Member Engagement and Outreach Committee (2019–2021). He was an ARL Research Libraries Leadership Fellow (2011–2012) and an ARL Leadership and Career Development Program Fellow (1997–1998).



ARL's Tony Ellis interviewed Jon via email in October 2022. The interview follows.

#### **Why and how did you get started in librarianship?**

My grandmother was a children's librarian for Prince George's County, Maryland, and when she retired she moved to Portland, Oregon. While we never talked about librarianship, she managed to make sure I read all the books on the banned book list. When I started thinking about a career, I settled on librarianship because it sits between journalism and a PhD in history. I was inspired by writing, history, information, and ideas that help encourage better decisions in ourselves, our organizations, and our communities. My leadership journey began by asking, "How does one who looks like me get hired as dean of libraries?" Turns out: there is a tremendous amount of personal growth that must happen to become an authentic leader.

### **What are the highlights of your career?**

The colleagues, friends, and relationships built while attending the ARL Leadership Career Development Program (LCDP) and ARL Research Libraries Leadership Fellows (RLLF) program (now the ARL Leadership Fellows program) are a true highlight. In 2013, I finished my PhD in managerial leadership at Simmons University. As dean at West Virginia University and Wayne State, I brought both institutions and libraries to the Greater Western Library Alliance. I was privileged to mentor LCDP Fellows, Kaleidoscope Program Scholars, and ALA Spectrum Scholars. Serving as visiting faculty for the Harvard Leadership Institute and the UCLA Library Senior Fellows was a tremendous experience. I established a dedicated Special Collections room at Wayne State and co-established the Diversity Alliance at the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) with University of Iowa, Virginia Tech, and American University. Finally, I am proud of the software that allows libraries to accurately identify usage of their collections; this entrepreneurial effort emerged from Wayne State University Libraries and is currently being tested in several libraries.

### **Were there goals that you set as a director that you have not yet reached?**

With the completion of WSU's Master Plan in 2018, I did not finish laying the groundwork for funding, building, or renovating a new library for Wayne State. In 2018, I led a survey to benchmark the current organizational culture at Wayne State University Library. We were to repeat the survey in 2020, but were disrupted by the worldwide pandemic. This was part of finishing research that illuminates the importance of leadership, change, and organizational culture dynamics. Although it is not complete, I will continue to help the next generation become inspired and passionate about leading in libraries.

### **What advice do you have for individuals who aspire to leadership positions/roles in libraries?**

Love libraries: what we do, how we do it, and what we stand for. We need inspiring, positive leadership that articulates the benefits of our current work and encourages talented people in our organizations to grow, fail, and respond to the changing needs of students and alumni.

Attend every leadership training and development program available (Build your network, reach out to leaders you admire or respect).

Read more books about leadership, listen to any and all podcasts on leadership from all industries (*The Leadership Podcast—We Study Leaders*).

Be curious: Continually think/reconsider what you think you know (about organizations, people, and the culture).

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Consider these questions: What is your own vision for future direction and work in libraries? How may your vision change the current culture? How does your vision inspire people at all levels of the current library?

### **What key issues do you think research libraries will face in the next five years?**

Financial pressures may likely require deeper collaboration across institutions and libraries. Think Skilltype. I hope library leaders understand the dynamics and importance of organizational culture on future directions, strategic planning, and professional development. I look forward to libraries leading broad, overarching discussions about scholarship, particularly encouraging and supporting interdisciplinary research.

### **What still inspires you about librarianship?**

The amazing, talented people we have in the profession

### **What do you look forward to in the next phase of your life?**

After a disruptive pandemic and a sobering health challenge, I look forward to serving the profession in creative ways. I remain passionate about leadership and helping the next generation become inspired and passionate about leading in libraries.

### Rebecca L. Mugridge



Rebecca L. Mugridge stepped down on June 30, 2022, after leading the University at Albany Libraries since 2015.

Rebecca began her tenure at the University at Albany (UAlbany) in 2013 as the associate director for Technical Services and Library Systems. In 2015 she was asked to serve as interim dean and was later appointed dean in 2016. Rebecca was promoted to distinguished librarian in 2020. During her tenure at UAlbany, Rebecca oversaw a number of

library renovations as well as the migration from an Ex Libris Aleph integrated library system to the Alma library services platform. She advocated and supported the university's adoption of an open access policy in 2021.

During her tenure as dean, Rebecca served as a trustee of the Capital District Library Council, (2016–2022), and as its treasurer (2021–2022). She served on the Board of the SUNY Libraries Consortium, and as its chair (2021–2022). She was secretary of the SUNY Distinguished Academy (2020–2022). Within ARL, Rebecca served on the Research and Analytics Committee (2016–2018), the Advocacy and Public Policy Committee (2018–2021), the Member Engagement and Outreach Committee (2021–2022), the Program Planning Committee (2018–2019, 2021–2022), and the Nominating Committee (2018). Rebecca has been active in the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, the Library Leadership and Management Association, the Library and Information Technology Association, and the Association of College and Research Libraries. She is currently active in the new American Library Association division Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures, serving on its Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee.

Prior to joining the University at Albany, Rebecca was head of Cataloging and Metadata Services at Penn State University, catalog management librarian at Yale University, head of Cataloging at Robert Morris University, and government documents retrospective conversion librarian at the University of Pittsburgh. Her work has revolved around cataloging, authority control, retrospective conversion, and library management. Her research interests include assessment, process improvement, and library management, primarily but not exclusively in technical services and information technology. Rebecca has a BA in history from Penn State, an MLS from the University of Pittsburgh, and an MBA from Robert Morris University. She was a member of the second cohort (2007–2008) of the ARL Research Libraries Leadership Fellows (RLLF) program (now the ARL Leadership Fellows program).

### Kevin Smith

Kevin Smith served as dean of libraries at The University of Kansas from May 2016 through July 2022. Within ARL, Kevin served on the Advocacy and Public Policy Committee (2016–2020) and the Digital Content Task Force (2019–2021).

ARL's Tony Ellis interviewed Kevin via a phone call in October 2022. The interview follows.



#### **Why and how did you get started in librarianship?**

I was a doctoral student at the University of Chicago, studying religion and literature. I had already completed all of my coursework and began looking for jobs to support myself and my young family. I originally envisioned my career path to lead me to become an academic professor.

While working on my dissertation, however, spending many hours in the research library, I accepted a job in the library, and enjoyed it very much. I ultimately decided I wanted to switch career paths and become a research librarian.

Librarianship wasn't foreign to me as my father was a high school librarian.

But, once I decided to immerse myself in the idea of a career in librarianship, I realized that I really liked the work and the people I met while working in the library, because they were quirky and interesting.

#### **What are the highlights of your career?**

I was employed by Duke University Libraries for over 10 years. While employed at that institution, I became their first scholarly communications librarian, and eventually, was promoted to lead the Office of Scholarly Communications and Copyright. At the time of my initial appointment at Duke, the scholarly communications role in librarianship was relatively new, and many in the field were still uncertain about how this role could effectively be used in the research library setting. So, in collaboration with a cohort of two others, I developed Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to aid young careerists in better understanding the emerging sub-discipline in librarianship. Over the past 10 years, roughly 40,000 people have registered and attended the MOOCs I helped to develop, and I continue to serve as a mentor to young professionals in North Carolina and beyond. I find it extremely rewarding to influence the next generation of research librarians.

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While employed at the University of Kansas, as dean of libraries, I really enjoyed working with the extraordinary staff. I led the institution through two massive budget cuts and am proud to say that no one on the staff had to involuntarily lose their job. At Kansas, the research librarians championed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and were able to lead that programming without the need for a central office; of course, our steering committee helped determine the allocation of resources.

### **Were there goals that you set as a director that you have not yet reached?**

In celebration of the 100-year-old Watson Library, we planned renovations to ensure that the library would be a resource for the next generation of students. Financial and fundraising constraints have delayed the project from fully getting underway. I do, however, remain optimistic that those efforts will materialize into a magnificent project, and I look forward to watching those plans come to fruition from a distance.

### **What advice do you have for individuals who aspire to leadership positions/roles in libraries?**

While I was at Kansas, a wise professor had a quote which read, “Those of us who presume to teach, should never stop learning,” and I have found that, to be an effective leader, you have to continue to learn and grow. One should never believe that they have amassed all the knowledge to arrive at the destination of librarianship.

The last piece of advice I would give, is to respect the people who work for you. If you can’t do that, you shouldn’t be in the role.

### **What key issues do you think research libraries will face in the next five years?**

As data explodes on campus, it’s going to play a big role. I suspect there will need to be more collaboration, where libraries will likely partner across campus.

Digital preservation will also be a big issue in the coming years.

And, the need to grow and learn on DEI is always going to be with us—and that’s a good thing.

### **What still inspires you about librarianship?**

The people I meet, the people I get to work with.

### **What do you look forward to in the next phase of your life?**

After having spent the past 16 years at large research universities, I’m really looking forward to returning to explore the role that the liberal arts play in shaping our larger society. And, I look forward to working more closely with students than when I worked at some of the “research one” universities (R1’s).

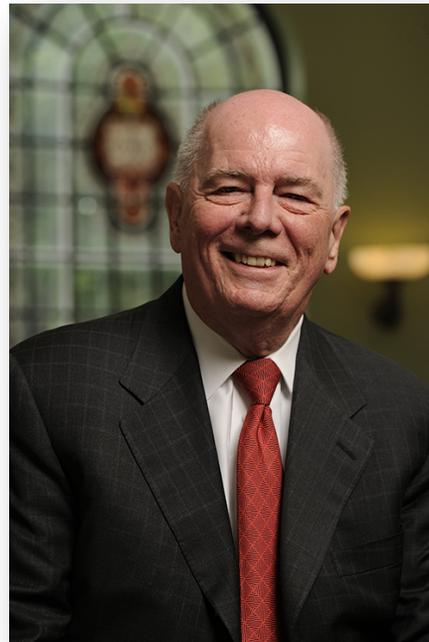
**Catherine Quinlan**



Catherine Quinlan served as the Valerie and Ronald Sugar Dean’s Chair of the University of Southern California (USC) Libraries from August 2007 through August 2022. Prior to joining USC, Catherine served as university librarian at The University of British Columbia from January 1990 through March 2007. Within ARL, she served on the Special Collections Task Force (2002–2006), the Access to Information Resources Committee (2001–2002), the Scholarly Communication Committee (1998–2000), and the Management of Research Library Resources Committee (1992–1994).

### Winston Tabb

Winston Tabb has served as Sheridan Dean of University Libraries, Archives, and Museums at Johns Hopkins University since September 2002 and plans to retire this year or when a new dean is in place. Prior to becoming dean at Johns Hopkins, Winston served at the Library of Congress for 30 years, the last 13 as deputy librarian and associate librarian of Congress for Library Services (and ARL member representative).



Winston has long been active in national and international library activities. He was nominated by President Obama to serve on the National Museum and Library Services Advisory Board and confirmed by the US Senate in 2010. He served the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) as chair of the Professional Committee, chair of the Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters 2003–2011, and is now IFLA’s official representative to the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva. In 2012, he was named an Honorary Fellow of IFLA, the association’s highest honor.

Winston has been very active in ARL throughout his career. He was ARL President (2011–2012) and a member of the Board of Directors (2007–2013, 2014–2015). He served on a dozen ARL committees and working groups, including the Nominating Committee (2018, chair 2013–2014), the Advocacy and Public Policy Committee (2015–2016, chair 2005–2007), the Task Force to Assess the International Engagement of ARL and ARL Libraries (chair 2010), the Intellectual Property and Copyright Committee (2003, chair 2004–2005), and the Special Collections Task Force (2002–2006).

Winston also serves on numerous boards, including the Simmons College Board of Trustees, American Library in Paris Advisory Council, and Academic Preservation Trust. He chairs the selection committee for the One Maryland One Book program, and served 10 years as a member of the Visiting Committee to the Harvard University Libraries. He has received the two highest awards presented by the American Library Association (ALA), the Joseph W. Lippincott Award (2007) and the Melvil Dewey Medal (1996), as well as ALA’s John Ames Humphry Award (2007) for significant contributions to international librarianship and the L. Ray Patterson Award (2012) for contributions to US copyright law.