

This year, I was able to attend the NYLA Conference thanks to a scholarship from RLRT. As a rural library director, it is difficult to make the time for continuing education; however, the experience is definitely worthwhile. First, I was able to attend several sessions that will have direct impacts on our patrons and services we provide. Thanks to the session titled: Beyond Ramps, Serving People with Disabilities, I am planning to take a closer look at our website to ensure that it meets minimum ADA requirements as well as establishing best practices for posting in the future. Additionally, I was able to attend Brand Kits on a Budget and Marketing for Small Libraries to help jumpstart the discussion my library is planning to undertake next year around branding & logos and how that will fit into our current social media plan. Equally as valuable were the speakers, on diversity hiring practices and intellectual freedom. Even small libraries have a part to play in the greater society and understanding the challenges facing libraries of all sizes is invaluable.

Aside from the professional learning, I was also able to connect professionally with library lovers from across the state, in scheduled meetings like RLRT; at breakfast, lunch, and dinner with tablemates; and re-connect with librarians from my region. Building your network of people who you can go to with problems, solutions, and to bounce ideas off of is an immeasurable boon for those of us in small libraries. Shout out to all the random people I sat next to who were ready and willing to engage in sharing information about their libraries and experiences that made me laugh, think, and grow. I can't mention you all because it would take up my whole article, but know that I carry you in my mind as a reminder of NYLA 2022.

Lastly, I took advantage of the fun events that help rejuvenate your spirit. Wandering around the trade show to get the "goodies", singing karaoke with a room full of librarians that want nothing more than to cheer you on regardless of whether you can actually sing, and the dinner invitation that was so kindly extended to me by RLRT Member-at-Large, Vince and his wife, Karen.

In short, if you have the ability to attend NYLA, I would recommend 100/10 (and that's no typo!). Thank you again to RLRT for allowing me the opportunity to attend.