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Georgia Library Association Advocacy Committee

Angela Cortellino

Sequoyah Regional Library System, angela@seqlib.org

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*People, Libraries
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

Georgia Library Association Advocacy Committee

Representing all Georgia libraries, the primary charge of the Georgia Library Association (GLA) Advocacy Committee is to maintain and grow the relationship between libraries and statewide legislative efforts. This involves working to understand the needs of legislators and legislative groups, as well as discovering ways to effectively communicate the goals and needs of libraries to these legislative groups and individuals.

Ensuring that various voices across the state and our profession are heard, GLA organizes several advocacy efforts allowing libraries to share with legislators the outcome and impact

of both local and statewide decisions made benefitting libraries and the community they serve. Also, these efforts give libraries the platform to foster important relationships with government agencies. For example, through the advocacy committee, GLA coordinates a Library Day at the capitol where library staff from various types of libraries work together to distribute an art print by Debi Davis to every state legislator. There is always lots of excitement in distributing these prints. Prints from previous years are on display and framed in many of the offices at the Capitol. With the print in hand, legislators and office staff often



On March 17, 2022, a group of library advocates gathered together before breaking into small groups and delivering prints by Debi Davis to the offices of the legislators. Pictured from left to right. Front row: Carey Huddlestun, Stacy Brown (Georgia Council President), Julie Walker (State Librarian), Karen Manning (GLA President), Ben Carter. Second row: Kara Rumble, Angela Cortellino (GLA Advocacy Chair), Laura Burtle. Third row: Ashley Pearson, Kristin White, Angela Stanley, Evan Bush, Nan Brown, Raymond Goslow. Fourth row: Chaun Campos, Gina Martin.

greet these advocates with a smile as advocates petition for library needs.

This year, the committee was able to return in person to continue this work at the capitol. With several volunteers working, Georgia legislators received 2022 Library Day prints. The 2022 print depicts the botanical gardens in Athens. The prints are a collaborative advocacy effort between GLA, Georgia Council, and the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS).

The Advocacy Committee is dedicated to advocating for all libraries in Georgia. As libraries continue to evolve in the services offered, groups served, and in meeting changing demands, government relations must be a primary function of library leadership and professional organizations. As advocates, library workers must shift the conversation from pleading for what they need to demonstrating community outcomes and possible political

intersections. Yes, the committee focuses on gathering funding support from our legislators, but it is essential to also create relationships in order to fully inform legislators, so they are able to make decisions that help libraries and communities grow. The fostering of legislative relationships is not a short term or easy effort. Advocacy efforts require consistency and dedication, a stern will, and belief in what libraries offer. The GLA Advocacy Committee looks forward to continuing its good work with all GLA divisions, interest groups, and committees to sustain these long-term efforts.

Stay up to date with all GLA Advocacy Alerts by clicking [ADVOCACY](#) at the top of the GLA Website.

*Angela Cortellino is the GLA Advocacy Chair.
She can be reached at
advocacy@georgialibraryassociation.org*