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## From the President

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## *From the* PRESIDENT

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*Karen Manning*

Happy Spring, everyone! It is the season for planting and sowing seeds to cultivate growth. Typically, things do not sprout immediately, and we wait to see productivity.

The work of the Georgia Library

Association (GLA) is ongoing, and activities are sprouting and blooming within committees, divisions, and interest groups. The first quarter of my presidency has been filled with understanding, changing, updating, and improving procedures and processes; getting to know people; building relationships with GLA's executive board, chairs, and members; developing ideas and action items; and planning for future endeavors.

The Columbus Area Library Association (CALA) is now an external affiliate of GLA. The concerted effort of the ad hoc group to generate an option that offers another tier of membership opens opportunities to explore other potential members to expand our community.

Administrative Services Liaison Linh Uong manages business and parliamentary matters. Her impressive display of skills and attention to detail wows me and other stakeholders. Together, we are tackling matters that we had no idea existed! Along with Member Services, we are in the process of updating the membership portal. Inquiries concerning gifting or sponsoring a membership and how external affiliates can join or renew led to a review of how we process memberships. Member Services is working to fulfill our requests. In the

meantime, please consider bringing in members to acquaint them with our professional association.

A beautiful hybrid is in the making. The Advocacy Committee and Trustees, Friends, and Advocates Division may be coupling to satisfy a strategic goal and maximize the productivity of the two. Under the leadership of Advocacy Committee Chair Angela Cortellino, the Library Day at the Capitol was a success. First-timers were excited about participating as they navigated the halls. Continue to support Angela's advocacy work that she conducts on behalf of GLA and libraries.

The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for various GLA awards. Take time to recognize someone for their contributions to GLA or the library profession and nominate them for an award. We want to know and acknowledge who they are.

The Conference Committee is diligently working to provide an exciting in-person conference this year. Our theme "You Belong! Because we're better together" has been received positively. In the spirit of the theme, I hope that attendance will be reflected in the efforts put forth to have an engaging and enjoyable conference.

The Constitution & Bylaws and Handbook Committees are led by Laura Burtle and Cathy Jeffrey, respectively. They have their hands in the weeds tending to the details that comprise GLA's governance and structure. These tasks are no rose gardens, but gratefully, we have people with great aptitude in understanding policy. I am trying to keep up, as the committees work diligently to synchronize and create consistencies. I greatly appreciate the work towards these efforts.

I tasked the Nominations and Elections Committee with revising practices to be more inclusive in attracting candidates from various types of libraries to serve as GLA Officers. This resulted in a slate of candidates that represent different backgrounds in the profession. The candidates will run in the 2023 GLA Executive Board election. Kudos to this precedent that broadens our candidate considerations for leadership!

Our Webmaster, Jon Bodnar has identified ways and received recommendations for making changes to the website. The intent is to provide better content organization and incorporate techniques that address accessibility. Remember to send Jon any updates to website content.

The implementation phase of the strategic plan will begin in the second quarter. GLA members are steps ahead with interests and action items that are important to their respective groups and the association. This preludes what may be forthcoming and is a great lift as we move into implementation.

Throughout the first quarter, I was fed with knowledge, personal experiences, and support that nourished my presidential beginnings. I have experienced a great amount of growth in GLA that began with someone sowing a seed and setting me in motion. Seeds take time to grow and need proper nutrients to sustain.

Involving my presidential advisor, Tamika Barnes, in my plans has helped me blossom. Tamika is a ray of sunlight that cultivates my garden of fresh ideas. I endearingly refer to myself as “grasshopper” in training with a well-rounded coach. The advisor role is not taken lightly and adds value to the leadership structure.

It is always the season to develop and grow. We plant seeds in more ways than we may know. Germination can begin in thoughts, spoken words, or even in actions. Continue to plant seeds that will grow and blossom in the rich soil of GLA. Our future can be a direct result of what actions we take today cultivating practices that bring us together. Let’s continue to spread seeds of *inspiration*, fertilize our *motivations*, and blossom together in *collaboration* to produce progressive results for GLA’s present and future growth.

I cannot thank our executive board, officers, chairs, and all members for your continued support of GLA. Your dedication is truly appreciated!

Please reach out to me or any board member with additional ideas, suggestions, or comments.

*Karen Manning is the 2022 president of the Georgia Library Association. She can be reached at [president@georgialibraryassociation.org](mailto:president@georgialibraryassociation.org)*