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## From the President

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Rebecca Ballard

Hello again, everyone, and welcome to spring! It has been a very busy couple of months for the Georgia Library Association (GLA), and I am so grateful to have such a great team to work with in this organization. I have been learning some things “on the go,” and much planning has been happening on multiple fronts. I am extremely impressed by the many things going on within all of GLA’s divisions, committees, and interest groups. There truly is something for everyone in GLA.

I am very excited that our Georgia Libraries Conference planning is well underway, and we are looking forward to amazing things in Athens in October! Get your conference proposals ready: the conference runs October 4–6 on the usual Wednesday through Friday schedule. Our conference theme this year is “We’ve Got Stories to Tell.” I know we can all learn a lot from each other at this conference, and I hope as many of you as possible can attend.

I am also very jazzed about our conference keynote speakers! Our first keynote is Tricia Hershey, founder of the Nap Ministry. I know all of us have been overwhelmed in a variety of ways by both work and life in these post-COVID times. Tricia Hershey teaches self-care and is the author of *Rest is Resistance: a Manifesto*, which focuses on social justice and the liberating power of rest. I love this statement from Hershey: “Our worth does not reside in how much we produce.” It’s important (and sometimes, very difficult) to remember. Our next keynote is bestselling author and award-winning storyteller, Carmen Agra Deedy. She has many wonderful stories to share, such as the lifesaving power of libraries during her childhood as a Cuban refugee in Decatur, Georgia. I am so glad we have these amazing speakers coming out this year. Thank

you to our conference committee chair, Ben Bryson, for being a great organizer and leader. If you’re interested in helping with planning the conference, please reach out and join the committee—the more people that can help, the better our conference can be.

Advocacy is on our minds in the beginning of the year when the Georgia General Assembly meets. We had a wonderful turnout for GLA Day (Print Delivery Day) at the state capitol thanks to the organization of our advocacy division leadership: Brienné Coates, Melissa Brown, and Angela Cortellino. We teamed up with our friends in the Georgia Council of Public Libraries and the Georgia Public Library Service, including State Librarian Julie Walker, and we all worked together to hand-deliver beautiful prints to the office of each representative and senator, as well as the state’s constitutional officers. While we visited each office, we talked about the great things happening in our libraries and also thanked them for supporting Georgia libraries. Many of the officials spoke of how they looked forward to seeing us and collecting the prints each year.

Please consider joining the advocacy division as we become more involved in library advocacy efforts in the coming years. Some very concerning state bills were put forward this year, and we all need to work together to uphold the future and safety of libraries and librarians in Georgia.

As always, if there is anything I can do to help you, or if you have any ideas or suggestions for GLA, please feel free to contact me anytime. We are “a team” in librarianship, and I would love to help support you!

*Rebecca Ballard is the 2023 president of the Georgia Library Association*