

2026-2027 Nominees Biographical Information

EXECUTIVES

President-Elect: Laura Pitts, Jacksonville State University

Laura Pitts is an assistant professor of library services at the Houston Cole Library and serves as a liaison to the English Department within the College of Arts, Humanities and Science. She has a Doctorate in Communication from the University of Alabama, an MLIS from The University of Alabama, an MA in English & Creative Writing from the University of Alabama Birmingham, and a BA in Journalism and English from the University of Alabama. Laura has held multiple leadership positions within the Alabama Library Association including President and she is the current editor of Alabama Libraries. She is seeking her second term as President of ALLA. Laura is an avid supporter of the freedom of information and the value of that freedom to society. She has worked as a public library director at Scottsboro Public and a reporter/magazine editor.

Statement: “In my previous career, I served as the director of a small, rural public library in Alabama. During those nine years, I gained a deep understanding of the workforce needs within our communities, as well as the gaps and missed learning opportunities facing students. That experience sparked my passion for hands-on, experiential learning as a way to better prepare individuals not only for careers, but for meaningful, engaged lives.

“My time in public librarianship also gave me firsthand experience with the ongoing challenges facing our libraries at the state level. Issues such as book challenges and censorship efforts are not going away, and they continue to impact the work we do and the communities we serve. These are not abstract concerns, they are real, present, and require our continued advocacy, resilience, and unity as a profession. Libraries have always stood at the center of intellectual freedom, and we must continue to show up for that work.

“As I transitioned into academic librarianship, I have been able to see a different, yet equally important, set of challenges facing our profession. Academic libraries are navigating complex and evolving issues—from legislative impacts on tenure and promotion, to increasing expectations around accountability, assessment, and accessibility. At the same time, academic librarians bring highly specialized skill sets that position them as essential partners in teaching, research, and student success. Ensuring that this expertise is recognized, supported, and shared across our profession is critical.

“I believe deeply in the potential of the Alabama Library Association to be a space where all librarians, public, academic, school, and special, can come together, find community, and access the resources they need to grow and thrive. My goal is to help ALLA continue to evolve into an organization where every librarian sees themselves represented at the table, and where collaboration across library types strengthens our collective impact.”

2026 ALLA Elections

Treasurer: Jessica Hayes, Auburn University at Montgomery

Jessica Hayes is currently Head of Public Services at Auburn University at Montgomery. Jessica has a wealth of experience from previous roles at EDMC, EBSCO Industries and Birmingham Public Library. She holds a Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of Alabama along with a robust skill set that includes Library Instruction, Information Literacy, Community Outreach, and Collection Development. She is Past President of ALLA and is the current Treasurer of the Association and is seeking a second term.

Statement – “Though it has been almost 16 years since I received my Master’s in Library and Information Studies – a requirement for all professional librarians – the love for my profession remains constant. It isn’t the shelves of books and magazines. It isn’t the (non-existent) quiet environment. It is and will always be the people.

“Serving students and residents who walk through the doors of the Auburn University at Montgomery Library is the reason I do what I do. From assisting faculty members with research projects to educating students on the best resources to use for their English papers to helping public users navigate an online application, the joy I receive from meeting a user’s need is the reason I became a librarian. I’m not alone.

“As Past President and current Treasurer of the Alabama Library Association, I’ve seen the many ways that academic, public and school librarians serve thousands of Alabama citizens each day, and they do it because they love serving. I do, too.”

Secretary, Danny Stewart, Pell City Public Library

Danny received his MLIS from the University of Alabama in 1997 and has been active in the Alabama Library Association. He has served as Secretary, Chair of PLD, and as the AVL representative. Additionally, Danny is a past ALLA Humanitarian Award winner. Danny is a member of ALA, PLA, the Pell City Rotary Club and served as its President, the St. Clair County Bicentennial Committee, and is currently serving as Secretary of the St. Clair County Historic Development Commission. Danny is a former President of the Pell City Kiwanis Club and the St. Clair County Historical Society, a former Chair of the Public Library Directors’ Council of Alabama and the AVL, a former Vice Chair of the Cahaba Trace Commission, a two term Chair of the LSTA Advisory Council for Alabama, and a former member of Leadership Pell City and the Board of the Central Alabama Literacy Council.

2026 ALLA Elections

Member-at-Large (Central), Ricky Statham, Oneonta Public Library

Ricky Statham is seeking the Member-at-Large (Central) position with ALLA. He is the Library Director at the Oneonta Public Library in Oneonta, Alabama. He joined OPL 13 years ago and has served as Director for the past 9 years. Ricky holds a Bachelor's Degree in English from Athens State with a teaching certificate.

He began his library career immediately after college, initially working as a Catalog Assistant before being asked to take over Teen programming, where he developed specialized weekly programs. As Director, he has overseen initiatives such as grant-funded robotics programs and specialized community services.

Of special note, even though Ricky is stuck doing "Director duties" most of the time, he still loves participating in programming, especially for teens, tweens, and children. OPL's "Robots Build a Better World", funded by a grant written by Statham, was recently ranked #3 by YALSA for the top summer learning programs.

In addition to his work at the library, Ricky has served as the Pastor at Straight Mountain Baptist Church. He has also been involved with Rotary International, serving as President of the local chapter. He is married to his wife, Kimberly, and they have three children: Madeline, Elijah, and Isaac.

Member-at-Large (South), Shelia Harris, Enterprise Public Library

Shelia Harris is the Director of The Enterprise Public Library in Enterprise, Alabama. For over eight years, Harris has overseen the "hub of the community" in downtown Enterprise, Alabama, with a staff of 7. Ms. Harris graduated from Wicksburg High School in 1989. She continued her education by graduating from Jacksonville State University with a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1993.

Harris worked with the Dothan Eagle Newspaper for 23 years in Sales and Marketing before leaving the profession in 2017. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Public Library Directors Association of Alabama, is a board member of The Pea River Historical Society, and serves on the board of Coffee County Family Services. Harris recently completed terms with The Enterprise Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Main Street Enterprise, and the Library Science and Technology Act Advisory Council (LSTA).

Shelia is a member of St. Peter Community Church in Dothan, Alabama. She has one daughter, DeAunna Harris, who resides in Anniston, Alabama. Harris's hobbies include reading (if you couldn't guess) and traveling abroad!

2026 ALLA Elections

ROUND TABLES

GODORT Moderator-Elect: Tim Dodge, Auburn University

Employed at Auburn University since 1992, Tim currently serves as History, Political Science, and Theatre and Dance Librarian in the Research and Instruction Department. He previously worked at the University of New Hampshire and Barry University (Miami, Fla.). He has held numerous ALLA offices including President (2004-2005) and currently serves as GODORT Moderator and MCIRT Moderator-Elect. Also active in SELA (including President 2019-2020) and AACRL (including President 2000-2001 and 2008-2009). Education: Ph. D. in History, University of New Hampshire (1992); M.A. in History, University of New Hampshire (1982); MLS, Columbia University, 1980; and B.A. in History, Swarthmore College (1979). Fun facts: Tim plays boogie woogie piano and has hosted the Golden Oldies radio show on WEGL – Auburn FM 91.1 since 1998. The show features 1950's Rock 'n' Roll/R. & B. and related music Tuesday nights 7 – 9 p.m. (<https://www.weglfm.com/page/listen-live>)

GODORT Secretary-Treasurer: Allison Boswell

Allison Boswell joined Jacksonville State University's Houston Cole Library as the Scholarly Communications/Government Documents Librarian in 2020. She obtained her MLIS in 2018 from the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa. Previously, she was the Acquisitions Librarian for Pell City Public Library. Also, Allison was a Librarian's Assistant on a Senior Bookmobile for the St. Louis County Library for many years as well as a Computer Lab Trainer for the same system. In her off-time Allison lives a crazy life in rural Alabama with her husband, child, 2 cats, 2 dogs, a tortoise named Bertha, and a bunny named Honey-Bun!