

President's Report



Kelly Maggrias

Teacher-Librarians have been working hard during the past year to raise awareness of school libraries in Ontario. At the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario School Library Association on February 1, 2018, it was my privilege to accept the continuing role of OSLA President for 2018. We would like to welcome our new council members: Cynthia Gozzard will be representing the Central West Region, and Jennifer Brown will be our new Vice-President. Welcome to Caroline Freibauer as our new editor-in-chief of *The Teaching Librarian*. We also would like to thank Diana Maliszewski for her outstanding 12-year commitment to *The Teaching Librarian* and OSLA council. Your dedication and passion to the role and value of teacher-librarians is a true reflection of your mania, zest and continued commitment! We would like to thank our outgoing councillors, Alanna King, Joe Facca and Lisa Elchuk, for their contributions to OSLA during their time on council.

The OSLA Annual Award winners were recognized at the Annual General Meeting, graciously sponsored once again by Saunders Book Company. We honoured Teacher-Librarian of the Year, Sue MacLachlan. Sue has held many positions as teacher, teacher-librarian and Special Assignment Teacher-Librarian with more than 25 years of experience in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. Our second award of the evening was the OSLA Award of Special Achievement, given to the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario for their continued support and commitment to teacher-librarians. In the past year, ETFO has been particularly supportive of the current inconsistent working conditions for elementary teacher-librarians around the province. Studies demonstrate the immense value a properly staffed and resourced school library learning commons contributes to the school community, and we are thrilled that ETFO has been willing to recognize this and advocate for equity in Ontario schools. ETFO has recognized the importance of providing equitable funding and resources, as well as defending and supporting teacher-librarians where certain areas of the province are at risk of losing librarians.

The role of OSLA council is to represent and advocate for school libraries. This is a voluntary group of dedicated individuals who meet four times a year to plan advocacy and create resources to support our school library programs across Ontario. Although we only meet face-to-face a few times a year,

we are in constant communication with each other to meet our initiatives. As a subject association for school libraries, we are invited to attend many educational conferences, professional learning opportunities, and Ministry of Education sponsored events to provide our voice and perspective. We are proud to announce our contribution to the new resources on Sikh history and heritage that were developed by the Ontario Elementary Social Studies Teachers Association, the Ontario Art Education Association, the Ontario Association of Geographic and Environmental Educators, and the Ontario Library Association in partnership with the Sikh Heritage Museum of Canada. These new voluntary curriculum-linked resources describe Sikh celebrations in Canada and diverse viewpoints on maintaining cultural practices, Sikh perspectives on global warming and climate change and the history of Sikh pioneers in Canada and human rights. OSLA values and appreciates the ongoing support of ETFO and OTF in providing the opportunity to demonstrate the immense value of school libraries in learning and teaching.

The collaboration between OSLA and TeachOntario continues to develop through opportunities to innovate and grow. The projects led by OSLA members included online book clubs, online courses and outreach opportunities for educators to connect with stakeholders. We are thrilled by the continued relationship and support for student achievement and library programming provided by TVO and TeachOntario.

In partnership with TALCO, the Association of Library Consultants and Coordinators of Ontario, we continue to collaborate and demonstrate the role of school libraries as partners and leaders in building capacity and knowledge through education curriculum connections in the learning commons.

Are you passionate about school libraries? Why not nominate yourself or someone you know for a council position? The advocacy initiatives support library learning commons across the province and the professional growth opportunities are limitless! There are two positions open on our council – the Toronto Region (term until January 2019) and the Northern Region (3 year term). Please contact OSLA if you are interested in joining!

Finally, a special thank you to OSLA council and OSLA Super Conference planners Jessica Longthorne and Alanna King for their dedication, hard work and enthusiasm. ■