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# SLIS RENEWALS

A Quarterly Newsletter of the School of Library & Information Studies  
at The University of Alabama

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## DIRECTOR'S CORNER:

### "No News Today!"

Jamie Campbell  
Naidoo, Ph.D., SLIS  
Interim Director



Storytellers Connie Regan-Blake and Barbara Freeman are well-known for their version of the mountain story “No News.” And, while their story is an ode to enjoying “no news” for fear of “the bad news,” oftentimes no news is not good news. Indeed, it has been a while since the University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) shared our stories, accomplishments, and news with our constituencies. In this inaugural return to the SLIS newsletter, I, along with the SLIS Administrative Team and Faculty, hope to “renew” the tradition of communicating SLIS happenings on a quarterly basis. In the newsletter, you’ll find the following sections: SLIS Happenings, capturing general news events in the life of SLIS; Alumni News, sharing the accomplishments of our graduates; Student News, highlighting achievements of currently enrolled students; Faculty & Staff News, profiling select faculty and staff highlights; Retiree News, offering snapshots from the lives of retired SLIS faculty and staff; and Announcements, listing upcoming events. If you have news that you’d like to have considered for the next edition of the newsletter or general feedback about the newsletter, please contact me at [jcnaidoo@ua.edu](mailto:jcnaidoo@ua.edu). I look forward to hearing from you! You can also find additional SLIS news items on our [website](#). And, now, on to THE NEWS!

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## SLIS HAPPENINGS

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### SLIS Student Advisory Council Launches

In December 2021, the SLIS Student Advisory Council (SAC) was launched. SAC is an appointed advisory group of current SLIS students that serves as a conduit between the SLIS administration and the SLIS student body. SAC also works with the SLIS student body to select the SLIS Outstanding Faculty Award for teaching. Members of SAC represent the Book Arts program and the main campus and distance education LIS programs. The current SAC representatives include the following students:

#### Book Arts, MFA Representatives:

**Kate Bennett**

Second-year student in both the MLIS and the Book Arts MFA programs

**Kelsey Horn**

First-year student in the Book Arts MFA program

#### MLIS Representatives:

**Cecilia Dupepe** - a first-year MLIS Main Campus student

**Melody Knight** - a first-year MLIS Main Campus student

**Gracie Newman** - a first-year MLIS Online student

**Elizabeth Wingo** - a first-year MLIS Online student

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# SLIS HAPPENINGS

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## SLIS to donate a record \$38,300 in new, free children's and YA books to School Libraries in the Black Belt and Beyond

### 2022 Book Bonanza Black Belt Winners

**Gordo High School**, serving grades 7-12 (Pickens County),  
Librarian Heather Perrigin

**Highland Home School**, serving grades PreK-12 (Crenshaw County),  
Librarian Amy Campbell

**Phenix City Intermediate**, serving grades 6-7 (Russell County),  
Librarian Jessica Pittman

### 2022 Book Bonanza Beyond Winners

**Saraland Elementary School**, serving grades 2-5 (Mobile County),  
Librarian Cindy Wilson

**Stapleton School**, serving grades PreK-6 (Baldwin County),  
Librarian Lisa Comer

**Woodland Elementary School**, serving grades PreK-6 (Randolph County),  
Librarian Earnestine Fincher

The University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) will award a record \$38,300 in new, free books to elementary, middle, and high school libraries in Alabama via the SLIS Book Bonanza for the Black Belt & Beyond Program. Please join us in congratulating the following winning school libraries. SLIS graduate students and SLIS Interim Director Dr. Jamie C Naidoo will deliver the books to winning schools in late March and early April 2022.

Additional information about the program is available on the program [website](#). A special thank you to SLIS graduate students Lindsay Ball, Camryn Brooks, Miles Dalrymple, and Cecilia Dupepe for assisting with the program logistics for 2022.

## Stillman College Students Visit Book Arts Studios

In February 2022, a group of design students from [Stillman College](#) visited the SLIS Book Arts studio to learn more about the program and print a broadside. The students are part of a class taught by award-winning Book Arts alumnae Jillian Sico, Class of 2020.



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# NEWS

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## Alumni News

Leslie Bardos (Grant), SLIS Class of 2015, has accepted a position as the User Services Administrator and Instructional Librarian at The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) Salmon Library.

Rhonda Crim, SLIS Class of 2007, recently joined The University of Alabama as the Director of Alumni Publications.

Laura Egan, SLIS Class of 2021, will publish her first translation of Japanese Manga in May 2022. The title of the book is The Music of Marie written by Usamaru Furuya.

Rheena Elmore, SLIS Class of 1993 and Director of Library Services at Coastal Alabama Community College (formerly Faulkner State Community College), has retired as of March 1, 2022.

James Gilbreath, SLIS Class of 2009, was hired in January 2022 at The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Libraries as the new library liaison to the UAB School of Public Health.

Grace Hammond, SLIS Class of 2008 and media specialist at the Delaware Area Center (DAAC) in Delaware, Ohio, has been awarded the 2022 Innovation in Teen Services Award from the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association.

Timothy Pennycuff, SLIS Class of 1993 and Associate Professor and University Archivist at The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), co-authored *Fifty Years of Dreams and Discoveries: The University of Alabama at Birmingham (2019)*, a photographic history of UAB drawn chiefly from the images in the collections of the UAB Archives. He also co-curated an exhibit at UAB's Abrams-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts (AEIVA) entitled

“Unfolding UAB: 50 Years of Photography from the UAB Archives.”

Anne Romano, SLIS Class of 2000 and Director of Library Services/CME Coordinator of Silver Hill Hospital in New Canaan, Connecticut, was elected in January 2022 as a board member of The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Connecticut Chapter.

## Student News

Current MLIS student Kathy Brunot has been selected as a member of the 2022 class for the Blackburn Institute, a leadership development and civic engagement program at The University of Alabama designed to improve the state of Alabama.

Current MLIS student Elizabeth Webb is the director of the newly relocated Baldwin County Library Cooperative (BCLC), moving from Robertsdale, AL to Loxley, AL. BCLC is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit membership network which offers books, DVDs, CDs and computers, as well as Wi-Fi printing from mobile devices, copies, scans, and fax services for a small fee. The facility also acts as a hub for

Baldwin County's 13 municipal libraries.

## Faculty & Staff News

**Dr. Laurie Bonnici** co-published research with Dr. Jinxuan Ma (Emporia State University – SLIM) in the Canadian Journal of Information & Library Science. The study explored a pro/anti-vaccine discussion forum on Facebook (AKA Meta). Vaccination debates in social media forums give participants access to second-hand knowledge conveying personal experiences. Through the lens of Speech Act Theory, this study analyzed discourses on pro- and anti-vaccination perspectives along with views from vaccine hesitant groups. Analysis reveals significant criticism of behavior around information.

Findings indicate provision of substantiating information would play a crucial role in debate within divergent information contexts. Application of Speech Act Theory serves to inform participant communication more intimately and empowers their engagement in polarized discussion.

The article may be found at <https://ojs.lib.uwo.ca/index.php/cjils/article/view/13342/11266>



## Student News: Photo Opportunity

The outreach work of current doctoral student and MLIS alumna (Class of 2020) Reba Williams made a big splash in the Birmingham (AL) area. Williams, the branch manager at the Titusville Library, created the Community Resource Day which provides food, diaper giveaways, and assistance to residents in the community. Her outreach program was highlighted on a Lamar Advertising billboard in February 2022.

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### Faculty & Staff News (cont.)

Professors **Sarah Bryant** and **Holland Hopson** (New College) have released a collaborative project called *Half Premontions of the Moon*. *Half Premontions of the Moon* is an instrument, modular score, and set of performance instructions housed in a custom-built enclosure. It will be on display at the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum in April. Bryant's newest solo project, *Fairmont Color Card*, is about to be added to the artist book collections at Yale University, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art. These projects (and many more) can be found on her website: [www.bigjumpspress.com](http://www.bigjumpspress.com)

During 2021-2022, **Dr. John Burgess** pursued interests related to information ethics and academic librarianship. He published the article "Using Investigative Video Games to Teach Intuition and Critical Judgement in Reference Transactions," for the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Sciences* and "Towards an Ethics of Unity: An Ecological Approach to Overcoming Dispossession in Academic Libraries" for the *Canadian Journal of Academic Librarianship*. Additionally, Burgess presented at the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) and the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) on ethical enactment or how to put professional principles into practice, catastrophic risks as moral edge case for sustainability ethics, trends in information ethics education, and what environment ethicists can teach us about intellectual freedom. Burgess taught courses in Information Ethics, Information Literacy Instruction, Academic Libraries, Research Methods, and Professional Pathways.

He served the University as co-chair of the Information Technology committee, the College as member of the Computing and Instructional Technology committee, and SLIS as chair of the Curriculum committee. His professional service includes being a board member for ALA's *Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy* and the planning committees for the ALISE Information Ethics and Information Policy special interest groups.

The 2021-22 academic year has been an active research year for SLIS's Linked Data Research Group (<https://wikibase.slis.ua.edu>) led by **Dr. Steven MacCall** and CIS doctoral student and SLIS MLIS graduate **Huapu Liu**. Highlights include a research poster presented at the 2021 ASIST annual meeting (**Huapu Liu, Steven MacCall, Nicole Lewis**), a paper presented at the international ISKO German Chapter conference *Wissensorganisation 2021: Digitization and Knowledge Organization: Between Indexing and Knowledge Graphs* (**Huapu Liu, Steven MacCall, Nicole Lewis**), and an accepted paper for an international "GLAM Labs" conference at the Library of Congress that was canceled due to COVID19 (**Steven MacCall, Huapu Liu, Melissa Anderson**). We also worked with UA Computer Engineering faculty member, **Dr. Yu Gan**, and several of his undergraduate students during this academic year, and we are presenting a group paper at the upcoming 8th International Workshop on Computer Vision in Sports in June 2022.

**Dr. Bharat Mehra** is a prolific scholar on social justice in LIS. In 2021-2022, he authored/co-authored six refereed articles in top journals, including the *Library Quarterly*; *Journal of the Association of Information Science*

and *Technology*; *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*; and *International Journal of Information, Diversity, and Inclusion*. His latest article, entitled "Libraries Reclaiming "Social Justice Warriors" during "Miss Rona's" Global Pandemic Crises", was published in the *Library Quarterly* October issue (91:4). He edited/co-edited two books, *Social Justice Design and Implementation in Library and Information Science* (Routledge, 2022) and *A Librarian's Guide to Engaging Families in Learning* (Libraries Unlimited, 2021), and two journal special issues on related topics. Mehra authored/co-authored nine refereed book chapters and one paper/extended abstract published in conference proceedings. He presented papers, served on panels, and moderated sessions in five professional events, and is currently an advisory board member on three grants funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Mehra is book Series Editor of *Advances in Librarianship* (Emerald) and was awarded a grant by the UA's Office for Research and Economic Development entitled "An Exploratory Assessment of the Role of Alabama's Public Libraries to Address the Opioid Crisis." Details available at: <https://bmehra.people.ua.edu/curriculum-vita.html>.

**Dr. Jamie Campbell Naidoo**, along with recent MLIS graduate **Mercedes (Sadie) Zabawa**, Class of 2019, published the book chapter "Sameness & Difference in Visual Representations in Same-sex Couples in International Children's Picture Books" in the edited book *International LGBTQ+ Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Anthem Press, 2021). He also published a book chapter "Exploring the World of Latinx

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Nonfiction Children's Literature" with Dr. Ruth Quiroa in the edited book *Reading and Teaching with Diverse Nonfiction Children's Books: Representations and Possibilities* (National Council of Teachers of English, 2021). In January 2022, Dr. Naidoo and recent MLIS graduate **Kaitlyn Lynch**, Class of 2021, published an entry on serving LGBTQ+ students in school in public libraries for the *Encyclopedia of Queer Studies in Education* (Brill, 2022).

**Dr. Jeff Weddle** published his 13th book in February! The poetry collection *Advice for Cannibals* (Poetic Justice Books, 2022) highlights his ironic observations on the human condition and captures our inherent narcissism.

### Retiree News

SLIS retirees continue to use their skills and abilities in the volunteer space.

The University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), associated with the University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies, has benefited from former SLIS faculty in key positions. Former interim director Ann Prentice headed OLLI's curriculum committee during the pandemic, moving classes from in-person to online; Elizabeth Aversa, former director, served as president of OLLI from 2018-2020; and Anne Edwards works as a class host/facilitator.

The Opera Guild at UA, in the College of Arts and Sciences, provides support for the University's opera program. Elizabeth Aversa served as its founding president; former director Joan Atkinson was corresponding secretary, and Anne Edwards was elected recording secretary several terms. Before moving away, student services

coordinator Beth Riggs was the organization's first web mistress. When anything needs to be researched or organized, Guild members say "get the librarians!"

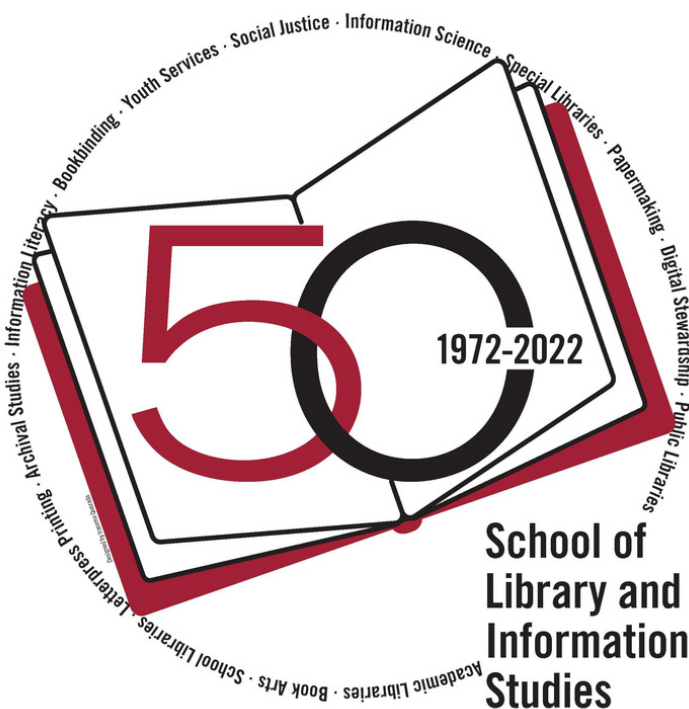
Former SLISers Annabel Stephens, Joan Atkinson, and Jewell Sandoval have been spotted "out to lunch" around Tuscaloosa, demonstrating that SLIS ties extend far beyond the time on 7th floor Gorgas Library.

In more somber news, retired SLIS Professor Dr. Margaret Stieg Dalton passed away peacefully in her home on Tuesday morning, March 1, 2022. Dr. Dalton was a professor at SLIS from 1972-1975 and from 1983-2011, where she taught reference services to thousands of graduate students and held the Bristol Endowed Professorship.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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SLIS Honors Day is Friday April 8th, 2022! SLIS students and outstanding alumni will be recognized for their accomplishments. A list of honorees will be shared in the next edition of the newsletter.

SLIS is turning 50! In fall 2022, we'll be celebrating our 50th anniversary with special events, a digital showcase from the SLIS archives, and more! Save the date of September 30th for an in-person gala at Gorgas Library remembering our past and looking towards the future.

A SLIS Alumni Reception will be held at the American Library Association annual conference in Washington, DC in June 2022. Forthcoming information will be available this summer on SLIS-L.

**Want to keep up with other SLIS announcements or share news about a job posting? Subscribe to one of our SLIS listservs! More information is available on our [website](#).**