

Reconnect, Rebuild and Rebrand: CALA Members' Initiatives to Help Move Our Institutions Above & Beyond the Pandemic

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Introduction

When COVID-19 sweeps through an area, a region, the virus attacks people equally regardless of race, class or socio-economic status. However, the impact it left on people, families and communities are very different. People with means fare much better than those who are struggling financially, and people of colors have sustained a much higher mortality rate. On top of that, Asian Americans have another pandemic to fight: anti-Asian hate crimes went through the roof, making all of us fearful of our safety in school, on the street, in public transportations or simply in our own home! During these difficult times, the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) has led its members to fight back! Our poster session is designed to demonstrate how our association has connected and engaged our members in uncertain times.

We recognize that raising awareness, understanding biases around us is only the first step in fighting systematic racism that is rooted deep in society and that the success of all EDI education comes from the next steps: our actions to dismantle racism at members' institutions, whether they are public, academic, special libraries or library schools. We're very proud to report that our members have responded to our calls. For this poster session, we will introduce you to the programs that help advance our EDI movement to the next level. We will cover CALA's initiatives to enhance members' professional development to grow a more diverse leadership workforce and to advocate more voices by providing channels for open access publishing from underrepresented groups. We will also recount the successful launch of two new virtual program series on world religions and religious diversity in a large public library system that literally created a virtual community. This poster presentation will also showcase advocacy and implementation of global library initiatives at major research libraries.

Stories From the Queens Public Library, Before, During and After COVID-19 Pandemic

The Background:

Queens County is one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse boroughs in New York City – more than 47% of the population is foreign-born. More than 160 languages are spoken in Queens, making the borough the most linguistically diverse place in the world.

Queens Public Library is one of the largest and busiest public library systems in the US. We are dedicated to serving the most ethnically and culturally diverse area in the country. Our tag line: We Speak your language

In 2018, we circulated more than 12.4 million materials, welcomed 11.4 million visitors, served close to 1 million cardholders, provided 3 million computer sessions, offered over 80K programs. Our collection includes materials in 20 languages and we offer events, programs & classes in multi languages

COVID-19 Pandemic: Devastating Impact on Our Community



In the spring of 2020, New York City was the center of the coronavirus pandemic in the United States and Queens had the highest numbers of diagnosed cases and hospitalizations.



Many Queens residents were living and working on the front lines, providing essential services and supporting family and community members. These personal stories were not well documented by the media as news of the pandemic moved at a stunning pace. Without real-time documentation, memories can fade and facts can be misremembered, making it difficult to reconstruct lived experience.

After March 20th, as the city was urged to stay at home, we collected first-person accounts from the communities affected in the most acute ways.

This season of the Queens Memory Podcast features these first-person accounts from our community as we got through this historic pandemic together.

QPL Responds: Reconnecting, Rebuilding

QPL quickly instituted a new model of services after initial lockdown: a mix of to-go services & expanded digital resources. QPL reconnected with our communities through virtual programs, classes, celebrations & advocacy events.

We celebrated the library's 125 anniversary with year-long virtual activities, events for staff & public.

"service, which is truly the lifeblood of the community." – a proclamation from State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky & NYC Council Member Linda Lee



CALA & Path to Leadership Grant

The Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) has been an active affiliate of the American Library Association (ALA) since 1976, and is one of the five members of the Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC). Currently, CALA has eight chapters in the United States and Canada. Throughout the years, CALA has served as a leader in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the library profession, speaking out on issues that affect librarians of color and the communities they serve. A recent example is being invited (along with Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association) to reflect on race and racism in American Libraries along with other leaders.

In 2020, CALA created its new strategic plan. The CALA 2020-2025 strategic plan will focus on six strategic areas that maximize strengths, utilize expertise, sharpen skills, deliver high value to members, and heighten the association's far-reaching impact on CALA and the LIS field:

- Increase Membership Recruitment, Retention, and Engagement
- Conduct Leadership Training and Career Development
- Provide Professional Development Opportunities through Training and Mentoring
- Support Local Chapter Development
- Offer Professional Networking through Digital Technologies
- Make CALA's Impact on Local, State, National, and International Levels

In 2022, CALA President focused on leadership development and collaborated with Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) to apply for a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Our project Path to Leadership: National Forum on Advancing Asian/Pacific Islander American Librarianship received funding from IMLS to host a two half-day online forum to support leadership development opportunities for the community of Asian American and Pacific Islander American (APIA) library workers. Funding will provide 50 library and information science students and professionals at all levels with the opportunity to build strategies to develop APIA library leaders and solutions for the barriers that they experience. The forum will produce a white paper documenting ideas for leadership development pipelines among APIA library workers and a curriculum outline for a leadership program specifically for APIA library workers. So far we concluded the forum, and we are having monthly webinars to continue the discussion. Forum participants will also have a reunion event at ALA conference this summer.



QPL Responds: Rebranding

As we navigated through the challenges to move programs online, we quickly recognized the opportunities awaiting for us. Our thematic programs will be able to create a virtual community with common interests. With that in mind, we launched two new series

Our Many Faiths, a six-part series on world religions and religious diversity, presented in both English and Chinese. The speaker talked about historical events related to Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and other religions, as well as unique values they bring to our lives.

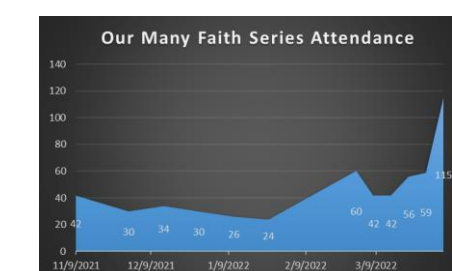


Our Major Minor Voices, season 3 of Queens Memory Podcast feature stories from our neighbors of Asian descent in Queens, New York. One in four residents of the borough identifies as Asian-American. That's more than 650,000 people with roots stretching back to Asia. Each episode features stories about identity and belonging from this broad array of people who have made valuable contributions through their cultural traditions, belief systems, and linguistic diversity. The series includes eight bilingual episodes representing the most widely spoken Asian languages in Queens: Bangla, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Tagalog, Tibetan, and Urdu.



Customers Responding

Attendances to the new series steadily went up and ended the season for a record of 115 participants



Positive Comments Poured in on Library's Wall



International Journal of Librarianship

International Journal of Librarianship (IJoL) is an open access, refereed journal of research and discussion dealing with all aspects of library, librarianship and information science, throughout the world. It publishes original research papers, practical developments, reviews, and commentaries of value to professional practice in librarianship.

1. Inaugural issue launched in 2016
2. Till now, 11 issues published, including 107 articles (69 peer-reviewed)
3. All articles are indexed by DOAJ, EBSCO, ProQuest, and archived by the Library of Congress
4. Highly diversified authors, editors, reviewers and other contributors



Global Library Initiatives at Stony Brook University

In support of the Stony Brook University's global mission, the University Libraries designed a suite of services and expertise to facilitate and strengthen the work of Stony Brook University faculty and students abroad. The Office of Global Library Initiatives provides leadership, creativity, and vision in enhancing and developing the Library's critical role in the success of SBU faculty and students. Since its inception in September 2014, the Office of Global Library Initiatives has worked closely with academic and clinical departments and the Office of Global Affairs to identify international initiatives, programs, and activities in order to focus the Library's efforts to the areas that are most critical to SBU success. We have developed relationships with research libraries that support the global mission of Stony Brook University and initiated sustaining international collaborations. So far, we have signed the Library Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with five academic libraries in China including: Shanghai Normal University, Shandong University, Northeast Normal University, Southern University of Science and Technology, and Shandong Normal University. We have sponsored visiting scholars to encourage the open exchange and best practices in librarianship, and have forged partnerships with libraries abroad to allow Stony Brook University researchers and students access to research material during extended stays in other countries.



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Inspire, Engage, Enable, Connect

87th World Library and Information Congress
 26-29 July 2022, Dublin, Ireland