

TO: PLA Board of Directors
FROM: Melissa Johnson, Conference Manager
Angela Maycock, Manager, Continuing Education
RE: PLA 2024 Update
DATE: March 4, 2024

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: Report

PLA staff are making final preparations for PLA 2024 in Columbus, OH – April 3-5, 2024, along with a virtual conference.

Registration & Housing

As of Monday, March 4, 2024, there are 4,814 full conference attendees registered for the conference, compared to 3,226 full conference attendees registered at the same time for the 2022 conference in Portland and approximately 5,500 full conference attendees registered at the same time for Nashville in 2020.

The housing block is at 90% of contracted block, with a total of 3,719 reservations on peak and 12,631 room nights presold, compared to 2,252 reservations booked on peak 8,436 room nights sold in 2022. In 2020, overall block was at 88%, with 4,019 reservations booked on peak.

Exhibits

There are 266 companies confirmed in 532 booths and 7 tabletops, compared to 199 companies in 435 booths for the 2022 conference and 298 companies in 667 booths at this time in 2020. Exhibit hall space is sold out.

Financials

Below is a “back of the envelope” view of the major conference revenue categories as of March 4, 2024, based on reports from our registration and sales vendors. It should be noted that ALA financial reports will not record conference revenue or expenses until the conference month of April 2024.

	Budgeted	3-4-24 Actual	Variance
Registration	\$1,444,430	\$1,923,182	\$478,752
Workshops	\$60,000	\$53,186	(\$6,814)
Virtual Conference	\$246,959	\$55,955	(\$191,004)
Exhibits	\$1,197,255	\$1,480,250	\$282,995
Sponsorships	\$60,000	\$115,250	\$55,250
Totals	\$3,008,644	\$3,627,823	\$619,179

Special Event Speakers

The following speakers are confirmed for special/meal events:

Opening Session – Dr. Joy Buolamwini

Children’s Author Breakfast – Gennifer Choldenko, Loren Long, Daniel Nayeri & Maleeha Siddiqui*

Big Ideas Thursday – Ta-Nehisi Coates

Thursday Author Lunch – Rainbow Rowell*

APA Lunch – Dr. Bettina L. Love, Molly Knox Ostertag, Fiona Davis & Greg Wands*

Big Ideas Friday – Mary Annaïse Heglar

Friday Author Lunch – Amanda Jones*

Closing Session – Dulcé Sloan

*Ticketed events

Conference Programming

The PLA 2024 Conference Program Subcommittee, chaired by Candice Wing-Yee Mack, reviewed over 560 proposals and selected 124 one-hour panel presentations, 8 one-hour roundtables, 4 half-day workshops, and 7 virtual-only programs. An additional 2 half-day workshops were programmed by the Ohio Library Council and 2 half-day workshops were programmed by PLA.

Following the Early Bird registration deadline, PLA staff made the decision to cancel 3 of the 8 planned half-day workshops – including one organized by OLC – due to low registration. Both the cancelled Ohio Library Council workshop and one additional cancelled workshop (which focused on EDISJ in small/rural libraries and organized by Erica Freudenberger) were rescheduled as conference programs.

Of the 132 accepted and planned programs, 7 have cancelled their PLA 2024 participation, citing staffing changes, funding challenges, and other unforeseen circumstances. Of these 7 cancelled programs, 3 involved speakers from the New York Public Library. One of the 3 cancelled NYPL sessions was able to be rescheduled as a Virtual Conference program.

The [full list of PLA 2024 educational programs](#) can be found on the PLA Conference website.

Virtual Conference

The Virtual Conference agenda will feature 22 educational programs, offering attendees a choice between 2 programs in each of 11 program slots. Half of the programs will be virtual-only, delivered remotely by presenters across the country, and the other half will be encore performances of some of the most popular in-person programs. These “in person AND virtual” programs will include presentations by Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, Michael Lambert, and Dr. Maria Taesil Hudson McCauley.

Special Activities & Attractions

Career Center

The Career Center, in the Exhibits Hall, will have coordinated events at select times, including the Career Fair, résumé reviews, interview practice, and mini-mentoring.

Dog Park

Meet some furry friends at the PLA Dog Park, located in the Exhibits Hall! Unwind and enjoy some quality canine companionship from the certified therapy dogs of [Buckeye Paws](#) and [Pet Partners Central Ohio](#).

How-To Stage

The How-To Stage offers a cooperative learning experience, teaching practical, hands-on skills that can be learned in short sessions. It's a fun way for attendees to learn something new and share their experiences.

Intellectual Freedom & Advocacy Event

Sign up for a twenty-minute appointment with staff from ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom, the Association of Small and Rural Libraries, and advocacy experts. Consultants will be available for confidential support and guidance in responding to materials and service challenges, implementing intellectual freedom best practices, or more general advocacy for your library.

Library Lodge (Boulder Public Library)

Escape the conference bustle and enjoy some après-session activities in the Library Lodge. Add your own piece to our PLA puzzle, make a friendship bracelet to swap with conference pals, or just kick back by the fire to rest and recharge (your device). Connect, create and be oh-so-cozy.

Member Lounge

The Member Lounge, located in the Exhibits Hall, is a space for attendees to relax, charge their devices, learn more about PLA resources, and meet new friends while crafting their own souvenir buttons! Staff from the American Library Association and members of the PLA Membership Advisory Group will be available to answer questions about membership and how to get involved.