

Dear First Name

Hello IFRT Community! Looking back at 2021 we have seen our share of challenges, literally and figuratively speaking. We have all struggled with adjusting to life changes as the pandemic continues. Many of us have had to return to work with new policies and restrictions, adjust the ways in which we interact with others, and of course the constant fight against misinformation concerning the Coronavirus. We have also seen a significant increase in challenges to library materials like we have never seen before. School boards as well as local and state legislatures have tried to prevent the public from accessing books and other materials that relate to the racial history of America and the LGBTQIA+ community. Librarians have been at the forefront of this fight, sacrificing their mental health and sometimes even their careers. That is why it is so important to have resources such as the [LeRoy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund](#) (The Merritt Fund) to support librarians and library professionals who have made personal sacrifices for intellectual freedom. The Merritt Fund is devoted to the support, maintenance, and welfare of librarians who are denied employment rights because of discrimination or because of their defense of intellectual freedom." We should all work together to support these library professionals by promoting the Fund so those who need it know that it is available, as well as donating.

As we look forward to 2022 we will continue to fight for intellectual freedom in all areas, but there will also be chances for us to come together and celebrate and learn from each other. LibLearnX will have a number of IF focused programming, and you can expect more membership gatherings and other IFRT programming throughout the year. Finally, we are excited to announce IFRT's sponsored Emerging Leader for 2022. Jung Soo is a truly accomplished librarian in and outside of the profession. She is currently a librarian at the National Gallery of Art in D.C. She is a member of the Art Libraries Society of North America Association, Linked Data for Libraries Working Group, and an ALA Spectrum Scholar from the 2015 cohort. She also enjoys reading, gardening, and traveling. As a former Emerging Leader participant sponsored by IFRT, I am proof of the importance of this collaboration. IFRT's support nurtured my interest in intellectual freedom and promoted my involvement within the Round Table. I believe continuing to support Emerging Leaders will bring in new and interesting perspectives to the IF community.

Finally, I want to thank you all for your support, hard work, and fellowship throughout 2021 and I hope that you all are looking forward to working together in the new year. Happy Holidays!

IFRT Chair, Rhonda Evans



## Emerging Leaders Announcement

IFRT is honored to welcome Jung Soo Bae as our 2022 Emerging Leader! Soo (her preferred name) is a librarian at the National Gallery of Art in D.C. In her current role, she catalogs for various library materials related to art and art history and works on some metadata projects. Before joining the National Gallery, she worked at Northern Virginia Community College, University of Virginia, and Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, across a number of different specializations (access services, cataloging/metadata, digital libraries, technology, etc.). [Learn more about Soo.](#)



## Intellectual Freedom at LibLearnX

Members of IFRT are involved with three separate sessions at LibLearnX 2022:

- Problematic Authors and Problematic Works - An Intellectual Freedom Q&A
- Advancing Social Justice Through the 9th Principle of the Code of Ethics
- 50+ Years in the Making: Claiming Social Justice as a Core Value

If you've already registered for the conference, make sure you come out (virtually) and support the great work of your fellow members! If not... [Register for LibLearnX here.](#)



## Merritt Fund Supports Library Workers Who Defend Intellectual Freedom

The Leroy C. Merritt Humanitarian Fund was established to support librarians who are discriminated against or denied employment rights because of the defense of intellectual freedom. Applications for consideration can be completed [online](#) or in a [printable PDF](#) and mailed. The fund is supported solely by donations.

IFRT published a [Merritt Fund promotional toolkit](#) in partnership with OIF and the Freedom to Read

Foundation. The toolkit provides information about the fund, how to apply, how to donate (including a QR code), and graphics to promote the fund on social media and in presentations.

The Merritt Fund was established in honor of Leroy C. Merritt, a long serving librarian, staunch opponent of censorship, editor of the ALA's [Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom](#), and author of the book, *Book Selection and Intellectual Freedom*. [Learn more about the Merritt Fund.](#)



## Banned Authors Calendar

The 2022 IFRT calendar is for ALA members or anyone who is passionate about issues of censorship and intellectual freedom. The calendar includes a list of banned author birthdays. Perfect for your desk or refrigerator, this calendar can help you keep track of your busy schedule in the new year and also serve as a reminder of the importance of our fight to preserve intellectual freedom. [Download them here.](#)



## Register for January's IFRT Meeting

On January 12, 2022, from 2:30 to 4:00 Pm Central Time, The Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT) will meet via Zoom. The officers, directors-at-large, and committee chairs will provide oversight of round table business and will discuss and plan events and initiatives. All are welcome to attend and to participate. In a time of unprecedented challenges to the right to read in school libraries, the discussion is especially timely. [Register here.](#)