



## Paralibrarian Section @ MLA Conference

What is a Paralibrarian you ask?

From the Chairperson:

The simple answer is someone who works in a library and does not have a professional library degree. But in real life things are not always simple! A Paralibrarian is someone who works in a library, can check in books, check out books, solve problems with patrons' cards, catalog materials, order materials, work with social media, run workshops and programs teaching patrons a skill or craft, facilitate programs, serve on committees and plan events. Paralibrarians are also called library support staff. A Paralibrarian uses personal talents and strengths to implement and enhance library services. Some paralibrarians are union representatives and are on search committees. Paralibrarians stand side by side in support of librarians and their work. Paralibrarians also participate and have impact within the community, and in regional, state and national library organizations. *Wow Paralibrarians are pretty cool!*

In Massachusetts, Paralibrarians have been an active force within the Massachusetts Library Association. The Section sponsors several programs, not just for Paralibrarians, at the annual conference including the Book Cart Drill Team. The section has developed a relationship with the New Hampshire Library Association and has assisted them in reigniting the Paralibrarian section in New Hampshire and developing their own PARalibrarian Recognition of Achievement certification. Paralibrarians, or Library Support Staff, can be recognized in two different ways. The PARalibrarian Recognition of Achievement (PARA) is a certification where by attending workshops, serving on committees, attending the annual conference, college course work and much more, can earn points for your portfolio. Once you have earned the appropriate number of points for any of the 4 levels you will receive a certificate of achievement at the annual conference. Several libraries, when posting openings, are asking for someone with a PARA certification! Guidelines can be found here:

<http://masslib.org/PARAProgram>

The second recognition is the Paralibrarian Awards. *The Paralibrarian Section Award for Outstanding Library Support Staff* is an award you are nominated on by your peers. This award is given to someone who goes above and beyond for the good of their library, their community and their local or state organization.

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## MLA Conference 2016

Mark your calendars and join us

Monday May 16 - Wednesday May 18 at the  
Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis

### PARA Recognition of Achievement Certification (PARA)

Meet Diane Oxtou: a PARA Certification recipient

She is a valuable member of the Newburyport Public Library Youth Services Department who just received her PARA Level III this past year. We asked Diane to share her paralibrarian experience with us.

#### **How did you hear about the PARA Certification?**

I first heard about it at a library conference and then a co-worker of mine explained the program and how to apply.

#### **What made you decide to apply for the PARA Certification?**

I started the process to see if it was something I could do. I wanted to know where it would lead. I also liked that it was a certification. I hoped it would be looked upon favorably and show my interest and commitment to my field.

#### **How did you find the process?**

I found the process easy to do. My questions were answered quickly and found I had fun pulling all my training and classes together. I now have a body of work and one place to show all I have accomplished over the course of my career.

#### **Has it made a difference?**

I have found the experience very validating. With the library field changing it is nice to have a way to document my training, workshops, work experience and years of passion in my field.

Read more about our PARA Certification in our next Newsletter.

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This person is chosen from a collection of nominations received in late winter and awarded at the annual conference.

*The Paralibrarian Advocate of the Year* is a person who supports and advocates for paralibrarians. This person can be a peer, supervisor, trustee, and town official, anyone who supports the work paralibrarians do in a library. Becoming involved in the section is easy and you can commit to a board position to helping out with programs at the conference or simply reading the newsletter. You can also broaden your experiences at your library by applying for the Paralibrarian Recognition of Achievement and attending workshops or webinars, going above and beyond for the good of your library and community.

We are a fun bunch, come and join us!

**Gerry Deyermund**

Chairperson, Paralibrarian Section  
Massachusetts Library Association

#### PARA Certification (cont.)

If you are interested on the PARA Certification, please visit:

<http://www.masslib.org/PARAProgram>

If you have questions you may contact Karen Horn at [khorn@clamsnet.org](mailto:khorn@clamsnet.org)

PARA Certification submission deadlines are:  
December 4, 2015  
March 4, 2016



### MISSION STATEMENT

**Through support and increased awareness of paralibrarians, the Section advocates for recognition and participation in the library community. The Section also promotes and provides a forum for networking and career development opportunities.**

## 2015 - 2016 Meetings

Meeting Times are 10:00AM to 12:00 PM

#### October 29, 2015

Location: Skype  
Agenda: TBD

#### December 3, 2015

Location: Andover  
Agenda: TBD

#### January 21, 2016

Location: Skype  
Agenda: TBD

#### March 17, 2016

Location: Middleboro  
Agenda: TBD

#### April 14, 2016

Location: Skype  
Agenda: Finalize MLA Conference details

#### June 9, 2016

Location: TBD  
Agenda: MLA Conference Wrap Up

#### Join a meeting via SKYPE

- Contact Gerry at : [gdeyermond@mhl.org](mailto:gdeyermond@mhl.org)
- Send your Skype name
- Accept the invitation and log into the meeting

### Find Us on:

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#### **BREAKING NEWS!!**

*Middleboro Library  
Negotiates pay grade  
increases for PARA Level 3  
and 4  
Stay Tuned*