

MDMLG NEWS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." – F. Scott Fitzgerald

And so it does.

It's hard to imagine, but here we are on the cusp of the fall season already which brings with it a new start for all of us; a new semester for those of us in academia, new residents and interns for those of us in hospitals, a new semester for those of us still in library school, and a new year for MDMLG. I want to extend a warm welcome to all current and new members that are joining us for our fresh year with MDMLG.

As we start anew this season, I urge all of us curious creatures also known as librarians to stay curious and open to learn and grow in our roles; whether it be through learning more about what life looks like for each of us in our upcoming Fall Program panel discussion featuring

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- News & Events
- Fall Social @ Island Lake
- Feature Article:
"Not All Heroes Wear Capes" by Jill Turner
- New Member Spotlight
- Interview: Tamara Sawyer

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

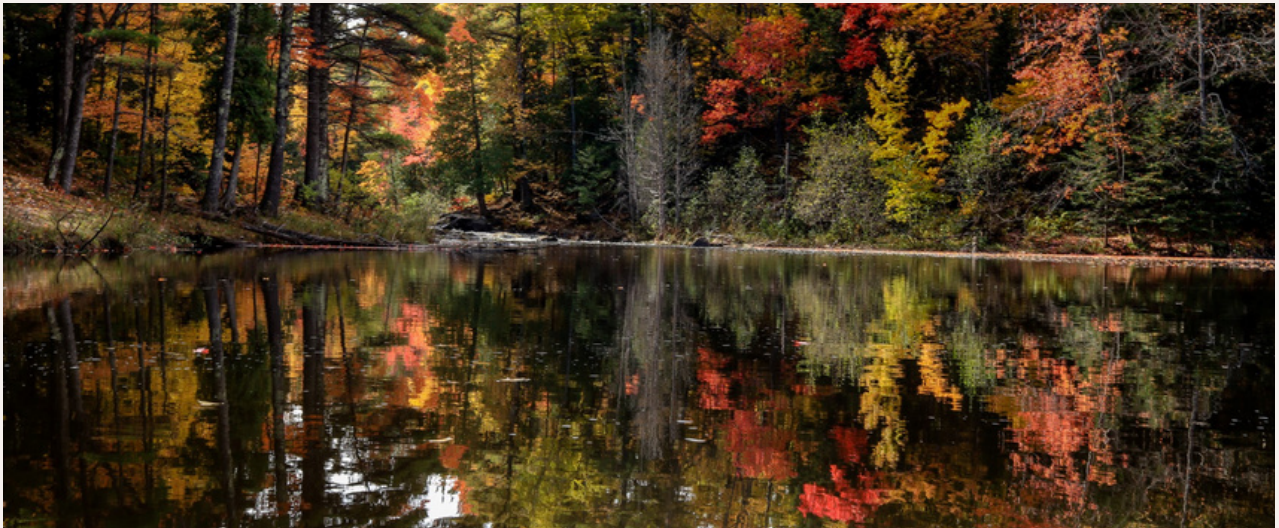
Steven Moore, Chair
LaCharmine Jefferson
Jill Turner

*Have MDMLG-related news
to share with members?*

Contact us at
MDMLGNews@gmail.com

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different medical librarians, taking a hike with colleagues for our Fall Networking event, or simply stepping outside of your comfort zone to get more involved with MDMLG.

As President, one of my goals this year is to get our little hyperlocal group of Metro Detroit Medical Librarians connected and conversing more; expect to see more opportunities outside of the Annual Summer Luncheon and Fall Networking event to meet in person and network – maybe (definitely) there will even be dogs in attendance! I have hopes to also include virtual networking for those of us that can't make it in person through Journal Club and online Coffee Breaks. Stay tuned!

If you haven't already, I urge you to fill out the survey that Steven Moore sent out, located [here](#), so that we can best move our organization onward and upward, and help us to know what is important to you in this new year. I look forward to this upcoming year, and to seeing what unfolds for the future of MDMLG!

Amanda Kelly

WELCOME TO THE NEW BOARD!

Please help us welcome our new board members for the 2026–2027 term! Members of the MDMLG Executive Board and MDMLG Committees began their role on August 1. More information on the Executive Board can be found [online](#).

President

Amanda Kelly
Ascension Health

Past-President

Colleen Streeter
Henry Ford Health, Sladen Library

Treasurer

Jennifer Bowen
University of Detroit Mercy, School of Dentistry Library

Outreach & Social Media

Michelle Rau
Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

Webmasters

Valerie Reid
Retired

Rachel Melton
Moustakas Johnson Library, Michigan School of Psychology

President-Elect

Ella Hu
Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

Secretary

Laurie Arrick
Henry Ford Wyandotte Library

Membership Services

Alexia Estabrook
Ascension St. John Medical Center

Auditor

Jill Turner
University of Detroit Mercy, School of Dentistry Library

Archivist

Alyssa Huffman
Wayne State University, Shiffman Medical Library

Student Representative

Emily Minott
Wayne State University School of Information Sciences

WELCOME NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS!

Please help us welcome our new committee members for the 2026–2027 term! Members of MDMLG committees help plan our programs and events, create professional development opportunities, write our newsletter, and find new executive board members for upcoming terms.

Newsletter Committee

The newsletter committee publishes four issues of MDMLG News annually as a way to share news and other important information with MDMLG membership.

Steven Moore, Chair

Sladen Library, Henry Ford Health

LaCharmine Jefferson

Wayne State University Shiffman Library

Jill Turner

University of Detroit Mercy, School of Dentistry Library

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee is responsible for securing nominees for MDMLG elected officer and committee positions and coordinating the election.

Tamara Sawyer, Chair

Central Michigan University College of Medicine

LaCharmine Jefferson

Wayne State University Shiffman Library

Analise Johnson

Sladen Library, Henry Ford Health

Program & Professional Development Committee

The Program and Professional Development Committee serves membership by planning continuing education courses and other programs and presentations throughout the year. Programs are intended to meet the training needs of MDMLG membership, both professional and paraprofessional.

Ella Hu, Chair

Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

Alyssa Huffman

Wayne State University, Shiffman Medical Library

Analise Johnson

Sladen Library, Henry Ford Health

Stephanie Swanberg

Michigan School of Psychology

FEELING SOCIAL? TAKE A HIKE



Photo courtesy of <https://www.michigan.gov/recsearch/parks/islandlake>

Join us for a social event on **September 19th** at **Island Lake State Park**! All members are invited to join us for fresh air, scenic trails, and lovely conversation at our upcoming Fall Hike & Picnic Social Networking Event. Family and furry friends are welcome too!

Event Details

- Date: Saturday, September 19, 2026 (Rain Date: Saturday, September 26, 2026)
- Time: 11:30 AM – 3:00 PM
- Location: Island Lake State Park – Kent Lake Picnic Area ([13167 Kent Lake Beach Rd, Brighton, MI](#))

Schedule

- 11:30 AM: Meet & Greet / Check in
- 12:00 – 1:00 PM: MDMLG picnic and socializing
- 1:00 PM: Hike in small groups (choose your own trail and distance); or chill by the lake with family/friends or a good book!
- 3:00 PM: Official MDMLG Fall Social Networking event concludes.

For more information, including what to bring, where to meet, and how to RSVP, visit the [MDMLG website blog post](#) or contact Ella Hu, Program and Professional Development Committee Chair.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 19 @ 11:30am

MDMLG Fall Social Event

Hike & Picnic Social Networking Event.

See more on page 5!

September 23 @ 1pm

MDMLG General Business Meeting

Our fall general business meeting will be held virtually on September 23rd at 1pm, with a program to follow at 2pm.

More information and details on the meeting have been shared via MDMLG listserv. Contact President Amanda Kelly with questions.

October 7-9

Camp MHSLA: Back to Our Roots

MHSLA is back to offering a standalone conference for the first time since 2019! The Annual Conference will be offered a hybrid format: in person at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, MI and virtually via Zoom.

Visit the [conference website](#) to register.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

October 13 @ 1pm EST

**You Must Comply (Eventually):
Accessibility in Health Sciences
Digital Repositories**

As the ADA Title II deadline approaches, librarians are preparing digital repository materials to comply with federal accessibility guidelines. In this 60-minute moderated panel, you will learn ways to integrate accessibility into outreach, instruction, workflows, and collection content including digital posters and ETDs. This session will not be recorded.

A link to access this shop talk will be shared via the MDMLG listserv when it becomes available.

November 19-20

MIRL Symposium 2026

The Medical Institutional Repositories in Libraries (MIRL) Symposium is now a two-day virtual event! Join us as we discuss medical IRs and other topics related to the digital preservation of institutional content.

Visit the [MIRL website](#) or contact Steven Moore for more information.

NEW! CONSUMER HEALTH CERTIFICATE

Wayne State University is pleased to announce the launch of a new initiative for students to earn the nationally recognized consumer health information certification from the Medical Library Association (free to students) while attending the MLIS program at WSU!

The School of Information Sciences at WSU currently offers two health-focused courses (INF 7610 Health Sciences Information Services and Resources; and INF 7620 Health Informatics) approved for the Medical Library Association's (MLA) Consumer Health Information Specialization ([CHIS](#)) certification.

In addition to earning credits to fulfill their MLIS degree requirements (by taking these two elective courses – INF 7610 and INF 7620), the bonus and free CHIS certification for students from the MLA will be attractive to future:

- Medical librarians
- Public librarians
- Librarians working in consumer health libraries
- Information professionals
- Anyone who cares about providing accurate and useful health information to the public

Students can earn the CHIS certification, a nationally recognized credential certified by the MLA, by completing one or both approved courses.

The INF 7610 "Health Sciences Information Services and Resources" course will be offered in Fall 2026. For more information about the INF 7610 course, please contact Dr. Bethany Figg at bethany.figg@cmich.edu.

The INF 7620 "Health Informatics" course will be offered in Winter 2027. For more information about the CHIS certification and the INF 7620 course, please contact Dr. Deborah Charbonneau at dcharbon@wayne.edu.

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY'S NEW HIRE

By LaCharmine Jefferson

Congratulations are in order for our very own **Alyssa Huffman**, MDMLG Archivist and member of the Program & Professional Development committee!

Alyssa recently accepted the position, **Collections and Information Services Librarian**, at Wayne State University.

Alyssa was hired at Wayne State in 2023 as an Urban Health Research Librarian focusing on the areas of Scholarly Communications & Publishing as part of the Library Diversity Residency Program. The program was designed to give individuals time and opportunities to work, learn, and grow in the field of medical librarianship. And, learn and grow, she did.



Alyssa has been an active member of MDMLG since 2024. She enjoys connecting with other professionals in this field, as an early career librarian learning from established professionals has been instrumental in her progression as a medical librarian. She has received overwhelming support and education from many MDMLG members since joining!

Outside of work she enjoys reading (of course), and she is a VERY amateur blacksmith and is working on setting up a home workshop. She loves antiquing, is a tea enthusiast and loves hosting tea parties with friends. She also loves dumplings and will take any and all recommendations for new places to try!

Congrats, Alyssa! 🎉

NOT ALL HEROES WEAR CAPES

By Jill Turner, MLIS



"Batgirl Poster" by [Gene Ha](#)

There are many professional career opportunities for those who choose to enter the field of medical and health sciences librarianship. MDMLG members work in a variety of settings, including hospital libraries where we serve healthcare professionals looking for evidence-based practice care and assist patients and families in finding reliable information about medical conditions and treatment options. We are professors and instructors in academic institutions such as medical, nursing, allied health, and dental schools and programs, where we educate and support the

next generation of healthcare professionals. Others work as independent information professionals, contracting with law firms to provide research support for legal proceedings or conducting comprehensive medical literature searches for a variety of organizations.

Our members' positions represent only a small sample of the diverse opportunities available to health sciences librarians. The Medical Library Association (MLA) maintains a concise [About the Profession](#) webpage that highlights the many roles and employment opportunities available in health sciences librarianship as well as the skills and knowledge areas utilized by health sciences librarians.

Medical and health sciences librarians come from a wide variety of educational and professional backgrounds, and medical or health sciences experience is not a requirement. In fact, a survey I conducted of MDMLG members for a 2023 *MDMLG News* article series, "[Welcome to the House of Scribes \(Parts 1-3\)](#)," revealed a much wider range of backgrounds than I had expected. While some respondents began their careers in health professions such as nursing, audiology, speech pathology, and other allied health fields before transitioning into

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librarianship, the majority of MDMLG members came from non-health disciplines. The undergraduate degrees of our members represented a wide array of academic focus, including business, education, engineering, psychology, biology, communication, media arts, professional writing, sociology, women's studies, classical civilizations, art history, archaeology, history, anthropology, and more.

The diversity of backgrounds among medical and health sciences librarians is also evident in our pre-librarian occupations. Interestingly, a large group of members reported having worked in non-professional library positions rather than in medical or health sciences fields. Some participants worked in library-adjacent occupations, including bookstores and publishing. Others in careers that included food service, education, university administration, academic research, retail, insurance, engineering, childcare, music instruction, floral design, and customer service. Finally, some of us did indeed previously work in healthcare (e.g., nursing, audiology) or in health-adjacent roles like social services and medical clerical positions.



Photo by Guney Ozgur

The bottom line is that the profession benefits from individuals who bring with them a variety of skills, perspectives, and life experiences. This survey shows the vast range of experience represented within medical and health sciences librarianship in the Detroit area and across Michigan. It demonstrates that there is no single educational path or career trajectory that leads to becoming a successful medical or health sciences librarian.

Programming for the fall MDMLG meeting includes a panel of MDMLG librarians representing a range of librarian positions, so we will get to learn a bit more about our fellow members and their responsibilities and institutions. For readers interested in learning even more about the professional journeys and contributions of other medical librarians, several resources on the next page highlight the experiences of health sciences librarians across the United States.

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The NNLM Discovery podcast episode [Journey to Becoming a Medical Librarian](#) follows the educational path of aspiring medical librarian.

The NNLM Discovery episode [Medical Librarians: A Story from Region 7](#) features an interview with a practicing medical librarian.

The Medical Library Association published [Impact Stories](#) during National Medical Librarians Month.



The Krafty Librarian featured [Little Stories on a Medical Librarian's Impact](#) in her blog.

Together, these stories illustrate both the varied routes into the profession and the value medical librarians have on education, research, patient care, and their organizations.

*Would you like to make your journey to medical librarianship known with others?
Contact the newsletter committee to share your experience!*

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: LaCharmine Jefferson

What's your current position?

I currently work as Research & Instruction Librarian at Wayne State University for Shiffman Medical Library. When I graduated library school in 2021, no one could have convinced me that I would be working as medical librarian. My heart was always in public librarianship, with my dream job being an Adult Services Librarian, possibly aspiring to administration.



However, while I was working part-time at Royal Oak Public Library waiting for a full-time position to come up, I randomly decided to apply for Adjunct Librarian position with Oakland Community College. And thus began my introduction into academic librarianship, opening up whole new career that I'd never considered. By the time the full-time Adult Service position came up, I had already applied and accepted a full-time position at Madonna University. I was at Madonna for a little under two years before I applied for the position at Wayne. And the rest is history in the making...

Have you learned anything fun or interesting lately you'd like share?

I've developed an affinity for playing a non-word game. It's a matching game, called Match Factory, through this app called Fetch. As I play it, I earn points which transfer over to Fetch, which converts into points that can be used to purchase gift cards and such. What's interesting is that I just love the game. I could care less about the points that I acquire. It's become a mini-obsession.

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

What's on your bookshelf right now?

What a loaded question for a librarian??? I bought at least four books when I attended the annual Festival of Books at Eastern Market this summer. Haven't picked up one of them to read yet. However, I just downloaded a new book, *The Widow*, by John Grisham, in my Audible account. Just started listening to it this morning. I love women's fictions, but every now and then I crave a good mystery and suspense book to shake things up!

Most Importantly, Tell Us about Your Pets or Family

While I do have pets, I'd prefer to showcase my three grandchildren, Lorielle (6), Lilah (4), and Niko (1 ½). They all live outside of Michigan so I have coined myself the Traveling Grandma. This picture was the one time all three were visiting me in November 2025. We were not picture perfect for the occasion, but it was a "must" to capture the rare moment.



AUTHOR INTERVIEW: TAMARA SAWYER

By Steven J. Moore, MSLIS

Tamara Sawyer, MS, MLIS, AHIP, is the Knowledge Services Manager at the Covenant Healthcare College of Medicine at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, MI, and serves as the Nominating Committee Chair for MDMLG.



Click [here](#) to view Tamara's publications in PubMed.

SM: Since 2017, you've been an author on sixteen journal articles. What was your role in these publications? Did it vary?

TS: My role varied depending on the research question and the needs of the principal investigator or research team. My responsibilities often included translating the clinical research question into searchable concepts, identifying appropriate databases and information sources, developing controlled vocabulary and keyword strategies, conducting database searches, documenting the search methods, and assisting with deduplication and management of the retrieved literature. I also collaborated closely with the physicians and other investigators to refine the search based on their clinical expertise.

Although my role consistently centered on information retrieval and methodology, it was not identical across the sixteen publications. Some collaborations involved a focused literature search, while others required a much deeper involvement in the systematic review process.

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What did you need to do to prepare for your role in publishing?

Preparation began well before running the first search. One of the most important steps was developing a clear understanding of the research question and its methodological framework. For systematic reviews, I needed to understand the population, intervention or exposure, comparison, outcomes, and study design requirements so that I could translate the question accurately into a search strategy.

Preparation also included determining which databases were appropriate for the question. A strong systematic-review search is rarely just a matter of entering a few keywords into PubMed. I had to consider database coverage, indexing differences, terminology, publication types, date restrictions, and whether additional sources—such as trial registries, reference lists, citation searching, or grey literature—were necessary.

What did you discover that you didn't know before publishing?

One of the most valuable discoveries was how much the quality of the search strategy can influence the entire systematic review process. Before working extensively on systematic reviews, it can be easy to think of searching primarily as a retrieval task. Through publication, I learned that it is really a methodological component of the research itself.

Another important lesson was how different clinical researchers and librarians approach the same research question. Physicians bring tremendous subject-matter expertise, while librarians bring expertise in information structures, indexing, retrieval, and search methodology. The strongest collaborations occurred when those two types of expertise were integrated rather than treated separately.

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Is there anything you would improve about the submission process?

Yes. I would improve the submission process by making the contribution of information specialists and librarians more explicit and standardized.

One issue is that journals do not always provide clear guidance about how a librarian's methodological contribution should be described. If the librarian develops the search strategy, executes searches across multiple databases, contributes to the methodology, helps interpret search results, and participates in manuscript development, that contribution can be much more substantial than simply providing a literature search.

Do you have any advice for librarians interested in publishing scholarly journals?

Learn the methodology, not just the databases. Cochrane methodology is an excellent foundation, particularly for understanding comprehensive searching, study identification, risk of bias, and reproducibility. I would complement that knowledge with current reporting guidance such as PRISMA and guidance specifically addressing the role of information specialists in evidence synthesis. In addition, Medical Library Association (MLA) hosts online professional development courses to show employers and colleagues that you have the information retrieval and management skills to support high quality and reproducible systematic reviews.

After sixteen publications, my final advice for librarians is to collaborate! A systematic review is not simply a one-person project with supporting personnel. It is often a collaborative methodological enterprise involving a team such as clinicians, librarians/information specialists, statisticians, epidemiologists, and other researchers. When a librarian's expertise is integrated into a systematic review from the beginning, the librarian can be a genuine methodological partner and co-author rather than simply a service provider.

ABOUT MDMLG

The Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group (MDMLG) can trace its roots to the Biological Sciences Group established by the Michigan Chapter of the Special Libraries Association in 1946. It existed primarily as a social group until the mid-1950s when the members began to experiment with various projects. During the 1960s, several plans came into fruition including the production of a serial locator tool, the creation of a union catalog of monographs, and the establishment of an active interlibrary loan network. The group began the process of formal organization and chose its current name in 1970.

For more on MDMLG , its history, and current activity, visit mdmlg.org.

NEXT ISSUE

Please contact members of the MDMLG Newsletter Committee with any questions or content submissions for our Winter 2026 issue.

We are always looking for:

- *News or updates from your library or institution*
- *Announcements of upcoming events*
- *Recaps of MDMLG or other relevant events*
- *Book/resource reviews*
- *Interviews*
- *Survey results*
- *Editorials, opinion pieces, think pieces, etc.*
- *Anything that you think is fun, useful, or interesting to share!*