

CLA Board of Director Candidate Statements for 2020-2022 Term

Ally Hauptman

Seventeen years in the classroom revealed the transformative power of texts in my students' lives. Witnessing students' increased motivation to read sparked a passion for connecting books to readers. Sometimes it only takes one book to convince students of the joy of reading, leading to increased motivation to read that may change their lives. I entered education to serve others. Serving first and fifth grade students in the classroom was an honor. I now serve teacher candidates in my role as professor and researcher. It has been a privilege to serve the children's literature community over the past seven years as a member and then chair of the ILA Children's and Young Adults' Book Award Committee. Currently, I serve on the CLA Ways and Means Committee and would relish the opportunity to become more involved in the important work of CLA. I would be thrilled to be a part of the Board so I am able to surround myself with brilliant scholars who will make me a better person, professor, and scholar. Thank you for your consideration.

Mollie Welsh Kruger

Books hold such potential for learners. This was evident in my twenty years of teaching young children in New York City schools. Now working with teachers at Bank Street College of Education, I have the opportunity to deepen my understandings of the roles of books in classrooms through my students' engagements in children's literature courses and through my involvement as co-chair with the Children's Book Committee, which has put out a list of the best books of the year for over 100 years. The work of the Children's Literature Assembly raises my curiosity. This organization supports educators in finding outstanding books to meet the needs of their students by celebrating the joy of children's books and the authors and illustrators who create them, through the professional journal, book awards, and cultivating a larger learning body. I would like to contribute more fully to this established group that shares my intentions of supporting educators in finding, utilizing, and loving children's literature.

Rachel Skrlac Lo

My love of children's literature started when I worked in a small bookstore in Western Canada, where I learned to appreciate the mastery of beautiful picturebooks and the art of a good read-aloud. The seeds planted there bloomed into an academic career. Now an assistant professor of education at Villanova University, I research representations of families in picturebooks (*Journal of Children's Literature*, fall 2019), children's responses in an after-school graphica club, and critical content analyses of YA dystopias. In 2019, I presented at nine international, national, and regional conferences, and visited the International Youth Library as a returning Fellow to study graphic novels and wordless books. I am the Program Chair for AERA's Literature SIG and serve on LRA's Gender and Sexualities Standing Committee and my department's diversity committee. By serving on CLA's board, I hope to nurture a network of child literature scholars from around the world.

Donna Sabis-Burns

As an enrolled member of the Iroquois Six Nations (Mohawk) my research interest in social justice and critical multiculturalism drew me into how Native Americans are portrayed in books for children and young adults. I believe a meaningful educational experience should include sensitivity and celebrations to cultural diversity. My role, if elected to CLA, would serve as an advocate for getting more quality multicultural/social justice literature in the hands of our youth and educators so we can offer more authentic learning opportunities through real-life experiences and cross-cultural connections. I was honored to serve the CLA Board as a doctoral student 10+ years ago where I co-chaired the Master's Class for two years, served as a peer reviewer for the journal, and participated in various committees. The extraordinary experiences I obtained assisted me in my endeavors when I left to work with the federal government serving Native American/Alaskan Natives. We were then stationed overseas where I was fortunate to work with DoDEA and our wonderful military families absorbing and teaching cultural awareness to American and European youth. We have since been stationed in Hawai'i where maintaining cultural sovereignty and cultural integration into education are a high priority. I have temporarily returned to the elementary classroom on our military base to reconnect with my passion of teaching, and to share my love of literature with my students and faculty. Working with my CLA colleagues, the

publishers, and the authors and illustrators has been one of the highlights of my career. I hope to once again be able to give back these special experiences through service and the advocacy of high-quality literature.

Megan Van Deventer

I am interested in serving on the Children's Literature Assembly Board because of CLA's commitment to supporting teachers' effective use of children's literature to foster a love of reading while explicitly teaching reading skills and strategies within classroom contexts. As a member of CLA for the past several years, this organization has been a wonderful academic home that promotes high quality literature, diverse authors, and valuable research. Within CLA, I have assisted the Master Class offered at NCTE and always enjoy attending the Breakfast. As a teacher educator, the goals of CLA align with my own teaching and research, which focuses on building teachers' capacity to select, promote, and use children's literature as one component of equitable educational practices, where every student has access to mirrors and windows in the curriculum. Honoring Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop's scholarship, I help teachers identify children's books that affirm students' identities and meet their teaching objectives.

Currently, I serve on the CLA Research Award Committee, and I have benefitted from witnessing the scholarship of our colleagues. I am dedicated to the CLA Board's efforts in fostering collaboration between children's literature stakeholders, such as educators, publishers, librarians, and authors. I would be honored to serve the Board and maintain our reputation as a renowned organization within NCTE. Thank you for your consideration.