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## Beta Phi Mu Executive Board

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## From the President

Dear *Bibliothekarios Philax Mathesis*-

While the pandemic has put our traditional June activities on hold, I am grateful for the opportunity to connect with you digitally, and to gain some sense of normalcy. Your dedication to the service of others is now more critical than ever to ensure individuals, communities, organizations, and institutions can access up-to-date, accurate, and valid information. It is not surprising that librarians and information professionals continue to provide outreach to prisons and homeless shelters, and to offer online, curbside, and innovative services in the midst of COVID-19. It is just what we do! Bravo to you for keeping BPM's purpose and mission at the fore during this most unusual time.

As you know from the previous issue of *The Pipeline*, our current financial model of a single fee for a lifetime BPM membership is no longer sufficient to sustain our programs. We are in peril of not being able to continue to award scholarships to outstanding LIS students and fund continuing education and international research endeavors for our members in the near future. The implementation of a \$125 assessment fee per chapter earlier this year has provided a bridge for the time being. The institution of professional memberships has also been helpful.

The Board is discussing additional ways to continue BPM's vision including moving towards a working board, much like many state library associations, to reduce the expense of an executive director. We are in the very, very early stages of this conversation and need your input!

Although we will not meet in person this year during the ALA Annual Conference, technology will come to the rescue. We will hold a Zoom membership meeting to celebrate one another, welcome new initiates, and plan for the future of BPM. Very much like the popular belief that we will get through the Coronavirus crisis together, I trust we will get through BPM's financial crisis together. Please plan on attending to share your thoughts and ideas with us. I look forward to seeing you virtually then.

It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as BPM President this past year. Having retired in December, the 2020 Annual ALA Conference was the last one

I was planning to attend. Being a member of Lambda Chapter for 23 years has been a highlight of my career. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and for everything you do for libraries and librarians. The society will be in very capable hands moving forward with Dr. Emily Knox at the helm as President. I can't wait to see what BPM does next!

All the very best and take good, good care!  
Cecy Brown, PhD  
*President*



# YOU are Beta Phi Mu

## Introducing: Elana D. Karshmer, Ph.D., M.A. (LIS)

Elana Karshmer is a Professional Member of Beta Phi Mu. Elana currently works as the Head of Information & Research Services at Florida International University.



### Tell us a bit about yourself.

I grew up in Las Cruces, NM. Both of my parents were professors at NMSU and I spent a lot of my childhood running around the university. I always felt like the university was like a second home. In addition to reading (I'm currently finishing up Alan Bradley's Flavia De Luce series), I do Pilates when I'm not working and I confess to a slight addiction to online shopping (usually for shoes and makeup).

### What has your career path been like?

I went to college intending to major in biology and go to medical school... that didn't work out so well. I was never especially good at science, but even more than that, I was always drawn to literature. I ended up with a B.A. in creative writing, and I had no idea what to do after college. I went back to New Mexico after graduation and decided to get a master's in literature while I figured things out. The master's degree didn't clarify anything, so after a year of work in the business world, I took my mom's advice and went to library school at University of South Florida.

I really enjoyed teaching English as a grad student during my first master's program, so I thought that becoming an academic librarian might be a good fit. I started my career as an instruction librarian, and after several years in that role I moved to a new university and became the head of Information & Research Services. The funny thing is, I never expected to become a librarian. It was never a goal until I went to library school. As it turned out, I enjoy teaching information literacy and providing reference services, so I guess my mom was right.

### What made you interested in becoming a professional Beta Phi Mu member?

As a grad student at USF, I was more concerned with finishing than with always doing my best, so I didn't apply myself fully in a couple of my courses. When I wasn't able to get into BPM as a graduate, I wished I had been a bit more conscientious. When the opportunity to join as a professional member arose, I was thrilled because I felt like I had a second chance to show that I take my profession seriously and that I care deeply about what I do. I was thrilled to learn that I had been accepted as member.

Membership in BPM is a reward for excellence as a student or as a professional practicing in the field. This kind of recognition acts as a reward for librarians and information professionals, and as inspiration for others in the field.

### What are your thoughts about the future of librarianship and the need for librarians in society?

Librarians are essential to the education process. We don't just teach users how to find information, we teach them how to think about what they find, consider which sources are best, and use information appropriately. We teach information literacy, digital literacy, and so much more. The proliferation of fake news has just made our jobs even more important. How we practice will change, but the core concepts of service and instruction will not. People will always need librarians to teach them and to guide them, even more so as technology evolves and as our methods of interaction and communication adapt to situations like we're seeing now.

### **Fun Facts About Elena**

*I finished my Ph.D. in literature in May 2019. My dissertation was on postcolonial farm literature of South Africa. I have a cat named Larry. I adopted him in 2018 from the Pasco County Animal Shelter.*



## JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, June 27th  
2:30pm CDT

Beta Phi Mu's annual membership meeting will take place online this year.

Please join us on Saturday, June 27th beginning at 2:30 pm CDT (3:30 pm EDT).

You'll hear from our officers and directors, and we'll announce the results of both the 2020 BPM election and the 2020 Scholarship judging.

The meeting should last approximately 30-45 minutes, and will take place over Zoom. Seats are limited and you must register in advance to attend. For more information, see the registration details on the [BPM homepage](#).

We hope to see you there!

## Welcome to the Beta Phi Mu Virtual Raffle!

A raffle for Beta Phi Mu-related items has been a mainstay of recent Beta Phi Mu Membership Meetings, held in conjunction with the ALA Annual Conference. Well, we're not letting the cancellation of ALA affect our ability to hold this fund-raiser! Welcome to the first-ever Beta Phi Mu Virtual Raffle!

Chances may be purchased for \$5 each through the [online store on our website](#). Enter to win Beta Phi Mu honor cords (\$15.75 value) or a copy of the BPM Scholars Series title, *Book Banning in 21st-Century America* by Emily Knox (\$71.20 member price value). Buy as many chances as you'd like to win one of these fine items, and support your honor society!

The drawing for the winners of these prizes will be held during our online membership meeting, which will take place on **Saturday, June 27th**. A random-number generator will be used to determine the winners, based on the order of entries received. You do not need to be present to win. Support BPM – buy a raffle ticket!

## VOTE! in the 2020 Beta Phi Mu Election

### The Polls are Open!

Be sure to vote in the 2020 Beta Phi Mu election by **June 25th**. We'll be electing a new Vice President/President Elect and a Treasurer for our organization, as well as a new Director-at-Large. The vote for two Directors, which normally takes place in person at our Membership meeting, will also be on the ballot this year.



There are by-laws changes to consider as well: one allowing for greater flexibility in the time frame for chapters to nominate new members, and one concerning a proposed new Undergraduate Membership category. See the link to the ballot on the BPM homepage:

[www.betaphimu.org](http://www.betaphimu.org)



# Chapter News

## Beta Epsilon Chapter at Emporia State University

### Talking Books 50th Anniversary

Congratulations to Beta Phi Mu Epsilon Secretary Michael Lang, Director of [Kansas Talking Books](#), upon Governor Laura Kelly's proclamation of March 2-6, 2020 as Talking Books Week. The State Library of Kansas in Topeka celebrated with several special events. Artistic Abilities: Celebrating Unique Talents, an art exhibition in the state library's foyer, featured works by six patrons of the braille and talking book program. The library also held a Volunteer Appreciation Day and highlighted the work of Jessica Whitsitt, who has narrated more than 220 locally-produced talking books, ranging from preschool picture books to adult true crime.

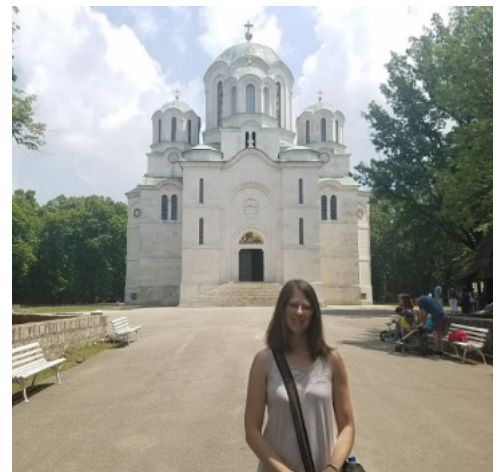
Located on the campus of Emporia State University, Kansas Talking Books provides more than 100,000 free audio books, audio magazines, and braille books. Kansans with physical or visual impairments including a reading disability, dyslexia, Parkinson's, or macular degeneration qualify for these services.

### Congratulations to Dr. Amanda Harrison

Congratulations to Beta Phi Mu Epsilon Chapter Vice-President and upcoming President Amanda E. Harrison for earning the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Library and Information Management in the School of Library and Information Management (SLIM) at Emporia State University (ESU). Amanda presented virtually to a large group on April 13, 2020, including members of the University of Belgrade and the Serbian library community, as well as members of the School of Library and Information.

Through SLIM at ESU, Amanda had the opportunity to travel to Serbia in the fall of 2014 and the summer

of 2018. Subsequently, she became interested in international approaches to librarianship. Amanda's dissertation, *The Impact of the Network Society on the Professional Identity of Serbian Librarians*, is a case study of professional influences of Serbian librarians using Castell's theory of the networked society explored how professional organizations reach people in a global society.



In addition to her classroom experiences, Amanda taught courses for the University of Central Missouri. Amanda's main duties and responsibilities comprise being a school librarian serving four schools in the McPherson, KS, school district. Beta Epsilon Chapter of Beta Phi Mu compliments Dr. Harrison for her successful dissertation defense and service as our Vice-President and upcoming President.

## Beta Beta Theta Chapter at The University of Iowa

### Scholarships Awarded by Executive Council

The 2020 Annual Chapter Program of the Beta Beta Theta Chapter was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2019-2020 Executive Council agreed to serve in their current positions until our next business meeting in May 2021.

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Those officers, elected at the May 2019 meeting, are Chapter President Justin Baumgartner, Past President Susan Henricks, Vice President Melody Dworak, Secretary-Treasurer Heidi Lauritzen, and Faculty Advisor Lindsay Mattock.

The Executive Council agreed that, despite the canceled meeting, candidates for induction into Beta Phi Mu should be nominated and our Chapter scholarships should be awarded. Scholarships of \$400 each were awarded to SLIS students Lauren Claeys, Breanna Himschoot, and Samantha Rayburn. Five graduates were inducted into membership in the society: Damien D. Ihrig, Andrea L. Martin (2019 Beta Beta Theta Scholarship winner), Aleks I. Mickunas, Ellen Theresa Reynolds, and Dana Williams.

### **Sigma Chapter at Drexel University Welcome to New Members**

This April, the Sigma Chapter of Beta Phi Mu at Drexel University was happy to welcome nine new members from the Class of 2019: Rebecca Coert, Michelle F. Di Giovanni, Olivia Grace Gorecke, Charles Hermann, Denise Isabella Makowski, Elizabeth Anne Mule, Nicole Audrey Rosetti, Deborah Simonik, and Devon Elizabeth Stivers. Congratulations to our new members!

### **Beta Beta Chapter at Simmons University Congratulations to Dr. Em Claire Knowles**

Long-time advisor of the Beta Beta Chapter at Simmons University and 2017 Beta Phi Mu Award recipient, Dr. Em Claire Knowles retires on June 30, 2020 from her position as Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs of the College of Organizational, Computational, and Information Sciences at Simmons University. Dr. Melanie Kimball and Dr. Laura Saunders, also a National Board Member, will become the new faculty advisors of the Beta Beta Chapter. We wish Dr.

Knowles well in her new endeavors and hope to see her at future national events.



### **Omicron Chapter at Rutgers University Annual Membership Dinner Postponed**

The Omicron Chapter at Rutgers University has postponed their annual membership dinner and initiation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally scheduled for Thursday, April 9th, this year's event was to feature presentations by three doctoral students about their current research at the School of Information and Communication. Diana Floegel, Isha Ghosh, and Connie Pascal prepared presentations entitled, respectively: *Investigating Structural Articulations of Power in Information Creation Through a Constructivist Grounded Theory Study of Queer-Created Slash Fanfiction*, *Increasing Privacy Sensitivity Through Social Interventions*, and *Exploring the Information Practices of Cannabis Nurses*. The event will be rescheduled for Fall 2020.

Despite not being able to hold their annual meeting, the Omicron Chapter awarded four \$500 scholarships to students currently enrolled in the Rutgers Master of Information program. Two scholarship recipients have provided a brief update on their plans at Rutgers University and what the scholarship means to them.

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## Omicron Scholarship Recipient Updates

*Margaret Yankovich*

Since being awarded the Omicron Beta Phi Mu scholarship, I have finished my course work for the MI program, and as of May 28, 2020, I have graduated the program with a 4.0. Once I receive my diploma, I will be applying for the Maryland state certification as a librarian. I am currently wrapping up my fourth year working at Dorchester County Public Library in Cambridge, MD, where I was promoted last year to Head of Reference/Information. My time at Rutgers has been invaluable to my career and has allowed me to procure this promotion. It has also expanded the horizons of what I can do at the library, and how I can make the library a more accessible and welcoming space for my community.



The scholarship came at a crucial point in my life, when I was finishing up paying for my education, a degree that I have worked hard for over the last two years. It also came during the COVID-19 public health crisis, when librarians have faced sudden closure of the spaces we love and where we do our work. This scholarship is an encapsulation of everything I have strived for during my time at Rutgers and over the past four years that I have worked at a public library. It speaks to my passion for community service, learning, and librarianship that is at the heart of everything I do.

*Chelsea Rizzolo*

Summer 2020 is my last semester in the Master of Information program. I'm using this final semester to step outside of my comfort zone and take courses that are different from any others I have taken so far. As Co-President of LISSA, I am working with our team to recruit new leadership for the 2020-2021 academic year; we are thrilled with the response we have received and look forward to placing new and talented students in positions of interest. I am remaining hopeful as I continue to seek full-time employment as a reference and instruction librarian during these uncertain times. I will continue to work part-time as a Library Associate at Rahway Public Library to keep my skills sharp. I sincerely look forward to reconnecting with the community once we can safely open the building.



The Beta Phi Mu Omicron Scholarship means a great deal to me. The honor of winning this scholarship extends beyond its monetary value, for which I am emphatically grateful. It represents support from the spectacular group of BPM members whom I admire deeply. The members of this organization are the researchers I learn from through my studies, the professors I turn to for advice, the librarians who positively influenced me during childhood, the advocates and organizers I look up to on Twitter, and the professionals I will be proud to consider colleagues upon graduation. Thank you to the BPM officers and all members for this great privilege.



## Policy Updates & Reminders *In a Time of COVID-19*

For everyone's reference, here's a run-down of recently updated policies, along with some reminders and information that may be particularly useful during this time of social distancing.

- Thanks to all chapters that have already paid their \$125 Chapter Assessment fee! If your chapter has not yet paid, this is a reminder that the requested deadline is September 1st. You may mail a check payable to "Beta Phi Mu" to BPM Headquarters, or [pay online here](#).
- New membership application deadlines for chapters are June 30th and September 30th. We hope that all chapters can make one or both of these deadlines for forwarding new membership applications, fees, and lists of all nominees to BPM HQ. However, we realize that many people are working from home these days and may not have access to all of what they need to meet these deadlines. We are willing to be flexible!
- If you would like to pay new membership fees for your chapter without having to mail in a check, we can provide an electronic invoice that you may pay securely online with a PayPal account or credit/debit card. Simply contact BPM HQ and let us know the total amount of the fees for which you would like to be invoiced.
- We will soon be providing editable PDF versions of the BPM membership forms, the Chapter Initiation Report, and the List of Nominees. This will hopefully enable new members and chapters to more easily send electronic versions of their materials without the need to scan anything. These will be found on the [Forms page](#) in the Members area of the BPM website.
- We encourage all members to support Beta Phi Mu during this time of financial challenge by becoming sustaining members of our organization. Commit to making a donation of at least \$10/year for Regular Members and \$20/year for Professional Members. Or better yet, commit to making a monthly donation! Visit the [Donations page here](#).
- Due to stay-at-home orders in place in Philadelphia, BPM HQ staff are making fewer trips to the post office. As a result, some delays in responding to or sending mailed correspondence may be experienced; we apologize for any inconvenience.

*Contact BPM HQ with any questions.*

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## Thanks to Our Partners and Sponsors

In addition to our members and chapters, our partners and sponsors help make the work and continued existence of our honor society possible. Thank you!

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