



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# GOOD LEADERS NEVER STOP LEARNING

**A**s we begin this new year, I am very excited about this issue of *AALL Spectrum*, which focuses on leadership and career development. These are both areas that I am passionate about, personally and professionally. This issue has something for everyone, regardless of what stage you are currently at in your career.

Directors may find interest in Michael Robak's article on the AALL Executive Leadership Institute, held in Washington, DC, this past July. There is also an article on mid-career professionals and those looking to transition careers by Alyson Drake, Franklin L. Runge, and Austin Martin Williams. As someone who has transitioned roles recently, this article especially piqued my interest. Additionally, librarians and legal information professionals at any stage will find Teresa Miguel-Stearns's article "Fostering a Culture of Teamwork Around Continuous Professional Development" to be valuable, as continuous learning is key to building your career in the ever-changing legal landscape. Be sure to also read Deborah Hamilton's article on how creating free professional development webinars that help public librarians better assist patrons with legal research questions can also improve your presentation, training, and collaboration skills.

### **Professional Development Leads to Career Satisfaction**

It is helpful to remember that staying active in career development is one of the best ways that any professional can remain motivated over the many decades that our careers span. AALL assists with career and professional development through webinars, in-person institutes, and the AALL Annual Meeting. Personally, I enjoy these learning opportunities because they also help with combating burnout, which can be common in this field, especially since we are all asked to do more with fewer resources. For an insightful look

at the importance of leadership, lifelong learning, and professional development to one's career, read this month's Leader Profile, which highlights the 40-year law librarianship career of Mark E. Estes.

As with professional development, leadership development is important to a healthy career. Leadership development is not limited to only those in management roles; you can be a leader at any level. For example, formal or informal mentoring are great ways to further develop your active listening skills, as well as your communication skills. Leadership development also encompasses useful skills that may be overlooked, such as empathy, risk-taking, and providing effective feedback. These are all leadership skills that I developed later in my career after making a few mistakes. Jim Kwik, the 2020 AALL Annual Meeting keynote speaker, has several podcasts to help further develop leadership skills, deal with burnout, and train your brain at [bit.ly/JF20Kwik](https://bit.ly/JF20Kwik).

The start of a new year brings with it the opportunity to reflect on the past year and look forward to new beginnings. I encourage everyone to review their past achievements, set professional development goals for the new year, and take advantage of the Association's many fantastic resources to help realize those goals and empower others to reach their full potential, as well.

  
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