

The North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association



What is the North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association?

The North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association (NCLPA) is a roundtable of the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA). Through a variety of activities and resources, the NCLPA provides a forum for paraprofessionals in public, school, and academic libraries; it acts as a stimulus in making the North Carolina library community more aware of paraprofessional concerns.

The NCLPA sponsors workshops and programs on library service topics for paraprofessionals across the state of North Carolina, supporting an environment for the identification of goals and the exchange of ideas.

If you would like more information on how you can participate, please visit the NCLPA website at: <http://www.nclaonline.org/nclpa>

A Message from the NCLPA Chair

Welcome to the first issue of the North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association's new semi-annual newsletter! I hope that this publication will become a rich source of information on North Carolina library paraprofessional issues and events.

Many of the discussions on the future of libraries center on such issues as electronic delivery of materials, the future of the book, and librarianship. In my vision of the library of the future, I see paraprofessionals and MLS-librarians serving side-by-side on library-wide committees; paraprofessionals and MLS-librarians developing policy, training modules and educational systems, each with mutual respect for the other's perspective and input; I envision library human resources efforts that target paraprofessional staff **AND** MLS-librarians for recruitment, and I see state and national efforts to expand the scope of paraprofessional staff involvement in organizations and associations relevant to library work.

As chair of the NCLPA for the 2003-2005 biennium, I am excited about the possibility of achieving these very goals. **Communication is key.** I hope that this newsletter will be one of many avenues not only for that communication but also for a strong NCLPA for the entire North Carolina library community.



Note: This letter of support is written by the Director of Harnett County Public Library in Lillington, NC.

Greetings All—

Did you know that paraprofessionals meet more than 66% of staff needs in libraries today? As a library director, I value the paraprofessionals on my staff. They may not hold an MLS in library science, but their work as library employees is very professional indeed.

I am calling upon my fellow library directors to promote the development of their paraprofessionals and to give them the recognition they deserve as important and vital members of the library work force. Library paraprofessionals range from student workers to technical professionals to holders of advanced degrees in non-library fields.

By helping your paraprofessionals grow, you are investing in the future of your library. How can you help? It's simple:

- Encourage them to join the NCLA and become a member of the NCLPA (North Carolina Paraprofessional Association) roundtable. The NCLPA provides a forum for members to share ideas and concerns and to identify objectives and goals of common interest.
- Pay NCLA membership dues for everyone on your staff. I have done so beginning this year! Ross Holt, Past President of NCLA, issued a statement to all library staff in North Carolina—"you MUST be a member of the North Carolina Library Association." I took his message to heart.
- Send your paraprofessionals to available workshops. Many are sponsored by other NCLA member groups. It can only improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Allow each paraprofessional to attend an NCLA biennial conference even if it is only for one day. Several programs held by the NCLPA, including a panel discussion on the Patriot Act, were praised for their timeliness and for content applicable to everyone within the library community.

Please join me in giving our paraprofessionals every opportunity to realize their full potential.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie H. Collins".

Melanie Collins, Director
Harnett County Public Library
Lillington, NC



Online Learning for Library Paraprofessionals

Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) in Sanford is one of only a few educational institutions in the country providing a two-year degree in Library and Information Technology (LIT) entirely online. In addition, the program presents additional credential choices for persons preferring a shorter course of study: the diploma and three certificate options. Personal computer access at home or at school and a basic proficiency using a word processor, e-mail, and the Internet are desired.

A.A.S. Degree or Diploma

Students working toward their selected LIT credential options must complete the following credit hour requirements:

- ☞ Associate in Applied Science Degree (A.A.S.)—70/71 semester credit hours
- ☞ Diploma—36 semester credit hours

Each option above calls for 120 hours of cooperative work experience in a library. Requirements include library-related, computer/technology, office systems, and general education courses. [Library-related courses are only available online through CCCC.](#)

Non-library courses may be taken online or in a traditional seated classroom at CCCC or at another community college of the student's choice.

Certificate Options

Certificate programs target students with short-term goals plus degree or diploma students who wish to add to their list of credentials with certificates of accomplishment in either or all three areas.

- ☞ Public Services—12 semester credit hours of library-related courses specific to public services
- ☞ Cataloging—12 semester credit hours of library-related courses specific to cataloging
- ☞ Technical Services—18 semester credit hours of library-related and computer/technology courses

College officials recently announced the addition of two courses to the LIT program: Library Services for Patrons with Special Needs and Library Services for Children.

For more information, access the college web site at www.cccc.edu or contact Ellen Dickey, Lead Instructor, at (919) 718-7439 or 1-800-682-8353 (ext. 7439) or e-mail edickey@ccc.edu.

Reasons for Learning Online at CCCC

CCCC students cite many reasons for selecting the LIT online curriculum besides the obvious ones regarding choice of time and location for accessing schoolwork and fewer incidental costs incurred by commuting such as childcare, transportation, and meals. These reasons include:

- Pay raise
- Substantiated validation of paraprofessional work performed for which a library employee has no (or few) previously earned credentials
- Promotion to the next step on an organizational career ladder
- Meeting goals and objectives established during semi-annual or annual employee performance evaluations
- Job requirement
- Career change
- Self-improvement/personal growth

Regardless of your rationale for seeking additional educational opportunities, professional development is always a worthy goal.

Meet Your NCLPA Executive Board

Annis Barbee, Chair

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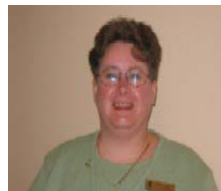
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North Carolina in Four Regions

The NCLPA divides North Carolina into four regions, a director overseeing each. Regional Directors are members of the NCLPA executive board.



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News and Events

NCLA Supports Mutual Respect Task Force

At the December 2003, meeting of the NCLA executive board, the North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association proposed a resolution calling for a task force to study the “state of respect” in the North Carolina library work environment. The NCLA board unanimously passed the resolution, naming Annis Barbee, current NCLPA chair, as task force chair. The group has been assembled and has established August as its deadline for submitting its final report to the NCLA executive board. In addition to Barbee, the task force members are: Vanessa Budnick, NC State University Libraries; Keith Burkhead, Guilford Technical Community College; Jackie Cornette, Western Watauga Branch Library; Susan Wolf Neilson, NC State University Libraries; and Angela Suggs Davis, East Carolina University Music Library. Watch this newsletter and the NCLPA website for details of the ongoing study and results.

The North Carolina Library Paraprofessional Association is a roundtable of the North Carolina Library Association. For information on how to join, visit:

<http://www.nclaonline.org>

or

<http://www.nclaonline.org/nclpa/>

NCLA Centennial Conference and SELA Biennial Conference

The North Carolina Library Association and the Southeastern Library Association will jointly host a conference—*A Splendid Combination*--at the Charlotte Convention Center, November 9-13, 2004. During that conference, the NCLPA and Public Library Section will co-sponsor a program on Wednesday, November 10, from 2:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. The speaker will be Bill Thompson from *Our State* magazine. Also on Wednesday, the NCLPA will sponsor a visit and book signing with North Carolina’s own Sarah Shaber, writer of the *Simon Shaw Mystery Series*. To register for the conference or for more information, visit the conference website at:

<http://www.nclaonline.org/conference/>

Did You Know?

You can exchange ideas and concerns with library support staff from all over the nation on the support staff email discussion list. For more information, visit the list website:

<http://mailman.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/libsup-l>