



SOLIS

Newsletter

for VSU's Student Organization of LIS



April-May 2026

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Volume 18 Issue 2

SOLIS News

SOLIS Events

During this semester, SOLIS hosted our Read-A-Thon on our Instagram page during Spring break, which was a success! We appreciate everyone who participated and shared about what they were reading. Next, we held another live Q&A session with library professionals, which went well! The recording for the Q&A session was shared on our Instagram page.

As we close out this semester, we will be welcoming new officers. Meet your new officers on page 2 of this newsletter! There are also multiple positions vacant. Interested in serving SOLIS? Please contact Dr. Ren at xren@valdosta.edu.

VSU Foundation SOLIS Account

Currently, VSU Foundation SOLIS account has an ending balance of \$980.68. It is used to fund the SOLIS Internship Reimbursement Award: https://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/education/master-of-library-and-information-science/student-resources/internship_reimburse.php and to support various SOLIS community engagement activities.

The main source of SOLIS account revenue is MLIS T-Shirt sale. You may follow this link to order yours: <https://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/education/master-of-library-and-information-science/solis/t-shirt-order-form.pdf>.

SOLIS Social Medias

SOLIS has social media accounts. On these accounts, SOLIS will be engaging with students within the program, sharing resources, hosting events, and more. Please follow us on Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) for the latest SOLIS news.



Both usernames for Instagram and X are [solis_vstate](#)

Achievements

SOLIS loves to celebrate your achievements. Keep sending your news about recently awarded scholarships, a conference presentation, a paid internship opportunity, or other exciting news of your scholarly and/or professional achievements to Dr. Ren at xren@valdosta.edu. Thank you!

2026-2027 SOLIS Officers

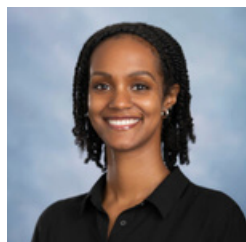
Vice-President: Shelby Whittet



Bio: Shelby Whittet currently works for a non-profit centred on community building and resilience in rural New England, while also working as a reference assistant in a public library setting. Entering her second year at VSU, Shelby is interested in becoming a veterinary/animal science librarian in an academic research library. With a degree in counselling and current work in community resilience Shelby is passionate about making meaningful connections to her community of peers and faculty at VSU. In her free time Shelby enjoys going on adventures with friends, with her two rescue pups or out in the saddle.

Election Statement: I would be honored to act as the SOLIS Vice President in order to support my peers and professors at VSU. As an online, asynchronous graduate program we all have diverse needs, schedules and interests. Supporting the MLIS community feels crucial in a successful experience and enriching experience at VSU. My hope in running for this position is to leverage my background in community building and engagement to support the VSU MLIS community. I believe I have strong leadership and interpersonal skills along with personal and professional experiences that will allow me to do this in a way that will enrich the student experience while supporting faculty / curriculum needs.

Advisory Board Member: Melba Abraham



Bio: Melba Abraham graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor's Degree in History with a focus on Africa, Asia and the Middle East. She currently works as a Library Technical Assistant at Georgia State University. She entered Valdosta's MLIS program in Spring of 2026 and hopes to use her MLIS degree to work in academic libraries, as well as support research of her own cultural history through collaboration with academics as well as institutions such as the Oromo Cultural Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Her interests include teaching, sewing, fashion, and anything nerdy.

Election Statement: Deciding to pursue my MLIS degree has been an extremely fulfilling journey, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn more every day from both my professors and my peers. The field of librarianship aligns with many of my personal and academic interests, and I hope to establish myself among my peers by actively engaging in the field both as a student and as a professional. As an advisory board member, I will bring my perspective as someone belonging to underrepresented groups in American librarianship and will advocate for those who may experience similar marginalization from the field. I am excited to be more involved in the Valdosta MLIS community and look forward to the opportunity to serve on the advisory board.

Graduation!

Congratulations to our May 2026 graduates! We wish you well in your future endeavors!



Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Colette Drouillard



Dr. Drouillard is pictured (right) featuring Vashti Harrison, 2024 Caldecott Award Winner

BIOGRAPHY:

Dr. Drouillard earned an BS in Elementary Education from Oakland University, an MEd in Occupational Training Management/Instructional Design from Idaho State University, an MLIS in Library & Information Science from Florida State University and a PhD in Library & Information Science from Florida State University. Throughout her career, she has worked numerous positions, including Librarian at the Florida State University London Study Centre, Children's Literature and Education Collection Librarian at Goldstein Library, Florida State University and Children's Librarian at Huntington Woods Library (between PhD at FSU and beginning as faculty at VSU). She has been selected for the ALA Book Award Committees and she was a member of the 2025 Caldecott Award Committee that selected the "most distinguished American picture book for children."

1. What would you describe as your focus/concentration within the MLIS field?

I focus on youth services within the MLIS field, where I advocate for inclusive children's and young adult literature. My goal is to ensure every young reader sees themselves in their library's collection and cultivating the development of programs for children and young adults that bridge the gap between the library and the community.

2. What are some lessons or tips you have learned throughout your career?

Embrace unexpected opportunities—you never know where they might lead! After nearly a decade with the Florida Department of Labor's Division of Occupational Safety, the governor unexpectedly cut all laws and funding for public sector occupational safety and health. Our entire division was laid off with less than 30 days' notice. At the time, I was only one semester away from finishing my MLIS at FSU. I went to the Dean's office to withdraw, but instead of letting me quit, she offered me the opportunity to work as a librarian at FSU's London Study Centre. It was a dream job I didn't even know existed, and it opened doors to a future I never could have anticipated.

3. What were some unexpected challenges you faced throughout your career?

I think I answered that in the process of answering #2 above!

4. What are some resources you recommend for professionals within the MLIS field?

Just a few off the top of my head:

[ALA Association for Library Service to Children](#)

[Looking at Picture Books](#) – Mac Barnett (Library of Congress National Ambassador for Young People's Literature) and Jon Klassen

[Unite Against Banned Books – Book Resumes](#) - Book Résumés help librarians defend books from censorship by detailing frequently challenged books significance and value.

[We Need Diverse Books](#)

5. Do you have any advice for upcoming graduates on how to navigate the job search and/or enter the field as a new graduate?

For MLIS grads, your degree gets you the interview, but your proximity gets you the lead. Many of the best roles never hit a job board; they are filled via the hidden job market.

My advice: If you want a seat at the table, you need to be in the room. Get involved with local and/or state LIS committees, meetups, or volunteer projects. Don't just look for openings—build your presence so the openings find you.

Support the Student Organization of Library and Information Science (SOLIS) by ordering your own T-shirt with the VSU and MLIS insignias!

Proceeds of sales in years have funded ALA conference registrations for students, travel reimbursements for SOLIS officers representing SOLIS at GLA conferences, a reception for the travelling rare books exhibit on loan from the Remnant Trust, a 15th anniversary celebration in downtown Valdosta, and many SOLIS activities such as virtual 5k, and t-shirt design contest. The proceeds of sales will be the main funding source for a newly created SOLIS scholarship starting from Fall 2021. Shirts are sold at \$10 each at face-to-face events such as GLA conferences and previous New Student Orientations.

SOLIS T-Shirt Order Form

Yes, I want to support SOLIS! Please send me _____ (number) of shirts.

Please fill in the oval next to your preferred t-shirt **design**:



Please indicate the **quantity** for each size:

Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____ 2X-Large* _____ 3X-Large* _____
**sizes not available for white t-shirt*

Order of one (1) shirt is \$20 (includes processing and shipping via USPS). Order of 2 or more shirts is \$15 per shirt (processing and shipping included)

Total enclosed: _____

Check payment only. Make check payable to **MLIS Foundation**. Allow two to four weeks to receive your t-shirt(s).
 Your shipping address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Please mail this form with your check to:

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