

2020-2021 SOLIS Officers Nominees

Nominee for President:

Bio: **Matthew Yohn** lives in Kennesaw, GA and works in the technical services department at the Life University library. He has been a student in Valdosta State's MLIS program since Fall of 2018 with a focus on technology. Last year he served on the SOLIS Advisory Board.



Election Statement: I am running for SOLIS President because I enjoyed my time on the SOLIS Advisory Board and would like to serve in a new capacity. I learned from my experience on the board and, if elected, I will endeavor to continue the good work of my predecessors in representing the students of the MLIS program.

Nominee for Communications Officer:

Bio: **Melissa Thompson** began her MLIS journey in Fall 2019. She currently works as a library assistant at Augusta University's Reese Library located in Augusta, Georgia. She has a strong interest in diversity & equality efforts in librarianship as well as incorporating comics & graphic novels in education. Upon completion of the program she hopes to become a systems librarian focused on user experience and web accessibility efforts.



Election Statement: Hello to all! I'm running for Communications Officer. I bring forth a wealth of marketing experience--from web media management to graphic design. I have the skills to encourage all who want their voices to be heard to become more involved. I am a dependable and attentive

worker. I am approachable and encourage anyone to reach out to me if they need a listening ear. I appreciate this opportunity and hope to represent Valdosta State, SOLIS, and most importantly our fellow students.

Nominee for Vice President:

Bio: **Taryn Mirabello** is an Ohio public library Branch Manager. She began working in libraries in 2008 at the John M. Flaxman Library and Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection while pursuing her MFA in Writing at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her goal is to become a Library Director.



Election Statement:

I am running for Vice President because I want to serve my fellow VSU MLIS students and identify ways to establish and maintain a strong sense of community among students—especially those students who (like myself) are completing the program 100% online.

Nominee for Secretary:

Bio: Hello, everyone! My name is **Angelica Chapman** and I'm an extroverted person with a nerdy passion for libraries, gaming, music, and knitting. I have had the pleasure of serving my community in a variety of boards including public libraries, roller derby teams, and non-profit plays.



Election statement: I'm running for Secretary because I'm a highly motivated and detail-oriented person who cares about the future of librarianship. In particular, I'm eager to be part of the current shift towards dismantling the legacy of white supremacy in librarianship as well as ensuring accessibility of services to patrons with disabilities. In my role as secretary I will be accountable to SOLIS by meticulously and reliably performing my role in recording and sharing information. I will also use my skills in library programming and teamwork to engage us all in memorable activities.

SOLIS Advisory Board Member Nominees

Bio: Avery Johnson was born and raised in Smyrna, Georgia, and now lives in Dallas, Georgia with her husband and three cats. She has worked in libraries for 5 years, first as a part time clerk at a public library to a circulation supervisor at the University of West Georgia Ingram Library.



Election Statement: As an advisory board member, my desire is to work with the other members of SOLIS to organize events and activities that will benefit those in the MLIS program. Being a distance learner, I hope to use this as an opportunity to develop closer connections with others in the MLIS program and integrate myself into the culture of VSU.

Bio: Jeremy McAninch's library experience consists of 7 years as the Night Circulation Supervisor at an academic library. He is interested in reference work but also open to any library related position upon obtaining my MLIS degree. He is pursuing a SOLIS position so that he can further interact with his classmates.



Election Statement - I would like to be considered for an Advisory Board position. I intend to be available to aid SOLIS however I can in this role. I will gladly take direction from the officers and collaborate with fellow board members in a constructive manner. I will commit to serving the organization to the best of my abilities.



Bio: Mikayla Kittilstved (she/her) lives in Washington state with her partner, Nick, and their cat, Purrlock Holmes. She works for the Community Library Network in Idaho and serves on the North Idaho Reads committee. Mikayla enjoys bluegrass music, travel, board games, and *Nancy Drew!*

Election Statement - I am running for advisory board member to increase the representation of West Coast students in SOLIS and to support SOLIS activities all distance learners can easily participate in.

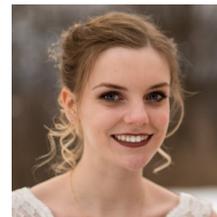
Bio: Genesis Vanderhorst Batista is in her 4th semester at VSU. Born in the Dominican Republic she immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 5. She was raised in Queens, NY and studied Communications at Fordham University. She currently resides in Lawrence, Massachusetts and works for the Trial Court Law Libraries as a Law Library Assistant.



Election Statement: I wish to run for a position to be a member on the Advisory Board. I believe that I can contribute to the success of the 2020-2021 program period with the experience and former leadership positions I've held. For example, during my undergrad years I served as President of Poder Latino, a club for Latinx students on campus and interested students to learn about Latinx culture and history. Being President of this club allowed me the opportunity to form connections with different students and clubs on campus and share my culture and my team's interests and passions with others.

I also currently serve on the Board of an organization in my community called BLAC! Lawrence. BLAC! Lawrence is an upcoming nonprofit that focuses on educating and informing the citizens of the Lawrence community in Lawrence, MA on Black Lives and the injustices, truths, and struggles experienced by Black folk and people of color.

Bio: Lauren Simpfenderfer is in her third semester in VSU's MLIS program. She has a B.S. in Informatics/Information Technology from the University at Albany. She has worked in public libraries for over five years and is currently a youth services library assistant at the White Plains Public Library.



Election Statement: I am excited for the opportunity to become more involved at my school through SOLIS. If elected, I hope to find more opportunities for students to connect and support each other despite the restrictions of an online program, as well as represent my fellow students' interests on the advisory board.

SOLIS Advisory Board Member Nominees

Bio: **Megan Steinhauser** is a current MLIS student who works as a sub for the Pikes Peak Library District. After working in libraries for over 12 years, she decided it was time to start her MLIS. She hopes she can combine her love of libraries, her work experiences, and her education to help better serve the library patrons in her community.



Election Statement: I hope that my passion for libraries and my various library experiences in three states will make me an ideal candidate for the SOLIS Advisory Board. I hope by serving on the Advisory Board it will not only help current and future students, but it will also help in my growth as a leader and librarian.

Bio: My name is **Samuel Ernst** and I am from Omaha, Nebraska. I have volunteered and worked at my local library for the past 13 years and two years ago decided to pursue my MLIS. I feel very fortunate to have selected VSU as my graduate school and am looking to become more involved with other MLIS students



Election Statement: I am running for a position on the SOLIS Advisory Board so that I can assist the SOLIS officers in their activities and provide advice and my opinion when needed. I have served on a non-profit Board and I know first-hand the most important thing a Board needs is to be unified in purpose and work as a team and also have excellent communication skills. I feel that I can provide these things on the SOLIS Advisory Board. In these unprecedented times, we need to provide innovative solutions to adapt to our new normal. I am grateful for this opportunity to run for the SOLIS Advisory Board and am hopeful for the impact I could have as a part of SOLIS.

Congratulations!!!

MLIS Spring 2020 graduate **Jennifer R Sullivan**'s article based on her Capstone project is scheduled to be published in the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* in April of 2021 (vol 62, issue 2).

- ◆ **Title:** *Child Development Knowledge Among New Children's Librarians in U.S. Public Libraries*

MLIS Spring 2020 graduate **Alex Thomerson** will be recognized for the Georgia Library Association Academic Library Division Research Paper Award at this year's October GLA conference. He will also present his paper in a webinar for GLA prior to the conference.

- ◆ **Title:** *Academic Library Space and Technology Concerns: A Content Analysis by Discipline*

MLIS Spring 2020 graduate **Lauren Jones** is the runner-up for the Georgia Library Association Academic Library Division Research Paper Award.

- ◆ **Title:** *Post-Traditional Student Satisfaction with the User Services Provided by Dacus Library*

MLIS current student **Jessica Varsa** was awarded the 2020 Georgia Library Association Beard student scholarship. She was also the recipient of the VSU MLIS Baker Family Scholarship for spring 2020.

MLIS current student **Donald "Don" Giacomini** won the 2020 Georgia Library Association C.S. Hubbard scholarship.

MLIS current student **Chaundria M. Campos** was the 2020 recipient of the ARLIS/NA Southeast Chapter Travel Award of \$500.

Congratulations to you all for your excellent academic performance and achievement! We are proud of you!

Please keep sharing your news with us about a recently awarded scholarship, a conference presentation, or a paid internship opportunity, or other exciting news of your scholarly and professional achievements. Please send your news items to xren@valdosta.edu as they happen. Thank you!

Alumni Spotlight: Ashley Shull

Ashley Shull serves as the Archives and Special Collections Coordinator for the Athens Regional Library System, managing the Athens-Clarke County Library Heritage Room, assisting library branches across 5 counties with special collections, and serving on the leadership team of the Athens Regional Library System. Shull serves as a board member of the Athens Historical Society and also as a member of the Programming Committee for the Society of Georgia Archivists. Shull earned a bachelor's degree in Literature and master's degree in Secondary Education from Georgia College and State University, and a Masters in Library and Information Science from Valdosta State University. She graduated from the program in 2015.



What were your favorite classes while in the MLIS program?

My favorite classes while in the MLIS program were generally the technology and metadata based courses. I worked part-time reference assistance at a public library while earning my degree, so the classes concerning the “back-end” of library work were the most interesting to me.

What was your favorite course project while receiving your MLIS degree?

My favorite course project was honestly the portfolio. It provided me the opportunity to review my progress and progression throughout the program. It took me 3 years to finish the program, so I often overlooked all of what I accomplished while working towards completing the degree. I also really enjoyed building a website in Dr. Yang’s class. It was great to be able to build something from scratch that still exists today.

How has what you learned while getting your MLIS degree directly affected or been applied to your work?

I learned about database systems, archival theory, and more importantly the impact of librarianship on the world at large. I gained such a passion for the profession and for serving the public. I strive to serve my patrons with respect and acknowledgement at every step in the process from selecting materials for the collection, developing programming, to serving them one-on-one. I now not only manage the special collections and archival collections at the Athens Regional Library System I also serve on our Regional Resource Team or leadership team for our five county system. Everyday I use skills I learned in the program to serve on this team.

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

I Take every “failure” as an opportunity for growth. I did not get full-time salaried work right after I completed my degree, it took a year and a half. I interviewed at least 7 different times for 5 different positions along the way. It was not easy, but I learned from each of those interviews and eventually ended up exactly where I needed to be. I would also advise new graduates to take every opportunity afforded to you. I worked 2-3 part-time jobs for years, waiting tables, and often working 14 hour days. Through each of those positions (sometimes not even library related) I learned more about the profession, about myself, and what I wanted. I interned and volunteered, I went to conferences, and I kept applying for jobs--eventually leading me to my current position. I’ve had 5 job titles in 8 years at the same library system each with more and more responsibility. Get your foot in the door and learn to grow!



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 past have funded ALA conference registrations for several 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, and a 15th anniversary celebration in downtown Valdosta.

Shirts are sold at \$10 each at events such as Georgia Libraries Conferences.

SOLIS T-Shirt Order Form

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

Please indicate the quantity for each size:

Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____ XX-Large _____

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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