2024 Library Champions

**Linda Allmand (1937-2020)** was Director of the Fort Worth Public Library (1981), Chief of Branch Services at Dallas Public, and President of TLA (1986-87). She was a UNT Hall of Fame Recipient, and an ALA Approved Building Consultant. Linda was awarded TLA’s Librarian of the Year Award (1985). At the Fort Worth Public Library, she revived the Library Friends Group, increasing the membership from 50 to 600, added branches and automated the library system collaborating with the Amon Carter Museum and the City of Fort Worth. Linda modeled exemplary leadership in areas of service, automation, working with elected officials and policy makers. She focused on offering services to the underserved, and she was an excellent mentor to new librarians.

**Sharon Amastae**, President of TLA (2014-15), chaired almost every major TLA committee and is an active member of the Border Regional Library Association and REFORMA. She served as both Chair and TLA Councilor for District 6. Sharon was elected TLA Chapter Councilor for ALA (2003-06), and also served on the Texas Library and Archives Foundation, as well as the New Mexico Library Foundation Board. She was a TALL TEXAN, and a TALL TEXAN Mentor in 2007, 2013, and 2014. Her community service includes working with incarcerated teens as a founding member of the Esperanza Book Club, serving as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), and providing humanitarian services to refugees. Sharon has been awarded numerous honors, including the TLA Lifetime Achievement Award (2021).

**Dr. Barry Bishop (1951-2012)** was President of TLA (2002-03). He combined his leadership skills and advocacy for libraries with service to TLA to advance and strengthen all types of libraries early in the 21st Century. He served on the Telecommunications Infrastructure Board awarding grants to Texas Libraries, was a Delegate to the White House Conference on Libraries (2002), a TALL TEXAN Mentor, and TLA Librarian of the Year (2007). As Library Director of Spring Branch ISD and as a professor at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, Barry taught Instructional Technologies and initiated the TLA School Administrator’s Conference. Through TLA, he also provided professional development in computer skills for librarians. Barry was an active, devout church member.

**Dr. Viriginia Massey Bowden, (1939-2022)**, a Daughter of the Republic of Texas, graduated from the University of Texas at Austin where she was one of the first students to take computer programming courses. She became the Director of the UT Health Science Medical School
Library, excelled as an academic health sciences librarian, and was instrumental in establishing organizations such as the South Central Academic Medical Libraries Consortium. Virginia was active in AMIGOS and MLA and was awarded the Louise Darling Medal for Distinguished Collection Development in Health Science. She provided outreach medical services to underserved regions in Texas. She served on the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library and on the UT ISchool Advisory Council. Virginia published extensively.

**Sharon T. Carr** was library administrator for El Paso ISD (1990-2010) and implemented technology grants in her school district totaling almost 2 million dollars. Appointed by Governor Rick Perry, Sharon served on the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (2005-2013). She was on the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board and the Board of Advisors for the UNT School of Library and Information Sciences. She was President of the El Paso Area Libraries Consortium and a TALL TEXAN Mentor. Sharon was President of TASLA and served on the TLA Intellectual Freedom Committee. She is a Lifetime member of TLA and other organizations. She is a UNT Outstanding Alumna (2000-2001). She served on the boards of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and the Junior League of El Paso.

**Dr. Yvonne Chandler (1957-2020)** was a UNT Associate Professor, TLA President (2013-14), and a founding member of the American Association of Law Libraries’ (AALL) Black Caucus. A former student described Yvonne as a larger-than-life library science educator. She was awarded ALA’s Gallagher Distinguished Service Award and the UNT President’s Council Outstanding Teaching Award. Yvonne served on the University of Michigan’s Advisory Board and received the Joseph Andrews Legal Literature Award. She helped secure over $4 million in federal grant funding for students of color and for first time college students. She was beloved and remembered by her students who upon her death requested that a Mentorship Program be established in her name. In 2020, Yvonne was inducted into the AALL Hall of Fame.

**Dr. Joe F. Dahlstrom** was simultaneously the Senior Director of Libraries at the University of Houston-Victoria and the Director of Libraries of Victoria College. Joe was TLA President (1987-88), served in leadership positions in TCAL, and on multiple TLA committees. He was a Contributing Editor for the Texas Library Journal. Joe also served as the Interim Executive Director of TLA. He was active in ALA serving as Chair of the Texas Chapter of ACRL, and on several other ALA committees. Joe is active in the Rotary Club, serving on historical preservation groups and oral history projects. He has served on the Museum of the Coastal Bend Advisory Board and has been a member of the Abilene Philharmonic, the Victoria Symphony, and the UT Alumni Band.

**Elizabeth Wheeler Fox** was Executive Director and founder of the Westbank Community Library and helped initiate a Texas State law that created sales taxing districts for small rural library districts. This resulted in the Westbank Community Library being the first library in Texas to become a library district. Fourteen other communities utilized the same legislation to create library districts capable of collecting sales taxes. Beth founded the TLA Library District Discussion Group which still meets twice per year for the mutual support of library districts. She was awarded TLA’s Librarian of the Year Award (2006) and was twice presented with ALA’s John
Cotton Dana Award (1986,1990). She also helped found the TLA Small Community Library Roundtable and the Texas Municipal Library Directors Association.

**Rhoda Goldberg** was the Library Director of the Harris County Public Library where she successfully cultivated a culture of “yes.” She chaired the TLA Legislative Committee multiple times while supporting many state and national library issues. She was a key influence in the establishment of joint (academic-public) libraries at Lone Star Cy Fair and Lone Star Tomball College where she encouraged lifelong learning. Rhoda was a TALL TEXAN Mentor and Co-Chaired TLA’s Conference Program Committee and the TLA Local Arrangement Committee. As a library consultant, she offered guidance in building design, staffing, collections, and library management. After Hurricane Harvey and the COVID Pandemic, Rhoda led and coordinated the recovery and assistance efforts of her synagogue. She is a compassionate leader and exemplary library advocate.

**Margaret Dorcas Hand**, a retired private school Director of Libraries at the Annunciation Orthodox School in Houston, is a library educator and advocate for libraries. Dorcas has presented and published on the importance of strong school libraries. She served on committees both in TLA and ALA. Dorcas is Coordinator of the TLA Intellectual Freedom Hotline for Texas librarians facing book challenges. She also chaired the State Ecosystem Task Force to design a toolkit for legislators and government officials outlining how to advocate for libraries. She also served as Texas Chapter Councilor to ALA. Dorcas was the founding chair and member of the Houston Area Independent School Library Network that works to educate the HISD School Board, administrators, and the public on why students need libraries.

**Kathryn Jones Hoffman** is a retired Executive Director of the MD Anderson Research Medical Library and a distinguished member of MLA’s Academy of Health Information Professionals. As an adjunct instructor for UNT, and an MLA and NLM Certified Course Instructor, she mentored many librarians. Kathy has published, presented extensively, and has been a consultant on medical cataloging and a variety of medical library topics. She was recognized by the Medical Library Association for her exemplary service and received the Estelle Brodman Award for Academic Medical Librarian of the Year (1990). Kathy co-chaired the 2011 TLA Conference Program Committee, the 2011-2015 TLA Strategic Planning Task Force, and the Retired Librarians Round Table from 2015-2018. Kathy was awarded TLA’s Lifetime Achievement Award (2011).

**Dr. Barbara Immroth (1942-2021)** was a Professor Emerita at the University of Texas at Austin, School of Information. She was an internationally recognized educator, researcher, and advocate of intellectual freedom. She was the first woman at UT to advance from assistant professor to full professor in twelve years and was the first woman at the iSchool to direct a dissertation. She mentored students throughout their careers. Barbara authored several scholarly books and articles. She was President of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and served on several notable children’s book selection committees. Barbara was elected for three terms as ALA Councilor-at-Large. She was a TALL TEXAN Mentor, President of TLA (1997-98), and was awarded the TLA Lifetime Achievement Award (2009).
Mary Lankford (1932-2023) was Library Director of Irving ISD, author of twelve books, and a library advocate. She inspired many improvements in library services for K-12 students. She encouraged librarians to work closely with classroom teachers, the principal, and other facets of the community, including the public library. Director of Libraries at TEA and President of TLA (1975-76). Mary served on notable book committees in ALA, AASL, and ALSC. She also served on the Irving Chamber of Commerce and the Irving Rotary Club. The Irving ISD Library Program won the National School Library Media Program of the Year Award (1991). Under her direction, Irving ISD’s Library Program was recognized for its many innovations in library services. She was awarded TLA’s Distinguished Service Award (1985).

Jeanette Larson has been a librarian, library school educator, library consultant, and author. She is recognized for her wide variety of published works ranging from her revision of the authoritative CREW: A Weeding Manual for Libraries and Model Policies to works on children’s librarianship, and children’s books. Jeanette contributed to library literature, including The Public Library Policy Writer and Children’s Services Today. She is also the author of dozens of articles for journals and magazines. Jeanette was a trainer for the Public Library Association’s Staffing for Results and Training for Results programs. Jeanette was awarded TLA’s Librarian of the Year (1998); YALSA’s Excellence in Services to Teens (2003); Hotho Literacy Award (2005); and TLA Project of the Year (2006).

Teri Lesesne (1952-2021) was a professor at Sam Houston State University, an author and advocate for reading, and an outstanding reviewer of books. She promoted using libraries and being best friends with a librarian. She served on numerous book award committees. Her life’s work was to create readers, and she was enormously successful in this endeavor by influencing teachers, librarians, and students. She emphasized the importance of school principals and librarians collaborating with teachers to promote reading. Teri was awarded the TCTELA Outstanding University Teacher Award (2014); the Outstanding Columnist Award, ALAN Review (2015); the Richard Halle Award (NCTE); and she was selected to represent TLA at the International Book Fair in Monterrey, Mexico. Teri was awarded TLA’s Award for Outstanding Services to Libraries (2020).

Dr. Marla McGhee is a Texas Christian University retired Academic Professor of Educational Leadership and former public school principal. She was the first Texas professor in her discipline to advocate for school libraries. She was a presenter at TLA’s School Administrators’ Conference for eight years. She also promoted strong school library programs at ALA Annual Conferences. Marla trained numerous school administrators emphasizing the importance of the school library. She has written books and numerous articles that discuss the impact of effective school library programs on student success. Marla has made a difference in how librarians are perceived by principals, teachers, parents, and students, not only in Texas but nationally. The U.S. Department of Education named Marla a National Distinguished Principal (1994).

Dr. Robert Sydney Martin, retired Professor Emeritus of Texas Woman’s University, served as an archivist, academic librarian, researcher, lecturer, Texas State Librarian, and the first Director of
the Institute of Museum and Library Services (2001-05). Bob worked on the first Texas Book Festival with First Lady Laura Bush, and is a distinguished alumnus of Rice, UNT, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Bob is a recipient of the Ainsworth Rand Spofford Award, the Daniel W. Casey Memorial Award, and UNT’s Lifetime Achievement Award. President George W. Bush awarded him the Presidential Citizens Medal (2008). Bob led several UNESCO delegations abroad, and as a writer and consultant, served on community committees and numerous national boards. Bob was awarded TLA’s Distinguished Service Award (2002).

**Dr. Joe McCord (1936-2011)** served as Dean and Director of several Texas academic libraries. He was a resource sharing visionary, often called the Father of TexShare, for his work in creating this statewide resource sharing network. He spoke eloquently and often with Texas legislators to secure free access to both print and electronic resources for all Texans. He conceived of and organized the first TLA Legislative Day. Joe worked with Amigos, ETCL and PAISANO State consortia to promote access to information in the early days of library automation. He served as President of TLA (1996-97) and was awarded TLA’s Librarian of the Year (1988), the Meritorious Service (1995), and Distinguished Service Awards (2001). Joe is buried and memorialized in the Texas State Cemetery in Austin.

**Maria Elena Ovalle** is a retired teacher, librarian, and an Education Service Center Coordinator for Library Services and Instructional Resources. She was a resource person for librarians in South Texas. She served on the TLA Executive Board and has been a presenter at TASLA, TLA, and numerous library conferences. Maria Elena trained librarians on the federal e-rate program and also created the TLA Tejas Star Book Award. She has served on many TLA Committees, including the 2015 Program Committee. She was a co-publisher of The Toolkit for School Administrators-Hiring & Retaining Librarians. Maria Elena has served on several boards including the South Texas Literacy Coalition, and the Edinburg Public Library Board. She was a TALL TEXAN Mentor. Maria Elena received TLA’s Lifetime Achievement Award (2019).

**Dr. Gleniece Robinson** was the Director of the Fort Worth Public Library who created a “Grow Your Own” development and diversity recruitment program, emphasizing degree completions. Gleniece increased usage, budget, staff, and the number of visitors to the library. She also reduced operating costs, added new branches, and renovated existing structures. She served on TLA and ALA committees and was a delegate to the White House Conference on Libraries (2002). Gleniece was the First African American President of TLA (1999-00), Chair of PLD, a TLA Councilor, TALL Texan Mentor and was awarded the Woman of Spirit Award by the American Jewish Congress (1999). Gleniece received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (2007) and the TLA Lifetime Achievement Award (2013).

**Dana Rooks**, former Dean of Libraries at the University of Houston and author of six books, is a committed leader and mentor. She served on the Board of Directors for ARL, AMIGOS, and the Greater Western Library Alliance. Dana served as TLA President (2004-05) and received three TLA awards: Librarian of the Year (1997), Distinguished Service (2009), and Lifetime Achievement (2014). She was one of the initial founders of TexShare, as well as the founder and president of TCAL. She completed a $20 million campaign for a Library building addition and
secured substantial financial support for library operations. Dana and her husband, Charles W. Rooks, PhD, established the “Rooks Early Career Librarian Fellowship.” Dana also created an endowed fund for TLA.

**Dr. Loriene Roy** is a Professor Emerita at the University of Texas at Austin and library school educator. She served as President of ALA (2007-08) and of the American Indian Library Association. Lorie is a prolific writer and a library presenter. Some of her professional awards include a National Conference of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums Leadership Award; a State of Texas Senate Proclamation; and an ALA Equality Award. Lorie was named a Library Journal “Mover & Shaker” and Outstanding Alumna from the University of Arizona’s Library School. She founded “If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything,” a reading club for Native Children and “Honoring Generations,” a graduate scholarship for indigenous students. Lorie also serves on the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Advisory Board.

**Cyd Sheffy (1948-2022)** was a school librarian in the Fort Worth Independent School District who rallied TLA members to support library issues. She encouraged them to contact Texas legislators and members of Congress to provide needed funding for library resources. She also taught librarians to inform and to educate these influencers on issues that were key to transforming libraries. She knew the needs of rural and urban communities and addressed both. She spoke avidly for students and defended their right to read. She served on TLA committees, including the Legislative Committee, Bylaws & Resolutions Committee, the TASL Executive Board, and annual conference committees. She mentored many school librarians and was a TALL TEXAN Mentor. As Chair of the TL-PAC, Cyd was an effective fundraiser.

**Mark Smith** is a retired Director and State Librarian of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. previously, his career included being a public librarian, a TLA Legislative Liaison, and acting as a LSSI VP who managed 10 public library organizations. He introduced many innovative programs to libraries, improved TLA publications, and played a key role in maintaining federal funding for TSLAC and reversing declining budget support at the agency. Mark has been persistent in providing funding opportunities for libraries. He is a public relations expert who has repeatedly advocated and negotiated for libraries both at the State and National levels. He successfully produced results through collaboration, education, and negotiation. Smith continues to provide library professional training under the sponsorship of the Tocker Foundation.

**Pat Smith** served as TLA Executive Director for 35 years. Under her leadership, TLA became a network of colleagues, lifelong friends, and family moving the profession forward. Pat created infrastructures for individuals to grow professionally. With her guidance, TLA provided a state library conference with a national reputation for quality, creativity, and excellence praised by Library Journal, American Libraries, and Publisher’s Weekly. TLA has been chosen consistently as the best library association conference by conference exhibitors. A member of many library professional organizations, Pat was an ALA Councilor, chaired ALA’s Budget Committee (BARC), and served on numerous other ALA award juries. She served on advisory boards for the UT
School of Information and the Austin Public Library. She excelled in diplomacy, empathy, and strategic planning.

**James B. Stewart (1944-2017)**, the Library Director of the Victoria Public Library for 30 years and a legislative advocate was the founder of the TL PAC. James served as President of TLA (1992-93), and received two TLA Awards: Librarian of the Year (1984) and the Distinguished Service Award (2013). He helped create the first joint library automation and resource-sharing system in Texas between an academic and a public library. He helped found the TALL TEXANS Leadership Development Institute and facilitate the purchase of TLA’s Bee Cave headquarters building. He was appointed to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (1990’s). He chaired the J. Frank Dobie Library Trust. A Vietnam Veteran, James received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He volunteered for Christ’s Kitchen.

**Dr. Julie Todaro** is the former Dean of Libraries at Austin Community College whose career included library manager, library educator, and public librarian. At ACC, Julie managed approximately 200 employees throughout eleven campus libraries in eight counties. She is the author of four books and co-authored a fifth. She is a presenter and library consultant on a variety of library topics. Julie was President of ALA (2016-17), becoming the first president from a community college, president of the ACRL (2007-08), and President of TLA (2000-01). She has received three TLA awards, including Librarian of the Year (1996), the Lifetime Achievement Award (2012), and the Distinguished Service Award (2019). She was a founder and volunteer for the Texas Book Festival. Julie is an outstanding, innovative leader.

**Dr. Herman L. Totten** is a Dean Emeritus of the University of North Texas School of Library and Information Science. He also served as the Vice President of University and Community Affairs (2011-2015). Herman expanded the range of programs, adding instructional technologies to the SLIS College, and created an endowed professorship to honor the work of an African American instructor and advocate of children’s literacy. He was the first African American Dean of UNT’s SLIS. Herman served as TLA President (2002-02), a TALL TEXAN Mentor, was a Melvil Dewey Award recipient, and received the ALA Medal of Excellence for Leadership and Service. He co-authored Model Policies for Small and Medium Public Libraries and authored two works on diversity in collection development for youth and children.

**Rose Treviño (1951-2010)** was a public librarian at both the Houston Public Library and the San Antonio Public Library. San Antonio’s first Hispanic Branch Manager, Rose promoted children’s books and literacy programs in underserved communities. Rose served on the Texas Bluebonnet Committee, the Children’s Round Table, and the 2 x 2 Reading List Committee. She was a Siddie Jo Johnson Award recipient (1997), and chaired ALA’s Newbery Committee (2009). With Pat Mora, Rose promoted El día de los libros, El día de los niños in Texas. Rose authored five books and created the Nation’s first bilingual Born to Read Program. She served on the Board of Directors of ALSC and REFORMA. Rose volunteered as a reader at the Children’s Shelter of San Antonio.