



Request for Coverage

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LeVar Burton, Al Roker, Dav Pilkey, Gene Luen Yang, and 200+ Speakers Address Educating Youth and Creating a Nation of Readers in Today's Digital World

April 19 – 22, 2016 at the George R. Brown Convention Center

AUSTIN – Librarians from around the state are preparing for the 2016 TLA Annual Conference, taking place in Houston, April 19 – 22, where more than 7,500 industry professionals will gather over four days, with 200 information and library leaders, policy experts, and authors to cover topics including technology trends, makerspaces, literacy initiatives, advocacy, information and data management sessions, among numerous of today's most pressing information and education issues.

The convention features a talented selection of experts and leaders in all areas of information and library services. Some of the keynote authors include Emmy award winner, host, and executive producer of the PBS series *Reading Rainbow* **LeVar Burton**, nationally-acclaimed newsman and author **Al Roker**, Caldecott Honor Award-winning author and illustrator **Dav Pilkey**, National Ambassador for Young People's Literature (2016-17) **Gene Luen Yang**, and many others. A full list of the 200 plus speakers as well as session details on the over 300 programs and events is available through the show's website: www.txla.org/annual-conference. Most authors will be available for signing autographs in the exhibit hall.

The exhibit hall will also feature the [largest state library trade show](#) in the nation. Continuing its tradition of serving as the premier marketplace of ideas and information services, the showcase will also feature close to 500 companies, publishers, media outlets, and professional library services organizations.

The gathering will serve as the official launch of "Ideas Powered: It's What We Do" ® – a campaign showcasing the modern library learning environment and community-based service offered through the state. School, public, and university libraries throughout our state serve millions of Texans and support education, business and entrepreneurship, innovation, workforce development, and much more.

[Conference website](#)
[Conference program](#)

Selected Conference Event Highlights by Day

Tuesday, April 19

- **Tech Creation Institute: Beyond Text** (Ticketed) | **9:00am – 4:30pm**
TLA's inaugural Academic Preconference (ticketed event) will take place on Tuesday, April 19th,

from 9:00am - 4:30pm. This event is for librarians interested in moving their practice forward and in need of additional technological know-how.

- **Tech Camp (Ticketed) | 10:50am – 3:30pm**
TLA's acclaimed TECH Camp returns with new content to equip participants with skills and knowledge to maximize social media platforms, web applications, digital content, and tech tools that wow students, teachers, and administrators.
- **The Internet of Everything – Wearable, Embedded Technology – What Does it Mean for Us? | 2:00pm – 2:50pm**
The Internet is embedded in everything from hoodies to home appliances – all via mobile apps and remote access. What is the Internet of Everything? What does this mean for library security, wifi, and other management concerns?
- **Great Ideas Poster Session | 4:30pm – 6:00pm**
TLA members open minds by presenting their innovative ideas in the form of Poster Sessions. See the showcase of how open libraries open opportunities for people of all ages; new ideas that empower our profession and our customers; and tools with an immediate impact. Leave with takeaways to implement in your library.
- **Launch Party: Ideas Powered: It's What We Do | 5:30pm – 7:30pm**
Join TLA for the launch of Ideas Powered: It's What We Do®, a public awareness campaign showcasing innovation and technology-centered work being done in today's libraries. The event will feature an interactive "Ideas Wall" with award-winning illustrators, the campaign video trailer, and giveaways while supplies last.

Wednesday, April 20

- **GENERAL SESSION I with LeVar Burton | 8:30am – 10:00am**
LeVar Burton has created some of television's most memorable characters – Kunta Kinte in *Roots* and Geordi La Forge in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. For legions of children, Burton is most recognized for his award-winning PBS program, *Reading Rainbow*, which has promoted reading for over two decades. Recently, Burton turned to Kickstarter to bring Reading Rainbow to children everywhere, especially to classrooms in need. The campaign met its 35-day goal of raising \$1 million in less than 11 hours and became the most popular Kickstarter campaign a final tally of over \$6.4 million. As a result, in 2015 RRRKidz introduced Reading Rainbow EDU. This literacy advocate will share his professional and personal story with you. Burton's first children's book, *The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm*, was published last year.
- **Miles From Tomorrowland | 10:15am – 11:50am**
Disney Junior's Miles from Tomorrowland is an intergalactic adventure series for kids 2-7 that charts the outer space missions of young adventurer Miles Callisto and his family. Hear from the show's creator and the space, science, and technology experts who consult on the series, which is designed to encourage kids to explore their natural curiosity in STEM fields.
- **Opening Author Session (Ticketed Luncheon) | Noon – 1:50pm**
Powerful women telling stories: now that's a true fast of narrative and performance talent. Two-time Grammy winner Rita Coolidge and acclaimed writers Carolyn Haines, Paulette Jiles, and Laura Lippman discuss their recent works, life, and creative inspiration.
- **Open Access: What You Need to Know | 2:00pm – 3:50pm**
Open access for academic journals and other scholarly publications is reshaping the university in the broader world. The panelists represent a diverse group of opinions in open access.
- **On Our Own: eBook Platforms by and for Libraries | 2:00pm – 3:50pm**
Libraries are working together to build eBook platforms that allow users to borrow immediately and read anywhere and anytime. Spearheaded by New York Public's Library Simplified, Amigos' eShelf, and CALIFA's Enki, this technology is available. Explore plans for delivering econtent from

the Big Five publishers with three clicks or less convenience on a national, federated scale through an open source app.

- **Spanish Language Books: International Vendors and Publishers | 4:00pm – 5:20pm**
Vendors and publishers of Spanish language books will help librarians discover up-and-coming authors and illustrators.
- **Children’s Book Illustrators Ultimate Sketch-Off | 5:00pm – 6:00pm**
Back by popular demand, renowned children’s book illustrators will compete in an ultimate sketch-off! Can these gifted and award-winning artists, confined by time and pressure, sketch a masterpiece better than their peers? Contestants: David Gordon, Tad Hills, Frank Morrison, Greg Pizzoli, Adam Rubin, Dan Salmieri, and Sara Varon.

Thursday, April 21

- **Data Management Basics and Best Practices | 9:00am - 9:50am**
Data management, data lifecycle, and data management plan are just a few of the data-related buzz words being discussed among librarians across the country. Learn the basics of these terms, data management best practices (that can also be used to improve how we, as librarians, work with data), and ways in which the library community can support the data management needs of researchers.
- **Copyright and Digital Collections: Lessons from Astrodome Memories | 10:00am – 11:20am**
Five Houston archives have partnered with each other and the public to create an online exhibit for Astrodome history and memories. This IMLS-grant funded project includes creating a model for managing copyright concerns. Learn about issues, progress, and a copyright manual that resulted from this work.
- **Texas Bluebonnet Award (Ticketed Luncheon) | Noon – 1:30pm**
This nationally-recognized children’s book award program selects a top winner every year. Voted on by over 100,000 Texas children, the TBA award is among the most coveted literary honors in the nation.
- **Keeping the Doors Open: Service in Times of Strife | 2:00pm - 3:50pm**
Panelists share their experiences keeping the library doors open and providing services to the community during times of unrest and upheaval, including during community rioting and natural disasters. Attendees will hear about challenges and practicalities related to such service.
- **GENERAL SESSION II with Al Roker | 4:00pm – 5:30pm**
What do you get when combine your world class talents on meteorological reporting, suspenseful writing, and documenting historical events? A can’t-put-down read on the Gulf Coast storm of 1900. Acclaimed NBC weatherman Al Roker’s latest book, *The Storm of the Century*, is a riveting look at history and the impact of one of the greatest natural disasters of all time. Roker is the author of several books – including a murder mystery series as well as a personal account of his own life and challenges with health issues. Roker provides a unique perspective on the news, weather, history, writing, and using all of one’s strengths and struggles to craft a meaningful life and work experience. Join him for a truly singular conference experience.
- **Book Cart Drill Team Competition | 5:30pm – 6:30pm**
Talented librarians show off their skills around those tried and true library tools – book carts. You can do much more with them than move books around! Teams of librarians dance to choreographed numbers as they vie for the title of Book Cart Drill Team Champions!

Friday, April 22

- **Role of Makerspaces in Curriculum and Assessment | 9:00am - 9:50am**

Makerspaces are highlight engaging for students and can stretch learners to use higher levels of thinking and problem solving as well as provide opportunities to collaborate the speakers will demonstrate how they employ makerspaces to challenge students, integrate the TEKS, and assess student learning.

- **Open Libraries on the Front Lines | 9:00am - 9:50am**
Baltimore erupted in protests on April 27, 2015 primarily outside the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Pennsylvania Avenue Branch, after the funeral of Freddie Gray, an African American man who died in police custody. Come hear branch manager Melanie Townsend Diggs discuss the decisions she and CEO Dr. Carla Hayden made to keep the library open during the unrest and the outpouring of support from the community and donors from across the country
- **Diverse & Digital: eBooks, Bilingual Books, and More from Independent and Multicultural Publishers | 10:00am - 11:20am**
Independent publishers share information about availability of their materials for libraries, whether through econtent providers or traditional book wholesalers. Publishers will be joined by a multimedia selection librarian, who will shed light on acquiring eBooks from the library perspective.
- **Poetry for the Public | 10:00am - 11:20am**
This program will focus on a variety of poetry programs launched at the Houston Public Library. These include "Public Poetry," a monthly program featuring readings by local and student poets, poetry workshops, and the Poet Laureate Program, which was partly inspired by the success of poetry programs at the library. Featuring: Robin Davidson, Houston Poet Laureate; Jack McBride, Writers in the Schools; Fran Sanders, Public Poetry; Jennifer Schwartz, Houston Public Library; and Gwendolyn Zepeda, Houston Poet Laureate (2013-2015).
- **Closing Author Session with Gene Luen Yang (Ticketed) | Noon - 1:20pm**
Yang will travel nationwide as National Ambassador for Young People's Literature to promote his platform, "Reading Without Walls." Yang's goal at TLA will be to raise national awareness of the importance of young people's literature as it relates to lifelong literacy, education, and the development and betterment of the lives of young people.
- **GENERAL SESSION III with Dav Pilkey | 1:30pm - 2:10pm**
New York Times bestselling author Dav Pilkey is the creator of the wildly popular *Captain Underpants* series, among other critically-acclaimed works. Beyond his own tremendous writing success, Pilkey is a respected voice on many of the issues of concern to the literary and information community. A champion of intellectual freedom and passionate advocate for reading, Pilkey offers insight on and off the page.

The Association also develops [reading lists](#) for all ages. These lists are created to promote a love of reading. Conference will feature authors and educators discussing the diverse 2015 lists.

- [Lone Star Reading List](#) (for sixth through eighth grade), Thursday, April 21, 10am
- [Tayshas List](#) (High School), Thursday, April 21, 10am
- [Texas Bluebonnet Award](#) Winner (list for third through sixth grade), Thursday, April 21, noon
- [Lariat List](#) (Adult Fiction), Tuesday, April 19, 4pm
- [Spirit of Texas Reading Program](#): (for middle school), Wednesday, April 20, 2pm
- [Texas Little Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List](#) (for K-5), Friday, April 22, 10am
- [Maverick Graphic Novel List](#) (for sixth through 12th grade), Friday, April 22, 9 am
- [Texas 2X2 Reading List](#) (for ages two through second grade), Thursday, April 21, 8am
- [Tejas Star Book Award](#) (for grades K-6 to promote bilingualism and multilingualism), Tuesday, April 19, 4pm

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Members of the media may request press passes.

About the Texas Library Association

TLA is the largest state library association in the United States with almost 7,000 members who work in public, school, academic, and special libraries and who support educational institutions. TLA offers a wide range of services, including advocacy, continuing education, research, and public relations. For more information, see www.txla.org or call 512-328-1518.