

Maryland State Library for the Blind & Print Disabled Named Library of the Year

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The Maryland State Library Agency is pleased to announce that the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), under the Library of Congress, has honored the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBDP) as the Regional Library of the Year for 2024. This specialized library, unique in its comprehensive services, caters to those who are unable to access traditional print.

“While NLS administers the national program, it’s our network libraries that enroll patrons and provide direct service to them,” said NLS Director Jason Broughton. “It’s to these libraries that patrons turn first when they have questions about service or equipment, when they want recommendations for books to read, and when they want to connect with other book lovers. The Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled goes above and beyond that core mission by sponsoring programs, events, and classes that are educational, creative, and just plain fun.”

Under the direction of John Owen, LBDP serves nearly 7,000 customers throughout Maryland. In addition to loaning materials in audio and Braille, LBDP has a collection of large-print books for youth and adults. LBDP offers its patrons access to NFB-NEWSLINE, the National Federation of the Blind’s audio news service, and Bookshare, which provides additional audio and e-books.

Among its other services, LBDP provides access to college textbooks through the Maryland Accessible Textbook program (MAT) and offers assistive technology training through the Technology User Group (TUG). The MAT program, which was established to serve Marylanders attending 2- to 4-year colleges within the state, contributed to the academic success of nearly 100 students in 2023 through accessible textbooks.

“This award recognizes the excellent customer service that each and every MD LBDP staff member gives every day,” Owen said. “This is a team award and I celebrate their commitment and creativity to the mission ‘That All May Read.’”

LBDP’s 21 staff members include Youth Services Librarian and 2024 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker LaShawn Myles, who works with young patrons, parents, guardians, teachers and schools. The library also has a Marketing and Outreach Librarian who provides adult event opportunities and coordinates outreach. The Patron Services Librarian and a team of two manage reference services and readers advisory. The Collection Development Librarian and Recording Studio Manager curates the large-print

and “Marylandia” audiobook collection. A Technical Services team is responsible for creating, pulling, and shipping books and magazines across the state.

“I’m thrilled for the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled and for the dedicated staff and leadership team that helped make this award possible,” said Maryland State Librarian Morgan Lehr Miller. “LBPD provides invaluable resources for our communities and plays a key role in making Maryland libraries and the services they provide accessible to all.”

For more information about the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, [visit the website](#) or call 410-230-2424.

About the Maryland State Library Agency

The Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) is an independent agency providing strategic leadership and guidance to Maryland’s public libraries. MSLA promotes the planning and implementation of library programs, supports staff and career development through education and training, and facilitates resource sharing among libraries. MSLA oversees the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, Maryland’s Public Libraries, the State Library Network, the Public Library Capital Grants Program, and the Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library.

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