



Fall 2022 LibraryLinkNJ Membership Meeting - VALE Update

Ann D. Hoang,
VALE Executive Committee Chair
December 13, 2022

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the LibraryLinkNJ fall membership meeting. On behalf of the VALE Executive Committee, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year.

The Virtual Academic Library Environment (VALE), a consortium of 50 New Jersey college and university libraries and the New Jersey State Library, is dedicated to furthering excellence in learning and research through innovative and collaborative approaches to information resources and services. VALE's mission is to help institutions meet the demands of students and faculty for access to scholarly materials.

VALE's core purpose is to serve as a cooperative to reduce resource costs through shared purchasing and licensing and to foster the exchange of ideas and expertise to transform NJ member libraries. While VALE focuses primarily on member libraries, it also partners with ACRL-NJ/NJLA-CUS, which focuses on individual member support, and Edge, which allows improved communication with higher education administrators and academic leaders and serves as the fiduciary agent to VALE.

The three main impact areas are Collaboration and Community, Collections and Content, and Customization.

The VALE's operating budget derives from a service fee assessed to its members. Since 2017, with one full-time employee, VALE aggressively pursued new resources, increased revenues on average by 5.5%, and kept annual renewal increases below 4% for subscribers. In September 2022, VALE processed just over \$4.5 million worth of subscriptions for its members, a growth in resource subscriptions by 6.67% over the FY2021.

VALE is committed to negotiating licenses with vendors on behalf of its members and acquiring more and more relevant and unique resources into the hands of the New Jersey higher education community. A major focus for FY2023 is on streaming media. VALE envisions a negotiation of a consortium-wide "all-in" contract for a product that would cover as many subject disciplines as possible to encourage participation from all member libraries.

Along with providing access to electronic resources, VALE also focuses its efforts on Open Educational Resources (OER). VALE's efforts are intended to make higher education in New

Jersey more affordable and accessible and assist with removing barriers to enrollment. Since 2019, VALE has been actively supporting its members with various programs, from education and training to developing an OER repository to an online certificate program.

- **OER Ambassador Program.** VALE appointed three academic librarians to serve as OER Ambassadors from May 2021 to June 2023. These OER Ambassadors are expected to lead a two-year, coordinated, statewide effort to advance OER and textbook affordability in NJ higher education.
- **OpenNJ OER Repository.** The OpenNJ is a statewide referatorium repository developed for New Jersey higher education institutions for its educators to find and access OER materials. This resource is intended to build a community of practice around OER. It allows educators to learn who uses what materials already and what they might consider for their own use.
- **VALE-NJ OER Certificate Program.** During spring 2022, the VALE OER Ambassadors piloted a 5-week online course to introduce academic librarians across the VALE network to OER. The focus of the course was to develop collaborative, multi-institutional solutions to increase the use and application of OER across NJ's colleges and universities.

The upcoming virtual New Jersey Academic Libraries (NJAL) Conference will take place on **Friday, January 6, 2023**. The theme is "*Supporting the Academic Community and Beyond: The Power of Community, Collaboration, and Connection.*" VALE welcomes Xan Goodman, Health Sciences Librarian at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas as the 2023 keynote speaker. Ms. Goodman's keynote address will focus on how cultural humility may offer a hopeful approach to the pressing challenges facing libraries. The 2023 NJAL conference will feature 5 posters and 20 breakout sessions, including 6 lightning talks and 7 roundtable discussions. Registration opened the week of December 5th. Read more about the conference on VALE's website. VALE welcomes all non-academic librarians and library workers to register and attend the NJAL conference.

On June 9, 2022, the Members Council meeting elected four (4) new members to the VALE Executive Committee. The members include Janet Hauge, Atlantic Cape Community College; Donna Rosinski-Kauz, Ocean County College; Leigh Keller, Ramapo College; and Kurt Wagner, Monmouth University. Each newly elected board member assumes their role for a two-year term, 2022-2024.

On July 7, 2022, the VALE Executive members elected new leaders and four (4) subcommittees co-chairs.

New Officers

- Ann Hoang, University Librarian at New Jersey Institute of Technology, was elected VALE Chair. Hoang became the seventh chair and will assume her role for a two-year term, 2022-2024.
- Marilyn Ochoa, Director of Library Services at Middlesex College, was re-elected as VALE Vice Chair in July 2022 and will assume her role for a two-year term, 2022-2024.
- Taras Pavlovsky, Dean of the Library at The College of New Jersey, was re-elected as VALE Treasure and will assume his role for a two-year term, 2022-2024.

New Subcommittees Co-Chairs

- Purchasing and Licensing Subcommittee, the Co-Chairs, are Leigh Keller, Ramapo College and Kurt Wagner, Monmouth University.
- OER Subcommittee, the Co-Chairs, are Rob Hilliker, Rowan University and Dorianne Mizzy, Montclair State University
- Outreach Subcommittee, the Co-Chairs are Janet Hauge, Atlantic Cape Community College and Edward Owusu-Ansah, William Paterson University
- Planning and Assessment Subcommittee, the Co-Chairs are Ana Fontoura, Fairleigh Dickinson University, and Donna Rosinski-Kauz, Ocean County College

On September 23, VALE held a successful Members Council meeting to introduce the newly elected vice chair, officers, and members of the Executive Committee. The VALE Members Council consists of the chief library administrators of all VALE member institutions. Its purpose is governance and networking. The VALE Members Council elects the members of the Executive Committee, approves VALE's annual budgets, and any changes that need to be made to VALE's Bylaws. The Members Council also serves as the primary supportive body for liaising at the local level, providing a forum for programming and discussions in support of VALE's mission.

On October 17, VALE hired Joe Toth as the Interim VALE Program Manager to continue the great work started by Melissa Lena, who resigned after 4.5 years

In November, the VALE Officers began drafting a new MOU between VALE and Edge. In 2013, VALE and Edge entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement, where VALE would become a subscribing partner of NJEdge.Net, a non-profit agency and technology consortium. VALE is seeking a new MOU with Edge to include a more definitive and intuitive fiscal sponsor agreement between the two organizations. The new MOU will also incorporate languages that would support future services if VALE is inspired to expand its mission, scale, and scope.

I am excited to build on the previous successes of VALE's past chairs and work on priority issues that matter most to the VALE libraries. I would like to thank LibraryLinkNJ and our other partner organizations for your support through collaborations. We have many opportunities, and I look forward to seeing what the future unfolds.