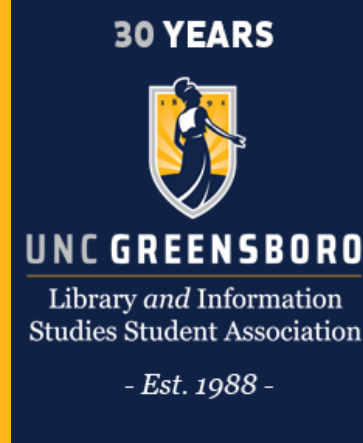


# Diversity In Action: A LISSA 30th Anniversary Initiative

Melissa Capozio, Allyson Frick, Nele Fritz, Dillon Heath, Tori Hopper, & Ashlea Johnson

UNCG Library and Information Studies Student Association



The Library and Information Studies Student Association (LISSA) at the University of North Carolina Greensboro has embraced diversity and inclusion by implementing a focused effort to arm our students with tangible ways to apply diversity in the LIS field instead of simply using the term as a buzzword for progress. At the same time, our organization celebrated its 30th year, leading us to establish the UNCG LISSA Diversity In Action 30th Anniversary Initiative.

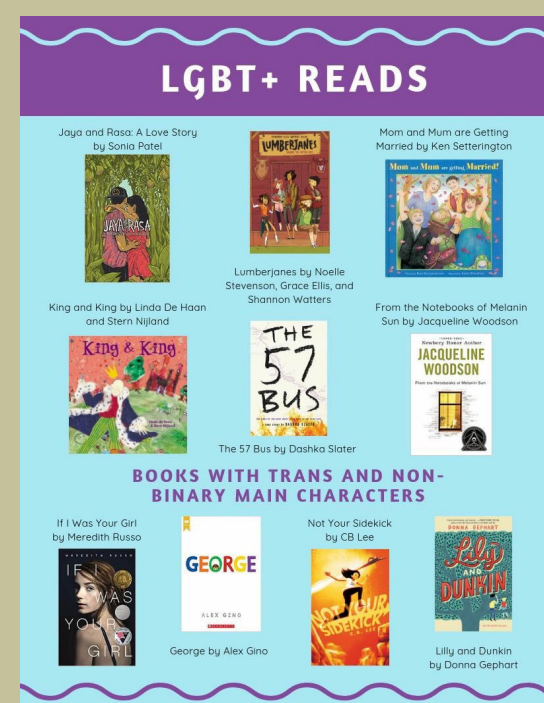
## Diversity Librarian Welcome Reception

In November, LISSA held a reception to welcome Deborah Yun Caldwell, the newest Diversity Resident Librarian at UNCG's Jackson Library. During this reception, LIS faculty/staff and students were invited to come meet Deborah and socialize over snacks.



## Diverse Materials Social Media Focus

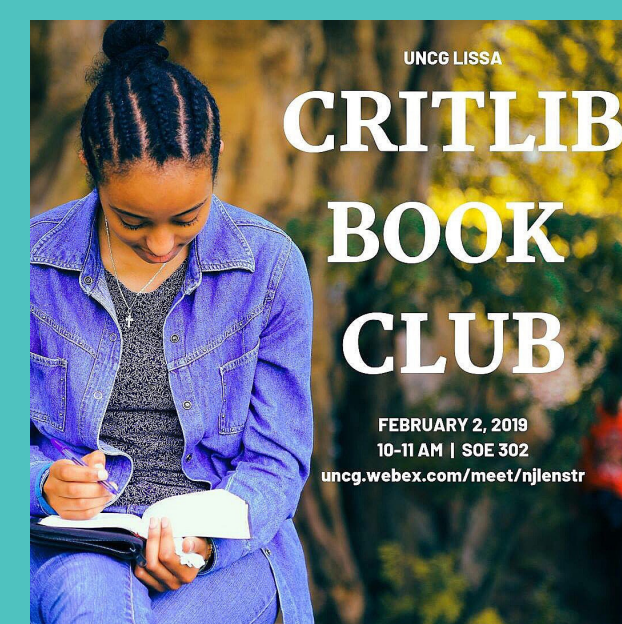
LISSA is focused on providing diverse resources for our student members. Utilizing our social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, we have shared flyers with our followers featuring print and electronic resources that promote diversity in all its forms, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, & ability.



## Critical Librarianship Bookclub

As part of our Diversity In Action Initiative, LISSA teamed up with UNCG Diversity Resident Librarian, Deborah Yun Caldwell, and UNCG Lecturer, Dr. LaTasha Velez, to create a safe space for LIS students to discuss critical librarianship. The term 'critlib' is short for critical librarianship and is defined by critlib.org as "a movement of library workers dedicated to bring social justice principles into our work in libraries." Our monthly meetings strive to assist our students both in and out of the library field by providing applicable theories to their current and future work. The meetings are moderated to ensure student safety. Topics discussed have already included:

- Students' reasons for participating in the book club and their interest in #critlib
- Privilege and anti-oppression resources
- Incidents of verbal attacks and harassment in librarianship and more



## Black History Month Storytime

In celebration of Black History Month, the LISSA Executive Board organized a storytime event with the Royce and Jane Reynolds' Boys and Girls Club of the Greensboro Salvation Army. During the storytime, LISSA members read books to K-2 students about famous African Americans and civil rights events in U.S. history, as well as popular children's books by black authors. During the storytime, we engaged the students in discussion, answered questions, and helped them make connections between the stories and their own lives. This was a valuable opportunity to share important topics related to our overall Diversity Initiative with young children. We were able to promote ideas such as equality, tolerance, perseverance, and an appreciation for the accomplishments of black Americans to our nation's history. Through this event, we aimed to demonstrate our commitment to diversity not only in word but through active volunteerism. We also hope to continue holding storytimes for the rest of the academic year, returning to the Boys and Girls Club once each month to share books that reflect other aspects of diversity upon each visit.



## Diverse Librarian Speaker Series

Aware that the majority of our LIS students are white, female, cis-gender individuals, LISSA hopes to provide a platform for diverse voices through its Diversity Librarian Speaker Series. The series features individuals who are from diverse groups or who have worked with members of underrepresented and diverse groups. Our organization has arranged for a monthly speaker to present a topic of their choosing, facilitate a discussion forum, and share helpful resources.

In October, Dr. LaTasha Velez shared "How to Be an Ally in LIS Professions". The presentation discussed the definition of an ally, Dr. Velez's preferred title of a "conspirator," along with tips and resources for how to support diverse groups in libraries. Dr. Velez is a LIS lecturer at UNCG.



Our January speaker, Deborah Yun Caldwell, discussed her position as UNCG's Diversity Resident Librarian. She presented information about what the position of a diversity resident librarian is, how they operate, and information about her own personal background.



In March, Gerald Holmes will discuss the Library Diversity Institute Project, a program that addresses the needs of professionally underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in order to advance diversity in U.S. academic libraries. Gerald is the Diversity Coordinator for UNCG Libraries.



Our second March speaker, Kaetrena Davis Kendrick, will host a discussion forum on questions about diversity from our own LISSA members. Kaetrena was recently honored as ACRL's 2019 Librarian of the Year and works to shed light on diversity topics in the LIS profession.

