Mary Ellen Icaza, CEO/Director, Stark County District Library (Canton, OH), is a candidate for the position of PLA Director-at-Large. The election will be held March 14 – April 6, 2022. She is currently accepting endorsements for her campaign and has asked for the endorsement of the Ohio Library Council. Most importantly, Mary Ellen is currently a member of the OLC Board of Directors.

Below is information about Mary Ellen.

Mary Ellen Icaza joined Stark County District Library in 2018 as CEO and Executive Director. Prior to joining Stark County District Library, Mary Ellen led educational programming, community outreach, and special events for Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) in Maryland as assistant director of programs and outreach. Previously, she was the virtual services program manager for MCPL, responsible for the development and implementation of all web and social media communications and new technologies. In 2018, Mary Ellen was honored with the EPIC Award for Education from Montgomery Community Media, which recognizes leaders for excellence in creating and sharing within the community. In 2004, she was named a Library Journal “Mover & Shaker” and was selected as a participant in the 2015 American Library Association Leadership Institute.

Mary Ellen earned a Master of Library Science from the University of Maryland and a Bachelor of Arts in English (magna cum laude) from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. She lives in Canton, OH with her husband Javier, children Christian and Victoria, and pet cheagle Marcie. In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, binge-watching TV shows, and spending time with family and friends.

**Personal Statement**

“I want to serve as part of PLA leadership to give back to my profession and be an advocate to continue to move public libraries forward. I am passionate about advocacy and adequate funding for public libraries to sustain our future; equity, diversity, and inclusion of services, programs, materials for all in our communities; and learning, from early literacy to adult workforce development. Libraries need to tell our stories of how we serve our communities so that we receive support to continue our mission, and I want to play an active role in those efforts.”

**About the Election**

In the 2022 PLA election, six nominees will stand for three positions – PLA President and two Directors-at-Large. These are crucial leadership roles that will guide PLA into the next several years, ensuring that PLA delivers on its core purpose to strengthen public libraries and their contribution to the communities they serve.
March 7, 2022

Ms. Michelle Francis
Ohio Library Council
495 Metro Pl S, #350
Dublin, OH 43017

Dear Ms. Francis:

The Public Library Association election is March 14 - April 6. I am running for PLA's Board of Directors at Large, and I respectfully request the endorsement of the Ohio Library Council for my candidacy.

Since becoming the Stark Library CEO and Executive Director in 2018, I have actively participated in the OLC, via the Legislative Network to presently serving on the Board. Additionally, my library is an institutional member of the organization, and we support any staff wishing to become individual members with partial financial reimbursement for membership.

I want to serve as part of PLA leadership to give back to my profession and be an advocate in continuing to move public libraries forward. I am passionate about advocacy and adequate funding for public libraries to sustain our future; equity, diversity, and inclusion of services, programs, and materials for all in our communities; and learning, from early literacy to adult workforce development. Libraries need to tell our stories of how we serve our communities so that we receive support to continue our mission, and I want to play an active role in those efforts.

I care deeply about the work we do in public libraries, what we stand for, and the people working in this profession. Libraries are community anchors, and I wholeheartedly believe in the value that we bring to our communities. I want to do all that I can to ensure public libraries will continue to stay relevant for many years to come.

Throughout my career I have been engaged in PLA. Most recently, I have served on the PLA Task Force on Family Engagement and the Public Libraries Advisory Group. During the PLA 2022 Conference, I will serve on a panel of library directors during the “Finding Your Library Leadership Pathway” pre-conference.

I am proud of the work that I have done as a supporter of Ohio Libraries and OLC, and I am committed to doing this on the national level for PLA. I strongly support the mission of PLA and the work the organization does to support its members in the work they do, and I want to contribute to moving the organization forward for its membership and the communities that we serve.
Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Icaza
CEO/Executive Director