



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPOINTS CHRISTINE SCHONHART AS NEXT DIRECTOR OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Schonhart joins Buffalo's oldest cultural institution from Brooklyn Public Library

BUFFALO, N.Y. – [May 21, 2026] – Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is pleased to announce the appointment of **Christine Schonhart** as Library Director. The appointment was approved by the Library's Board of Trustees earlier today following a national search.

A native of Western New York, Ms. Schonhart brings over 25 years of library leadership to the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. She holds a Master of Library Science from the University at Buffalo and Bachelor of Science and Business Administration from Fredonia State University of New York. She currently serves as Deputy Chief Librarian at Brooklyn Public Library, and has previously served as director of Brooklyn Central Library in New York, the King County Library System in Washington State, as well as Boston Public Library and Gleason Public Library in Massachusetts.

“On behalf of our Board, we welcome Christine Schonhart to lead the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. Schonhart offers the strategic expertise and operational excellence we sought, and the community-minded spirit to remain, always, *Profoundly Public*” said **Carima El-Behairy, chair, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees.**

Ms. Schonhart will assume the role of permanent Director in early August 2026. She will succeed Interim Director Dorinda Darden, appointed last spring due to the illness and passing of Library Director John Spears.

“After a period of loss and transition, the Library is excited to welcome a new chapter for the people’s cultural institution in Buffalo,” added **El-Behairy**. “We are confident Christine Schonhart will not only meet this moment of transformation for our communities and libraries, but also will be a trusted voice and advocate against troubling, organized challenges to the free access to information.”

El-Behairy continued, “The Board of Trustees is grateful to Librarian Dorinda Darden, whose steady leadership and more than thirty years’ experience helped to move our mission forward through extraordinary circumstances.”

Nearly two centuries old, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is Buffalo’s oldest cultural institution and is home to one of the nation’s most singular public library collections. Downtown

Buffalo's Central Library spans two city blocks, and the system comprises 37 branches across urban, suburban, and rural locations—serving as an essential community hub across Erie County.

See the *Buffalo & Erie County Public Library* website [here](#).

About Buffalo & Erie County Public Library

Established in 1836, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is Buffalo's oldest cultural institution. *Profoundly Public* in all we do, the Library serves more than 2.35 million visitors annually through 37 branches and mobile services. The Library also houses over 3.2 million resources, extensive digital collections, and innovative programming. With a collection of international and national note, the Library continues to significantly impact community education, equity, and cultural enrichment. In 2025, every dollar invested returned \$4.24 in community benefits, totaling over \$131 million in annual value. To explore resources and services, visit www.BuffaloLib.org.

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Interviews available with Board Chair Carima El-Behairy.



*Newly-appointed Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director
Christine Schonhart*

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