

# Bios for Moderator and Panelists

## BCCR Book Banning Informational Forum

October 4, 2023

Hybrid Event

Held via Zoom and at Bridgewater Public Library, Bridgewater MA

### The Moderator

**Carole Copeland Thomas** has been impacting the world in a significant way for over thirty-five years. Captivating audiences around the world since starting her business in 1987, Carole creates community as an internationally-recognized keynote speaker, thought leader, and cultural collaborator. She has spoken in nearly every state in the US and nine other countries, including England, Canada, Kenya, India, Guyana, Japan, El Salvador, South Africa, and Australia. Carole presented her signature message on "Facing Fear" at the TEDx Waltham event in Waltham, Massachusetts. The speech is available to view on the TEDx Channel on YouTube. In addition to her other business client activities, Carole currently serves as the Interim Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Curry College in Milton, Massachusetts.

### The Panelists

**Pamela Hayes-Bohanan** earned her Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Arizona in 1991. She has been a librarian at Bridgewater State University for the last 26 years, and been interested in book bans since the Reagan Administration. Her favorite banned books are *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, and *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury.

**Jed Phillips** is the director of Bridgewater Public Library. With a library career spanning more than a decade, Jed began his librarianship in Information Services as well as Technology and User Experience before moving into library administration. A vocal advocate for freedom of information, he shares a growing concern for the recent increased prevalence of censorship and information restriction rhetoric. When not serving at the library, Jed can be most often found in the woods foraging for mushrooms or enjoying a nice cup of tea at home with his partner and two cats.

**Kristine Richards** is the Coordinator of Teaching and Learning for the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Brandeis in English and American Literature and Elementary Education, a Masters of Education from Framingham State University in Literacy and Language, and a Masters in Education Administration from Endicott College. This is her 23rd year in education. She spent 7 years as an elementary school classroom teacher, 12 years as a K-5 literacy specialist and instructional coach, and is now in her fifth year as a central office administrator in Bridgewater-Raynham.

**Laura Rotolo** first joined the ACLU of Massachusetts in 2007 as a human rights fellow studying immigration detention conditions, and was part of the legal team that challenged the legality of the largest immigration raid in Massachusetts. Currently, Laura leads the Field team, which includes organizers, campaign strategists and policy experts. She works with advocates at the local, state and federal levels on issue-based campaigns and community building efforts. As a Latina and an immigrant from Argentina, she often advocates within Latinx communities in Massachusetts. Laura is a graduate of Tufts University, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and American University's Washington College of Law.