



INNOVATIONS IN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A presentation courtesy of ESLN

Friday, February 28, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Stephanie “Cole” Adams, Esq.



Empire State
Library Network

Stephanie "Cole" Adams is an attorney who advises libraries around the state of New York on operational and employment matters.

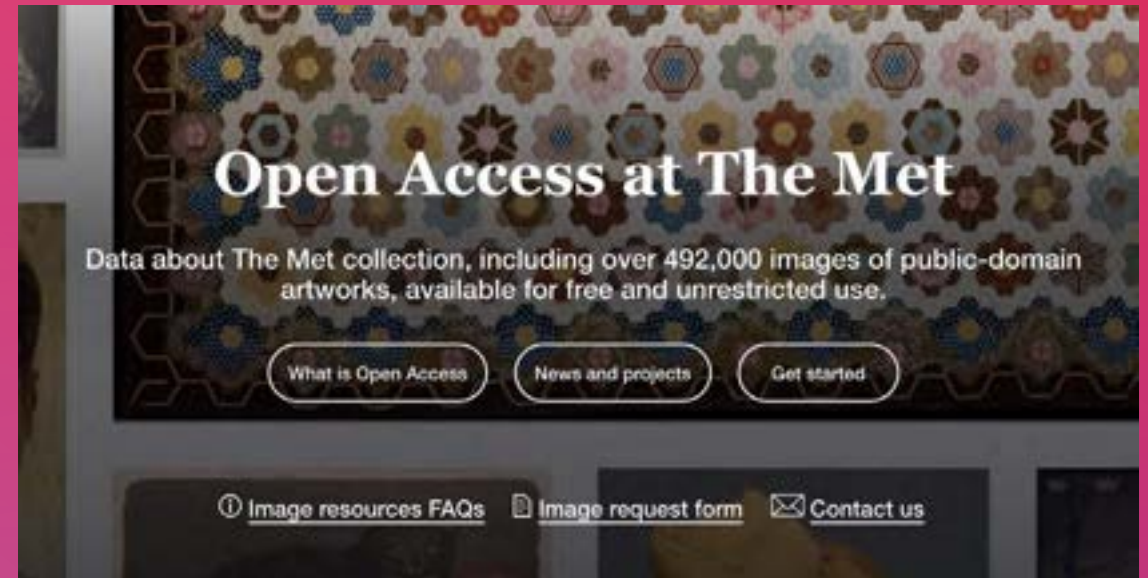
She got her start working with libraries as a page during high school.

Her law office in Buffalo, NY offers legal advice, services, and representation to help libraries and library workers to provide their communities with information access.

The images in this presentation are not presented for substance and all take-aways are in the handout that may be adapted for ADA purposes.

The images are all in the public domain and were located using “Open Access At the Met”, which is found at:

<https://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-met/policies-and-documents/open-access>





Musicians and Onlookers, Hans Schüpfelin, nd

Employee Benefit	How to Make it Happen
<p data-bbox="308 496 359 544">1</p> <p data-bbox="308 625 919 739">Update the Employee Manual</p> <p data-bbox="308 815 868 929">Adopt an Employee Manual</p>	<p data-bbox="996 625 2193 868">This is a project with an HR specialist or attorney that either starts fresh or updates a tired and out-of-date manual. The new/updated manual is passed by the board.</p>



“Album Containing Twelve Paintings of People Making Silk” Unknown Artist, 19th Century

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**On-site Child Care
Provider**

**On-site Elder
Companion Provider**

This can be via a third-party provider or provided in-house.

This can take many years of planning but is feasible either as an in-house offering or through a third-party contractor.



”Five People Working Like Ten” Ippōsai Yoshifuji , 1861

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**Educational
Assistance Program**

**This is a program set up in compliance
with the IRS guidance found here:**

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/frequently-asked-questions-about-educational-assistance-programs>



Blindman's Bluff, Page From a Dispersed Bhagavata Purana (Ancient Stories of Lord Vishnu), 1715-20

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**Employee
Assistance Program**

This is a third-party provided resource that can offer or connect workers and their family members to mental health counseling, child and elder care, credit counseling and financial planning, wellness, and other important supports.



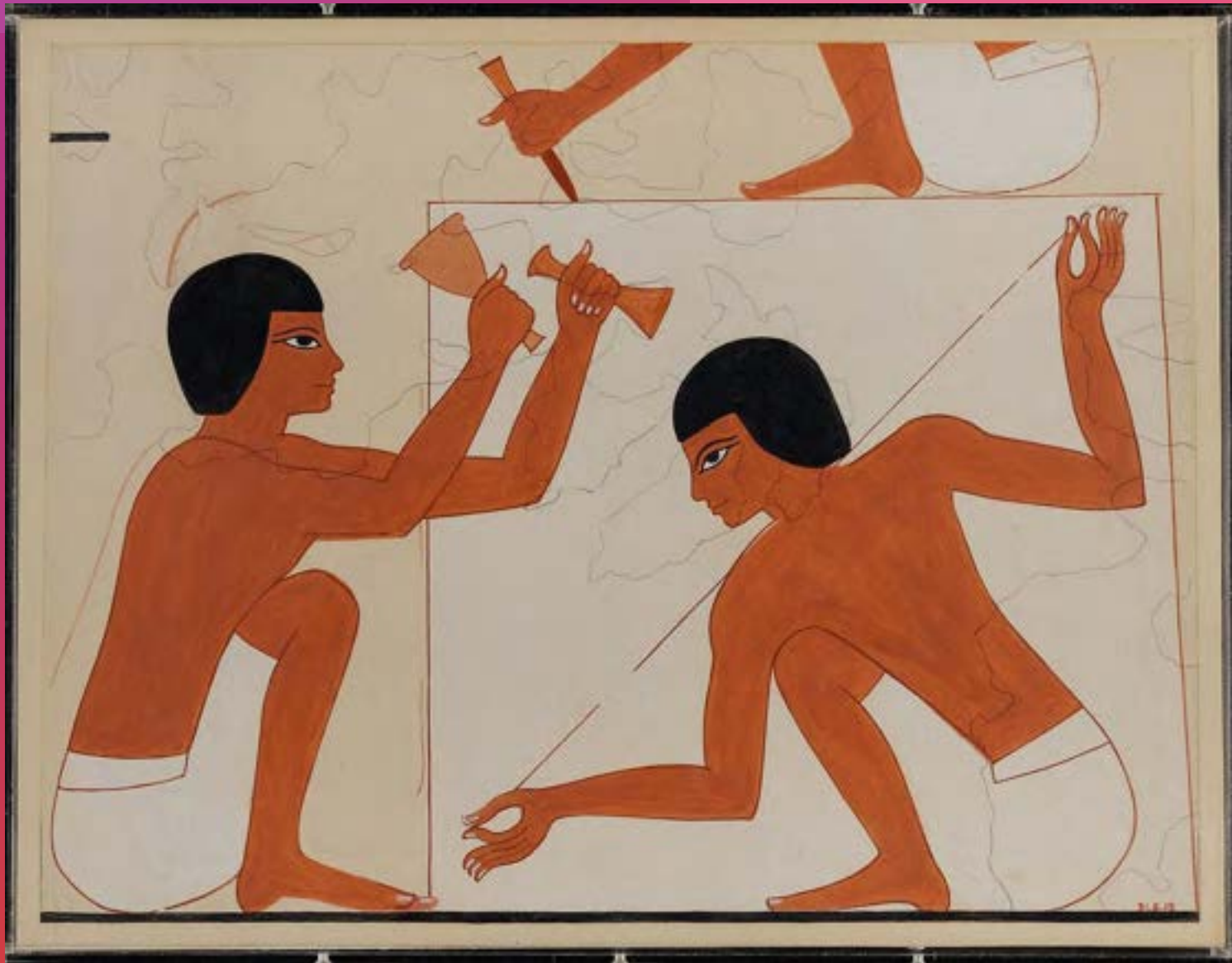
The Champion of the People (subject: Charles James Fox), Thomas Rowlandson, Pub. W. Humphrey, 1784

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On-site delivery acceptance benefits

**ASSOCIATION LIBRARIES,
COOPERATIVE SYSTEMS,
and COUNCILS ONLY.**

This is a policy allowing a limited number of personal packages to be delivered at the business location, to avoid loss through theft. *Public institutions should exercise care to avoid the perception of misuse of public resources.*



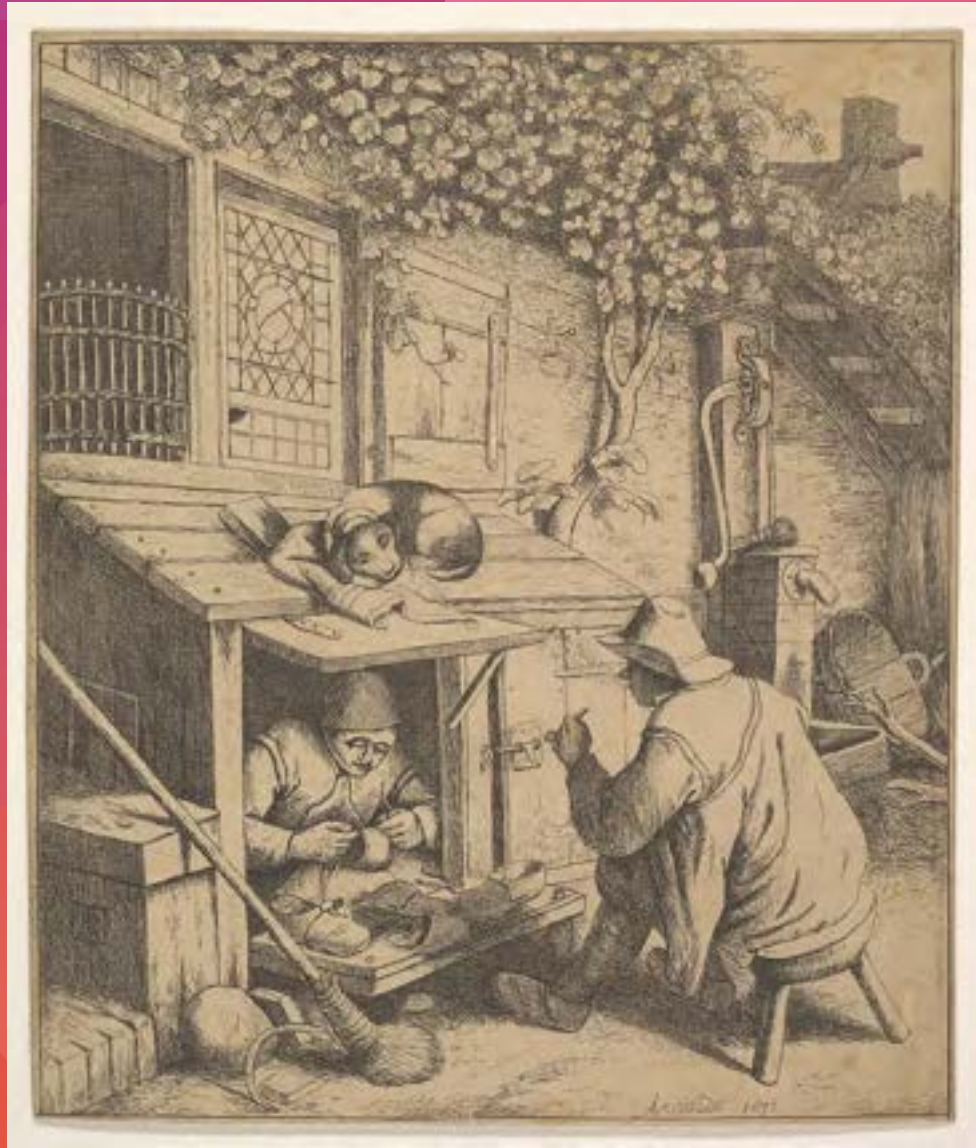
Masons Squaring a Block, Tomb of Rekhmire, New Kingdom, ca. 1479–1425 B.C.

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Affiliation benefits

**ASSOCIATION
LIBRARIES,
COOPERATIVE
SYSTEMS, and
COUNCILS ONLY.**

These are negotiated benefits that a local business may provide: 25% off coffee with any employee ID, etc.



The Cobbler, Dutch, no date

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Micro-award program

This is a budgeted program that offers small rewards for acknowledged acts of achievement, kindness and professionalism.

In a program like this, employees can nominate each other, and awards can be given monthly, quarterly...whatever works.

Examples could be: Movie tickets, a gift card for a nominal amount (\$20 or less), tickets to a local exhibit, etc.

Can be administered by the “Friends” if you have such an organization *but must be by written policy.*

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Rewards for the entire staff, such as a holiday party

Care should be exercised not to use public funds for purposes that do not benefit the library directly.



“Ladies Sewing”, Adachi Ginkō, 1887

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**Compensation
analysis, COLA, merit
raises, project
accomplishment
stipends**

**At the end of the day, competitive
compensation rates and positive
rewards for good performance can't be
beat.**

**This requires long-range commitment by
the governing board.**



The Gardener, Georges Seurat, 1882-1883

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“Continuum of Leave” FAQ covering sick leave, FMLA, PFML, WC, ADA, Disability, vacation, personal days, personal leave, and how they combine at your library.

Employees should be able to know how they can take time off to take care of themselves or their family, or as accommodation for a disability, without having to cross-reference four policies or sections of the collective bargaining agreement. A FAQ that takes employees through these different combinations can be very helpful.



Terracotta statuette of a teacher and a pupil Greek, Asia Minor late 4th–early 3rd century BCE

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**Structured
Individual “Fun
Days”**

This is the ability of an employee to work with their supervisor to structure a day that includes only the things they love best about their job.



“Railroad Wipers”, unknown photographer, estimated location: Brazil 1850s

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**Structured
Individual “Quiet
Days”**

For introverts! This is the ability of an employee to work with their supervisor to structure a day that includes a quiet day where only non-interactive work is done.



Rosaspina's drawing academy, Giulio Tomba, 1811

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**Opting in to Paid
Family Medical Leave**

Public entities only

Association libraries, cooperative library systems, and the councils have to offer Paid Family Medical Leave.

Public entities (municipal libraries, school district public libraries, etc.) can “opt in” to Paid Family Medical Leave, and the coverage can greatly enhance the ability of workers to take time out to take care of their families. This can be an effective tool for attracting new workers.

Caveat: if there is a union contract, the addition of PFML must be coordinated with the union before it is effective.



"Preparing Medicine from Honey", from a Dispersed Manuscript of an Arabic Translation of De Materia Medica of Dioscorides Calligrapher 'Abdullah ibn al-Fadl, dated 621 AH/1224 CE

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Assurance of Insurance for accusation related to obscenity or “harmful to minors” charge (unlikely in NY, but still nerve-wracking to consider).

Although in NY public librarians have protection from prosecution for disseminating material “harmful to minors”, it can be reassuring to know if the library has insurance for employees accused of crimes simply for doing their jobs. This coverage, when included in a policy, is generally part of “Employer Coverage.” Policies should be reviewed to see if this coverage is provided and if it is, employees should have the comfort of knowing that.



Nakahara in Sagami Province (Sōshū Nakahara), from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji* (Fugaku sanjūrokkei) Katsushika Hokusai Japanese ca. 1830–32

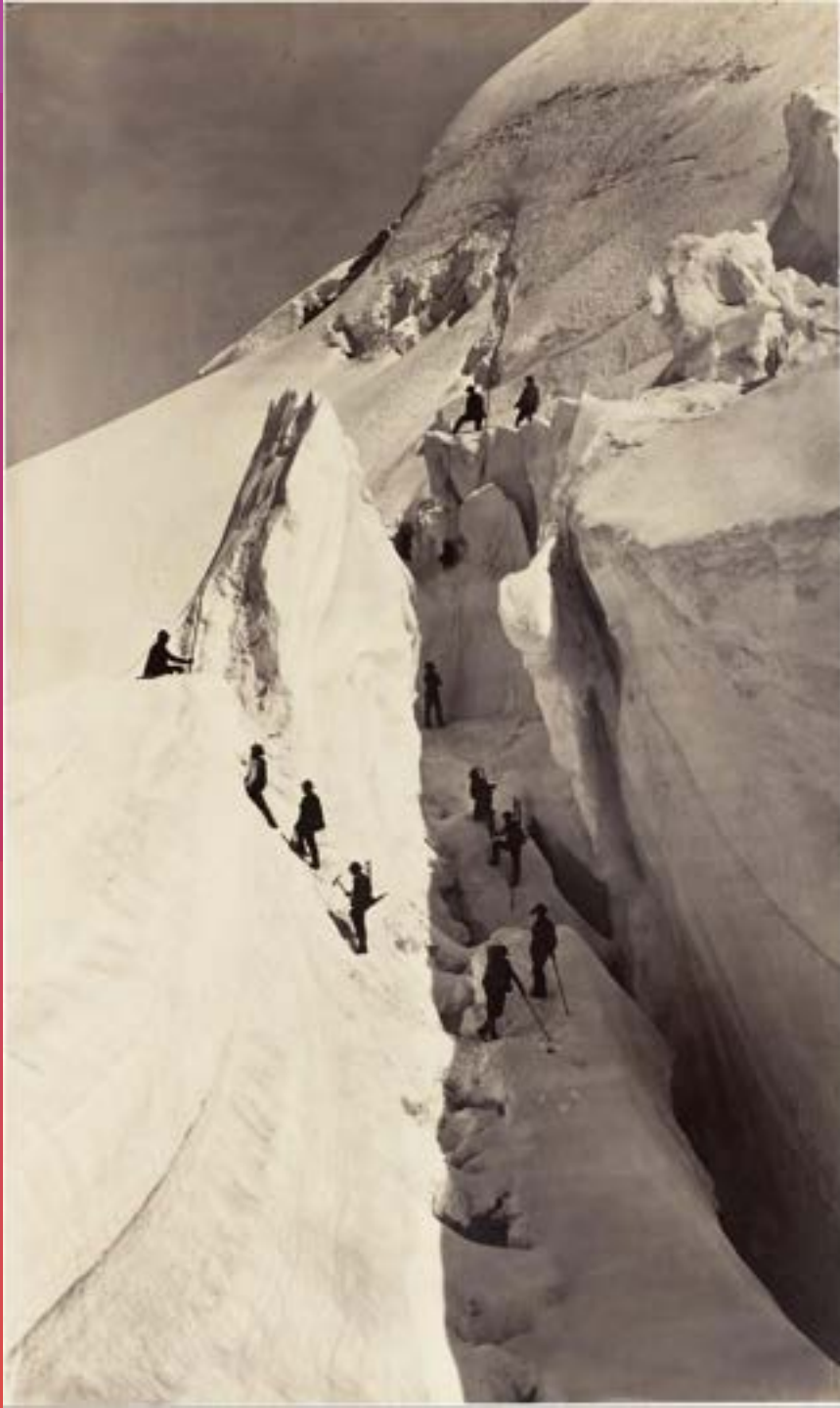
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**Employment
Contract**

A good way to keep any employee and to assure them of certain terms and benefits is to use an employment contract. Employers that want to use an employment contract should work with an attorney for a contract drafted expressly for their library.



“The Gulf Stream” Winslow Homer American 1899; reworked by 1906



Q&A

The Ascent of Mont Blanc, Auguste-Rosalie Bisson, 1861