

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 20, 2021

ULC Press Contact

Curtis Rogers

(202) 750-8658

crogers@urbanlibraries.org

“It Isn’t Enough to Not Be Racist.” ULC and Gale Call on Library Executives to Actively Embrace Anti-Racism’s Leadership Imperative

A new Urban Libraries Council Leadership Brief highlights action strategies for library executives to lead the charge for anti-racism, starting by looking inward.

WASHINGTON & FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. – The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) has published a new Leadership Brief on [Anti-Racist Executive Leadership for Public Libraries](#), sponsored by [Gale](#), a Cengage company. This resource examines the deep roots and enduring harm of structural racism in public libraries and challenges library executives to take on a more active, intentional and accountable role in strengthening their libraries as anti-racist institutions.

Introducing the Leadership Brief is the following quote from Baltimore County Public Library Director Sonia Alcántara-Antoine, “In order to make any progress as library leaders, we need to look at our own history with humility and have the courage to recognize that we can be part of the solution.” Alcántara-Antoine is a member of ULC’s [Anti-Racism action team](#), which informed the development of the Leadership Brief.

To guide library executives in taking meaningful steps forward in their work as anti-racists, the Leadership Brief provides key messages, action strategies and examples of leading practices. This includes recommendations not only for advancing organizational change and staff growth, but also identifying and addressing personal blind spots, biases and racist attitudes.

“Anti-racist leaders must be more than voices for change – we need to actively embrace and embody continuous growth as individuals, even when it is painful,” said ULC President & CEO Susan Benton. “This new Leadership Brief builds on the insights and deliberations of library executives across North America. It is meant to be a call to action for all leaders to own their role in addressing systemic racism.”

The Leadership Brief highlights executives from 13 ULC member libraries in the U.S. and Canada. All 13 libraries are among the 206 total systems who have signed ULC’s [Statement on Race and Social Equity](#). For additional information about ULC’s *Statement on Race and Social Equity*, Anti-Racism action team and *Anti-Racist Executive Leadership for Public Libraries* Leadership Brief visit urbanlibraries.org.

Gale is the first corporate partner to sign ULC's *Statement on Race and Social Equity* and sponsor the Leadership Brief.

"Systemic racism underpins our history and taking action is the only way to create change and promote equity," said Paul Gazzolo senior vice president and general manager at Gale. "Gale supports ULC's commitment to helping public libraries achieve racial and social equity and this leadership brief gives library executives the strategic direction and framework to put in the work to tackle structural racism and systemic inequities, putting them on a path to becoming an anti-racist library and safe space for all."

To [learn](#) how Gale can help public libraries measure and reduce equity barriers and support diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism through online learning and collection development, visit: gale.com/equity.

###

About the Urban Libraries Council

The Urban Libraries Council is an innovation and action tank of North America's leading public library systems. ULC drives cutting-edge research and strategic partnerships to elevate the power of libraries as essential, transformative institutions for the 21st century. More than 150 urban member libraries in the U.S. and Canada rely on ULC to identify significant challenges facing today's communities and provide new tools and techniques to help libraries achieve stronger outcomes in education, digital equity, workforce and economic development, and race and social equity.

About Cengage and Gale

Cengage, an education technology company serving millions of learners in 165 countries, advances the way students learn through quality, digital experiences. The company currently serves the K-12, higher education, professional, library, English language teaching and workforce training markets worldwide. Gale, a Cengage company, provides libraries with original and curated content, as well as the modern research tools and technology that are crucial in connecting libraries to learning, and learners to libraries. For more than 60 years, Gale has partnered with libraries around the world to empower the discovery of knowledge and insights – where, when and how people need it. Gale has 500 employees globally with its main operations in Farmington Hills, Michigan. For more information, please visit www.gale.com.

Follow Gale on:

- [Twitter](#)
- [Gale blog](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)