



Eighth Annual “Bridging the Spectrum” Symposium  
Keynote Address

## “A Unifying Vision: Libraries Educating Our Communities”

***By Valerie Gross***  
***President & CEO,***  
***Howard County Library System***

Friday, February 12, 2016  
The Catholic University of America  
Pryzbyla Center, Great Room



### **Abstract:**

A game-changing vision is ushering in a new era for libraries across the U.S. and beyond. By changing what we say – how we describe our role – we can dispel—permanently—misperceptions about libraries and the library profession. From the very words we use, everyone will recognize the true value of libraries. Just like schools, colleges, and universities, libraries are education—a timeless, economic imperative that merits immense respect and maximized funding. Library Journal hails this approach as “a 21st-century model worthy of study and consideration by every library in America, if not the world.” (Library Journal, June 2013).

### **About the speaker:**

Valerie J. Gross, MM, MLS, JD, has served as President & CEO of Howard County Library System (HCLS) since 2001. Developing a new vision for libraries, Gross worked with the HCLS Board, funders, elected officials, and the community to implement “Libraries = Education.” HCLS was recognized in 2013 as Library of the Year by Gale and Library Journal. They hailed the “Libraries = Education” equation as “a 21st-century model worthy of study and consideration by every library in America, if not the world” (Library Journal, 2013). The growing movement is ushering in a new era for libraries everywhere. Gross has delivered keynotes, workshops, seminars, and webinars on the strategy and is the author of the book *Transforming Our Image, Building Our Brand: The Education Advantage* (ABC-CLIO, 2013).

Note regarding accommodations: Please contact David Shumaker, [shumaker@cua.edu](mailto:shumaker@cua.edu), at least one week prior to the event to request disability accommodations. In all situations, a good faith effort (up until the time of the event) will be made to provide accommodations.