



**University of Alberta
Edmonton**



LISAA

Continue the Experience

**LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Spring 2008

*

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Congratulations to the graduating class 2008 and every new alumna/alumnus on the completion of the MLIS program!

This is an exciting time of the year when we welcome the graduating class to the profession. In the 40th anniversary year of our School and the centenary year of our Alma Mater we are happy to greet you as colleagues and fellow alumni and wish you all the best in your careers and future endeavours.

It is my honour to announce that Dr. Alvin Schrader accepted to be the editor of the 2nd edition of the book about the history of SLIS based on Dr. Robert Brundin's book *From the Codex to the Computer—*

see its online version at our website devoted to the 40th anniversary: www.lisaa.ca/40thanniversary.htm

The LISAA Executive is inviting all members to consider submitting nominations for the LISAA Distinguished and Honourary Alumni Awards—see details below. We are also inviting you to contribute to the 40th anniversary special issue of the LISAA Newsletter—see p. 6 for more info.

Erika Banski
LISAA President

LISAA EVENTS:

For more details on these events see p.6

LISAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 15th, 2008
5 p.m.
University of Alberta Faculty Club
Patio (or Lounge, if it's raining)
Edmonton

40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BRUNCH

Saturday, September 20th 2008
11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
2nd Floor, Carrel Room, School
of Library and Information
Studies
Edmonton

* Stamp issued by Canada Post as a tribute to the University of Alberta's centenary. It features the Dentistry/Pharmacy Centre rendered in green and gold. It is a domestic rate (52 cent) stamp.

INVITATION FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE AWARDS OF LISAA DISTINGUISHED AND HONOURARI ALUMNI, 2008

We are inviting your nominations for the LISAA Distinguished and Honourary Alumni Awards 2008!

In the past we have honoured many distinguished contributors to the profession, both those who graduated from SLIS at U of A and those who received their education elsewhere. If there is someone who you feel has made a difference in the library field, please consider nominating her or him for one of these awards.

1. The LISAA Distinguished Alumni Award is awarded to graduates of the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies who have made a significant contribution to any or all of the following:

- the library profession
- the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta
- the advancement of knowledge

Nominations shall consist of the candidate's names and current contact information, year of graduation, and a description of why the candidate is distinguished (maximum of 2 pages).

2. The LISAA Honourary Alumni Award is awarded to recipients who are not graduates of the University of Alberta's School of Library and Information Studies who have made a significant contribution to any or all of the following:

- the library profession
- the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta
- the advancement of knowledge

A nomination shall consist of the candidate's name and current contact information, and a description of why

the candidate is distinguished (maximum of 2 pages).

The recipient of the Distinguished Alumni and Honourary Alumni Awards shall receive:

- their names engraved on the plaques displayed in the School
- lifetime LISAA membership
- a rare book dedicated in the honour of each recipient in the Bruce Peel Special Collections, University of Alberta Library

The recipient(s) will be honoured at the LISAA 40th Anniversary Celebration Brunch on Saturday, September 20, 2008, at SLIS. See more details about this upcoming University of Alberta Alumni Weekend event on p. 6.

Any LISAA member in good standing can make nominations for both awards (and if you don't have a current membership, simply go to our website www.lisaa.ca/membership.html, print off the membership form and send it completed to SLIS - address below).

The deadline for nominations is Tuesday, July 15, 2008. Please forward your nominations by email to lisaa@lisaa.ca or by snail-mail to:

Library and Information Studies Alumni Association
c/o School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta
3-20 Rutherford South Edmonton, AB T6G 2J4

ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS FROM THE INAUGURAL BACHELOR OF HEALTH SCIENCES LIBRARIAN

"You don't need to be an expert on a particular topic: you just have to know where and how to find information on it!" These were among the first words I heard from the library director as I entered the Health Sciences Library on August 20, 2007. Turning the key and unlocking my office door symbolized a new era: one that would undoubtedly come with trials and tribulations over the course of a few weeks, yet one that would also reap numerous personal achievements and rewards.

Although I had worked at the University of Calgary's main campus for over a decade during my school enrolment, the transition from support staff to faculty is a big change, no matter how prepared one may feel. Attending numerous meetings with faculty members and fellow colleagues during my first few days in my new position, I had to dig deep to retrieve numerous notes on seeking scholarly material, outline research goals, and differentiate between systematic and literature reviews. As the start of the fall semester was a mere two weeks away, I had to act and act quickly.

News of my appointment spread like wildfire throughout the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program. Within 72 hours of officially assuming my new title, e-mail messages were appearing in my inbox in the blink of an eye and my phone was ringing off the hook. When I entered the library director's office with a puzzled look one morning, she reassured me that everything would settle down within a few days: I was simply a rare commodity, officially becoming the first Bachelor of Health Sciences Librarian since the program's creation four years earlier.

Experienced librarians reading my musings may chuckle at the above statement; naturally, the ability to adapt within one's workplace is a necessity in today's changing society. Stephen Covey in his *Seven Habits of Highly Intelligent People* shares this view. Nevertheless, a rookie with a degree in humanities and social sciences scheduled to begin his library career by teaching genetic mutations to a room of Masters of Biomedical Technology students is somewhat nerve-racking. However, rather than breaking out in a cold sweat and panicking, my mind retraced the first 72 hours of meetings with the director and other librarians. I did my homework, gleaned valuable advice from those who had previous experience instructing these students, and settled down to prepare.

Adhering to the advice and support of my experienced colleagues, my first library instruction session was a success. Although I still can't differentiate between the 16 core nucleotide records in an individual exhibiting traits of the sickle cell anaemia gene, I do know, for instance, that *GenBank* is a good source where one would go to retrieve such information. By learning to adapt and be aware of classes outside the Bachelor of Health Sciences realm, I am developing ties and liaisons with professors within the Faculty of Medicine as well.

Less than a week after guiding graduates through the searching process, I ran a library session on database searching for 3rd year students embarking on research projects of their own. This led to a trickle-down effect of students parading to my office, seeking advice on their own assignments and research pursuits, including a group who were working on their own independent study projects in the area of global health and society. Being able to help students understand a particular concept, seeing their faces light up as they develop new resolve to continue gathering research on a topic that may have seemed nearly impossible to accomplish a few days before, is the aspect of my position that I enjoy the most.

During my first full month of employment (September 2007), I saw, either in a classroom setting or individually, 244 students enrolled in six different courses within the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program. While it may seem that the primary objec-

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ... CONTINUED

tive of my position is to provide instruction, it in fact accounts for only 60% of my job profile. I have also been involved, as both a researcher and facilitator, for faculty members in two (biomedicine and health and society) of the three BHSC streams, and am intrigued by the entrepreneurial spirit that the professors within this program exhibit towards their research interests. While skimming through the abstracts of some of the documents that I have either retrieved or been presented with, I feel that I have a better understanding of how collaborative research in the health sciences sector truly is. Further, I feel privileged to be able to work so closely with faculty members, and appreciate being invited to numerous departmental events, including meet-and-greet outings and open house celebrations. One gathering that particularly stands out in my mind is the Journal Club, a required course for all BHSC students entering their final year of study. In speaking individually with the founder of the BHSC program recently, I was made aware of the purpose of this club in greater detail. In every session, a group of students from the class is selected to research and orally present on a pre-selected article that they receive a week before. Such an exercise not only acts as a means of sharpening one's research skills towards the composition of the undergraduate honours thesis, a required capping exercise for successful completion of the program, it also helps one gain confidence in public speaking.

Back on my home turf in the health sciences library, I have received a wealth of information from my colleagues regarding reference service, and am gradually taking on more hours at the service desk. In addition, the introduction of instant messaging chat reference at the main University campus is slowly gaining acceptance, and with the medical library serving as a referral point, there will always be new tasks and procedures to learn that keeps one on his/her toes.

While it is important to main a good working relationship with faculty and colleagues within the health sciences unit, it is just as vital to step beyond these boundaries and associate with the broader library community as a whole. Having recently obtained membership in the Foothills Library Association, I attended a sociable Bubbly Brunch event at McNally Robinson bookstore in September, reacquainting myself with my friends and colleagues from my days at MacKimmie Library and meeting members from other library facilities throughout the city of Calgary as well. Just a few weeks ago, I was sworn in as the newest member of the University of Calgary's library council, and attended Netspeed, my first library conference on October 18th and 19th. Incorporating technology into a library setting is my niche, and listening to a variety of speakers present their views on this topic during the two-day event certainly gave me plenty to think about.

As I settle down in my new career, I close my memoirs today by listing some of my key goals I plan on bringing to fruition over the next few months: polishing and improving my research and reference skills, continuing my role as a liaison with faculty members of the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program, and developing and maintaining active web pages. Above all though, my primary goal is to stay in this field beyond my one year "trial run", where I can continue to keep on learning.

Marcus Vaska, MLIS 2007

CLASS OF 1999: A MEMORY

I graduated from SLIS in 1999, and one of my most vivid memories of that "long time ago" year was the graduation banquet. I had been on the committee to help organize the evening and one of the suggestions the committee received was to make the banquet "unique" by hiring a belly dancer! We were pretty sure that no SLIS graduation banquet had featured a belly dancer before so we agreed.

Many of us had never seen a belly dancer perform live, so we were fascinated by her gyrations and undulations. The woman was not only a great dancer, but a great performer as well, and she worked the room and brought everyone into the moment. I remember her paying particular attention

to Dr. Dennis Ward, who smiled politely, but resisted her attempts to make him join her on the dance floor!

The other thing I remember very well about the evening is that it was co-hosted by the first and second year Social Conveners, Jody Crilly and Dan Mirau, who, after meeting in library school in 1998, tied the knot in the summer of 2000. Ahhhh ... the romance of libraries!

Nicolle Lemay, MLIS 1999

2008 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY REPORT

RECORD SETTING ATTENDANCE AT THE 2008 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY!

The Library and Information Studies Student Association held its annual Professional Development Day on February 8, 2008. For the first time in its 22-year history, P.D. Day was held at the downtown Stanley A. Milner Public Library. This change appeared to be well received with a record-setting 157 people attending this year's event!

The theme of P.D. Day 2008 was "Reaching Out: Serving Diverse Populations" and the committee was extremely excited to have Dr. Loriene Roy, president of the American Library Association, presenting the keynote speech.

Dr. Loriene Roy shared her experiences of being elected ALA President and the highlights of her Presidential programs. Some of these programs included the *Circle of Literacy Task Force*, which aims to support the literacy of indigenous youth, immigrants, and those incarcerated. She also described the work of her *Supporting LIS Education through Practice Task Force*, which employs a number of strategies to assist LIS students in acquiring practical experience and distribute the results of these experiences to other students and prospective employers. Other programs discussed were the *Workplace Wellness Task Force* and the *Events Planning Circle*. She shared compelling stories of travelling to witness library service in many different jurisdictions in Canada, the United States, and around the world.

Sarah Polkinghorne, 2007 SLIS grad and Reference Librarian at the University of Alberta Augustana campus, gave an overview of her research on the intersection of undergraduate students, library services, and social media. Polkinghorne discussed the conflicted, shifting identities of students as consumers and learners, and how these constructions can be observed in the context of digital social applications such as *Flickr*.

Jason Openo, Past-President of the PNLA and Manager of Whitemud Crossing Library, spoke about his experiences implementing the Solid Ground Program in

Seattle, Washington. Solid Ground was a pilot project that addressed the obstacles of serving homeless families through the use of cell phones and laptops.

Ann Curry, incoming director of the University of Alberta's School of Library & Information Studies, gave an intriguing talk about her research into both reference services to gay/lesbian teens and the picture book preferences of LGBTQ parents.

Laura Morin, Edmonton Public Library's Aboriginal Community Development Librarian, discussed how library services to Aboriginal People first came about in Edmonton and some initiatives that are currently taking place to promote community involvement.

The LISSA PD Day also featured five student presenters, who gave excellent and thoughtful presentations on a great variety of topics. Jillian Yawney, a MLIS thesis student, presented her findings from her study on "Storytelling as a springboard for teaching information literacy to grade four students". Tanya Driechel showed her powerfully moving documentary about community library development in Sumbrungu, Ghana. To close the day, students Liz Grieve, Eric Nyrose and Rebekah Willson shared their findings from projects conducted during Dr. Lisa Given's advanced research methods course.

The LISSA PD Day Committee would like to once again thank all of this year's speakers, sponsors and attendees for making this year's PD Day another amazing success!

Holly Arnason, SLIS Student
&
Amelia Martin, MLIS 2008

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL



The early months of 2008 brought much good news about both faculty and students receiving grants, and about students having conference proposals accepted.

GRANTS RECEIVED

On February 25th, Dr. Lisa Given was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. She and her co-investigators Drs. Cindy Jardine and Michelle Driedger will investigate 1) how uncertainty in environmental health risks can be best understood from various perspectives, including that of the general public, 2) how best to engage the public in dialogues about health risks, 3) the best methods and optimum timing.

In early April, Dr. Dangzhi Zhao was awarded a three-year \$104,820 grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for her project titled "Citation-based all-author knowledge network analysis". The study aims to significantly improve a main method available today for studying knowledge networks: citation-based author network analysis. It will focus on designing and testing new citation-based measures to see if and how they can improve the analysis and visual representations of author networks, and consequently the discovery of new knowledge and the management of existing knowledge resources. The study will extend citation-based author knowledge network analysis methods (a) to properly acknowledge all contributions of scholars, and (b) to better support current research trends analysis. The results will improve our understanding of, and confidence in, a central method of library and information studies, i.e., citation-based author knowledge network analysis, and will significantly improve our ability to evaluate the structures of scholarly communities.

Also in early April, we received news that SLIS masters student and adjunct professor in the Dept. of English Kirsten MacLeod received a three-year \$52,646 grant for a project that will re-examine modernism through the complex figure of Carl Van Vechten.

FACULTY AWARDS

The Coutts-Clarke Fellowship was presented to Dr. Ali Shiri on April 9. This award allows Dr. Shiri to be released from teaching responsibilities for one term so that he can concentrate on his research project entitled "Information Search Behaviour of the University of Alberta Nanoscience and Technology Researchers as Revealed by Transaction Log Analysis." The results will inform: a) the University of Alberta collection management process, b) the design of better user interfaces, and c) the development of scientific digital libraries.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

At SLIS, we strongly encourage students to share their research and projects and to hone their public speaking skills through presentations at conferences. In the past 3 months, we were delighted to learn that SLIS students Rhiannon Gainor and Jennifer Wilson will present a session at the 2008 Pacific-Northwest Library Association Conference in August, in Post Falls, Idaho. Their presentation is titled "Strategic Learning Opportunities for Career Advancement," and it will build on the 8R's Study.

In addition, four SLIS students—Shelagh Genuis, Eric Nyrose, Rebekah Willson, and Jilliane Yawney—will be presenting papers at the annual conference of the Canadian Association for Information Science (CAIS) to be held in Vancouver, June 5-7.

Congratulations to all of our high-achieving faculty members and students!

FORTHCOMING for SLIS in 2008

During the coming months, we will be concentrating on procedures for our proposed new doctoral program, a revision of the MLIS curriculum, renovation of our facilities and classrooms, and plans to celebrate the School's 40th Anniversary.

Dr. Ann Curry
SLIS Director

LISAA EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LISAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WHEN: Thursday, May 15, 2008

WHERE: University of Alberta Faculty Club Patio (or Lounge, if it's raining)

TIME: 5 pm

Join your fellow alumni to vote for the Lifetime Membership option, elect the new members of the Executive Committee, hear a summary of the activities and plans, and have a nice visit with your colleagues!

40TH ANNIVERSARY LISAA CELEBRATION BRUNCH

Save the Date for this year's special Celebration Brunch!

To be held in the SLIS Carrel room on Saturday, September 20, 2008 from 11am – 1pm.

2008 marks the 40th anniversary of SLIS and the 100th anniversary of the University of Alberta, so we plan to make our Celebration Brunch an extra special event! As usual, lunch will be provided and Distinguished and Honourary Awards presented. To this will be added historical displays, special guests, and recognition of the school's first alumni.

Please mark the date in your calendar so you will be able to join in the food, fun, and other festivities! We hope to see you there!

Trish Chatterley
LISAA Vice President

LISAA NEWSLETTER: 40TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

In honour of the SLIS 40th anniversary, the Library and Information Studies Alumni Association would like to compile a special commemorative issue of its newsletter full of anecdotes about students' experiences at SLIS. It is hoped that ten years down the road we will have enough stories to publish a book about the history of SLIS that is full of personal recollections about the school.

40 years is a long time and many students have come and gone through the welcoming doors of SLIS during that period. We'd like to hear from all of you! Please share with us any stories you have about funny incidents or antics, supportive professors, memorable classes/assignments, etc. We'd also love to hear about where you are now and your accomplishments since graduation. Or tell us about what SLIS meant to you, either during your school days or afterwards. Basically, tell us anything at all about you and SLIS! Also, if you have pictures, audio files, or videos to share, please send those on as well. To complement the print newsletter, we plan to design a multimedia website to host these memories.

So please, if you have a spare moment in your hectic schedule, please jot down a paragraph or scan a picture or two and email them to Trish Chatterley at patricia.chatterley@ualberta.ca. We hope to have a form up on the LISAA website soon, so you will be able to submit your anecdotes there as well.

If you have any questions or concerns, please send them to the address above.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this project. We hope to hear from you soon!

Trish Chatterley
LISAA Vice President

Library and Information Studies Alumni Association

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