Editorial

Ideas you can use

Conferences and professional gatherings of academic librarians and library stakeholders provide opportunities for learning, networking and kick starting new ideas. Practitioners are eager to walk away from a conference with concrete suggestions to reinvigorate and rejuvenate their service programs. In this issue, we bring together a number of articles with practical and immediate application and implication for your library's services.

Several manuscripts provide thoughtful, in-depth discussion of front-line reference and user services. The integration of technology into service design and delivery is the focus of five manuscripts – "Impact of Web-Scale Discovery on Reference Inquiry" (Koclanes, Copenhaver), "Are Reference Pop-up Widgets Welcome or Annoying? A Usability Study" (Imler, Garcia, Clements), "Building Bridges: Outreach to International Students via Vernacular Language Videos" (Li, McDowell, Wang), "Changing the Face of Reference and User Services: Adoption of Social Media in Top Ghanaian Academic Libraries" (Akenkorah-Marfo and Akussah) and "Studying the Impact of Blended learning that uses the Online PBwiki Guided by Activity Theory on LIS Students' Knowledge Management" (Barhoumi). We suggest readers will be especially interested in Blake and Morse's work, "Keeping your Options Open: A Review of Open Source and Free Technologies for Instructional Use in Higher Education", which presents and describes a number of free technologies to use and to introduce to patrons. Rogers and Carrier consider research consultations in "A Qualitative Investigation of Patrons' Experiences with Academic Library Research Consultations". The manuscript by Gonnerman and Johnson considers service providers themselves, specifically "Peer Reference Assistants in a Small Liberal Arts College: Case Study". And don't overlook Saunders' manuscript titled "Teaching the Reference Interview through Practice-Based Assignments". Lastly, consider the results of Pierard's and Bordeianu's survey on the status and sustainability of reference collections in learning commons at Association of Research Library (ARL) member libraries.

Other manuscripts focus on information literacy instruction. These include Bury's article, "Learning from Faculty Voices on Information Literacy: Opportunities and Challenges for Undergraduate Literacy Education" and Lantz, Insua, Armstrong and Pho's work "Student Bibliographies: Charting Research Skills over Time". Artemchik joins the information literacy instruction conversation with insights on "Using the Instructional Design Process in Tutorial Development". In a related vein, Zhang, Stonebraker and Promman consider our users and their experience of online help – "Understanding Library Users' Preferences and Expectations of Online Help".

There are many tangible takeaways in this issue. We believe that this practitioner-oriented issue will foster learning, networking and kick starting of new ideas among readers at all levels, from next-generation librarians to seasoned practitioners and their supervisors alike.

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