

# An Intellectual Playground

by Elise Lewis

Editor's note: Elise Lewis is one of two recipients of the 2008 James M. Cretsos Leadership Award, which honors new ASIS&T members (members for less than seven years) who have demonstrated outstanding leadership qualities. The *Bulletin* has asked her to describe her ASIS&T experiences and the motivations for her service to the Society.

**M**y intellectual playground – that is what ASIS&T has become to me. It all culminates at our annual meeting. This year, I was honored to receive the 2008 James M. Cretsos Award. I would like to congratulate my co-winner, Phillip Edwards. Winning the Cretsos Award and presenting Sam Hastings the Watson Davis Award are two events that make me look back and reflect on the path that brought me here with much joy. There are many people who have helped me along the way and I am truly grateful for their guidance and support.

In the fall of 2000, I had just started working on my MLS at the University of North Texas. Sam Hastings was running a digital imaging grant project that I was working on as a research fellow. Dr. Sam asked another student and me to present the student perspective of the project. I quickly accepted having no idea what I was doing. All I heard was ASIS&T, Washington DC, conference and something about a panel session.

What an opportunity. I was standing on the shoulder of giants. I presented at my first conference with Sam Hastings, Brian O'Connor, Howard Besser

Elise Lewis is a 2008 recipient of the James M. Cretsos Leadership Award. She is a doctoral candidate in the School of Library and Information Sciences at the University of North Texas. She can be reached by email at [elise.c.lewis@gmail.com](mailto:elise.c.lewis@gmail.com).

and my colleague Tara Carlisle. I watched in amazement as Howard put together his presentation 20 minutes before our session started. Brian scribbled several remarks on what appeared to be a scratch piece of paper. I spent weeks worrying about the content, theme and delivery of my presentation. The session was a success. After the session I had the opportunity to meet some of the audience members. I remember Barbara Flood told Sam that her students needed to present more often. I remember meeting Bahaa El-Hadidy and starting to realize there is a lineage in our field, and I was now part of it.

The next year I had the opportunity to participate in another panel session. I was looking forward to becoming more involved with the society, for ASIS&T had become my intellectual and professional home. Sam asked if I would be willing to help

## ASIS&T 2008



Cretsos Leadership Award winner Elise Lewis, right, shares a moment with her mentor Sam Hastings, winner of the Watson Davis Award.

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with another special panel presentation at SIG CON. This sounded very important. I had missed SIG CON my first year and saw the great opportunity to present my current research. Lesson learned.

I met Kris Liberman that year. She was chairing the Membership Committee and encouraged me to come to the meeting. I walked out of that meeting serving on the Watson Davis Committee and in charge of the New Member Brunch with Caryn Anderson. The rest, I guess you could say, is history.

Since then I have continued to serve on the Membership Committee. I also helped launch a student chapter at the University of North Texas, among other things.

ASIS&T has provided me the opportunity to meet people who challenge me to think about things in new and different ways. I always look forward to catching up with old friends at the conferences, to see what research is being generated from the field and finding a way to give back to ASIS&T. I look forward to continuing to grow with ASIS&T. There will undoubtedly be challenges to face in the future, but I am confident that the Society will continue flourish because of the great minds that contribute and serve. I look forward to being a part of ASIS&T in the future and will continue to work to ensure the longevity and success of the Society. I give my sincerest thanks to those who have helped along the way to make this organization such a fulfilling part of my life and career. ■