2010 ASIS&T ANNUAL MEETING

Suchman to Keynote Annual Meeting

Lucy Suchman, professor of anthropology of science and technology and co-director of the Center for Science Studies at Lancaster University, United Kingdom, will headline the 2010 ASIS&T Annual Meeting with a talk on Restoring Information’s Body, building on her research into ethnographic studies and interdisciplinary and participatory interventions in information technology design. The presentation will set the stage for dozens of panels, papers and posters to be offered on the meeting theme of Navigating Streams in an Information Ecosystem.

Meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 22-27, ASIS&T Annual Meeting participants will be a part of a re-engineered meeting format focusing on more interaction, more discussion and more acknowledgement of the spectrum of information science, practice and technology in the second decade of the 21st century.

Technical sessions are grouped within six broad tracks, each guided by a committee of topic experts. The tracks are Information Behavior, Knowledge Organization, Interactive Information and Design, Information and Knowledge Management, Information Use and Information in Context: Economic, Social and Policy Perspectives.

Several new features have been added to the Annual Meeting format this year. Themed workshops, many sponsored by ASIS&T Special Interest Groups (SIGs), will be held on Wednesday, October 27. These sessions, which require separate registration, will permit more focused and in-depth looks at topics touched upon during the meeting’s technical sessions. Also new this year is a Student Design Competition. Students attending the conference will be grouped into cross-institution design teams who will work together for a couple of days to come up with solutions to an assigned design problem. The work will be judged by industry and academic experts who will announce the winners at a special session on Tuesday, October 26.

For full information on the ASIS&T 2010 Annual Meeting, including registration materials and other new meeting features, check your mail for the printed version of the ASIS&T Annual Meeting preliminary program or visit the ASIS&T website.
Pakistan, for their paper *The Role of Educational Information Systems for Survival in Information Society and the Case of Pakistan.*

The paper review committee, chaired by Michael Zimmer, also included Johannes Britz and Maria Haigh, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Catherine Johnson, University of Western Ontario; Anindita Paul and Borchuluun Yadamsuren, University of Missouri; and Hong Xu, University of Pittsburgh.

**News about ASIS&T Members**

Don A. Wicks is the interim director of Kent State University’s School of Library and Information Science. He succeeds Richard Rubin, who is now associate provost for extended education at Kent State.

Louise Spiteri is the new director of the School of Information Management (SIM) at Dalhousie University. She has been a SIM faculty member since 1998 and served as academic director of the MLIS program at SIM for the last year.

**ASIS&T Member Receives Two Google Grants**

Miles Efron, assistant professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, received two major Google research grants over the summer. With the latest grant, Efron will address current problems in microblog search. This grant follows on the heels of a Digital Humanities Research Award for his project, “Meeting the Challenge of Language Change in Text Retrieval with Machine Translation Techniques,” which will enable him to develop software that will let people enter a query in contemporary English and search over English texts throughout history – from Medieval times to the present day.

In the first project, Efron says he is “looking at language change as a translation problem.” In order for older texts to be searchable, contemporary English needs to be translated into language from various historical timeframes. “For this problem we can think of English at different slices of time as different languages,” said Efron. “The project will mostly involve training statistical models that assign probabilities of the translation to a word or phrase in a target English language.”

In the microblog search project, Efron will look at information management and organization problems that people will face as microblogging services such as Twitter take on a larger role in their day-to-day activities. “Search engines are very good at what they do. But it’s not clear that the standard search model works well for microblog data... An individual tweet may or may not be of interest. But by intelligently connecting these short texts we can deliver information such as consensus, debate, open questions, recommendations – all in the scope of a particular information need,” said Efron.

Efron notes that “the unifying thread between the two projects is the relationship between search problems and information that has an inherently temporal nature.”
ASIS&T in Europe: The LIDA-ASIS&T Connection
by Emil Levine

The Libraries in the Digital Age (LIDA) conference, held annually in Croatia, represents not only a core European meeting for library and information science, but also specifically a focal point for participation by ASIS&T members in Europe.

The first LIDA Conference (2000) was organized jointly by Tefko Saracevic, School of Communication, Information and Library Studies, Rutgers University, and Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Zadar, Croatia. The conference, which has been co-chaired by them since that time, has included ASIS&T members as part of the program committee, featured and keynote speakers and guests of honor.

Tefko, who left Croatia in 1957, was honored at LIDA in 2006 with a book entitled ‘Contributionsto the Creation of a Theory of Information Science’, which contained Croatian translations of nine of his highly cited articles.

ASIS&T President Gary Marchionini, the keynote speaker at the 2010 conference held in Zadar, Croatia, May 24-28, expressed surprise at the involvement of ASIS&T membership in the meeting, which prompted me to ensure wider knowledge about LIDA among ASIS&T members worldwide.

Typical Conference Themes
According to Saracevic, “Since its inception in 2000, LIDA has emphasized the examination of contemporary problems, intriguing advances, innovative approaches and solutions related to digital libraries. Each year a different and hot theme was addressed, divided in two parts, the first part covering research and development and the second part addressing advances in applications and practice.”

Further, Saracevic explained, “Rather than analyze each of the 20 themes covered over 10 years, six overreaching and recurring subjects are chosen for discussion of changes and trends:

1. Networked environment: digital libraries and the web – positions, retrieval, diversity
2. Development: building digital libraries
3. Services: variety of services provided
4. Users & use: using digital libraries; human information behavior & information seeking in digital libraries
5. Professional: education for digital librarians, competencies needed; ethical concerns
6. Social: digital libraries and social, cultural, and institutional effects.”

ASIS&T Participation
ASIS&T notables who have attended LIDA conferences as keynote speakers and guests of honor include past presidents Eugene Garfield, Don King, Gary Marchionini, Tefko Saracevic, Nick Belkin and Robert Taylor. ASIS&T award winners participating have included Christine L. Borgman, Paul Kantor, Michael Buckland, Peter Ingwersen, Ching-chih Chen, Marcia Bates, Carol Kuhlthau and Barbara Wildemuth.

The ASIS&T European Chapter provides support for LIDA in the form of social events (wine and cheese parties), which are used to explain ASIS&T and recruit membership. (Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic served until recently as chairperson of the chapter, succeeding Emil Levine, who revived the chapter in the late 1990s. The chapter was originally organized by Michel Menou.)

A 2003 panel entitled the “The Role of Professional Organizations in Career Development” consisted of ASIS&T members giving examples of how participation in ASIS&T impacted and influenced their profession. Panelists included Levine, Kantor, Sanda Erdelez, University of Missouri-Columbia, Aparac-Jelusic and Saracevic.
ASIS&T European Student Chapter and LIDA

The relatively new ASIS&T-EC student chapter is strongly represented at LIDA, holding their annual meeting during the conference. The European Chapter awards several ASIS&T student memberships each year to student winners of the LIDA Poster Session.

In 2005 Gary Marchionini, Christine Borgman, Emil Levine, Tatjana Aparac and her husband Srecko Jelusic donated five free ASIS&T student memberships, whose recipients were selected by lottery. The award of the Thomson Reuters Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award to Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic in 2008 and the selection of the ASIS&T European student chapter as one of the two Student Chapters of the Year in 2008 also recognized the ASIS&T/LIDA connection.

The Future of LIDA

Conference statistics for 2010 are typical of other meetings. One hundred twenty four participants from 16 countries included 52 undergraduate and PhD students. Both the United States and British embassies in Croatia have provided financial support for speakers from their countries in the past.

Future meetings will be held on a biannual basis. The next LIDA will be held June 4-8, 2012, in Zadar, Croatia, with the theme Quality and Evaluation of Digital Libraries and Preservation of Digital Resources and Records. All LIDA presentations are available in proceedings of the conference at web.ffos.hr/lida.

Above, l-r: Christine Borgman, guest of honor at LIDA 2007, is shown with Kora Golub in 2002. Golub has translated several information and library science books into Croatian. Golub was ASIS&T European Chapter Student of the Year in 2002. | ASIS&T President Gary Marchionini delivers the keynote addresses at LIDA 2010. | Co-chair Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic with Igor Ignjacic, student winner of the LIDA Poster Session 2010. He and colleagues from the University of Osijek, Croatia, were presented free ASIS&T student memberships by the ASIS&T European Chapter. | Former ASIS&T President Nick Belkin served as program chair at LIDA 2003.

Above, l-r: ASIS&T members, from left, Paul Kantor, Sanda Erdelez, Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic and Tefko Saracevic, present panel on “The Role of Professional Organizations in Career Development” at LIDA 2003. Emil Levine also participated. | Former ASIS&T President Robert Hayes has participated in most of the LIDA conferences. In 2005, he was guest of honor. | At LIDA 2006, co-chair Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic presents co-chair Tefko Saracevic with Contributions to the Creation of a Theory of Information Science, a book containing Croatian translations of nine of his highly cited articles. | Former ASIS&T President Eugene Garfield gives his presentation as guest of honor at LIDA 2004.
The Libraries in Digital Age (LIDA) conference, held annually in Dubrovnik, Croatia, starting in 2000 and moving to Zadar, Croatia in 2009, had two significant precursors. The earlier one was a series of conferences organized at the Interuniversity Center in Dubrovnik by Prof. Bozo Tezak (1907-1980). These conferences, held in 1977, 1979 and 1980, had a general title “Universities in World Network of Information and Communication” and attracted an international audience. Among the issues raised in presentation and lively discussions were effects of technology on libraries and universities. Digital libraries were not around then, but the subject of libraries, technologies and networks was very much present.

The later precursor was the Third International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science (COLIS 3) held in May 1999, also in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Conference chairs were Peter Ingwersen, Denmark, and Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic, Croatia, and Pertti Vakkari, Finland; program chair was Tefko Saracevic of the United States. The theme of the conference was digital libraries; papers and discussions covered a wide range of related issues and topics.

Out of this experience came the idea to hold conferences specifically oriented toward a variety of contemporary topics related to libraries in the digital age – not only digital libraries. Consequently, the first LIDA conference was organized in 2000 drawing heavily from the legacy of these prior efforts. The purpose formulated then still holds today: “[T]o address the changing and challenging environment for libraries and information systems and services in the digital world.” While the purpose is constant, topics have changed every year. Directors for all the LIDA conferences have been Tatjana Aparac-Jelusic and Tefko Saracevic, while program chairs have changed every year depending on the topic chosen.

Tefko Saracevic is professor II emeritus at the School of Communication & Information, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and a past president of ASIS&T. He can be reached at tefkos<at>rutgers.edu.