



Creating Effective Resumes

The Library and Information Science Résumé Writing Workshop was again one of the year's best attended LACASIS events. Students seen jobs, and the good news from our discussion panel is that there are more jobs than ever for graduates in library and information science. Panelists included Marianne Afifi from the University of Southern California, Carol Bednar from California State University Fullerton, Katherine Richards from Advanced Information Management, Elizabeth Speigle from Santa Ana Public Library, and Kathleen Smith from Advanced Information Management.

Although the panelists were from a number of different areas within the field of library and information science, one thread of advice kept coming up over and over again throughout the discussion. Do your research! It is important to be aware of a position's required and desired qualifications. With this information you can tailor your résumé and interview responses to meet the needs and interests of the employer. Find out about the organization to which you applied. Employers are always impressed if you can relate your experiences to the mission and goals of their organization. Knowledge of the organization can also help you gauge the time it will take to complete the recruitment process. A corporate library may want someone to start work as soon as possible, whereas an academic library may be seeking an employee to start work at the beginning of the next academic year. Last but not least, the panelists reminded participants that job hunting is a two way street. You should be as excited about working for an organization as they are about hiring you.

Following the panel discussion, participants were paired with professionals that critiqued their résumés. These individual consultations were the highlight of the event. It was clear that participants were excited to talk with experts on how to best capture the essence of their education and experience. Many of the future library and information scientists even stayed around to glean advice from two or three different professionals.



ASIS

Awards & Accomplishments

LACASIS is pleased to recognize the following accomplishments of the Chapter and its distinguished members:

1999 Chapter of the Year

OASIS Newsletter
1999 Print Publication of the Year

LACASIS Web page
1999 Electronic Publication of the Year

Linda Rudell-Betts
1999 Chapter Member of the Year

Joseph Busch
2000 ASIS President Elect

Congratulations LACASIS!

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OASIS Contributors

Marianne Afifi
Dudee Chiang
Mari Davis
Hayley Garcia
Karen Howell
Linda McCann
Dorothy Fue Wong
Amy Wallace

OASIS Editorial Board

Editor
Holly Ying

Advertising
Louisa Toot

Design & Layout
Tanya Novak

Writer
Dorothy Fue Wong

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All communications, including manuscripts, comments, and letters to the editor, should be addressed to:
Holly Ying
540 S. Ogden Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
holly_ying@hotmail.com

Submissions for the winter issue should be received by December 15, 1999.

LACASIS Executive Board 1999-2000

Chair
Marianne Afifi
(213) 740-8817
USC
Fax: (213) 740-7713
afifi@usc.edu

Chair - Elect & Program Chair
Amy Wallace
(909) 607-7957
Libraries of the Claremont Colleges
Fax: (909) 621-8681
awallace@rocky.claremont.edu

Past-Chair & Award Chair
Linda McCann
(213) 740-8382
USC
Fax: (213) 749-1221
lmccann@usc.edu

Secretary
Claude Zachary
(213) 743-2435
USC
Fax: (213) 740-2343
czachary@usc.edu

Treasurer
Luci Barry
(213) 229-7161
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Fax: (213) 229-6161
lbarry@gdclaw.com

LACASIS Advisory Council 1999-2000

Archivist
Claude Zachary
(213) 743-2435
USC
Fax: (213) 740-2343
czachary@usc.edu

Hospitality
Sally McCoy
(949) 497-6227
Libraries in Touch
Fax: (949) 497-9898
smmccoy@earthlink.net

Marketing Database
Barbara Busch
(619) 545-8793
Defense Tech. Info. Center
Fax: (619) 545-0019
bbusch@dticam.dtic.mil

Member at Large
Linda Adams
(213) 625-4477
Boston Consulting
Fax: (213) 687-4175
lladams@ix.netcom.com

Membership Records
Jason Binford
(310) 397-8484
Binford Barnes Inc.
Fax: (310) 397-0509
binford@mindspring.com

Membership Recruitment/Retention
To be determined

Nomination
Dudee Chiang
(805) 447-3164
AMGEN
Fax: (805) 447-1322
dchiang@amgen.com

Publications Committee
OASIS Editor
Holly Ying
(323) 934-8860
Interactive Search Inc.
holly_ying@hotmail.com

OASIS Advertising
Louisa Toot
(626) 395-3408
Caltech
Fax: (626) 431-2681
louisa@library.caltech.edu

OASIS Design & Layout
Tanya Novak
(626) 577-5011
emtea@mindspring.com

OASIS Writer
Dorothy Fue Wong
(323) 294-9848
Electronic Solutions
Fax: (323) 294-4056
dfue@2cowherd.net

Publicity
Linda Salem
(909) 793-2121 ext. 4733
University of Redlands
Fax: (909) 335-3403
lilsalem@uor.edu

Special Project: Bylaws
Dorothy McGarry
(310) 825-3438
UCLA Science & Engineering Library
Fax: (310) 206-9872
dmcgarry@library.ucla.edu

Special Project: Member Survey
Karen Howell
(213) 740-2933
USC
Fax: (213) 740-7713
khowell@usc.edu

Student Chapter Coordinator
Bo-Gay Tong Salvador
(310) 206-9776
UCLA Library Info Systems
Fax: (310) 206-5337
bgts@library.ucla.edu

Web Administrator
Eileen Flick
(213) 740-5731
USC Doheny Library
Fax: (213) 740-4631
flick@usc.edu

Workshop Chair
Linda Rudell-Betts
Information Science Consultant
rudellbetts@mediaone.net

Student Chapter Advisors

UCLA
Gregory Leazer
Fax: (310) 206-4460
gleazer@ucla.edu

University of Hawaii
Dr. Diane Nahl
(808) 956-7321
nahl@hawaii.edu

Other Resources

ASIS Headquarters
8720 Georgia Avenue, Suite 501
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 495-0900
Fax: (301) 495-0810
<http://www.asis.org/>
Richard Hill, Executive Director

LACASIS Web Site
<http://www.lacasis.org>

Save the Date!

Please join us for the annual holiday meeting sponsored jointly by LACASIS and the Southern California Chapter of SLA held at the Athenaeum at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena on Tuesday, December 14, 1999. This time-honored event will feature Dr. Alan Kay, Disney Fellow and Vice President of Research and Development, at The Walt Disney Company. Dr. Kay is best known for the developing the idea of personal computing, the conception of the intimate laptop computer, and the inventions of the now ubiquitous overlapping-window interface and modern object-oriented programming. Kay was one of the founders of the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, and led one of the several groups that developed modern workstations (and the forerunners of the Macintosh), Smalltalk, the Ethernet, Laser printing, and network “client-servers.” Prior to his work at Xerox, Dr. Kay was a member of the University of Utah ARPA research team that developed 3-D graphics, where he earned a doctorate in 1969 for the development of the first graphical object-oriented personal computer. Dr. Kay has been elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Royal Society of Arts. A former professional jazz guitarist, composer, and theatrical designer, he is now an amateur classical pipe organist. His current interests revolve around creating better learning environments for children and adults, especially by understanding better ways to extend, capture, transmit and think about ideas via computer media.

Dr. Kay plans to give an address entitled “The Computer Revolution hasn’t happened yet.”

Summary

The printing press was invented in the middle of the 15th century, yet it took 100 years before a book was considered dangerous enough to be banned, 150 years before science was invented, almost 200 years before a new kind of political essay was invented, and more than 300 years before a country with an invented political system (the US) could be argued into existence via the press and a citizenry that could understand the arguments. Schooling and general literacy were also fruits of the press, and took many centuries to become established. The commercial computer is now about 50 years old and is still imitating the paper culture that came before it, just as the printing press did with the manuscript culture it gradually replaced. No media revolution can be said to have happened without a general establishment of “literacy”: fluent “reading” and “writing” at the highest level of ideas that the medium can represent. With computers, we are so far from that fluent literacy — or even understanding what that literacy should resemble — that we could claim that the computer revolution hasn’t even started. This talk will try to put a shape to the real computer revolution to come.

For more information, visit the LACASIS website at: <http://www.lacasis.org>.

From the Chair's Desktop

by Marianne Afifi

Fall is upon us as I write my first column as Chair. For most people it means turning leaves, shorter daylight hours, and cooler weather. For those of us in LACASIS it means award season and conference season. This year, we were fortunate to win two ASIS Chapter awards, both for this print publication, OASIS, and for our web pages. OASIS has had a long tradition of excellence, and although we are sorry to see our award-winning editor Jason Binford leave his position, we are fortunate to welcome a new editor, Holly Ying, with this edition. Our Webmaster, Eileen Flick who is about to release our redesigned web pages, is staying on for another year. With her help, we intend to expand our web presence and hope to attract new members while providing valuable information for our present ones. Congratulations to both of them for their creativity, hard work, and dedication.

We are ushering in the new LACASIS year with our traditional Contributions to Information Science awards meeting and honoring this year's winner Dr. Jose-Marie Griffiths. Our Margaret McKinley Scholarship winner is also being honored at the meeting. We look forward to hearing both their perspectives on the future of Information Professionals. I think everyone who has been contributing to our chapter wins an award for dedication, loyalty and being exemplary volunteers. At a time when workloads seem to increase and one's time does not, it is especially enlightening to see so many people make time to advance the profession, to mentor others and to contribute to our intellectual growth.

Conference season has not stopped since the summer and keeps going strong. It seems there are so many more interesting and worthwhile workshops and conferences appearing each year that it is difficult to make a choice as to which ones to attend. At our annual Fall Workshop it became even more obvious that the profession is expanding into many new directions and areas. It's an era of great opportunity for all of us. This theme continued at the CARL meeting, and will likely continue at EDUCAUSE, Internet Librarian, and at the ASIS Annual Meeting. A sizeable contingent of LACASIS members will be attending the Annual Meeting this year and I think all of us will be keeping our ears and eyes open for where these new directions might lead us.

I hope to be inspired by these conferences and learn to provide leadership for the Chapter in the next year as we face this rapidly changing world. We are truly seeing a shift not only on the familiar "information scene," but also in the way people view the world. Today's teenagers face a connected world, one in which a computer is as commonplace as a telephone was 40 years ago, but are they really connecting to what they need and want? Will the chat rooms supplant the mall and will the Internet replace the library? These are all crystal ball questions to which I obviously don't have an answer. But some of today's new trends will be the commonplace of the future and we must move with it. We are planning some interesting programs for the year to come and hope that we can provide an experience for you, our members and program participants, that will help you expand your professional horizons and your world. ■

Outgoing Chair's Comments

by the 1989-99 Chair of LACASIS, Linda McCann

As I thankfully step into my new position of Past-Chair, I want to take this opportunity in my farewell column to express gratitude to all members of the LACASIS board and advisory council who have worked so hard this year. The Fall Workshop program once again drew praise from attendees and I feel confident that this past year is a harbinger of great things to come.

In thinking over the year, I am struck that I still hear discussion in professional conferences of a disjunction between library science and information science and skepticism about the relevance of the term "science" at all. At the same time, I receive email from my children who say they read in the popular press and in their literature outside our field that librarians and information scientists are hot. I admit no bias when I say I think my children are right.

In my professional work, I see no breach between librarianship and information science. Technology, particularly the Internet, continues to transform our field. I feel fortunate during this time of change to be both a librarian and an information scientist and I believe I have the best of both worlds.

This year on my birthday my daughter also forwarded an email that included a Reuters headline from Tokyo stating, "Gray Hair Hip Fashion Statement For Japan's Youth". Being a librarian with an affinity for information science, I naturally was most interested in the abstract that added a semantic distinction. The correct term for this hair color was not "gray," it was "ash."

I encourage LACASIS members to take advantage of opportunities for professional growth that ASIS presents to us all, regardless of how we describe ourselves. ■

News from the University of New South Wales

| *by Mari Davis, School of Information Systems, Technology and Management,*

For some time now around the world, information disciplines have been moving closer together so that important connections and synergies can result from combining teaching and research programs in the various information fields. Two former schools at the University of New South Wales have combined forces. In early June 1999, the global trend for convergence in information studies courses at the tertiary level was further cemented by the creation of a new School of Information Systems, Technology and Management (SISTM) at UNSW. The important disciplinary components of Information, Library & Archive Studies, Information Systems, and associated areas related to software and technology development, including the newer fields of Web-based information and e-commerce, will now be taught in the one school. This merger will allow students greater diversity of choice among a wide range of information-related subjects. Similar mergers and/or collaborations have occurred at Monash University, the University of California in Berkeley, and Drexel University in Philadelphia.

Associate Professor Bob Edmundson heads the new school with two Associate Heads of School, Dr Connie Wilson (formerly in School of Information, Library and Archive Studies) and Associate Professor Graham Low (formerly in School of Information Systems). The staff establishment at the school is approximately 40 academics. There is a high potential for growth with an increasing number of new students enrolling in all areas of information studies and with new undergraduate offerings relating to library and information management, archives and recordkeeping studies. The former LIS postgraduate courses and subjects will continue to be offered for study within SISTM's Information Management Program. The new undergraduate offerings will be available for the start of the academic year in 2000.

Of special interest is the greater strength that this school offers for the development of new programs. These programs are designed to serve the information sector in the broadest sense, but particularly in information and library services and management, in Web-based information services, and in the burgeoning field of electronic recordkeeping.

The convergence and shift in focus were needed to address the major changes in social understanding of the nature and importance of information. Information in its many forms, including text, is now seen as having become overwhelmingly pervasive. With these changes there is an acknowledgment of the rapid development of computers and computing with their inevitable social consequences. Ideas of information are no longer restricted to something essentially in textual form, such as books, newspapers, journals and so on, stored in filing cabinets

or on the shelves of book stores, archives and libraries. In its multimedia digital formats, information embraces all kinds of text, numerical data, images and sound. It is involved at all levels of society and all aspects of human endeavour. The changes are far-reaching and profound. The new school has been established to capitalize on the expertise of academics from each of the information disciplines to educate professionals capable of responding appropriately to changes in the information environment. ■

Griffiths Receives 1999 Chapter Information

It is my pleasure to announce the winner of the 1999 LACASIS Award for Contribution to Information Science: Dr. Jose-Marie Griffiths, Chief Information Officer at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Following is a summary of her achievements from the nomination letter.

Dr. Griffiths is a well-recognized information scientist, researcher, and teacher, both nationally and internationally. She has published numerous books, chapters, and articles on measurement and evaluation of information services, value and economics of information, and other aspects of information science. She is currently the Chief Information Officer of the University of Michigan, where she has the overall responsibility for development and implementation of policies required to achieve University's goal in the use of information technology. She also serves as one of the Commissioners for the United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) from 1997 to 2001.

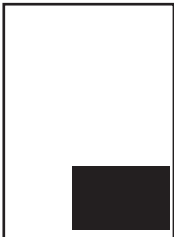
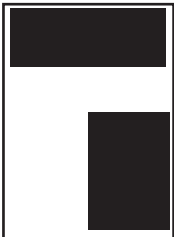


Dr. Griffiths has received many honors and awards throughout her distinguished career, among them the Research Award from the American Society for Information Science, Special Library

Association special recognition for research, and Outstanding Faculty Member from University of Tennessee. Earlier this year, she was named one of the "Top 25 Women on the Web" by "San Francisco Women on the Web", which "recognizes outstanding women across the nation who have most inspired people worldwide with their efforts to advance technology, contribute to the community and set an example as successful business women in the Internet and new media industries."

I nominated Dr. Griffiths for the LACASIS Contribution to Information Science Award because she has set an inspiring example for all information professionals. She excels in her work as a scientist, researcher, and teacher, expands her impact as an administrator and policy maker, and is now recognized by trade press. At a time when our parent society is in the midst of discussing whether to add the word "technology" to the name of the organization, it is especially significant to honor someone who has proved her contribution to the whole spectrum of information science, technology, policy, management, and services. ■

Charlotte P. Lee Wins Margaret McKinley Memorial Scholarship

Charlotte P. Lee is this year's winner of the annual LACASIS Margaret McKinley Scholarship Essay Competition. Charlotte is a Ph.D. candidate in the UCLA Department of Information Studies, specializing in human-computer interaction and social informatics. The competition prize includes funding to attend the ASIS 1999 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. and a one-year membership in ASIS. Congratulations, Charlotte!

<p>o a s i s Display Advertising Rates</p>				
<p>Advertise in OASIS, the journal for LA's Information Professional. Each ad runs for one volume (4 issues). For more information, please contact: Louisa Toot (626) 395-3408</p>	<p>Business Card \$100.00 3.68" W x 2.43" H</p>	<p>Quarter Page \$140.00 7.5" W x 2.43" H or 3.68" W x 4.93" H</p>	<p>Half Page \$250.00 7.5" W x 4.93" H</p>	<p>Full Page \$385.00 7.5" W x 10" H</p>

Report on the Fall Workshop

by Amy Wallace, LACASIS Board member

Marjorie M. K. Hlava kicked off the workshop with a keynote address. Majorie gave a comprehensive overview of the problems that exist in the areas of knowledge management and information sharing. One common thread among these problems is that the distinctions between the creators, aggregators, distributors, and users of information have become less clear. More and more, companies are venturing into uncharted territory. As a result, there is an increasing demand for standardized means in which to handle information. Some important standards that have recently been accepted are Digital Object Identifier (DOI), Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML), and Z39.50. In addition, several other quasi-standards (TCP/IP, pdf, etc.) have been embraced by the information industry to improve communication and understanding. If you would like to read more about new and proposed standards related to knowledge management and information sharing, go to <http://www.niso.org>.

Speaker Gary Saxer's discussion posed an interesting question. Why do people spend so much time trying to categorize the information we produce? Each year our society creates more and more information, and the general public is less and less likely to spend their time categorizing it. The categories that are created are equally irrelevant to everyone, which means no one can find anything anyway. He believes that we should produce and store information, but let computers do the tedious work of retrieving that information the next time we need it. Gary's company, Enfish, has created software that will find files on your personal computer and the World Wide Web by searching for keywords and phrases. You no longer have to remember file names or programs used to create a particular document. It will even sort incoming e-mail messages and find web sites related to your particular interests. If you want to learn more about the Enfish company and their software, Enfish TrackerPro, go to <http://www.enfish.com>.

Speaker Jay Nelson spoke candidly about the challenges of setting up an e-commerce site. He cautioned that an e-commerce site is not something you can put together overnight. It is like any other business, except your storefront is a web site. You will need to legally establish your business, hire employees, produce and track your inventory, create an appealing and user friendly web site, contract with an intermediary to handle credit card or COD payments, and set up a mode of delivery. In addition, you must create a detailed promotional plan. The two worst things for an e-commerce business are that there is no site when a customer is trying to find it, or the site is up and running but no customers are using it. Jay suggests that you create a detailed timeline of when to place print and electronic advertisements, send out press releases, get links to your site on affiliate pages, and have your site indexed by the major search engines. All promotions should maintain a steady flow of traffic on your e-commerce site, and prevent surges of customers that may cause your entire site to crash. If you want to visit Jay's e-commerce site go to <http://www.duomark.com>.

Speaker Robert Doiel introduced conference participants to Synchronized Multimedia Integrated Language (SMIL). SMIL is a subset of XML that allows you to bring together different images, videos, and sounds into a single multimedia production. Robert presented several fun and instructional examples. One project combined a video of him playing a whistle, the sound of him playing the whistle, and images showing where a person would need to place his/her fingers on the whistle to achieve the same notes. Another multimedia presentation combined video, photographs, and speeches to form a vivid historical account. What you need to create a SMIL presentation are the desired image, video, and sound files as well as a text editor, G2 player, and a web browser. To learn more about creating projects using SMIL go to <http://www.w3c.org>. To download the G2 player required for viewing SMIL presentations, go to <http://www.real.com>.

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Fall
Workshop

A Student's Perspective

by Hayley Garcia

The LACASIS 1999 Fall Workshop, Compatible Architectures Structures for Growth, brought together an eclectic mix of speakers, participants, and vendors in an effort to share perspectives on technology use in the field of Library Science. Along with several other students from the SJSU School of Library and Information Science, I attended the program as a volunteer, and assisted event coordinators with the preparations. Volunteers, under the direction of Holly Ying, assisted with registration, answered questions, and tape-recorded presentations. The workshop provided students with an invaluable opportunity to meet professionals in the field, and to familiarize themselves with the issues facing Information Specialists today.

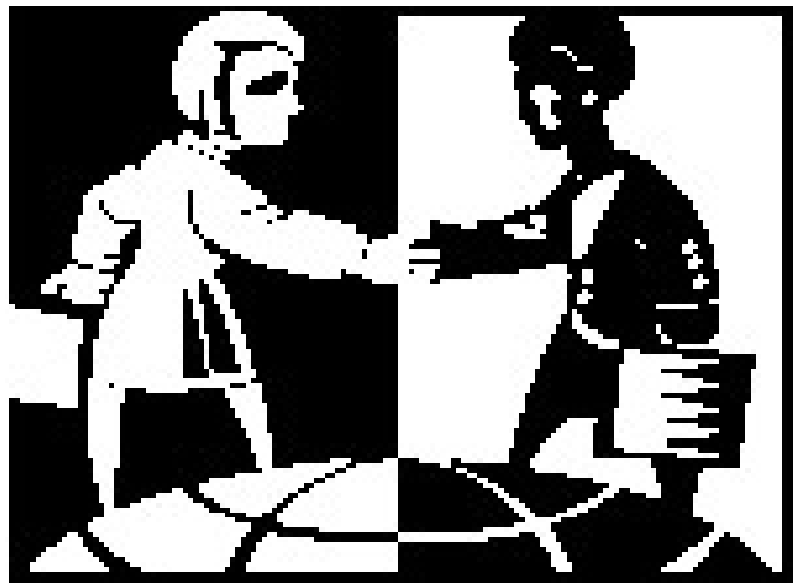
The workshop began with a presentation by Marjorie M.K. Hlava, President and Chariman of Access Innovations, Inc., who discussed the nature of the "New Architecture" in relation to knowledge management, the Internet, and digital information as a whole. In addition to identifying key players and roles, and explaining frameworks for networked systems, Marjorie stressed the importance of standards to the creation and maintenance of compatible architectures. As an explanation of the components which comprise networked systems, and the Internet in particular, Marjorie's presentation set the tone for the workshop. I found her recommendations to "know production values" and "stay flexible" especially resonant in light of the relentless pace of technological change.

After the break, Gary Saxer, a self-proclaimed Evangelist for Enfish Technology, enlivened the group with a spirited presentation on Enfish Tracker Pro, a software application designed to categorize and manage information. In the course of demonstrating the Tracker software, Gary explained his perception of the information scientist as "collector, categorizer, and trusted source." While I found Gary's estimation of the classification process as "irrelevant" problematic, I appreciated both his energy, and his unique perspective on the role of the information professional in relation to technological progress.

With the spotlight on commercial ventures, Jay Nelson spoke on the challenges of launching and promoting an e-commerce web site. Jay's presentation not only addressed the costs associated with such an enterprise, but also provided participants with a step-by-step guide to marketing an e-commerce site through print and online media. Jay stressed the importance of timing when advertising and launching a commercial site, and the need for constant promotion. His presentation concluded with a discussion of the monetary benefits of creating an e-commerce web site, and the kinds of companies that stand to profit most from this type of electronic endeavor.

Following lunch, Robert Doiel, a Programmer/Analyst at the Center for Scholarly Technology, spoke on the subject of multimedia and SMIL (Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language). Robert discussed the nature and evolution of SMIL, its similarity to XML and HTML, and the hardware/software resources required to use it. Throughout the presentation, audio and video samples were displayed in order to demonstrate the power and effectiveness of using SMIL as a tool for presenting synchronized data online. I found Robert's presentation to be especially valuable for Webmasters in search of a way to satisfy their viewers' insatiable need for change.

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Calendar | *Help for your planning*

December 7-9 Online Information 99, "...the largest information industry event in the world." London, United Kingdom. <http://www.online-information.co.uk/>

December 14, 1999 Annual Joint LACASIS and SLA/SCC (Special Libraries Association Southern California Chapter) Holiday Dinner. "The Computer Revolution Hasn't Happened Yet," presented by Dr. Alan Kay. Caltech Athenaeum, Pasadena. <http://www.lacasis.org/>

January 11-14, 2000 Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) 2000 Annual Conference. San Antonio, TX. <http://www.alise.org/>

January 14-19 American Library Association Midwinter Meeting. San Antonio, TX. <http://www.ala.org/>

January 17-21 Open Forum on Metadata Registries, sponsored by the International Organization for Standardization / International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC). Santa Fe, NM. <http://www.nist.gov/openforum2000/>

January 20-22 Special Libraries Association Winter Meeting. St. Louis. <http://www.sla.org/>

February 28 - March 1 Intranets 2000. San Jose. <http://www.intranets2000.com/>

March 6-9 TechEd 2000. Technology in Education International Conference and Exposition. "Teaching & Learning in a Networked World." Palm Spring Convention Center. <http://www.teched2000.org/>

March 8-10 International Conference on Learning With Technology. "Does Technology Make a Difference?" Temple University, Philadelphia. <http://www.temple.edu/iclt/>

March 14-18 Computers in Libraries 2000. Washington, DC. <http://www.infotoday.com/>

April 6-9 Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP) Annual Conference. Washington, DC. <http://www.aiip.org/>

April 9-15 National Library Week. <http://www.ala.org/>

May 5-11 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting. Vancouver. <http://www.mlanet.org/>

May 10-13 American Society of Indexers Annual Meeting. Albuquerque, NM. <http://www.asindexing.org/>

May 16-18 National Online Meeting and IOLS 2000 (Integrated Online Library Systems). New York City. <http://www.infotoday.com/>

June 10-15 Special Libraries Association Annual Conference. Philadelphia. <http://www.sla.org/>

July 6-13 American Library Association Annual Conference. Chicago. <http://www.ala.org/>

July 10-13 Sixth International ISKO Conference (International Society for Knowledge Organization). "Dynamism and Stability in Knowledge Organization." Toronto, Canada. <http://www.hud.ac.uk/schools/cedar/isko.html>

August 13-18 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference. Jerusalem, Israel. <http://www.ifla.org/>

September 18-20 Online World. San Diego. <http://www.onlineinc.com/>

October 16-19 Global 2000 Worldwide Conference on Special Librarianship. Brighton, United Kingdom. <http://www.slaglobal2000.org/>

November 6-8 Internet Librarian. Monterey Convention Center. <http://www.infotoday.com/>

November 11-14 California Library Association. Santa Clara. <http://www.cla-net.org/>

November 13 -16 ASIS Annual Meeting. Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Chicago. <http://www.asis.org/>

(310) 276-7717

E-mail: hkattlove@AOL.com

KATTLOVE & ASSOCIATES

Information and Records Management

1427 N. Beverly Drive, Suite 200
Rose Kattlove, MLS, CRM Beverly Hills, CA 90210

New LACASIS Members

May - July 1999

James Frew
Univ. of California
Donald Bren School of Enviro.
Science and Management
Santa Barbara, CA

Marion Scichilone
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Student, Hawaii



Workshop Garcia *from page 9*

Christine Anderson from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) also addressed the Internet from a user's perspective in her presentation on developing web sites for the blind and visually impaired. Christine emphasized the fact that design is "a matter of awareness," and that the same principles that apply to good design are vital for the creation of web sites for the visually impaired. In addition to providing an explanation of the software that makes sites accessible to visually impaired users, Christine highlighted the design principles most crucial to the use of speech software. The presentation concluded with an overview of the Louis Database, which provides users with MARC formatted, speech accessible bibliographic entries via the Internet.

Joseph Busch from Datafusion, Inc. provided the closing remarks for the workshop. Joseph commented on previously discussed topics, such as knowledge management and e-commerce, and provided a historical overview of library services and the methodologies used to manage information. In his presentation, Joseph underscored the importance of the information specialist as "mediator"—someone who uses the same skills he or she has used in the past to explain how technology works in the present.

As a student on the verge of entering the field of Library and Information Science as a professional, I found the workshop an extremely worthwhile experience. The presentations and vendor displays assisted me in becoming better acquainted with technological trends, and facilitated my understanding of the type of skills valued in the field. With its emphasis on flexibility and the need for both technical and traditional library skills, the workshop left me with a renewed commitment to my education and the profession.

I would like to thank Holly Ying, Sally McCoy, and LACASIS for providing SJSU SLIS students with the opportunity to volunteer at the 1999 Fall Workshop, and encourage students to take full advantage of future opportunities to volunteer at LACASIS events. ■

Perspectives and Lessons Learned from Being an Online Student

by Karen Howell

What does it mean to be an online student? In late December 1998, I was eagerly preparing to take my first web-based distance learning class. I had just been approved for a six-month research leave from my position at the University of Southern California, and among other things, I planned to use the leave to complete a graduate certificate in online teaching and leadership from California State University, Hayward.

I acknowledge there are many heated debates about whether or not distance learning is a threat to the sanctity of higher education. This article doesn't attempt to contribute to that discussion. Instead, I'd like to share with you a few of the perspectives and lessons I learned as an online student.

Foolproof technology

Although I work in instructional technology and as technical staff, I rarely have to fix major computer problems at work. Someone else does that. Taking that at home, like many distance learners would, was an eye-opening experience. The first half of my program required that I use a proprietary software client to communicate with my instructor and classmates. I had constant problems with the software unexpectedly quitting in the middle of a session, and reinstalling the software did not resolve the problem. When I repeatedly failed to log in to class, I feared I would fall behind in the coursework.

Fortunately, the vendor provided a toll-free number 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. I used the service once or twice at the beginning of the class, and after receiving great answers, I gained confidence in their ability and desire to help me get going. I even called them when I needed to set up my laptop for travelling on business out-of-state during the class period.

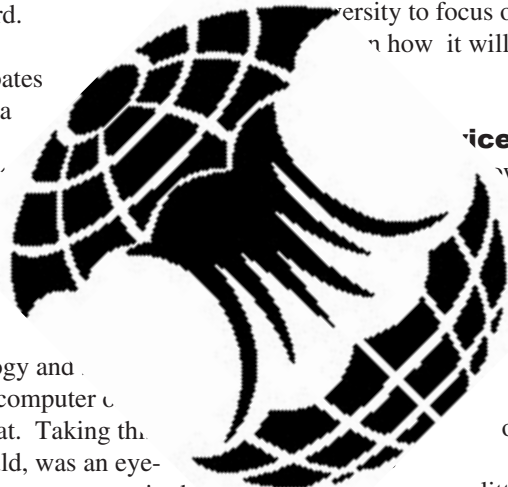
Lesson learned

The software and hardware had to be rock-solid, so that I could concentrate on learning rather than trouble-shooting my computer. A reliable technology base essentially requires a 24-hour a day, 7 day a week toll-free hotline.

A university must be able to support its distance learners without equivocating. Distance learners will not be satisfied to hear that they cannot be helped because they are not running an equipment configuration that is approved by the university, or that the problem really isn't a computing problem but a telecommunication problem, or that they must contact yet another office after being referred for the fourth time.

Corollary lesson learned

A university should seriously consider outsourcing its technical support for distance learning to a company that can take advantage of economies of scale and provide better quality and lower cost. Outsourcing is not always the best solution to providing good technical support, but the analysis will cause the university to focus on customer service, and help the university determine how it will offer equivalent service if it doesn't wish to



Services

How much being an online student changed my perspective on using the library? I did not do team research until the end of the fourth week of the five-week class. Although I was enrolled in Cal State Hayward's program, I did not use their library. I suspect that the lack of little communication between the faculty member and the library because the library never communicated with me about their services offered, and the online program materials never mentioned their library.

Our interlibrary loan librarian at USC knew I was enrolled in a distance-learning program and reminded me I was eligible to use USC's library. She also wanted to know what my experiences were so she could improve the document delivery service. However, I had trouble finding which full-text journals our library subscribed to, and which database subscription service contained relevant journals. Our interlibrary loan office was very willing to work with me to order journal articles or books, but it was difficult for me to work within their time frames.

It took about 2 weeks for my team to agree on our research topic and approach, leaving one week to do the research and one week to draft and revise the report. Even though I could fill in interlibrary loan forms on a web page, I would still have to hope the library could get the articles to me in 1-2 days time, and that I could get to campus to pick up the articles during service hours. Since I was working at home, that was a major inconvenience. If I had been a distance learner not based at USC, I would not even have gone to a library. In the end, I found the journal articles I wanted by searching through electronic journals on the Web through my Internet connection at home.

Lesson learned

Online students are under great time and distance constraints, not only because they are taking a class at a distance from the institution but also because their course schedule may be compressed, leaving little time to do research.

Corollary lessons learned

Librarians must be aggressively proactive in making their resources and services known, because online students and online faculty are not likely to seek them out. Some possibilities: contact online faculty every semester asking if they would like an online guest lecture about library resources and services, create collections of electronic resources customized to a course's or program's needs, provide web pages with sample citations in common style sheet formats, email students in a class advertising electronic reference or research consultations using chat.

Student workload issues

I conscientiously booked 9-12 hours a week into my schedule to work on the online class. However, I did not understand that the online learning format works best when the student checks into the class several times a day. In part, this is because the varying time zones of your fellow classmates means you are never finished participating in the online discussion. There is always something more to read or to respond to.

In online courses, participation tends to account for a substantial portion of your grade. This meant adjusting my schedule so that I could log in once in the morning and twice in the evenings. Every morning I got my messages sent from students in earlier time zones, and worked on the class as I had time during the day. I would upload my messages in the evening, and receive messages from students in the earlier time zone. I would do the bulk of my reading and writing at night, then respond to those messages again, then call it quits for the night. It was always tempting to log back in a fourth time to see if I got responses from the messages I sent out. Online discussion can be addictive.

Lesson learned

Not all online classes will have this level of intense communication, but to maximize the students' learning, there should be some regular interaction between the instructor and the student, and the student with other students. This requires some time, preferably at least once daily.

Corollary lesson learned

Academic advising for prospective distance learning students is very important, otherwise the drop-out rate will be high. Potential advising services include providing students with a guided tour of an online class taught previously, so they know what kind of interaction and experience to expect. Students could also be sent study tips for how to succeed as an online student, and encouraged to share study tips with their classmates.

Faculty workload and training issues

Faculty will need training not only to develop online pedagogical

skills, but also to learn how to manage workload, and to grapple with preconceived notions of online learning. Faculty workload involves course development issues, since a good online course does not happen defacto. I came to appreciate faculty's good facilitation skills, prompt grading, and concise lectures.

I discovered that faculty teaching online courses also have to log in at least once daily, and preferably twice. Because the course is online, students expect to get immediate responses from their instructor, whether or not that is feasible. All the readings and experiences I have encountered say that it takes more time for a faculty member to teach an online course than to teach a distance learning course.

Lesson learned

To maintain quality and avoid burnout, faculty need strong institutional support and incentives such as release time, equipment, and/or student assistant budgets.

Corollary lesson learned

The deeper issues involved are to look at why an institution (or department) wants to offer distance learning programs, what causes institutional and personal incentives to change, and what are the costs and benefits of offering a particular course/program online. Another issue is to find an effective way to train faculty how to teach online. The training program will have to be

Interview with Dudee Chiang

by Dorothy Fue Wong



Dudee Chiang is a past-chair of LACASIS. During this decade, she has organized several workshops and conferences on networked information for LACASIS, the Southern California Online Users Group, and the Medical library Group for Southern California. The LACASIS Fall Workshop she organized in 1997 won the ASIS Chapter Event of the Year, and during her term both as the Program Chair and Chapter Chair, LACASIS won Chapter of the Year awards. Previously, Dudee won the ASIS award for outstanding student paper in 1987 when she was a student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Q How was it possible to have the mid-year ASIS Conference held in Los Angeles this year?

A Several long-time LACASIS members, including myself, had the idea of hosting a mid-year or an annual meeting in our area. However, we did not have a real plan to lobby for a meeting here. We had informally expressed our interest to Dick Hill, ASIS Executive Director, and other ASIS leaders at the national level. We pointed out that Southern California has fair weather in both May and October, and there are a good number of tourist attractions around so that people can plan a family vacation before or after the meeting. We also suggested more specific areas, such as Pasadena or Santa Monica that are attractive, easily accessible from major airports and freeways, offering additional eating and shopping facilities nearby. ASIS headquarters contacted me in January of 1998 to inquire about holding a Mid-Year meeting in Pasadena. We jumped at the opportunity and said that it would be a great idea. From then on, like the quote from the entertainment industry, “the rest is history.”

Q For a long period of time you have been active professionally in the theme of the conference: Evaluating and Using Network Information Resources and Services. How did you get interested in this area and what were some of your early projects?

A I started out as a Reference Librarian, and I still consider myself a Public Services Librarian. I have always been interested in making electronic resources accessible and usable to library users. In the early 90’s when getting on the Net meant logging on to a Unix computer, and e-mail and listservs were the big thing, I signed on to PACS-L, and “heard” terms such as “telnet,” “FTP,” and “gopher.” It was very satisfying when I taught myself how to use those commands and services; I also realized that those commands allowed me to reach new resources that I could offer to library users.

My projects in the early 1990’s were mostly related to teaching and training Internet strategies. I taught several classes, including a full-day workshop on “Internet and Medical Librarians” for the Medical Library Group of Southern California and Arizona (MLGSCA) in 1994. The Norris Medical Library of the University

of Southern California later published the materials for that course, selling nearly one thousand copies. I also put together an “Internet Room” for the MLGSCA meeting in early 1994. It was pretty significant at that time because most national meetings did not provide Internet connections.

Q What does ASIS offer to professionals who are interested in networked information resources and services?

A There are A LOT of relevant research and papers published in JASIS (Journal of the American Society for Information Science) and ASIS Proceedings. Whenever I assumed a research topic and began a literature review, I referred to JASIS and other ASIS publications quite frequently. ASIS also has several Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that allow people to become acquainted with others who have similar professional interests at local, national, and global levels.

The thing that ASIS, or any professional organization offers to its members is networking opportunities. As work becomes more and more specialized within individual organizations, the only people who understand the nature of the occupation are those who do similar work at other companies or universities. Where and how do you meet those people? Through professional organizations like ASIS. Local chapters such as LACASIS provide a lot of opportunities for people to meet others and establish professional relationships. So, come to our meetings and volunteer for LACASIS!

Q Your contribution has been substantial to professional organizations that are involved with network information resources and services. What experiences did you find to be the most rewarding?

A I found that my work with these organizations has provided tremendous opportunities in learning more about the rapidly changing field of information technology and also in establishing a valuable network of professional relationships. For example, when I volunteered to be the editor of SCOUG newsletter, I did a

Continued on page 15

Dudee Chiang *from page 14*

lot reading. I enjoyed organizing workshops for LACASIS because I could pick topics and speakers that interest me. The process of putting together a workshop is an experience in and of itself, and it is a good practice in management and being a team leader.

I have found several good friends through LACASIS, and this is another very rewarding aspect of being active in professional organizations. I had sought career advice and professional opinions from friends in LACASIS, and I consider some of them my mentors. In return, I now look out for new members.

Q What approaches are you using as an Information Consultant in your job at Amgen?

A First, I want to point out that Amgen is a leading biotechnology company, and it has always considered information a vital resource. The library has changed the job title of most Reference Librarians to "Information Consultants." The biggest difference is that, as Information Consultants we do not stay in the library to wait for requests to come to us; we actively approach groups and teams to offer our services. There is a considerable amount of marketing woven into our daily work in addition to research, analysis, and dissemination of information.

There are two distinct portions of my job, one is to work with the Library Information Systems group to bring resources to our users in the company; this is where my involvement with networked information resources applies. The other portion is my work with designated clients, the information management (IS/IT) groups within the company. My challenge is that most of them think because they know computers they have no problem with information; I have to demonstrate my training and expertise in organizing information can help them with their work.

Q What are your favorite fun things to do when you are not working?

A If I still have time, I like to travel. I also enjoy the activities associated with travel before and after a trip. I like to research about the place before I go, this is where my professional skills enrich my personal life. I also try to compile a memory book after each trip. (Ok, I admit, I am a nerd.) ■

Workshop Wallace *from page 8*

Speaker Christine Anderson raised participant's awareness of the issues that should be considered when designing web sites so that content will be accessible to blind and low vision users. Blind and low vision web surfers use specialized reader software to access a site's content. The software typically reads everything on the web page, so Christine discouraged using the same words and phrases over and over again. The reader software reads web pages horizontally, so information placed in tables may be read differently than originally intended. Images are read as the word "image" if there is no embedded description. Christine also gave a few other tips for developing user-friendly web sites for low vision users who do not use readers. Most importantly, web pages should be created with high contrast and without distracting wallpaper. Please go to <http://www.aph.org> if you would like Christine's organization to critique your web site, or if you want to check out the American Printing House for the Blind's Louis Database. The Louis Database indexes accessible materials for people who are blind or visually impaired.

At the end of the day Joseph Busch provided a wonderful overview of the day's events. He reminded us that although we live in a society where the problems of information explosion and constantly changing technology are commonplace, these concerns are not so different from those of the past. The recent developments in e-commerce and infomediation just present us with new variations on the age-old problems of gathering, storing, retrieving, sharing, and using information. Information professionals have a long tradition of organization, and are being called on once again to help make sense out of the chaos. As information scientists we will need to identify current and emerging problems of gathering, storing, retrieving, sharing, and using information. We will then need to draw on our organizational skills and understanding of technology to create new solutions. Joseph envisions new controlled vocabularies that will allow information to transcend the personal vocabulary of its creator, nuances of organizational culture, and the jargon of a particular discipline. Therefore, he believes that the most sought after information scientists will be those who possess the ability to solve these information dilemmas in theory as well as the technical skills to develop the solutions in practice.

Overall, workshop evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Participants liked the fact that speakers addressed an array of developing technologies. We received a number of great suggestions for future workshops and topics. It seems that people are very interested in hands-on workshops. Look for LACASIS to host a hands-on workshop in Spring 2000. Possible topics include XML, metadata, or web design. ■

Online Student *from page 13*

Next Issue: Roles for Librarians in Distance Learning
by Karen Howell, Director,
Center for Scholarly Technology Information Services Division
University of Southern California

**Jason Binford
PO Box 642705
Los Angeles, CA 90064-7175**

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