

## **Academic & Special Division Report**

**Respectfully submitted by Amy Vecchione**

### **Summary of Activity:**

- Met with ILA Membership Committee working on ways to increase membership and increase value to membership, including vetting a mentorship idea.
- Met with several students regarding their interests in ILA.
- Worked with Gina Persichini and Liesl Seborg towards a proposal on including a voting student representative to the ILA Board.
- Searched for candidates for the Vice Chair position of Academic & Special Division.
- Met with interested candidates to run (including one who said yes, but is now going to be a public librarian at BPL).
- Assisted with curating the Academic/Special track at the annual ILA conference.
- Investigated the possibilities of creating an ACRL chapter in Idaho, as Idaho is one of only nine states without an ACRL chapter: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/resources/policies/chapter2acrl.cfm#2ten>
- Briefly investigated the possibilities of partnering with neighboring states.
- Drafted and announced survey about to find out the number of library science students in Idaho, to determine what their interest levels are in working with ILA, and to determine the value of ILA to the students.
- Helped plan to staff the table at the Region 3 conference to gain more members, and to educate the community on ILA's efforts.
- Updated the Facebook page with relevant information. Our facebook page is now much more active.
- Asked SPLAT members if they'd like to be the web 2.0 PR people, and no one volunteered, so I think I will volunteer and create a twitter account/continue to edit the twitter account. Will work with Eric, webmaster, on integration/password retention/etc.
- A summary of the student survey is below, but I did use the ILA username and password to create the survey which can be logged into at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)
- Spoke with CE consultant Shirley Biladeau at ICFL regarding the mentorship plans for SWIM and the student opportunities, in the perspective of this student survey.
- The overall summary seems to be that students in library science programs feel isolated and would like to feel connected, especially to put to use the many things that they are learning in their programs. Also overwhelming is the interest in volunteer opportunities around the state.

### **Student Representative Survey Summary**

27 Students took the survey

10 others were emailed who were previously known students who did not take the survey, but provided email feedback

17 Students would like to volunteer with ILA

The student affiliation varied from 10 being in a current program, 9 considering it as a career, and some who have applied and recently been accepted, etc.

Below is a sample of responses students gave when asked: **How do you think that such a position might benefit you as a student and future library professional?**

- **I would be interested in keeping a blog or wiki of useful websites, training opportunities, and other useful for both library students and student-librarians as well as perhaps setting up mentoring opportunities between students and recent LIS graduates. It would be a great resource to have with an insight into other libraries and talk with current librarians about job related opportunities.**
- **Networking for finding and utilizing opportunities for financial assistance with programs.**
- **Networking would definitely be a huge benefit for this position. I also feel that students have a lot of innovative thinking that can improve library services for future generations. Keeping library services current is very important to our patrons and I think a library student would be able to contribute some great ideas in that department.**
- **I think being involved with ILA as students would also give us exposure to and experience with advocacy for libraries. It's easy to get wrapped up in studying while you're in school and forget how important it is to advocate for libraries in the reality of daily life.**
- **Lending a voice to students.**
- **I've found that being a library student in Idaho is rather isolated and can definitely see how this position would be beneficial in networking library students. Also, a student representative would be aware of the unique needs and the services that the ILA could provide to enhance library students' educational experience.**
- **This sort of falls under the "contributing to the direction..." heading, but I think this position would be wonderfully beneficial for students currently working in libraries. Having this connection would allow student-librarians to more easily cooperate on programs as well as share information with each other about best practices and programming ideas.**
- **I intend to get my masters in library science, after I finish my undergraduate degree in English, and such a position would acquaint me with more facets of the library system than I currently see as a volunteer in the children's section and a patron.**
- **Educating library students about the value of state and national library organizations! Encouraging students to take the time to go to ILA website, conferences, and use training opportunities.**
- **I am currently an Art History major at Brigham Young University am looking into working in library museum archives or curatorial work. An opportunity like this would be great to help me build a resume, network with others, and a great opportunity to serve others while learning.**
- **In addition to the benefits listed above, I am interested in creating a stronger voice for library students in Idaho. As a library science student without much practical experience, I have had to carve out my own learning experiences. Acting as a representative on the board will give more voice to student needs and concerns in Idaho, may improve educational opportunities in Idaho and may encourage more library staff members to pursue an MLS. I am also interested in learning more about the decision-making process at the state level that has an impact on all libraries in Idaho. Participating in an online program has given me the opportunity to compare Idaho's promotion of libraries and the promotion of professional careers in libraries as well as state statutes and standards with**

**those of other states. I would be very interested in learning more about these processes at the state level as well as library staffing retention and continuing education.**