

## Editor's Letter

*Megan Lowe, ACRL-LA Newsletter Editor, Reference Librarian, University of Louisiana at Monroe*

ACRL-LA is still going full tilt! We've done a lot since the last newsletter, with plans to do even more in the coming year(s). Here are the highlights, some of which you'll read more about in this newsletter!

**Workshops & Panels:** We're already in the midst of planning for this year's pre-LUC workshop! This one will focus on leadership and advocacy. We've got Scott Walter, Associate University Librarian for Services at the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign, and Beth Avery, University of North Texas, Head of Research and Instructional Services, as well as directors from institutions around Louisiana, coming to speak.

ACRL-LA has also hosted a series of focus groups throughout the state, including two at LLA. If you haven't attended one yet, or heard about one in your neck of the woods, please don't hesitate to contact me at [lowe@ulm.edu](mailto:lowe@ulm.edu) to find out more. We're not done yet!

In order to further the cause of collaboration, departing president Mike Matthews, Boris Teske, and I presented at the 2009 LaSSAL conference in Alexandria on ACRL, ACRL-LA, and our activities. For more on that, check our Boris' article later in the newsletter.

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Of course, the thing we are currently most excited about is the ACRL Roadshow! Out of pool of 46 applicants, ACRL-LA was one of five sites selected to host the Roadshow! For more about the Show, check out [author's name] article later in the newsletter!

Remember, if you have an idea for a workshop, for either pre-LUC or during the year, please make sure to get in touch with us and share!

**Website:** We're still rocking the ACRL-LA website! Be sure to check the website regularly since we put up announcements of upcoming events, links to useful resources, and project details. Remember: you can also renew your membership online as well. And Webmistress Karen Niemla strongly encourages us all to check out the forums!

**Mentorship:** Due to the results of the survey that Michael Matthews, Rob Bremer, and I presented on at LUC

2008, it was decided to rename the mentorship initiative. It is now known under the working title “Peer Support Network Program.” The results of that survey also led to the decision to host the focus groups throughout the state. Information gathered from the focus groups will enable us to develop a better network for you!

**Executive Board:** The Executive Board met back in February to hash out details for upcoming events. Please see the website for minutes and details!

**Publications:** The newsletter is continuing, and past issues are available on the ACRL-LA website. However, another publication is being added: an electronic scholarly open-access journal (OAJ)! The membership has spoken, and it is being named *Codex: the Journal of the Louisiana Chapter of the ACRL*. If you’re interested in volunteering with the journal, or have questions or suggestions, please contact me at [lowe@ulm.edu](mailto:lowe@ulm.edu).

On a related note to *Codex*, this will be the final issue of the ACRL-LA newsletter. It will be combined with the OAJ, so look for ACRL-LA news on the website and in *Codex*.

ACRL-LA is certainly staying busy! We hope to provide useful programming, opportunities for collaboration and growth, and so much more to academic librarians and libraries throughout the state. I have enjoyed my short run as the editor of the newsletter and look forward to working on the OAJ! If you have questions or comments, please don’t hesitate to contact me at [lowe@ulm.edu](mailto:lowe@ulm.edu).



## Incoming President’s Message

*Dr. Tony Fonseca, Ellender Memorial Library, Nicholls State University*

In a June/July *State News (Council of State Governments)* article, Mikel Chavers examined the state government practice of addressing financial shortfalls by paying recurring bills with one time money. He points out that when Colorado attempted this balancing act in order to fund higher education, saving it from a \$150 million cut over the course of three years, this placed higher education in a much more precarious situation, once one time funding like recovery money dried up. Unfortunately, as Chavers notes, Louisiana may be following suit if it addressed its \$1.3 billion revenue shortfall (and the subsequent \$219 million dollar cut in education) with rainy day fund money or stimulus money. Chavers argues that this makes prospects for 2011-2012 bleak (“Balancing Act,” Vol. 52, no. 6, 22-25).

Indeed there will be no easy solutions for higher education in Louisiana. For example, the LSU system is still considering the idea of dealing with its \$100 million deficit by raising the number of hours full-time professors teach, raising the current limit on class sizes, and possibly even furloughing staff (*USA Today*, March 30, 2009, 11a), and recently the Baton Rouge campus announced faculty furloughs are now on the table. These deficit problems have

been addressed at the highest levels of state government, with Governor Bobby Jindal's threat of using line-item vetoes to force state legislators to pass a feasible budget, freeing up what Jindal calculated to be about \$120 million, in what he termed an attempt to limit cuts to higher education to less than 10 percent. Without a doubt, the word "crisis" is appropriate to describe the financial problems facing Louisiana's higher education system. For example, Northwestern State's funding, in a worst case scenario, would be cut by an unthinkable 47 percent by 2011. Nicholls' funding would be similarly affected, being cut by up to 43 percent over the next two to three years. Academic librarians may soon find themselves using the same descriptor—crisis—when discussing the multiple implications that higher education budget cuts will have on university and college libraries, as well as on their profession.

We would be remiss not to meet this challenge head on, by realizing that when money is tight, it is essential to translate the mission of the academic library, and by extension that of the academic librarian, into terminology that both upper administrators and state legislators both understand and respect; hence, Louisiana's academic librarians need to begin expressing the function of the academic library in business terms, by developing working, feasible models to show the Return-On-Investment (ROI) of their organizations. In an interview with *Reference Services Review*, Paula Kaufman (University Librarian and Dean of Libraries, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), one of the few librarians nationally who has seriously attempted

an ROI translation for an academic library, succinctly points out the changes that academic librarians need to make in how they present their funding needs to administrators: "From the point of view of a university provost ... a reliable ROI would answer the question of how much quantifiable value the University received for every dollar it invested in the library" (Sarah Barbara Watstein, "Library Value [Return on Investment, ROI] and the Challenge of Placing a Value on Public Services," 36.3, 227).

ACRL-LA is solidly behind every effort to help Louisiana's academic libraries in this endeavor. The 2009 Pre-LUC Mini-conference will feature Scott Walter, Associate University Librarian for Services and Associate Dean of Libraries at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Walter, along with Kaufman, is the driving forces behind creating a ROI model for Research I universities. As keynote speaker for ACRL-LA's October 2009 event, he will be giving practical assistance to participants to better enable them to articulate their library's value, as well as their own, in both bottom line financial terms, even for those aspects of librarianship that are in the public service sector. Our hope is that Louisiana's academic librarians, especially the library deans and directors within our ranks, will better be able to express their libraries' worth to their parent institutions by establishing a final monetary value that expresses the return earned for every dollar of institutional investment. As Judy Luther argues in the 2006 white paper, *University Investment in the Library: What's the Return? A Case Study at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, "Academic libraries are being challenged

increasingly to demonstrate their value to their institution in compelling quantitative terms. There is a growing need to provide a response based on sound methodology to questions about the value of the university's investment in the library" (Executive Summary). Toward that end, ACRL-LA will be working towards developing flexible models for academic libraries of all sizes, so that a monetary value can be articulated even when a service does not have a clearly defined monetary value.

The challenge, however, will be immense. Despite the efforts of the Urbana-Champaign team, Kaufman admits that the development of ROI models for academic libraries is "perhaps in its teenage years" (Watstein, 229). What librarians need to do is change their ways of thinking; they must learn to speak not about nebulous degrees of customer satisfaction, but rather in *measurable outcomes*. It is imperative that they develop a *quantitative measure* that recognizes the library's role in supporting the university's strategic goals. Academic librarians will have to devise ways to apply models such as the Strouse Model (developed by Roger Strouse, Vice President and Lead Analyst with Outsell Inc.), which described the contribution of corporate and government libraries to their institutions based on the time and costs saved by users, or the Weiner Model, which attempts to determine how to deal with the problem that "statistics alone do not reflect a dollar value of worth" (Barbara Weiner, "A Bottom-Line Adventure," *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian*, Vol. 18, no. 2, 2000, 27).

And there is little time to waste. Starting with the next fiscal year, the Louisiana Board of Regents will change the way it distributes existing funds to higher education. The long and short of this is that by FY 2011-2012 institutions such as Northwestern will watch its budget shrink from the 7/1/2008 baseline of \$49,658,266 to \$29,909,174 for FY 2011-2012. This new funding allocation is based on NIH / NSF grants funded research, which means that Research I and Research II institutions will be favored, leaving undergraduate universities that emphasize teaching and student engagement, like Northwestern and Nicholls, and by extension their libraries, out in the cold.



## ACRL-LA Roadshow

*Karen Niemla, Reference Librarian,  
University of Louisiana at Monroe*

On June 17, 2009 ACRL-LA hosted the roadshow workshop "Scholarly Communication 101: Starting With the Basics" in association with ACRL national at the LSU Faculty Club. Attended by over 80 people, this event was one of the largest events ACRL-LA has ever held, if not the largest, and the opportunity in itself was an honor as ACRL-LA had been chosen as one of 5 hosts out of 46 applications. It was also made possible by the kind and appreciated support of Oxford Journals,

Atlas Systems Inc., and Lyrisis.

Prior to the workshop, a business meeting was held (the minutes of which are available on [acrlla.org](http://acrlla.org)), and a catered luncheon was served.

The speakers were Sarah L. Shreeves, the Coordinator for the Illinois Digital Environment for Access to Learning and Scholarship (IDEALS), Kevin Smith, the Scholarly Communications Officer at Duke University, and Louisiana's own Ralph Boe, who is of course the Director of LOUIS. The presentations covered a variety of topics related to Scholarly Communication, although they were all related to changes happening now and in the future. The current model of scholarly publication as an industry was compared to its potential future model, and how roles of the parties involved would change in transition.

All potential authors were repeatedly encouraged to negotiate with publishers to retain rights to their articles and books, and to understand what their own inherent rights were before giving them away. Attendees were given sample copies of real Copyright Agreements from a variety of well-known publishers, which were examined in small groups and discussed. Creative Commons copyright was explained to some degree and most handouts for the event themselves carried a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license.

The concept of "Open Access" access was explained. It does not necessarily mean free in terms of cost, and there is more than one type of Open Access, but the commonality between them is that these means of publication are more transparent than traditional publishing.

The presenters provided ample examples of established electronic publishers, including many that provide free and useful content, such as SHERPA/RoMEO, [arxiv.org](http://arxiv.org), [plos.org](http://plos.org), and a few others.

To learn more about the topics covered please visit ACRL's national website here:

<http://www.acrl.ala.org/scholcomm/>, and to see pictures, video, and details of the event at the LSU Faculty Club go here: <http://www.acrlla.org/events/scr.html>



### **Incoming Vice President's Message**

*Melissa Ursula Dawn Goldsmith,  
Ellender Memorial Library, Nicholls  
State University*

The list of projects is impressive: establishing annual workshops, delivering group presentations at LLA, developing a sophisticated website, publishing an informative and interesting newsletter, developing an open-access peer-review journal, and creating a mentoring program. Through the leadership of Michael Matthews (our Past President), Tony Fonseca (our current President), and members of the Executive Board, ACRL-LA is now credited as being one of the most active chapters of ACRL. Whether you are a post-Katrina member of the Chapter (like I am) or a long standing one, it is impossible to miss ACRL-LA's efforts towards becoming responsive to academic libraries and librarians in the state. Speaking for myself, I can say that

it has been an honor to have served as Chair of the By-Laws Committee. We were able to make necessary changes that address the Chapter's current needs and provide flexibility for future growth to the document. Not only has that role helped me to acquire a deeper understanding of the goals of the Chapter than I had before; serving as Chair has also contributed to the development of my own vision as ACRL-LA's Vice President/President Elect.

In the last newsletter, Matthews mentioned several issues concerning the mentoring program survey. The most controversial of these was "Is the library the true heart of the university?" In answering that question in a broad context, my impression is that many academic librarians wonder. Though some libraries are located inside or nearby the quadrangles of Louisiana institutions, many of the state's academic librarians believe they are either constantly on the outside looking in, or on the periphery altogether in the minds of faculty, students, administration, and the institution's community. Conference presentations and articles have focused on this problem, offering ideas to bring the academic and research library to the attention of the university community. As a tenure track assistant professor at Nicholls, I have been encouraged by both my director and my colleagues to participate fully in the University community through committee work and by organizing symposia—as well as through creating and participating in outreach activities that remind the university community of the necessity of not just the academic library, but also the human interaction and instruction it

provides. As Vice President/President Elect, I intend to emphasize the library as the true heart of the university by further strengthening an already strong ACRL chapter, especially through increasing and expanding its membership.

But I also intend to keep the dialogue going, for these activities are not the sole responsibilities of the chapter president. I intend to ask the hard questions, even the ones that may not have answers we want to hear: How often have you been told by a faculty member that s/he loves the library, and merely acknowledged the statement with a smile? Have you been approached by a student who expresses interest in academic librarianship, but sent him or her away because you were busy? Do you have someone in mind who works in another field—related or unrelated—that may benefit from library scholarship, but whom you have not talked to about librarianship? Do you have a friend with a library degree but without a position (retired or unemployed) who possesses strong interests in academic librarianship, but is being kept out of the field? Surely, these people are all allies, but not only that. They are potential ACRL-LA members. We, as academic librarians, must reach out to them aggressively, engaging them in deeper dialogue.

We are also lucky enough to have colleagues who belong to sister organizations that share a focus on academic and research libraries (albeit with a specialized lens). And then there are our colleagues, librarians and library faculty who no longer live in Louisiana but still desire connecting with ACRL-LA. These people are yet another

potential membership source. I intend to explore all these possibilities, but I will need the help of ACRL-LA affiliated academic librarians. We all must encourage these potential allies to join our Chapter by informing them about its many activities that can benefit them and enrich their careers. We must let them know that as members, their voices will be valued, that the ACRL-LA Executive Board promises to offer diverse venues and forums for them to be heard. We must learn not to stop the conversation about becoming a librarian with a vague mention of graduate studies in library and information science; we must continue the dialogue by mentioning the many professional opportunities that ACRL-LA offers to members, whether they are seasoned professionals, new to the field, or just considering a position in academic and research libraries.

Returning to the question of the library's being the true heart of the university, I believe that we will only be able to answer an emphatic "yes" when we have seen the fruits of the concurrent work of librarians and strong library-related organizations. It will take strong local organizations, engaging in invigorated efforts to empower academic libraries and their librarians. After all, Louisiana's academic librarians *are* its academic libraries.

Melissa Ursula Dawn Goldsmith  
Vice President/President Elect of ACRL-LA  
August 2009



## LLA 2009

*Karen Niema, Reference Librarian,  
University of Louisiana at Monroe*

In case anyone has forgotten, the 2009 LLA Conference was held at the Hilton Capitol Center 12-14, and ACRL-LA and its members were well-represented.

This year, ACRL-LA had a non-profit exhibit booth (#62) for conducting Academic Librarian Focus Groups, providing cookies and bottled water to attendees. The purpose of these focus groups has been to assess interest in a statewide peer support network. Those who attended these casual yet structured Focus Groups brought forth a variety of concerns about what they wanted assistance or support with in both their supervisory and subordinate roles. These conversations made it clearer that because of the multiplicitous nature of what it means to be a librarian, levels of expertise have less to do with how long one has been a librarian, and more to do with what one was doing during that time, which would necessitate a support model based on cooperation and mutual interest (as opposed to the "mentorship" model that is sufficient in other professions or disciplines).

It should also be mentioned that there will likely be two more of these Focus Groups in the future, one at Nicholls State University, and one at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, which will later be announced with dates and locations.

LLA's Academic Section also sponsored ticketed event, the "Academic / ACRL Meet and Greet," held on Saturday, March 14th from 4:30 to 5:20 in the Hilton's Capitol Room, catered with

fruit, drinks, and cheese. It was hosted by Academic Section Chair Betsy Miguez and then-ACRL-LA-president Michael E. Matthews. Light academic conversation was enjoyed, and later on, ACRL-LA honored Sigrid Kelsey with its first Scholar Librarian of the Year Award, presenting her with a framed certificate and a gift. LLA Academic Section also honored David Duggar as the Outstanding Academic Librarian of the Year. Photos and videos from the event are available on ACRL-LA's website.

Also this year, former ACRL-LA President Don Smith was chosen as the 2009 Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect of the LLA Academic Section, and there were presentations given by several ACRL-LA members.



### **Supporting LA Libraries**

On May 14-15, LaSSAL hosted its annual conference at Best Western Inn and Suites and Conference Center in Alexandria. Pre-conference workshops were held on Thursday, May 14, and the proper conference was held Friday, May 15. Topics included outreach, interlibrary loan, collection development, grant-writing, professional development, and online resources.

In the interest of collaboration and reaching out in the state, ACRL-LA submitted and had accepted a presentation regarding learning and cooperation efforts between ACRL-LA

and LaSSAL. Out-going President Mike Matthews, Boris Teske, and Megan Lowe co-authored and co-presented the presentation (available on the ACRL-LA website at <http://acrlla.org/events/acrllalassal09.ppt>).

Mr. Teske's portion of the presentation centered on what the ACRL is and what it has to offer, including the various publications produced by the ACRL, its issues and concerns, services and programs, and how one might get involved with ACRL. Mr. Teske also highlighted how library support staff can get involved with ACRL and what services and programs would be available for support staff.

Ms. Lowe's portion of the presentation involved outlining the activities of the Louisiana Chapter of the ACRL and what the Chapter plans to do in the future. Activities described included conferences and workshops held; initiatives being started; the Chapter's updated website; the focus groups currently being held around the state; and the advent of the Chapter's "Scholar Librarian of the Year" award. Ms. Lowe also discussed the Chapter's newsletter and the up-and-coming open access peer-reviewed journal, as well as briefly describing the ACRL Roadshow which hadn't taken place at the time of the conference.

Mr. Matthews' portion of the presentation was entitled "What Can We Do Together? Interactive Time with Mike Matthews." This section of the presentation was conducted with an eye towards how ACRL-LA and LaSSAL can assist each other in the accomplishment of their respective goals. The subject receiving the most



attention on both sides of the discussion was management, and Mr. Matthews highlighted this year's ACRL-LA Pre-LUC workshop which will cover themes of leadership and advocacy and will feature Scott Walter, Associate University Librarian for Services at the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign, as well as directors from institutions around Louisiana, coming to speak.

## COMING SOON!

The electronic scholarly open-access journal, *Codex*, will be up and running for Fall 2009! Keep an eye out – you can contribute by volunteering to work with the journal or by submitting articles for publication! If you have questions about the journal, please contact Megan Lowe at [lowe@ulm.edu](mailto:lowe@ulm.edu)!

### 2009-2010 Executive Board

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