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ILA/ACRL Newsletter, vol. 19, no. 6, November 2009

Association of College and Research Libraries. Iowa Chapter

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President's piece

It's been an enjoyable year as President of the Iowa Chapter of ACRL. The Chapter has been busy in 2009 and despite the hard economic times there have been a number of bright efforts the organization has supported.

The Spring Conference was certainly a highlight. Steven Bell's visit to talk about "Designing the Future-Proof Library" inspired the audience members to consider how to best support their library programming and services to maintain relevance and maximize impact. The after-session workgroups gave the audience a chance to work together and get feedback from Steven. Listening to sessions from my colleagues around the state during the concurrent sessions gave me a number of ideas to take back to my library and reminded me of the interesting work taking place in Iowa.

The newsletters have been an informative venue to share information and ideas. They also provide a good record of ACRL's events.

ACRL was active at the annual Iowa Library Association Conference. Jennifer McLennan and Faye Chadwell presented "Collective Advocacy: Engaging Public Libraries in the Open Access Movement" and "Rights Stuff: Decoding Publisher copyright transfer agreements." Open Access and Scholarly Communication have become important issues for Libraries and gaining learning opportunities is important for members.

In 2009, the Chapter was able to take a leadership role within ILA and become the first subdivision to conduct an electronic election. Thanks to Vice President Mary Iber for working with the ILA office to make the election happen without too many glitches.

I am glad I was able to participate in the Iowa Chapter of ACRL as President. It has been an honor to serve my colleagues and gain the experience of working on behalf of the Chapter members. Thank you to the members for providing this opportunity.

Brett Cloyd
President, Iowa Chapter of ACRL

Setting the Trend with Online Voting

ILA/ACRL is the first subdivision of the Iowa Library Association to conduct electronic voting. The ACRL chapter membership unanimously passed the new by-law at the Annual Meeting at ILA on October 22, 2009.

Congratulations to our new officers! We look forward to a productive new year.

Ryan Gjerde of Luther College, VP/President-Elect

Ericka Raber of the University of Iowa, Secretary/Treasurer

Natalie Hutchinson of Central College, Member-at-large

Submitted by Mary Iber, VP/President Elect

Collective Advocacy: Engaging Libraries in the Open Access Movement

Faye Chadwell, Associate University Librarian for Collections and Content Management at Oregon State University, and Jennifer McLennan, Director of Communications for the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), teamed up to discuss open access and ways that libraries and librarians can advocate for free and permanent access to research. The timing for this session was fortuitous, as October 19-23 was Open Access Week (http://www.openaccessweek.org/).

Open access is the principle that research results should be freely available on the Internet immediately upon publication. Open access allows for more connections to be made between ideas, and for more progress to be made in research. Libraries can provide users with more of what they need. Researchers have more avenues for discovery of others' work and more reach and impact for their own work. Colleges and universities are aided in achieving their core mission of education and research.

Chadwell and McLennan highlighted four paths to reaching open access. First, open access journals (now over 4000) put submitted articles through peer review and then make the accepted articles freely available; the cost of producing each journal is covered through means other than subscription costs, such as submission fees or institutional sponsorship. Second, open access archives, often associated with institutions or disciplines and with over 1500 in existence, do not perform peer review, but do make archived materials accessible to the world. Third, authors publishing in venues other than open access journals can sometimes negotiate, through amended copyright transfer agreements (see also Chadwell and McLennan's second session, "Rights Stuff") to keep the rights to their own work and distribute it freely. Finally, funding organizations can require as a matter of policy that results of sponsored research be made freely available.

The Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPAA, S.1373) would, if passed, require U.S. federal agencies and departments with budgets of more than $100 million to implement policies mandating higher levels of public access. Journal articles reporting on research funded by grants from these agencies, or written by researchers employed by these agencies, would be affected. FRPAA would require that such results published in peer-reviewed journals be made freely available to the public within six months of initial publication. The National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and the Department of Energy are examples of the agencies that would be affected.

Ways that librarians can support open access include writing in support of the Federal Research Public Access Act, joining SPARC, and joining (for free!) the Alliance for Taxpayer Access (http://www.taxpayeraccess.org/), a coalition of organizations and individuals supporting open public access to taxpayer-funded research. Librarians can also inform their institutions and colleagues about the goals of open access and the ways to increase open access to research.

Report and photo by Kris Stacy-Bates

Rights Stuff: Decoding Publisher Copyright Transfer Agreements

Jennifer McLennan, Director of Communications, SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) and Faye Chadwell, Associate University Librarian for Collections and Content Management, Oregon State University, shared with the audience the importance of authors being aware of their rights when they publish their work.

According to McLennan and Chadwell, managing author's rights is a key component to transforming scholarly communication. The most common practice among scholars is to sign the copyright agreements without questioning anything. Besides being able to challenge the content of these contracts, scholars also should be aware that they can and should amend the copyright transfer agreements in order to protect their rights.

In order to help librarians learn more about publisher copyright transfer agreements several examples of agreements were distributed among the participants. The overall conclusion reached after reading these examples was that the language in these contracts is very vague and, in many cases, transfers an almost total control over to the publisher.

They also shared some tools that librarians can use in order to educate faculty on campus about transferring the ownership of their intellectual output.

Reported by Germano Streese

Fred Gertler Session Cancelled

A third session ILA/ACRL sponsored session, "Humo(u)r in Libraries: Making Fun at Work and Staying Productive," and Gertler's presentation sponsored by Support Personnel, were cancelled due to illness. Those of us who attended the Annual Conference and were planning to attend Fred Gertler's presentations were disappointed. But, hopefully, he will be able to present at a future ILA conference.