

ORALL NEWSLETTER

OHIO REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

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President's Column – Ingrid Mattson

Library Caring

On the whole, I have found people who work in libraries to be incredibly conscientious. They are dedicated to doing excellent work—in large part because they are service oriented. We care about our work and our patrons. My colleague Paul Gatz¹ wrote about this in his [recent post on the RIPS blog](#): “It is why we must treat our work with the greatest of care and not slide into the mechanical boredom associated with the cycle of checklists and deadlines. It is the caring that is the work of librarianship – that is what it means ‘to library.’ And that is what makes the library necessary.”

I agree, but I wonder if caring in and of itself is enough. I might care very much about my patrons, but if I do not tell them and hope they just figure it out through my dedication to library services, can I fault them if they don't really know I care? I posed this question to Paul in an email exchange,² and he responded as I should have expected:

with an explanation of a course he took that focused on [Heidegger](#) and his work *Being and Time*. From Paul, “If we just care about meeting our performance objectives or our status or who is or is not doing what I think is his or her job, that is going to affect us as individuals and the library as a whole. But if we care instead about the work in an authentic way, focusing on what we are actually trying to accomplish – teaching, helping, etc. – then I think we can be more effective, both individually and as a whole.”

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¹ My apologies to Paul if I've mischaracterized his sentiments. I do appreciate having him as a sounding board and discussant.

² I am out on parental leave with my newborn son, Soren, for a few more weeks.

ORALL

Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries

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Newsletter

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Profile

ORALL is a 3-state chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries [Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky]. It was formed in 1949 "to further the development and usefulness of law libraries and to stimulate a spirit of mutual helpfulness among law libraries of this region." An annual conference is held each fall. ORALL publishes or sponsors the following publications: *Core Legal Collection* [bibliographies for Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan], ORALL Membership Directory, ORALL Newsletter, Ohio Legal Resources Annotated Bibliography & Guide 3rd.

Unsolicited contributions are encouraged; contributions submitted for publication are subject to editorial review. For extra copies, contact the editor.

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President's Column *continued*

Again, I agree, but I wonder if, to me, caring feels at risk of being passive (and irrelevant) if it doesn't involve outreach—some conscious demonstration of caring in which patrons are made aware that they are the target or recipient of our care.

With that, I think a two-fold approach to outreach is essential. Consider approaching outreach both programmatically and organically. Programmatic outreach is relatively easy, and it's great because it generally includes measurable outcomes. Newsletters, sitting at the reference desk, research consultations, research guides, current awareness services, and even Twitter feeds and blog posts are useful tools for librarians to demonstrate their value. But it can have the drawback of making us feel like we've demonstrated our value in a way that is comfortable but may not really connect with our patrons.

Organic outreach (i.e., taking opportunities to connect as they naturally arise) can be effective with law students and attorneys since they have so much going on and cannot quite bear another scheduled obligation, even if it is "good" for them. Organic outreach can include providing baked goods or coffee at the reference desk, attending local bar association functions to socialize or network with your patrons, or otherwise inserting yourself in their usual paths so when they do need you, they think of you. The success of this type of outreach can be tough to measure and involves getting outside the library. This can make it difficult to explain in a job description for library staff (beyond simply requiring an outreach or service mentality) and difficult to explain to funders (why spend so much time outside the library---don't you have enough work in the library?). But relationship-building with patrons is essential to encourage use of library services and materials and to inspire long-term support for the library.

In other words, caring is important; telling patrons you care, or at least demonstrating it in a number of ways throughout your library work is critical.

I care about ORALL and its members and libraries. I cannot believe my term as President ends in just a few months. (Yes, October is around the corner.) Thanks for letting me work on your behalf, and please let me know if there's anything I can do for you.

* * *

On the Third Hand: One More Way to Think About Collection Development

by Ingrid Mattson, Moritz Law Library, the Ohio State University

Many law librarians still (happily) view their role as preservers of print and extensive collectors of new monographs for future researchers, yet new formats

coupled with the unpredictability of patrons' interests and needs make it challenging to know whether we are acquiring what's best for our patrons. Put simply, how do you know what to buy?

On one hand, you can be quite financially prudent and focus on patron-driven or demand-driven acquisitions. You can buy monographs that faculty request. You can evaluate usage stats on databases and ditch those seeing limited use. Evaluating and re-evaluating overlapping print and digital content (particularly with serials) to make retention decisions is another path. Unfortunately, you may be at the mercy of vendors if you're not purchasing database content---costs could rise dramatically or content could disappear entirely.

On the other hand, you can buy widely in areas "of interest" to your patrons (based on their scholarly agendas or practice areas). Print is at least durable, and you know you will have it for decades, so you are simultaneously meeting anticipated needs of future patrons. But if you have the budget, why not get the ebook packages as well and hope the publishers can agree on a platform so that your patrons cease being confused by the variety of reading and borrowing options for ebooks? Maybe you can get usage stats on ebooks, and you still have the tried-and-true circ stats you can consult to evaluate use.

Well, that's two hands. And it might make sense to take a both-and approach as neither is a perfect solution. Maybe that's two-and-a-half hands? But neither seems particularly satisfying. We want our patrons to value our collections and our efforts. People using the stuff we buy (for *them!*) would be a dream.

So, what if you had a third hand? What if you could buy the content your patrons want in the format they want right now? (No focus groups or surveys patrons don't want to fill out required!)

Paul Gatz and I are in the midst of a project to examine citations in faculty scholarship in the hopes that we can evaluate what our patrons (specifically law faculty) are actually using these days for their research, compared to the sources used before the ubiquity of Westlaw and Lexis for research. We're buying print monographs---are faculty using them? Is there a difference between usage by more senior and more junior faculty? And is there some way our research can be used by other law librarians at other library types to facilitate their collection decisions?

Admittedly, I think we in fact need a third hand. It's not that this new-fangled third hand will actually be the only one librarians need to make financially prudent, forward-looking, comprehensive collection development decisions. But hopefully three hands will make lighter work of the modern collection development puzzle we face today.

* * *

AALL Leadership Academy: Learning to Lead Effectively
by Jennifer L. Baker, Dinsmore & Shohl LLP

First and foremost, thank you to the Grants Committee members for their time and consideration, and to the Executive Board for funding the Special Meeting Grant, which I am grateful to have received. The opportunity to attend AALL Leadership Academy was very important to me, and the conference turned out to be a wonderful learning experience. Leadership Academy is sponsored by AALL, but the organization brought in Gail Johnson and Pam Parr of Face-to-Face Communications to present (as they have for many years).

The first day of the seminar covered matters associated with leadership roles that are rooted in the fundamentals of communication. Gail and Pam left attendees copious amounts of insightful advice from their years of experience leading in varying capacities. Some interesting points that were made about workplace communication:

- One cause of miscommunication is ambiguity. Since the purpose of workplace communication is to obtain a desired result, in the manner intended, being direct should not be thought of as inconsiderate or otherwise.
- With particular concern for women, Gail and Pam encouraged attendees to stop using self-diminishing qualifiers such as “just” and “sorry”. Instead of softening your own stance, you should seek to empower others with whom you are communicating.
- In discussing how to think through the need for having difficult conversations, Gail and Pam suggested that anyone in a traditional leadership position not let underperformance go unaddressed past two occasions. The logic behind their position is that at the point any behavior is repeated twice, it should be considered a pattern that is affecting the relationship. “Leadership is about what you do, **and** what you allow; because in allowing something, you consciously decide **not** to do something.”
- Attendees were provided with conversation starters tailored to our leadership style to help us in having difficult conversations. Some examples are, “Did you know...” and “Are you aware...” and “Help me understand...”

During the second day of the conference, we learned about two key areas of managerial leadership roles – motivation and accountability. Important takeaways from those conversations include:

- People motivate themselves, and much of motivation is based upon the perception of success. Depending on the individual, success may be measured as achievement, affiliation/acceptance, and/or power.
- It is human nature that people will not change unless they see it as a benefit to themselves, so find out what is important to them and discern how you can help get them what they want while also helping yourself.
- The best way to motivate is to provide feedback, and making your feedback specific. Ignoring your employees will result in twice the degree of disengagement as either negative or positive feedback, so feedback is most effective when provided immediately and not only at an annual review.
- Accountability must begin with clear expectations and end with consequences, whether good or bad. The decision to not hold mediocre employees accountable is a simultaneous decision to devalue high performers. A perfect example (and ramification) of this is the high performer getting new projects because of their good work product; this rewards the mediocre person with less work and overburdens the high performer.
- We tend to lower standards to accommodate average. This is best exemplified by job descriptions, which are understood as written to cover the bare minimum. Thus, define good versus great, and know what someone must do to exceed expectations.

A common topic of conversation amongst firm librarians centers on the perception of being underrepresented at AALL functions or within the organization as a whole. I believe this to be partly due to law firm budgeting principles, but also because we are a fairly small subset of the law librarian community at large. Needless to say, I was excited to learn that Leadership Academy had accepted six law firm librarians (total attendance was 38), and I was able to connect with all but one. As a continuation of the workshop, attendees are paired with mentors and have a forum in MyCommunities where we can continue to discuss leadership issues and learn from the ideas and experiences of our peers.

AALL Leadership Academy was well-organized, the presenters were fantastic, and it was the perfect scale for combining in-depth topic coverage and productive networking. For any ORALL members who are interested, I would strongly encourage you to apply for 2020.

* * *

My Favorite Four Letter Word – Free! What I Discovered at the 2018 ABA Tech Show

by Sarah Starnes, University of Akron

Being new to the profession, I am eager to learn as much as I can as quickly as I can. When the opportunity arose a few months after I started at the University of Akron to attend the ABA Tech Show, I jumped at the chance. I attended with Akron Law's library director, a seasoned Tech Show attendee. Having gone straight from law school, to library school, and (back) to law school again, I missed the real life experience of learning what technologies help attorneys do their jobs. The Tech Show as a great place to see what sorts of programs and technologies exist. This then got my wheels turning – I didn't recognize most of these companies, so why would law students recognize them? Most law students take the traditional path and go into some sort of practice, so wouldn't it be great if students were at least aware and given a brief understanding of what is to be expected of them in practice?

From my limited knowledge, it seems that librarians are in the best position to teach legal technology at law schools. Wouldn't it be great then if we were able to receive free licenses for some of these technologies in order to introduce them to students before graduation? Practice ready graduates are becoming more appealing to firms, and I'm sure to the graduates themselves who choose to go solo. Educators were present in higher numbers this year than in years past and the vendors in the Tech Show expo hall were jumping at the chance to speak to us about why we were interested in their technologies. Once we explained why, an overwhelming number of vendors offered free licenses to us in order to, I'm sure, not just educate students on what these technologies are, but also become paying customers once they graduate and begin to practice.

Although the list of vendors is long, for sake of space, I'd like to mention a few that indicated they would be more than willing to work with law schools to educate students on their products. The first is [PartUs](#), a small company created and run by Krista Andrews and Tim Brookins. Krista is a family law mediator and came up with the idea after realizing how much easier it would make the divorce process if it were streamlined. PartUs brings most of the necessary divorce documents together into once place. Similar to a spreadsheet, PartUs creates worksheets that can split assets evenly and quickly. It allows for accountants and other professionals to also view and edit the worksheets. The worksheet allows for electronic attachment of documents by either the attorney or the client to specific line items. Last, PartUs allows for a quick and electronic mediation process by allowing opposing parties to securely exchange settlement offers. Please check out their website (hyperlinked above) to see a better explanation of what this technology can do!

The second is [Soluno](#), which helps attorneys manage their practice as a business. New graduates are eager to jump in and practice law, but fail to realize that a big part of practicing law is successfully running and managing a

business. Soluno strives to improve practice management for law firms, and the software includes accounting, billing, and payables that can be specialized to a specific firm. Soluno has two products: one for practice that can be installed and maintained on its own server or computer, and another that hosts multiple firms in a cloud environment. The software program functions to track time and fees, banking (writing/printing checks, transferring money between accounts, managing vendors), reports and supplies metrics on productivity, expedites billing, and has the ability to integrate with any existing contact system. Having students learn how to do this before graduation will be an invaluable tool once they begin practice. To learn more about Soluno, please check out their website (hyperlinked above).

The last I'll discuss here is the [National Society for Legal Technology](#). When visiting the website for the first time, it will ask you if you are a student or a solo attorney or small firm. If student is chosen first, it takes you to a page where it asks you to become a member in order to obtain your Legal Technology Certificate. Although there is a fee involved, the vendor at the booth indicated they would be willing to provide free access to students. Although some of the technologies offered are general, like Microsoft Office, they also have a database of programs separated by several categories like case management, document management, legal billing and time tracking, electronic discovery, and practice management. Much of the same technology is offered if choosing a solo attorney or small firm, however it is available for a much higher group price. After either of these options are chosen, students and attorneys will have access to on-demand learning modules that range from beginner to expert level tasks. This is a great resource to allow students to get experience, or at least an introduction to, a wide range of technologies that they'll likely be using after graduation. For more information, please visit their website (hyperlinked above).

This is only a small sampling of the vendors I spoke to who indicated they would be willing to provide free licenses to law schools. If you are interested in a more exhaustive list, please contact me! I can provide specific names of those who we spoke to while at the Tech Show to see what the process would be for getting licenses for your own technology class or certificate.

* * *

ORALL Grant Winners

The Grants Committee is pleased to announce the grant winners for this quarter:

We have four ORALL members who won grants to attend AALL (\$695 each):

- Kim Crowthers, Clermont County Law Library
- Anna Gault, Supreme Court of Ohio Law Library
- Jaime Klausner, BakerHostetler

- Laura Ray, Cleveland Marshall College of Law

We had no applicants for the CONELL grant.

Finally, the recipient of this quarter's Special Meeting grant (\$350) is Paul Gatz, The Ohio State University Law Library, who plans to attend the CALI Conference in June.

Be on the lookout in the next ORALL Newsletter for articles from our grant recipients detailing their experience at the Conference in Baltimore, Maryland.

And make sure to apply for grants as they are offered. Many times there are more grants than applicants, meaning often times all the grants cannot be awarded. Don't miss out on an opportunity to obtain financial assistance to attend these valuable meetings.

* * *

Book Displays from the Supreme Court of Ohio Law Library
provided by Erin N. Waltz





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A Note from Your Newsletter Editor

Thanks to all who contributed this quarter to the Newsletter. I'm always appreciative of your input and ideas.

Our next newsletter will be published September, 2018. We should have plenty of articles from the grant recipients for AALL 2018, and it will be our last Newsletter before ORALL 2018 in Cincinnati.

As always, please feel free to send any submissions you feel may be informative and useful to the ORALL Library Community.

As always, if you ever have any questions, concerns or ideas, please e-mail me at pvenard1@udayton.edu.