The Basement Blotter

ALA-SC

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UH Manoa ALA Student Chapter Wins ALA Chapter-of-the-Year

The American Library Association-Student Chapter at the University of Hawaii has won the 2006 ALA Student Chapter of the Year Award, given by the ALA New Members Round Table. Among its achievements, ALA recognized UH ALA-SC for giving leadership experience to students through the executive officer and committee chair positions.

Inspired from winning runner-up in 2004, 2005-2006 President Lillian Nicolich felt that the University of Hawaii Chapter had a better chance to win Chapter of the Year this time around. It was a group effort to put together the application package. Annie Thomas and Secretary Janel Quirante helped pull together materials for the package. Nicolich wrote most of the application itself, and Faculty Advisor, Andrew Wertheimer helped assemble the submittal package.

Nicolich insists that the award was won built on the efforts of officers and members in previous years. For instance, with the help of Social Chair Annie Thomas, the social events program was a busy one. Especially after the LIS common areas were lost to the flood of October 2004 the focus of this committee became to create places for fellowship and community. Emphasis was put on the new-student mixers, not only to welcome new students to the program but also to encourage participation in ALA-SC and foster a student community. Nicolich recognized Thomas for contributing new and innovative events such as hikes and attendance to local events that "took advantage of the local environment."

Lillian Nicolich shows the ALA Student Chapter of the Year $1,000 check. This helped fund two students' travel to ALA in New Orleans.

Also due to the flood, there was no job and internship fair the following spring. Thus, the brown bag events were increased in number and devoted more to LIS professions. In order to fund the brown bags and social events, the work of the fundraising committee headed by Loraine Oribio created "excellent financial conditions to run programs," says Nicolich. Also a unique program to ALA-SC at UH is the service program. Each semester has a service project on which ALA members collectively contribute about 75 hours. This past semester's project was the digitization of *Nippu Jiji*, a Japanese American newspaper archive. Looking towards the semesters ahead, Nicolich sees that the ALA-SC ready to move on. "Last year was about regrouping. We're moving ahead this year."

photo: Andrew Wertheimer

Changing of the Guard: New energetic bodies relieve outgoing officers.
TOP ROW: Caitlin Nelson, Margot Hanson, Christine Cipolla, Anne Hillier, Carrie Ann Young, Annie Thomas;
BOTTOM ROW: Janel Quirante, Marta Wiggins, Lillian Nicolich, and Loraine Oribio.

american library association

university of hawai`i at manoa student chapter

Established Feb. 4, 1992

hamilton library
ground floor
2550 mcCarthy mall
honolulu, hawai`i 96822

president
christine cipolla

vice president
carrie ann young

secretary
anne hillier

treasurer
vanessa vallejos

faculty advisor
andrew wertheimer

blotter editor
mona kwon

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editorial

Thoughts from Labor Day 2005

Andrew Wertheimer, Faculty Advisor

Back on Labor Day, former *Blotter* co-editor Wendy Ikemoto organized an informal breakfast gathering at the Big City Diner. I'm not a big fan of eating out for breakfast -- even 9:30 seems early on a day off -- but I was pleased to join over a dozen current and former ALA-SC leaders. There was no agenda for the day beyond eating and catching up with each other's summer activities. It was fun to hear recent graduates excitedly talk story about their new positions in Hawaii's public and academic libraries. I've equally enjoyed reading letters, e-mail, and blogs of alumni working in California, Guam, Maryland, Wyoming, and beyond.

Midway through breakfast Carole Suzui asked who would be going to the HLA Annual Conference on the Big Island. I was thrilled to see so many hands go up. Ever since that breakfast I've been reflecting on how our ALA-SC is a real leadership laboratory, and how you all are well on the way to becoming the next generation of professional leaders.

Later that afternoon, my wife and I watched *The Constant Gardener*. It was a wonderful, mature film: part love story, part Le Carré espionage thriller, with exquisite cinematography, and a strong dose of social justice. As we left the theater we were overwhelmed by our own emotions and the challenges posed by the film. The film -- though very British -- was a typically American-style story of "individual vs. society." The movie reminded me of my desires to help right some of the world's many injustices. I was frustrated at first, as there is so little that I could imagine doing on my own.

Working with our ALA-SC (as well as national ALA and HLA), however, I've seen how we as librarians can make a difference together in our crazy world. I think we do this everyday on the local level, although we rarely see the evidence. We also have an impact at the national level too. For example, librarians worked together to challenge the federal government over the so-called USA PATRIOT Act. It takes real *chutzpah* to argue for professional ethics during a period of wartime hysteria, but we're doing it.

Reflecting on this all, I feel good when I think about our chapter's work. You really are the next generation of professional leaders. It is up to you all to keep libraries relevant to today's users (and non-users). I often discuss the challenges, but I am confident. I've seen your intelligence, professional commitment, and desire to make libraries serve people. You've all also taught me a great deal about the value of cooperating -- working and playing together towards our goals. With this cooperative professional spirit we can indeed change the world in our own small way.

I wrote most of this editorial months ago, and only want to add that being selected as "ALA Student Chapter of the Year" shows that others appreciate your leadership style, and recognize ALA-SC and UHM-LIS as centers of excellence. Even without this great news, **I am proud of you all**. I'll look forward to many future celebrations as well as news of your own noble efforts, and such occasional successes. *Thanks again for all of your efforts!*

ALA-SC Faculty Advisor

Doctor? Who?

Christian De Lay

For most LIS students, the master's degree is the "terminal degree." In spite of the ominous connotation, this really just means that the student is done with school, never again choosing to subject herself to final exams, abject poverty, or "fine campus cuisine."

What, then, should we make of those students who willingly subject themselves to further schooling in the pursuit of a Ph.D.? Are they masochists?

Quite the contrary!

With the end of the term so close and so many of our graduates leaving us for that great mystery called "the real world," it seemed as good a time as any to investigate the mysterious world of the doctoral student.

In order to gain some insight into the mysteries of the Ph.D., I polled a few members in the UH LIS community who have completed, or are pursuing, a doctorate. Susan Johnson, social sciences librarian at UH Manoa's Hamilton Library is pursing a Communication & Information Sciences Ph.D. because it's the only option in Hawaii that lets her continue studying LIS-related themes. Johnson also noted that, practically speaking, she's also in it for the money—promotion past a certain point requires a number of post-graduate credits and she felt that going for the Ph.D. made more sense than a second master's degree.

Because doctoral study can take anywhere from three to seven years (no small undertaking, that!), I sought the advice of some resident experts in the LIS Program. Dr. Rebecca Knuth encourages anyone considering pursuing a Ph.D. to become an "academic entrepreneur" early on, and make a name for yourself as an expert on a focused topic, preferably one that nobody else has staked out yet. She also suggests writing every class paper or project (even while in the LIS program) as if it were to be submitted for publication (either for practice, or to actually publish). On the topic of which school to attend, Dr. Andrew Wertheimer advised focusing on the scholar whom you want to study under. For those in Hawaii who want to continue their studies at UH, Dr. Diane Nahl recommended the CIS program, opining that such a degree could prove to be more versatile, with regards to finding a faculty position, beyond a LIS-specific doctoral program. For those interested in CIS, Nahl suggests skimming through *Theories of Human Communication* by Stephen Littlejohn (available at Hamilton) and advises potential students not to be afraid of the doctoral education process.

In her presentation *Should I Consider Getting a Ph.D.?* (http://tinyurl.com/lxbgq)Teresa Y. Neely, Director of the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico, examines LIS doctoral pursuits and various stages of the degree process. 1.3% of persons aged 25 or older in the U.S. have a Ph.D. and from 1990 to 2002 there were 8,058 students enrolled in a LIS Ph.D. program (only 864 degrees were awarded).

As for schools, there are currently twenty-five schools in the U.S. that offer a doctorate in LIS (see the ALA LIS directory at http://tinyurl.com/et8rq). The LIS programs at the University of Texas-Austin, the University of Illinois, the University of Washington, and Indiana University were commonly mentioned schools.

Students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. may also want to consider reading:

U.S. Department of State. *Graduate degrees* (http://tinyurl.com/jwk5u)

David Sternberg, *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation*

Patrick Dunleavy, *Authoring a PhD Thesis*

Allan Glatthorn, *Writing the Winning Dissertation*

ALA-SC hosted an LIS Prom in Spring 2005. Jacob Rosen and Margot Hanson were elected King and Queen.

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Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources: A Report to the OCLC Membership
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Catherine Sheldrick Ross, Lynne (E.F.) McKechnie, and Paulette M. Rothbauer.
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Knowledge Entrepreneur
Stan Skrzeszewski
Z682.35.V62 S57 2006

Poetry Aloud Here!: Sharing Poetry with Children in the Library
Sylvia M. Vardell
Z718.1 .V338 2006

An Eventful Two Years:

Knuth Guides LIS through the Flood

When Professor Rebecca Knuth took over as LIS Program Chair in May 2004 she had no idea what an exciting two years were ahead. Even under normal circumstances it is an extremely busy two-year commitment to oversee our program of around 150 students. Five months into the position, it changed completely because of the flood. It has been a busy time, Dr. Knuth admitted, but she is proud to have "helped the Program not only to survive the flood, remain strong, but even to advance." She shared a few words with the Blotter in advance of stepping down in May, when Professor Diane Nahl will again kindly serve as the Chair.

Knuth admitted that "It takes a community to run a program," like LIS; recognizing help from students, faculty, staff, and colleagues in ICS, Hamilton Library, and other units on campus. Of course, our former graduates are another key source of support. Knuth said she was very proud, as a UH Alumnae, to be part of the revitalization of the LIS Alumni Group. The last Alumni event proved to her that "there is a lot of Ohana spirit among Hawaii's librarians."

"My toughest time was the flood," she admitted; adding, "Most of my two years has been overshadowed by it." It is hard for most of us to imagine how much of her energy has gone into working with FEMA and campus units to what seemed like almost continuous revisions of insurance loss forms, serving on planning committees, purchasing equipment to recreate facilities, as well as counseling students and colleagues. While we are most grateful for the many donations we've received, it is embarrassing to admit how much time it takes just to do the right thing by recognizing these gifts.

What is perhaps most amazing is that Dr. Knuth has done this at the same time that she teaches, coordinates the internship program, and advanced her research. In fact, her new book, *Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction* came out this summer. After stepping down as Chair, Knuth is looking forward to being able to spend more time on teaching and her third book -- not to mention dreaming of traveling again.

I asked her if she had any advice for future leaders such as our students. She replied, "It's about building teamwork;" and that "no leader can do everything on his or her own." Leadership to her is about "creating an atmosphere of cooperation," while "thinking on your feet, handling logistics and resources, and supporting people." One of Dr. Knuth's students quickly agreed that supporting people is her trademark, adding that her words and a hug helped the student to complete the program.

Congratulations ALA-SC!

Annie Thomas, Lillian Nicolich, and Dr. Wertheimer display our ALA Student Chapter of the Year Award at the 2006 Annual Conference of the American Library Association in New Orleans.

Gail Morimoto Selected for the Vann Award

The ALA Student Chapter is pleased to award the 2006 ALA-SC Dr. Sarah K. Vann Professional Service Award to Gail Morimoto. The award is given individuals who have impacted librarianship in Hawaii in terms of intellectual freedom, advocacy for libraries and librarians, professional education, and international relations. It is named after UHM LIS Emeritus Professor Vann, who is an respected scholar of library history, international librarianship, and intellectual freedom.

Anyone who has gone through the LIS Program in the last 30 years knows how much Gail does for the program, and how she looks over everyone. The Student Chapter wanted to recognize her extra dedication in the years since the Hamilton Flood, when she had to start over from scratch. *Mahalo!* The nomination letter is online at the ALA-SC webpage.