Georgia Library Association - Academic Library Division

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People, Libraries and Agencies IN THE NEWS

Georgia Library Association Academic Library Division

Election Announcement

Elections for Academic Library Division (ALD) officers were held in September. Linh Uong from the University of North Georgia will be the vice-chair/chair-elect. Lamonica Sanford of Georgia College will serve as secretary. They will join the chair, Karen Doster-Greenleaf, as the ALD 2020 officers. Thank you to the other candidates who agreed to run this year.

Academic Research Paper Contest

The winner of the 2019 ALD Academic Research Paper Contest was Amanda Sexton, assessment librarian at Kennesaw State University. Her paper was titled "Librarian, Teacher, & Counselor: Interventions to Library Anxiety in Adult Learners." She received a $250 cash award and complimentary registration for this year's Georgia Libraries Conference (GLC). The runner-up paper selected was by Leslie Drost, first-year experience librarian from Kennesaw State University. The title of her paper was

Leslie Drost and Amanda Sexton

Amanda Sexton and ALD Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect Karen Doster-Greenleaf at the GLA Awards Ceremony

"Challenges and Opportunities with First-Year Students for Academic Librarians." Ms. Drost also received complimentary registration. Both presented their papers at the conference. Congratulations to Ms. Sexton and Ms. Drost! ALD encourages members to consider submitting papers for next year's contest.

GLC Sponsored Session

After the paper contest winner presentations, ALD held a panel to discuss publishing professional works with Jason Puckett, online learning librarian, Georgia State University; Allison Galloup, collections & initiatives librarian, University of North Georgia; and Ariel Turner, interim chair of library resources, Kennesaw State University. They discussed their experiences of getting started with writing, working with publishers, and open access.

Thank you to this panel for an informative and helpful session.

Project Outcome for Academic Libraries Workshop

As a part of the GLC conference programming, ALD was able to arrange for an ACRL-sponsored pre-conference workshop and an information session on the new Project Outcome for Academic Libraries toolkit (https://acrl.project outcome.org/). Attendees learned how to use the standardized surveys and discussed measuring and analyzing outcomes for programs and services offered in their libraries.

The pre-conference workshop and 45-minute information session were presented by ACRL staff member Dr. Sara Goek. Sara is program manager at ACRL where she contributes to efforts to improve research about academic library contributions to student learning and success. She is the project lead on the new Project Outcome for Academic Libraries toolkit. Sara holds a PhD in history/digital arts & humanities and an MA in historical research from University College Cork, and a BA in history and Irish studies from Boston College.

Sofia Slutskaya and Chris Sharpe, ALD chair, were able to talk with Dr. Goek after the workshop about her experience traveling across the country promoting Project Outcome and learning about assessment efforts in academic libraries. Project Outcome for Academic Libraries is based on a model developed by the Public Library Association (PLA). This free toolkit was designed to help academic libraries understand and share the impact of essential library programs and services by providing simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. The standardized surveys allow libraries to aggregate their outcome data, analyze trends over time by service topic and program type, and compare their results with peer academic institutions. Training and resources are provided to participating libraries so they can use data-driven results to advocate for their library.

An ACRL task force, with members from a range of academic library types, from community colleges to research institutions, developed and tested the Project Outcome surveys. The team

that developed the toolkit spent much time identifying areas to assess, as well as the appropriate models and questions to include. The task force agreed on seven major areas: digital and special collections, events/programs, instruction, library technology, research, space, and teaching support.

Since the toolkit launched in April 2019, Sara has been traveling to library conferences to promote the project and train academic librarians to use the toolkit. She has facilitated workshops in many parts of the country including such states as South Dakota and Hawaii. During the workshop and in conversation, Sara shared creative ways academic libraries across the country are using the toolkit to assess library spaces, technology, and programs. Some case studies are available to registered users on the site (https://acrl. projectoutcome.org/surveys-resources/case-studies).

ALD asked Sara how to get started with assessment and who should get involved. She recommends to begin with small projects and perhaps with something never assessed before. She believes using the toolkit provides a learning experience for libraries and can engage more people in the process. Open comments from the surveys can be surprising, but also very useful for evaluating outcomes. Presenting

a survey to users as helping the library make improvements can also increase response rates.

Sara strongly believes assessment should be a grassroots effort based on a culture of improvement. She encourages every academic librarian to register on the Project Outcome for Academic Libraries website to see if there is a tool they can use to assess outcomes of their projects. Assessment can provide a great opportunity for different departments in the library to collaborate. For example, technical services teams can collaborate with public services to assess how technical service work contributes to student learning.

Finally, ALD asked Sara how state library organizations can get involved with the Project Outcome. She pointed out that Project Outcome has a group member option to assess across a consortia or association. She also said that organizing workshops and sharing results and experience of implementing the toolkit at the state and local conferences can be very beneficial. Academic Library Division leadership is hoping that at next year's conference, many Project Outcome workshop participants can reconvene to discuss their use of the tool.

To learn more about the project, please visit https://acrl.projectoutcome.org/