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Second group of LBC scholars begin classes in Valdosta

The second group of 15 “Librarians Build Communities” (LBC) scholars began classes in January 2011 in Valdosta State University's Master of Library and Information Science program.

The three-year program provides scholarships to prepare 45 students to be public librarians with an expertise in community building. It is funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services’ Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program. In collaboration with the Valdosta State University (VSU) Master of Library and Information Science (M.L.I.S.) program, the Georgia Public Library System (GPLS) is providing each qualifying student with a full in-state tuition scholarship to the 39-semester-hour mostly online program.

The scholars, their VSU professors, and grant consultant Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook, Distinguished University Professor at the University of South Florida, met for a face-to-face kick-off workshop at VSU’s Odum Library on January 16, 2011. Wallace Koehler, M.L.I.S. Program Director, opened the day with welcoming remarks. Assistant Professor Linda Most oriented the students to Georgia’s 61 public library systems and provided an overview of the value of public libraries’ contribution to the people of Georgia.

McCook facilitated the workshop and introduced the scholars to the concept of community building through public libraries. While on campus the scholars received their grant-funded laptops.

LBC scholars represent public library systems from across Georgia. This cohort includes scholars from Houston, Coweta, Forsyth, Hall, Columbia, Clayton, Cobb, Dogherty, Dekalb, and Irwin County public library systems, the Piedmont Regional Library System, and the Smyrna Public Library.

This is the second group of fifteen students to receive the scholarship. Fifteen more scholarships are available for fall semester, 2011. To be considered, applicants must be accepted into and attend the VSU M.L.I.S Program. The deadline for Fall 2011 admissions is March 15, 2011, and the scholarship application deadline is March 30. (Please note: Applications for the VSU M.L.I.S Program and the “Librarians Build Communities” Scholarships are separate.)

More information about the scholarship and the application procedure can be found on the GPLS website at http://www.georgialibraries.org/lib/publiclibinfo/bush_grant_app.php.

— Linda R. Most
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