

FLORIDA LIBRARIES

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Volume 62, No. 2
Fall 2019



Data Drives Success:

Broward County Library's account of how data helped them to make more informed decisions

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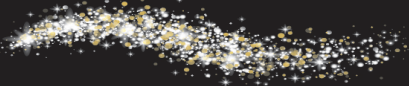
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*Cover picture: Broward County Library's Marketing, Publicity & Communications Team
From left to right: Ari Rothenberg, photographer/videographer; Catherine McElrath, writer; Pamela Smith, designer; Stephen Grubb, Public Information Officer; Vena Paylo, web designer; Della Attisani, writer

2019-2020
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Mission Statement:

The Florida Library Association is a statewide organization that promotes excellence in Florida libraries by advocating strongly for libraries and providing high quality professional and leadership development for a diverse community of library staff, volunteers, and supporters.

Vision:

The Florida Library Association champions strong, indispensable, user-focused Florida libraries that exceed the expectations of the communities and constituents they serve.

Lisa O' Donnell, CAE, Executive Director

Karen Layton, Membership & Events Manager/ *Florida Libraries* Designer

Melissa Stocks, Administrative Assistant

Karen Urbec, *Florida Libraries* Editor

Florida Libraries is published two times/year (Spring, Fall) and is a benefit of FLA membership. FLA began publication in 1927, which has evolved into the present *Florida Libraries*.

Florida Libraries Copy should be submitted by email to journal@flalib.org. You are encouraged to include press-ready digital photos (300 p.p.i.) and graphics with your articles, which will be included on a space-available basis.

From The Editor

Dear Colleagues,

My name is Karen Urbec and as the new editor of our state-wide journal, I would like to introduce myself to you and say a bit about what my hopes are for this publication.

I currently live in Miami and work as a museum archivist at a historic house museum. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens is a unique place, and I encourage you to come and visit me anytime! Museum work is exciting, unpredictable, and fulfilling, and managing a special collection within a historic home keeps me aware of all that I still have to learn, while allowing me to work each day to preserve and provide access to a historic treasure. If you can't tell, I love what I do.

My career has also always included writing and editing—from community newspapers to website content—and I am grateful to have the opportunity to continue to exercise my editing muscles as a librarian. You have honored me with the responsibility to manage this publication, and I assure you that I am eager for the task and am quite serious in my pursuit of it. *Florida Libraries* is one way that we communicate with each other throughout the state, and I hope to see it grow into a resource for all librarians who have the chance to read it.

My hopes for this journal are two-fold: First, I hope to bring you important news that is timely, relevant, and helps you to be a better librarian. And of course I can't do that alone! This means that I will be looking to each of you to share your stories with me, so that they can be passed on and we can all learn from the programs that you are creating, the challenges you are overcoming, and the vision that you have for your library and for our profession. I believe this sharing of plans, successes, and difficulties in our various work environments is of great value to us all.

Second, I hope to see *Florida Libraries* grow into a respected and peer-reviewed journal. Each of us spends time each day planning daily events and other short-term projects, but we also spend time thinking of the bigger picture and what our place in it is. When we take the time to pause, reflect, and conduct research on a topic that is meaningful to us, that is of considerable value to other librarians as well. Peer-reviewed articles, that are the result of dedicated research and that have been evaluated by our colleagues, will elevate our understanding of our profession, inform our daily work-life, and help us to be better leaders in our communities. It will also give many of us a regional venue to see our work published. And, again, I cannot do this on my own. I will need you to submit your original research for publication, and I will need many of you to volunteer as reviewers, as well. The plan is to start small, so I hope to have a few peer-reviewed articles in our Spring edition. More details are forthcoming, but I hope this idea has sparked you to finally write that article that you've been meaning to write!

So, to recap, *Florida Libraries* is a resource for us all, and I consider it my job to bring you the best, most interesting, and most timely information that I can. Whether that is a paragraph about a recent successful program, or a lengthy, researched article about librarianship in all its forms, I will consider it a success when both of those and everything in between are readily available to all readers of this journal. I look forward to working with you, and I hope you will contact me when you have ideas, big and small, to share with our colleagues.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'Karen Urbec'.

Karen Urbec
Florida Libraries Editor

From Your President



Selecting a theme can always be a challenge, but it is exciting as we get to think about all the ways it will be integrated into

programs and events throughout the year and at our annual conference. It is also rewarding and inspiring to see how others interpret the theme, get creative, and go far beyond the original ideas when it was first imagined. In choosing the theme Leading Forward, the goal is to inspire leadership at all levels and constant movement in a positive direction.

While brainstorming this concept with many of my friends and colleagues, two areas of focus emerged for Leading Forward and putting libraries out in front. One is to motivate a push that encourages and inspires our Association to keep things moving forward with a growth mindset. The other is to ignite a culture in libraries that embraces taking on challenges, stepping out of our comfort zones, and becoming part of the leadership conversations in our communities. Leading Forward and being out in front matters, because we all know that when libraries are in the lead great things happen.

This will be another big year for FLA. We'll be embarking on the development of our next strategic plan and determining the priorities and best direction for our Association. We recognize that things are moving at a more rapid pace than ever before. So, we'll be preparing hard and fast for challenges and opportunities in the immediate and not too distant future. We'll also be planning for the years just over the horizon and laying more groundwork to position FLA as a foundation of support for all of Florida's libraries and for the membership that is the heart of the organization.

Leading Forward is about encouraging others and building a culture that inspires everyone in libraries to get involved in the conversation. Telling our stories, participating, advocating, stepping out in front and leading the way, even when it scares us, is how we put libraries in the forefront of the minds of decision makers. Influencing these individuals is key as they often make crucial decisions impacting our funding, the levels of service we can provide to our communities, and the prospects for future growth.

In order to have an impact that will truly make a

difference for all of Florida's libraries, we'll need participation at levels not seen before. Our Association is not all that different from those you work with in your own libraries and local communities. We often see many of the same people stepping up and taking the lead in projects and taking on a lion's share of the tasks. We also see them getting things done and producing a level of work that is nothing short of amazing. There is no doubt that these folks are awesome individuals that love libraries and FLA, but we don't want to burn them out. We need to share the love and bring more people in.

Leading Forward is about creating an environment that is welcoming and beneficial to growing our ranks and expanding our membership. It is reaching out to others and encouraging them to be fully engaged, supporting our committees, finding and then facilitating more ways to grow our Association so that everyone can play a role in putting libraries out in front. This type of participation not only benefits FLA, but also our individual libraries and all the groups that support us and share our passion for what libraries do.

For some, it does require challenging ourselves, stepping outside of our comfort zone and taking the lead in a new area. Others among us love the challenge and can encourage and support our colleagues in Leading Forward by taking the lead in our own community and library. We can take the lead from wherever we are, with local teams and workgroups, projects or tasks, even with our own professional and personal development. The more we are joining together and Leading Forward, from all aspects of our profession, the stronger FLA will be, the stronger our libraries will be, and that will benefit all the many varied and unique communities that we serve.

One last thing. Let's not forget that FLA is recognizing its 100th anniversary this year! We will definitely have some fun with this, and it will be great to see what creative ideas emerge to help us celebrate. Let's all join together in remembering our Association's history and reminisce about all of the wonderful and talented people through the years that have played a role in shaping such a successful century for the Florida Library Association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Eric Head'.

Eric Head
2019-2020
FLA President



From Your Executive Director

by: Lisa O'Donnell, CAE



I love sharing good news. And, FLA has very good news. We're growing! Not only are we increasing our membership and programming, but FLA is literally growing and moving into a new space in Tallahassee. After careful consideration by the board of directors, the new FLA office will provide much-needed office space for professional staff and interns, along with ample storage and event prep space (anyone who's helped with the annual conference would see that as a welcome addition!). While our address will change, you can still reach us at the same phone number and email addresses you're used to. Let us know how we can help you.

More good news: next year, FLA will celebrate a milestone anniversary, marking 100 years since Miss Helen Virginia Stelle, Librarian of the Tampa Public Library, called an organizational meeting of the Florida Library Association in Orlando on April 26-27, 1920 and reorganized the association from its humble beginnings to the vibrant organization we see today. We are part of an important legacy and we look forward to celebrating with our FLA members in 2020!

While we honor that storied past, a new era is upon us with a renewed three-year strategic plan, focusing on several major goals that will propel librarianship ever forward. In September, a group of FLA members met for a facilitated two-day retreat, outlining the strengths, threats and opportunities that surround the association. Joining the board of directors were past presidents, chairs of several FLA committees, and a Library Advisory board representative.

Part of this strategic plan is an effort to elevate our Advocacy messages and encourage FLA members to participate. We have another robust Library Legislative Day planned for Wednesday, January 22, 2020. In hearing from various sources that the legislative budget will be leaner and more susceptible to cuts over prior years, it is vital that we have a strong in-person participation. There are, of course, constraints to advocacy activities in some Florida counties, but we still want your participation. Therefore, we will be providing easily shareable email messages that can be sent to your elected officials with a few clicks of your mouse. The more we inform the legislature about library issues, the better chance we have of seeing a fair appropriation of funds where libraries need it most. Be sure to register for this important day and

join your fellow librarians for a day of meaningful advocacy in Tallahassee.

Finally, make plans to attend the FLA 2020 Annual Conference, May 13-15 at the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton at Universal, Orlando. Headlining the conference will be Eric Klinenberg, a Helen Gould Shepard Professor of Social Science and Director of the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University. He is the author of *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life* among other great works. Conference registration will open in February! As usual, the conference will offer lots of continuing education sessions, networking time and another epic President's Reception! We look forward to seeing you there.



From all of us at FLA, we wish you health and happiness throughout the upcoming holiday season.



"One of my favorite books of 2018... Klinenberg is echoing what librarians and library patrons have been saying for years: that libraries are equalizers and absolutely universal."

—Carla Hayden,

Librarian of Congress, in *The Wall Street Journal*

State Update



DIVISION OF
**LIBRARY and
INFORMATION SERVICES**

The Division of Library and Information Services (DLIS) within Florida's Department of State has been a long-term partner of the Florida Library Association. As such I thought it would be interesting to provide an explanation of the services and programs provided by DLIS.

The Division is Florida's State Library Administrative Agency. Each state and territory has an Agency named in legislation that serves in this capacity. The legislation allows the Agency to accept and administer federal library funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), authorized under the Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. § 9121). This funding program is known federally as the Grants to State Library Administrative Agencies program. In Florida it is called the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program. Federal funding for libraries has been in place for more than 50 years. In state fiscal year 2019-20, DLIS will administer \$8.8 million federal dollars in grants and programs in support of libraries of all types.

Bureaus

The Division has three Bureaus: The Bureau of Archives and Records Management, the Bureau of Library and Network Services, and the Bureau of Library Development. Each Bureau oversees distinct programs and services supporting the work of government in Florida and supporting information organizations and services across the state.

The Bureau of Archives and Records Management (BARM) operates the State Archives of Florida, which collects and preserves the unpublished history of Florida from the records of the three branches of Florida's government as well as from other current and former state agencies and personal papers and manuscripts of Floridians. BARM also operates the Records and Information Management program, providing training in public records management and low-cost offsite storage for current records of government agencies.

The Bureau of Library and Network Services (BLNS) collects and preserves the published history of Florida, provides library services to Florida's government employees and Florida's library staff, and fosters resource sharing among Florida information organizations. One of the most extensive collections

within BLNS is the State Publications Depository Collection which documents Florida's government from territorial times to the present.

The Bureau of Library Development coordinates many statewide programs through grant funding and by direct coordination. Among these programs are the Florida Electronic Library, the Florida Library Youth Program, and the Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute. The Florida Electronic Library provides scholarly electronic resources to the almost 20 million Floridians from pre-school aged children to life-long learners. The Florida Library Youth Program has supported summer reading and learning activities in Florida's public libraries for more than 50 years. The Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute assists in preparing library leaders to provide the highest quality library services to the citizens of Florida, in the most effective and innovative manner, in order to meet today's needs and tomorrow's challenges.

This is just a small sample of the work of the Bureaus and DLIS.

Partnerships

DLIS has partnered with many professional organizations over the years, among them the Florida Records Management Association, the Society of Florida Archivists, and the Florida Library Association. The partnerships between the State Library Administrative Agency and various professional associations help to strengthen the allied professions throughout the state.

DLIS employees have held many positions within committees of the Florida Library Association and the Division Director sits Ex-Officio on the Board of Directors. In addition, DLIS has provided some grant funding in the past to assist with public library standards development. DLIS has had the great fortune to be a corporate sponsor for the Annual Conference's opening speaker the last couple of years. DLIS employees have also held numerous leadership positions for the Society of Florida Archivists and the Florida Records Management Association.

I look forward to determining future partnership opportunities between the Division and Florida's professional information organizations.



Contact information

If you have any questions about the Division or would like any additional information, please contact me at 850.245.6603 or amy.johnson@dos.myflorida.com.

Membership Matters

2019 FLA Organizational Members

Ana G. Mendez Library
Beacon College
Broward College
Broward County Library
Charlotte County Library System
Clearwater Public Library System
College of Central Florida
Collier County Public Library
Daytona State College
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Hunt Library
Everglades University
FAMU College of Law Library
Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC)
Florida Atlantic University Library
Florida International University
Florida National University
Florida State University, Strozier Library
Full Sail University
Gadsden County Public Library
Gulf Beaches Public Library
Hodges University Library
Lake County Library System
Lake Worth Public Library
Largo Public Library
Lee County Library System
LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library
Library and Information Resources Network, Inc.
Lighthouse Point Library
Lynn University Library
Maitland Public Library
Manatee County Public Library
Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach
Miami-Dade Public Library System
New River Public Library Cooperative
Orange County Library System
Osceola Library System - Hart Memorial Library
PAL Public Library Cooperative
Palm Beach County Library System
Palm Harbor Library
Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System
Pinellas Public Library Cooperative
Riviera Beach Public Library
Sanibel Public Library District
Sarasota County Libraries & Historical Resources
Sarasota County Library System
Seminole County Public Library
Seminole Tribe of Florida- Library Program
South Florida State College
St. Lucie County Library System
St. Petersburg Library System
State College of Florida Libraries
Sumter County Library
Tallahassee Community College
Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library
The Society of the Four Arts
Three Rivers Regional Library
University of South Florida
Volusia County Library Support Center
Washington County Public Library
Webber International University

* Current members at time of publication

Membership Matters

2019 FLA Friends, Foundations & Board Members

Circle of Friends of the Gulfport Library Inc.
Dunedin Friends of the Library
Florida Authors & Publishers Association
Florida Humanities Council
Friends of Deltona Library
Friends of East Lake Community Library
Friends of Fort Myers Library
Friends of Fruitville Public Library
Friends of Indian River County Gift Shop
Friends Of Johnson Branch Library
Friends of Library ACLD
Friends of Nature Coast Lakes Region Library
Friends of Pine Island Library
Friends of Punta Gorda Library
Friends of the Bay County Public Libraries
Friends of the Boca Raton Public Library, Inc.
Friends of the Broward County African-American
Research Library and Cultural Center, Inc.
Friends of the Broward County Library, Inc.
Friends of the Central Ridge Library
Friends of the Coastal Region Library
Friends of the Columbia County Public Library
Friends of the Deerfield Beach Percy White Library
Friends of the Gulf Gate Library
Friends of the Hugh Embry Branch Library of Pasco
County
Friends of the Jacksonville Public Library
Friends of the Key West Library
Friends of the Lake Worth Library
Friends of the Largo Library, Inc.
Friends of the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library
Friends of the Library - Ponte Vedra Beach
Friends of the Library at City Island - Daytona Beach
Friends of the Library of Collier County
Friends of the Library of Hernando Co., Inc.
Friends of the Library of Osceola County
Friends of the Library of Tampa-Hillsborough County, Inc.
Friends of the Main Library St. Augustine
Friends of the Middleburg-Clay Hill Library
Friends of the North Sarasota Library
Friends of the Okeechobee County Public Library
Friends of the Pace Area Library
Friends of the Palm Beach County Library
Friends of the Seminole Library
Friends of the Stirling Road Branch Library
Friends of the Suntree-Viera Public Library
Friends of the Volusia County Library Center
Friends of the Wilton Manors Library
Friends of the Taylor County Public Library
Friends of Venice Public Library
Library Foundation for Sarasota County
Melrose Library Association, Inc
Miami Dade Public Library Advisory Board
Poinciana Friends of the Library
Sanibel Public Library Foundation, Inc.

* Current members at time of publication

Membership Matters

2019 FLA Business Members



EBSCO



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The Newton Family
Patrons of the
Winter Haven Public Library
Winter Haven, FL

As a single parent of two young boys, the Winter Haven Public Library became a solid foundation for Vivian and her family to build and learn from. "Moving to a new place, with no family nearby, we didn't have a computer and wanted to get established. Everything we did was at the library." Today Vivian and her boys have much to celebrate with her oldest, Kwame graduating from Cornell University and beginning graduate studies at Harvard. Her youngest son, Kwesi will be attending Boston University. Vivian is currently working on her doctorate.

www.flalib.org



Sarah Davis
Patron of the
Jacksonville Public Library
Jacksonville, Florida

"The Jacksonville Public Library has added so much value to my life in so many domains—my professional life as a teacher, my life as a student doing research, and just my personal life in having access to beautiful novels and poetry from around the world!"

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Terry Harpold
Associate Professor of English
Patron of the George A. Smathers
Libraries, University of Florida

“My work in and out of the classroom would be simply impossible without the resources of our extraordinary libraries and librarians. The libraries are the essential center of UF's missions of teaching, research, and public service.”

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FACES of Florida Libraries

Stories of impact that showcase the value of libraries in Florida

The Florida Library Association is once again featuring local residents and their experiences in Florida libraries and how the staff has made a difference in their personal, professional or academic lives. These stories are an excellent resource that promote the amazing services Florida libraries have to offer. We want to brag about our libraries and spotlight what they can do to support their communities, so please share your patrons' stories with us!

flalib.org/faces-of-florida-libraries



Data-Driven Decisions Steer Broward County Library to Success

by: Della Attisani, Stephen Grubb, Catherine McElrath and Vena Paylo

Let's Talk: Data as Conversation

At Broward County Library, we consider data to be a conversation with our customers. That conversation can be a valuable tool for connecting with our customers, serving them effectively, and retaining our customers. Broward County Library uses customer data to make decisions on service enhancements, communication, marketing, and other operations.

You can ask a customer to fill out a survey about how they use the library and what types of services they would like to see, and there is certainly value in that. However, there is also a great deal of value in measuring actual customer behaviors. We have found it to be a reliable way to make data-driven decisions that provide positive results, with some of the best examples for our use of data being our website, e-Newsletter, and social media.

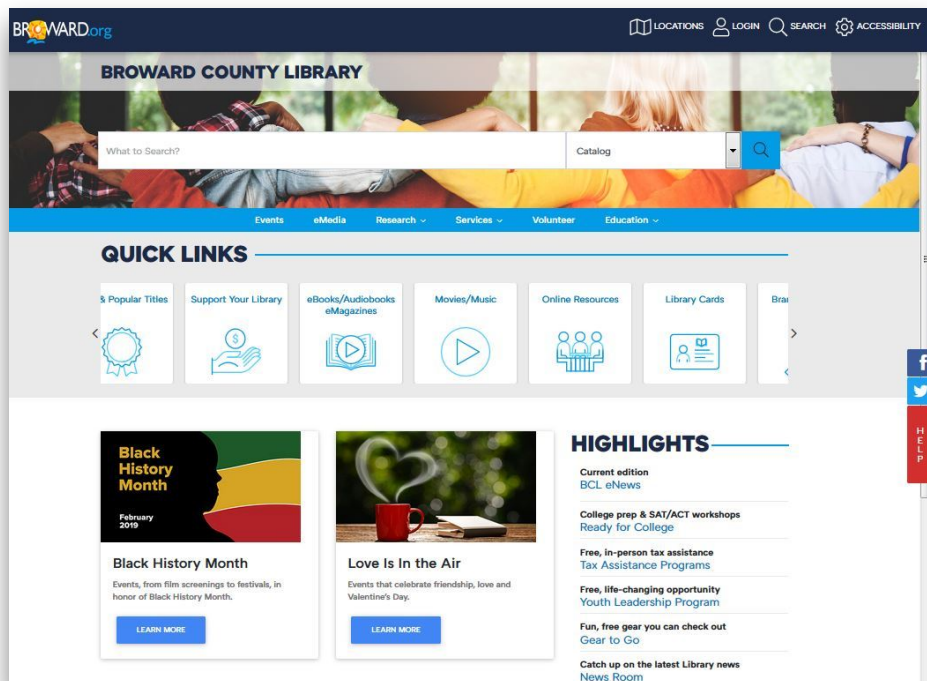
For example, Broward.org/Library isn't just our website, it's our virtual branch, our one location that's open 24/7, 365 days a year. It's also one of our busiest branches, with almost half a million visitors in 2018. For some of our customers, it's the only branch they visit. So, we had to ask ourselves – were we using it to its full capacity? Were we providing the best service to our online customers that we can? Was our website easy to use, intuitive? Was it meeting their needs?

Broward County Library staff -

including those who manage and direct communications, collection management, community engagement and public service - looked at the numbers and listened to what the data was telling us. That information, the knowledge that we obtained through that data, was the foundation of our plan to redesign the website.

Library's old website was designed primarily for desktop use with mobile as an add-on. We flipped the script and put together a mobile-first web design. It's not just mobile friendly — it's built with mobile in mind.

During the website redesign, we also did a tremendous amount of weeding. Our website had grown



Broward County Library redesigned and streamlined their website in 2018, downsizing from 800 pages to approximately 100.

Use Active Listening to Make Proactive Decisions

Browser data told us that approximately 60 percent of our customers were using a phone or tablet to use our website. However, Broward County

to over 800 individual pages that were a labyrinth to navigate, no matter what type of device you were using. Just like you would use checkout data to decide which items can be weeded from your collection, we used a year's worth of website analytics to determine which pages should be kept and how they should be structured. We pared down the site from 800

pages to approximately 100. For the most commonly-used functions of the website, we created a set of eye-catching quick links that are front and center.

We also made the decision to move away from having a landing page for each type of eMedia, such as music, eBooks, and video. Now, all our marketing materials point to one landing page for Broward.org/Library/eMedia. This also means that our customers can discover other eMedia we offer that may be of interest to them.

Another feature of our new website is targeted Events pages. These pages have proven to be very popular with our customers and have increased traffic in areas



Targeted events pages drive traffic online and in real life – attendance is up at library programs like this story time with Broward County Library Director Kelvin Watson and friends.

we weren't able to develop before. We also link these Events pages in our eNewsletters and social media, which helps us track and drive traffic. What's more, the redesign of our website gave us the opportunity to make important improvements such as high-ADA accessibility and language translation.

Data-Driven Content Creates Newsletters That Customers Read

Last year we also used data to drive a major change with our eNewsletter. We were sending out a weekly eNewsletter to approximately 80,000 customers using the common office software program, Outlook. Unfortunately, Outlook gave us no data we could use to improve our newsletter or better serve our customers. We were flying blind with no idea what was working and what was not. We needed a better tool, so we switched our eNewsletter over to Mailchimp, a marketing automation platform and e-mail marketing service, which provides data on every aspect of connecting with the customer. We went from flying blind to using technology as a

navigational homing tool.

Mailchimp tells us not only how many people opened each eNewsletter, it provides us with an email list of who opened each eNewsletter. We monitor this open rate closely and experiment with subject headings and the time of day we send out the eNewsletter to maximize the open rate.

We can also see which customers clicked on specific links in the eNewsletters. Not only can we see which links are the most popular in the e-newsletters, but also know which customers are interested in that link specifically. Consequently, targeted follow-up eNewsletters are directed to the person who appreciates the message, rather than sending everything out to our entire database. The average open rate for our weekly eNewsletter is around 20 percent. However, the open rate for our special targeted Newsletters is around 50 percent. That's personalized customer service, driven by data and fueled by the desire to be responsive to the needs of the community.

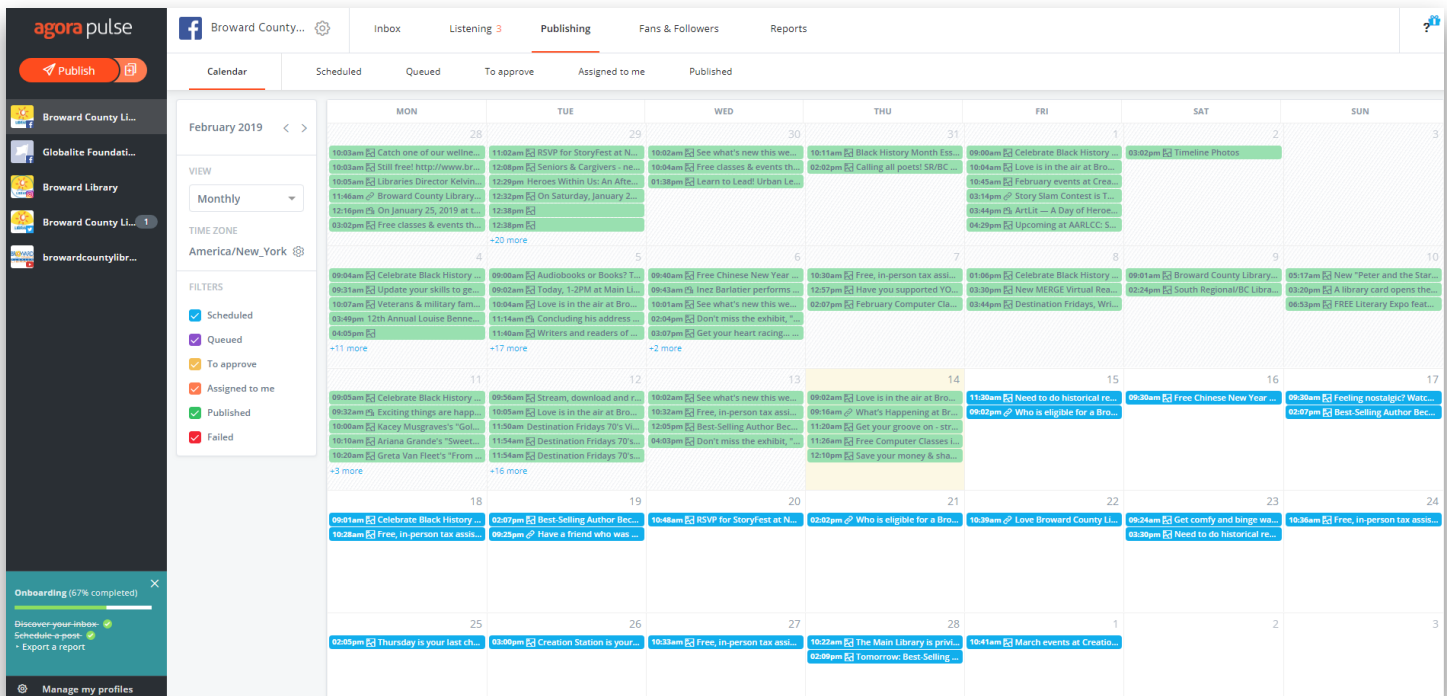
Every eNewsletter we send out also has a link to a survey using Survey Monkey that asks the customer's opinion of that email. With the survey, we are getting qualitative data along with the quantitative data provided by Mailchimp.

We have also used Survey Monkey to take polls to guide us in adapting to the needs and wants of our customers. We are driven by the data our customers generate and allow us to collect. We have asked them on computer center screens to tell us which days and hours they want their local branch to be open and how they typically use the library. We ask them what they want and how we can improve our services to them.

Using Stats to Drive Social Media Success

Broward County Library is an active social media participant. We use it to let our customers know about upcoming events, new services, and to alert them of important library info like last-minute closings. For our social media, we primarily use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Up until last year, we were not using anything other than those platforms to monitor our social media presence and the data they offered.

We take time to craft clever headlines and use eye-catching image for our posts, but were those words and pictures impacting our customers? We had no idea. Once again, we were flying blind. We didn't know who was listening or what they were listening to. Who were we reaching? More importantly, who



Social media management systems such as Agorapulse tracks the “who, what, why and when” of your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts and is a crucial part of making successful decisions based on data.

weren’t we reaching and how could we do better? We certainly want to increase fans and followers and engagement but another main goal was to drive traffic to our online resources such as eBooks, downloadable movies, and streaming music. After assessing the tools currently available and testing a number of different social media management systems, we settled on Agorapulse.

Agorapulse was perfect for us. As a social media management system, it’s budget-friendly, allows for collaboration among multiple users, and lets users schedule and control content in multiple platforms at one time.

Broward County Library began using it in June 2018 and it has been a game changer. It provides valuable, essential data we need to assess where we are, where we want to be, and how we can better reach our customers and drive them to library services and resources they might not know about or don’t use. It also allows us to be agile and responsive across multiple platforms. Most importantly, it provides the data we need to create the best customer experience we can.

With Agorapulse, we now know not just how many fans we have, we know how many are new and organic and how many we reach with targeted ads. We know how many posts were published and which ones were the most popular.

We also got a very clear picture of who is listening to us. We learned our average fan is a 35-44 year old female from the United States. We also learned who is not listening, mainly 13-24 year olds, a demographic

that makes up a scant 1 percent of our fans. That data helped drive us to start a pilot Instagram account, to extend our social media reach to a younger demographic. This is a change that we wouldn’t even have known we needed without first studying the statistics, figures, and information we garnered from Agorapulse.

We’ve also used data to create paid and targeted Facebook ads that reach the exact audience we’re trying to reach. If we have an author visiting, for example, we will create a targeted ad based on Facebook’s data. Facebook’s data will allow us to find people who are local and who have a specific interest, whether or not they are a library fan or library customer.

We continue to write catchy headlines and choose cool pictures, and the information we gain from Agorapulse allows us to make posts that are focused, effective, and that motivate visitors into action. Agorapulse also gives us information on how we are doing compared to the social media efforts of other similar-sized libraries, both in Florida and around the country.

After we’ve counted our fans and our followers and figured in retweets and open rates – we’re happy. The numbers are good. They see us! They like us! They’re opening our eblasts! They’re sharing us! But the real test isn’t how many retweets and shares we get – it’s how we translate this data into measurable results that prove that we’re reaching our customers and driving them to Broward County Library resources, particularly online resources.

That’s where we start to clearly see how effective our



use of data-driven decisions has been because we have been able to clearly measure our success. In addition to the 39 percent increase in usage of online services, our door counts went up over 20 percent, new library card registrations are up, and program attendance is rising as well.

Now, are all of Broward County Library's statistics up? No, we still have work to do in some areas and we know that. We know that because we have the data to guide us through our all of our decision making, from collection management to marketing.

We're in the age of information – the data is there. It's real. It exists. And we're library professionals – information is our science and our business. Who better to take data and use it to guide and inform our decisions? We've done it at Broward County Library, and we are reaching more customers. The data says so.

Data-driven decisions have led to an increase in new library card registrations.

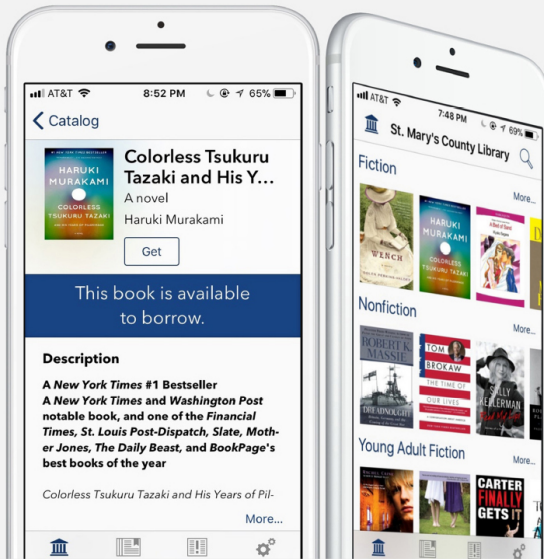
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St. Johns County Public Library System Selected for 2019 Inclusive Internship Initiative

by: Heather Sostrom

Join 50 other libraries from 28 U.S. states in hosting interns from diverse backgrounds

While some teens spent their summer vacation relaxing, one young man used this time to connect seniors with technology. James Maynard, a high-school junior, identified a need in our community, and then planned and implemented a connected-learning project to provide user support sessions for older adults having trouble with technology. He then provided one-on-one support to older adults at the Anastasia Island Branch of the library.

James was just one of 50 high school juniors and seniors around the nation selected to take part in an Inclusive Internship Initiative (III). Sponsored by the Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association, the paid internship offered individual guidance from a mentor while engaging with multiple facets of library life, from administration to programming, to user services.

After reflecting on his interests, James decided he wanted his project outcome to increase access to technology for seniors at the public library. It has already had an immediate benefit to the library and our community. James held one-on-one technology support sessions for older adults who brought in laptops, tablets, and cell phones. He also helped seniors to gain confidence and increase their awareness of library resources and services.

“I have enjoyed learning more about librarianship and the many ways librarians and library workers change lives in our community every day. Working with seniors has been a wonderful way to put what I’ve learned into practice. I know I’ve grown as a person through this internship!” said James.

The Anastasia Island Branch library will continue the one-on-one technology sessions from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. by appointment through September 17. For additional details about the sessions, internship, or the library, please contact Branch Manager Heather Sostrom at hsostrom@sjcfl.us or 904-209-3731.



Let your voice be heard and advocate for libraries.

- Tuesday, January 21: Legislative Reception in downtown Tallahassee, from 5:30-7:00pm
- Wednesday, January 22: Legislative Briefing at 8:30am followed by an impactful day of meetings with Legislators
- A block of rooms has been reserved at SpringHill Suites Tallahassee Central for \$159+tax. Reservation Details will be available soon.

Library Day is free and open to all library advocates

Creating a Comic-Con That Suits Your Library

by: Adam Chang and Brianna Pittman

In July the Citrus County Library System held its first Citrus County Comics & Cosplay Convention (C4 Con). C4 Con was organized by the library's team of Instruction & Research Librarians. The project began as a small program idea and quickly grew into one of the most successful and best-attended library programs held inside one of our libraries. The program was held on a Saturday in the middle of summer and attracted over 700 people.

While comic conventions aren't new or unique to big cities or many libraries, we wanted to try something innovative for our area. In the past we've held many "geeky" programs that have attracted large audiences; C4 Con was a way to bring all of those events together. We wanted to see if we could pull together a comic-con style program and to see how receptive our small community would be to this type of program.

Initial Concerns

We were concerned about attracting a large audience and meeting the expectations of patrons; our location is rural and our budget for this program was going to be very small. Many cons have featured guests or celebrities to headline their panels and draw in crowds. We knew we wouldn't be able to find a well-known guest to attend our first con. Our concerns were alleviated when we realized that while we don't have the resources that many groups have, we do have an abundance of patrons interested in bringing together a geeky community. Our initial request for



Left to right: Members of the 501st Legion - Tie Fighter Pilot, The Emperor, Royal Guard, and Stormtroopers pose for photos and greet fans. C4 Con, Homosassa Public Library 2019

support was met with dozens of enthusiastic comic book, gaming, sci-fi, steampunk, and anime fans all interested in supporting a con in their home community. They volunteered their time and created backdrops for photos, hosted gaming sessions, led panels on popular topics, face painted, and even hosted a Star Wars-themed story time.

Evaluating Your Space

When planning a similar program in your library, the first thing to do is to evaluate your library space and determine the scale you can accommodate. Is your con taking place inside one room? Around the entire library? Extending to the outside grounds? The size of the area will dictate both your layout and the number of vendors and presenters you can book. Being familiar with comic-con style events helps. We noted there are a few areas that tend to bottle-neck and create crowding issues such as registration, photo ops, and vendor tables. We took time to evaluate the area and sketch out plans to maximize space within our library, and in the process found some creative solutions to utilize all our available space and maximize the amount of programming we could have at our con. We turned our computer lab into a classic game arcade, complete with retro titles we found for free online including Donkey Kong, Pong, Super Mario Bros., and Pac-Man. We set up a Space Invaders tournament using an overhead projector and set the wallpaper on all the computers to look like old arcade screens that read "Insert Coin" for maximum old skool effect. Got a study room? Turn it into a mini escape room. A nook in the corner? Put out some comics or board games. Even an oversized table can be the perfect retreat for a D&D adventure. No special room needed.

Finding areas for presenters to speak is a slightly more forgiving endeavor for libraries with limited space, since you can recycle the room or rooms that you have throughout the day. Remember to leave plenty of time in the schedule between speakers, not only to reset the room but also for speakers and attendees to have time to do other things such as browse vendor tables, participate in activities, or partake of any provided refreshment.

Figuring Out Your Budget (and how to work around it)

For most libraries, budget limitations can be overwhelming when trying to plan a con. We found several ways to host our C4 Con on a shoe-string budget. For instance, don't worry about decorations too much. Very likely, your library is going to be so packed with vendors, workers, and attendees that most of what you put out won't be visible anyway—unless you're decorating the ceiling! So instead of spending your precious budget on things that will get swallowed up by the crowd, see what you can DIY with supplies you already have on hand or would be cheap to purchase. Pinterest is your friend for this! For our con we focused on decorating the oversized windows in our entry hall with silhouettes of the Gotham cityscape and using some well-placed blacklight and tape in our computer lab to accentuate the feel of a classic arcade room. That's it. For everywhere else, the vendor tables were enough "decoration" all on their own.



The Dread Pirate Roberts and her daughter a, LOL Surprise Doll. C4 Con, Homosassa Public Library 2019.

An option, if your library system allows it, is to accept a donation from vendors for reservation spaces. This will help you cover costs. Putting out a donation box for general attendees doesn't hurt either. We had many attendees who expressed their joy and gratitude for finally being able to attend a con with their family that wouldn't break the bank and it was a reminder for us that not all library programs have to be educational in order to be important for the community. Donation boxes are a great way for people to support us when and how they can.

Another thing you can do is reach out to comic book stores and bigger corporations to donate swag. Sign up for Free Comic Book Day if possible, and any other similar promotions. The earlier you reach out the better as some organizations take months to process

your request. If you can't afford to pay for a presenter, offer a vendor table as free trade for hosting a panel.

Staff and Volunteers

Initially we looked for staff that were interested in geeky programming, but we quickly realized that there are many other staff and volunteers that would be excellent additions to helping organize and run our con. Volunteers and staff that excel at crafting, are comfortable with large crowds, could be an authority, or just be a friendly face turned out to be some of our biggest supporters on the day of the con. There are a lot of roles that are required to organize and run a large-scale program, so getting as much support as possible makes the program a more rewarding experience.

Presenters and Panelists

Finding presenters, panelists, and special guests is a challenge both because of our location and our budget constraints. Our solution to this was to first reach out to some of our local established groups that already utilize our library. Some groups fit the "con" theme perfectly, like our Star Wars cosplayers (the 501st Legion) or local LARPer. Others, such as our local romance authors group, might not seem like an obvious choice at first, but they provided an excellent program on story creation that was relevant to authors and artists alike. Posting flyers in areas frequented by staff and volunteers is a great way to find hidden talents like tabletop gaming hosts and announcers.

Comic book stores aren't as common as they used to be, but it's still worth contacting stores that are closest to you (even 30+ miles away). You will find some of the most supportive and encouraging people through contacts with comic book stores.

Once you have a list of groups interested in helping with your con, don't be afraid to ask them for advice and input on hosting your event. Many of these people visit cons as fans, vendors, and presenters and are more than happy to share their passion, experience, and knowledge.

Creating Activities that Fit the Crowd

If your library system is anything like ours then

there's no way you are going to get away with hosting a program that doesn't in some way incorporate crafts. Con events like this will attract people of all ages, and you'll know best what will be the biggest draw for your crowd. If you can, you might want to have two or three different crafts for various ages. Try not to pick something with too many working pieces or that is too complicated. And of course, if you have a budget in mind, that will inform your choices as well.

Beyond supplies and age ranges, however, you'll also want to keep in mind a few other things. First, how long does it take to make your craft? If you have as many attendees as you hope, you will want an activity that discourages people from lingering. This will prevent the area from being overcrowded and allow others to have a turn. Second, for those whose craft tables are popular, make sure they have enough back up to help them watch the table and someone to swap out with them when they need a break. In fact, it's a good idea to plan out mandatory breaks for everyone working at your con. In the chaos, it can be very hard to take a break without a plan and schedule.

Success is in the Details

You don't need a massive library, a limitless budget, big-name guests, or walls bedecked in decorations in order to have a successful con. Oftentimes, it's the smallest details that really impress people the most, and small details are more thoughtful than costly.

One of the things that people were really taken with at our library were the lanyards we made to emulate those given out at official conventions. We designed the badge, laminated it, hole-punched the top, and put it on a long loop of yarn. It cost next to nothing and attendees loved the free keepsake.

They also noted and appreciated the art we hung. We're lucky to have a gifted local artist who is a cosplay photographer, and he was kind enough to let us display his work for the con. It required no work on our part, and really helped set the theme. If you don't have any local artists who do anything "con-themed" (admittedly it's a small niche), maybe have an art contest where people can submit their own work to be hung for your con. It encourages participation and will get your patrons excited, plus it will double as free advertising!

One unexpected compliment we received was about our garbage cans, of all things. They were old, collapsible, cardboard contraptions bought on the cheap years ago, but we covered them in nicely-folded red and blue paper and slapped big, high-quality pictures of superheroes on them. People recognized the effort that had been put into something as insignificant as a trash receptacle and it really

contributed to the overall mood of the day. That's right; we owe part of our success to the bins!

Some Crumbs of Wisdom

As you plan and run your own comic-con you'll find there are things to improve, or avoid altogether, for the next time. As a library system that has already been through the trenches, we humbly submit a few lessons we took away from hosting our own con.

Feed your vendors and guests. Whatever your budget is, you'll want to set some money aside for this, especially if you're hosting a smaller con and don't plan to have food available for the general public. Your vendors and guests are going to have just as much trouble trying to catch a break as employees will, and they won't have time to leave the premises to find lunch. Provide them with food and drinks. It will go a long way in building rapport.

Have a weapons check. In today's world, even libraries can't be too careful. Inappropriate costumes are easy to spot at the door, but prop weapons not so much. Have someone knowledgeable to inspect, tag, and zip-tie accessory weapons, and be sure to post any rules or regulations you decide on clearly both around the library and on any advertising.

Get staff shirts. Employee name badges are impossible to spot in a crowd. But a neon orange or green shirt? That's harder to miss, for other employees and attendees who might be looking for assistance. If you can get them with a logo or with "STAFF" printed on them, even better.

Provide extra seating. Not everyone who comes to your con is going to be able to walk or stand around for hours. Make sure to have seating available for people to take a break, if possible, away from the crowds that can get overwhelming for many. Little respite areas are great spots for families to relax, regroup, and plan what they want to do next at your awesome con. Be sure to take time after your event to debrief. Gather feedback from attendees, volunteers, and staff to help you get a better picture successes, failures, and ideas for future events.

Contact us

For more information regarding how we developed and ran our most successful program to date or just to talk about geeky programming in your library, contact Brianna Pittman brianna.pittman@citruslibraries.org, or Adam Chang adam.chang@citruslibraries.org

Service Animals in the Library: Practical Considerations

by: Kodi Miller

Imagine being back at college: a newly minted adult navigating the in-between of school and real adulting. It's often filled with mistakes and lessons that can be carried into being a working and productive member of society.

Now imagine that in that time of classes and parties and learning how to cook for yourself and doing your own laundry, you have seizures... every day. Imagine that you aren't able to go to the grocery store on your own because you could fall down at any time. You aren't even allowed to shower alone for your own safety.

But then, another option becomes available, a dog, trained to help you during a seizure, trained to stay with you through it all so you don't have to be a 20-something with a babysitter. Imagine how amazing it would feel to get your independence back in the form of four paws and soft ears.

That is what service animals are to the disabled community. So much more than just a pet that's with you all the time, they become a lifeline. Before Piper was placed with me, I was at the mercy of whoever was available to help me. With her I have the independence I need to essentially be a normal person.

Service animals have become more prominent in our society, and while that has happened the law has become more abused. As a library employee I know the moment of hesitation that comes when a person walks into our doors with a dog, and the only thing I've found to combat that is a clear understanding of the law.

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted to ensure that those with disabilities would be awarded the same rights and protections as those without. An amendment in 2010 gave rights to those who need to use service animals. According to the ADA, a service animal is defined as "a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability."

Many people find the law hard to understand, but essentially, in order for a dog (or in some cases, mini horse) to be a service animal, two conditions must be met;

- The person, or handler, must have a disability, and
- The dog must be trained to do something to help that disability. ⁽¹⁾

Vague, but vague for a reason. A disability is defined as a condition or conditions that restrict one or more major life activity. An example is the need for a wheelchair due to difficulty walking. The definition is intentionally broad and vague and there is no list of qualifying disabilities. A service animal can be placed with anyone who could benefit from the assistance of an animal. In the same vein, there is no set list of tasks. In recent years we've discovered new tasks dogs can learn to assist those who need it, so any restrictions would keep thousands of people from getting the help they need.

The process of training a service animal is expensive and time consuming. Depending on the tasks being trained, the cost for a private trainer can be anywhere from \$1,000-\$40,000, and take 1-3 years. There are non profit organizations that will train and provide dogs free of cost, but the wait list can be long. A third option is owner training. If the handler thinks they have the skills needed to take the dog through the training they are allowed to by law.


There are a variety of tasks, but they can generally be broken up into five main types. The first is medical alert, which is Piper's job. These dogs tell their handler before a medical event occurs, such as seizures, cardiac and diabetic events, and allergens. Mobility assist dogs help with mobility impairments by opening doors, picking up dropped items, and pulling wheelchairs. An important thing to note; not all disabilities are visible. Just because a person isn't using a wheelchair doesn't

(1) "Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA," U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section. Accessed September 8, 2019. https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.html.

mean that the dog isn't a mobility assist dog. The handler might need help with balance, or not be able to bend down. It is never our place as staff to judge the extent of a disability. Seeing eye dogs are the easiest to identify. One interesting fact about them is that they aren't leading the vision impaired owner, they are alerting them to any kind of objects in their way, like a stair step. Autism service animals are generally used for children but can also help adults with autism. They help to mitigate the challenges that come with being on the spectrum by alerting to repetitive actions or movements (known as stimming), assisting with destructive behaviors, and laying down when a child runs. The last main type is psychiatric service animals. These dogs will remind their handler to take their medication, intervene during a panic attack, and even walk into an apartment and circle the perimeter before a handler with PTSD enters the room.

It's safe to say that most everyone has heard of the emotional support peacock on the airplane. Let's clear up a few myths around that. Emotional Support Animals (ESAs), while real treatments for anxiety and depression prescribed by doctors, are not service animals. They are not covered by the ADA. ESA's appear in two laws. The Fair Housing Act allows them to live with their handler regardless of pet policy, and, currently, the Air Carrier Access Act, which allows them in the cabin of airplanes. These animals are not required to have any formal training, because other than an airplane cabin, they aren't allowed any public access. The biggest difference between a service animal and an ESA, besides the training, is that the owner of an ESA does not have to be disabled. ESAs are for depression and anxiety. Psychiatric service animals (PSAs) are given to those with disabling depression and disabling anxiety. PSAs do a task to help that disability.

Although there is misunderstanding over the law, emotional support animals do have a place in our society. Studies have shown that just being around an animal can decrease stress, depression, even blood pressure. However, these animals are untrained, and not given the right of public access. Another thing to note, just to circle back to the peacock, because ESAs aren't covered under the ADA, there is no restriction on type. So, yes, a peacock can be an emotional support animal.



"Just because an animal is wearing a vest that says service animal, doesn't mean it is a service animal."

Let's say you're at work and you look over and see a patron walk in with a dog, what do you do?

"When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions:

- is the dog a service animal required because of a disability, and
- what work or task has the dog been trained to perform. Staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the dog, or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task." (2)

The ADA has given us two vague questions, but when it comes down to it, those two questions are in place to ensure the two conditions are met. Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? We don't ask about the disability, or for documentation, but we do ask for confirmation that the handler is disabled. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform? This question can be as detailed or vague as the handler wants, but it must be something that the dog does to assist the handler with their disability. Therapy, comfort, and emotional support are not considered tasks. Both of these questions must be answered to fully identify the dog as a service animal.

In my experience, most patrons will say yes to the first question and be stumped by the second. The second question is just as important, if not more, than the first. Confirmation is needed that the animal has been trained. The questions are the only way to identify a service animal, as they are not required to demonstrate their task, show training documents, show medical documentation, wear a vest, or have an ID.

The last two points are the most important. Just because an animal is wearing a vest that says service animal, doesn't mean it is a service animal. Vest or no, the questions must be answered. As for the ID tag, if you type service animal into Google you will stumble across a host of sites offering ID tags for a minimal fee. None of these registries are federally regulated, and none of them are required. As a handler myself I wish there was a registry, but there isn't. If a patron refuses to answer the questions and instead holds up an ID card, that animal cannot be identified as a service animal.

(2) "Frequently Asked Questions ..."

(3) "Frequently Asked Questions ..."

There is the concern of the patron who knows how to Google, and found answers to the questions, but doesn't have a trained animal. The ADA states that if an animal is "out of control of the handler"⁽³⁾ or not housebroken, the handler can be asked to remove the animal. If the animal is identified as a service animal (not emotional support), accommodations must be made so the patron can receive the same goods or services but without the animal present. An example of that would be retrieving the books for the patron and bringing them outside.

"Out of control" is another vague statement. According to the ADA, an animal is considered out of control if they're doing any disruptive action that can't be stopped by the handler. Examples including incessant barking, jumping, and lunging. Other examples would be any aggressive behavior. But dogs aren't robots, and sometimes they get startled. If a dog barks once then settles, that dog is still in the control of the handler. If a dog is having an off day, as we all do, they might have a slip. If we have to ask a handler to remove an animal and they return the next day with the animal, unless the action was aggressive, the animal should be allowed in the building.

Another thing I've noticed is patrons with dogs in purses, or strollers, small dogs that can't do much damage, right? Wrong. Although untrained small dogs can't do much to a fully grown adult, they can hurt children, and they can hurt other dogs. I've been in stores where dogs have jumped out of carts to lunge at Piper, or pulled to get over to her. I need Piper to be able to go about my day. Untrained animals make the environment unsafe for Piper and therefore unsafe for me.

As a librarian I know it's hard to ask someone to leave. My favorite part of the job is ensuring that everyone has access to information, so it's difficult to say to someone, "we only allow service animals in the library; I would welcome you to come back without the dog." But I also mean what I say. If the animal is anything less than a service animal, the person can safely return without the animal. They don't need the animal to function. I challenge all who read this to think about it in a different way. We aren't refusing access, we're ensuring that the library is safe for the next patron who comes in and relies on a service animal to live. By adhering to the laws, we're keeping everyone safe.

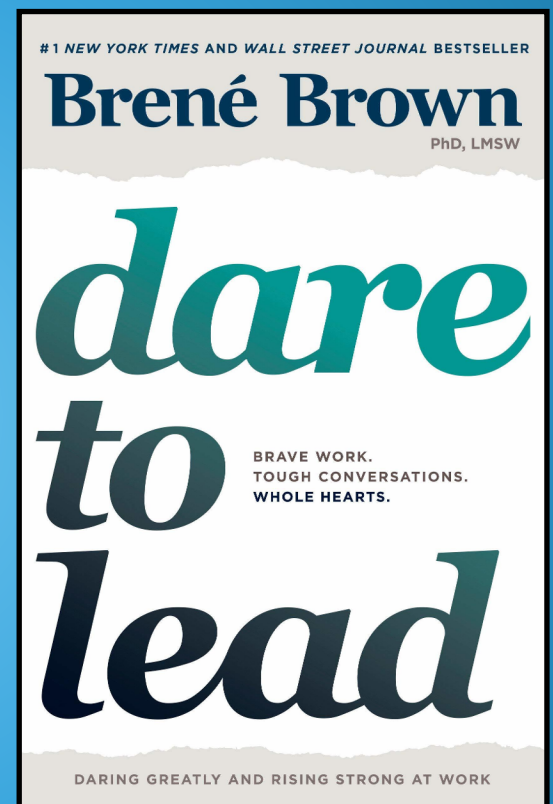
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ONE BOOK ONE STATE



Eric Head, '19-'20 FLA President, has chosen the #1 New York Times and Wall Street Journal Bestseller, "Dare to Lead" by Brene Brown. The FLA Leadership Development Committee is planning an extensive One Book One State program based on this engaging read, so check it out and stay tuned for more information!



Take a Gamble On Your Staff – The House Always Wins

by: *Suvi Manner and Rebekah Stewart*

Have you witnessed or experienced workplace fatigue? One day in the fall of 2018, we were overwhelmed and unmotivated, thinking about all the projects we were in the middle of, when two staff bounded into the office. Speaking at the same time, they excitedly reported about the “Supercharged Storytime” workshop they had attended and thanked me several times for sending them to participate. In addition to feeling energized and inspired by the learning and networking opportunity, they also felt validated about the work they do providing caregivers with information about early learning benchmarks and sharing strategies that will enable the young children to continue learning at home with their caregivers.

In an instant the brooding feelings lifted, and we knew we had to share this with our colleagues across the state. When an opportunity came to present at the Florida Library Association (FLA) 2019 Conference, we planned how we could tell our story and submitted our application. Going by the theme of the conference, one of those enthusiastic staff members, Rebekah Stewart, came up with the title, *Take a Gamble On Your Staff – The House Always Wins*. At that moment, our hope was restored, and we knew then that even though we didn’t always see the immediate results of our goals, the library was going to win in the long run if we invested in our staff.

The Palm Springs Public Library is nestled in a residential neighborhood in the middle of populous and multicultural Palm Beach County. One of the goals of the Village of Palm Springs is, “maintaining a small town feel within our diverse community.” As librarians, we translated this to providing new and innovative programs that bring our residents together to engage with each other through crafts, technology, and other activities. By creating something new, we needed to work with staff who understood the importance of outreach and library advocacy while providing excellent services for our residents who already use the library.

Children’s Librarian, Rebekah Stewart and “Librarian-In-Training” Karen Garcia were excited to share their story of how we responded to community needs and started changing the services through trial and error. All three of us were new in our positions in the beginning of 2016. Rebekah had to fill in the big shoes of a 30-year veteran librarian, and Karen started

to reach out to the surrounding Spanish-speaking community. Together they revamped the weekly storytime into Bilingual Preschool Storytime with clear educational goals and curriculum. However, they told me they could not have accomplished the development of new programs and increased attendance, had they not received my encouragement and guidance.

On May 15, 2019, Rebekah opened the conference presentation with some grim statistics. An alarming percentage of employees all over the nation working in small and large organizations felt passionless, devalued, unmotivated, underappreciated, and hopeless in their jobs, and held a general dissatisfaction with management; this includes workers from retail to education to government, within profits and non-for-profits, and includes more than half of our workforce. This is a costly problem, and is not only a waste of money, but is also a drain on our time and mental energy that accompanies staff turnovers and rehiring. These all take us away from focusing on our mission to serve the community. Rebekah discussed that the behavior disengaged employees are really showing us is that they do not feel empowered, and they feel there is minimal communication from management, especially about opportunities to develop skills. Engaged employees should also not be ignored. They are asking for opportunities for professional development, education, training, and support from leadership. A circular graphic provided tips for leaders and managers to help create a respectful motivated learning culture within our organizations:

- Clearly Define Goals and Expectations – what is the mission of the organization? What do you expect from your employees? Have you communicated this in ways they understand?
- Coach and Empower your Employees – is there enough training for your employees to reach the goals of the organization? Have you taken into consideration learning differences, language barriers, and educational gaps?
- Monitor Employee Progress – opening communication with employees builds trust, willingness, and understanding of the progression of goals.
- Recognize Employees’ Hard Work and Re-evaluate Progress – acknowledge what

employees have accomplished, go over what still needs to be done, and create a plan.

I shared the following Richard Branson quote during our presentation: “Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don’t want to.” I then elaborated on other tips to prevent employees from becoming disengaged, tired, and feeling devalued:

Build and Empower their Professional Skills: I discussed that as leaders sometimes we might become fearful that our staff will surpass us if we push them to grow, or they might leave, and we lose a great employee. I encouraged leaders and managers to not hold back and push aside your fears. You might lose them to “greener pastures” but feel satisfied in knowing that you provided them with all the opportunities possible to contribute at other organizations and achieve personal and professional success.

Nurture Self-Care: Work is not our whole lives. Encourage your employees to go home, spend time with their families, take care of themselves, pursue hobbies, sports, interests, and not be afraid of holding back their spirituality. By nourishing the whole being, our employees will be refreshed, focused, and feel accepted for who they are. This then encourages them to want to be part of the team.

Link them to Resources: As our staff feels connected to the mission and the team, they will communicate their interests, goals, and concerns. By “listening to understand” we can then connect staff and guide them to the right resources so that they can become empowered.

Karen expanded on the many opportunities for free professional development. People are constantly looking for ways to become empowered for the betterment of their families and themselves. Why not nurture that drive so they can bring that determination and inspiration to the workplace? There are many opportunities such as access to online webinars, local face-to-face workshops, networking, and peer mentorship. Providing opportunities for staff to utilize their talents, engage with the community, and take part in learning opportunities, will ultimately create satisfied and valued staff. Investing in their educational and emotional wellbeing will enable them to feel as if they are part of fulfilling the important mission of service to the community. The results are passion and professionalism demonstrating an increase in efficiency and productivity, which improves the quality of services.

We ended the presentation with photos and stories of Palm Springs Public Library programs and partnerships, sharing our experience in a room of at

least 127 professionals from across the State of Florida. We were touched that the room was so full that many sat on the floor and more stood within the doorframes. We hope that others will be inspired by our determination that even little libraries can do mighty things when staff is motivated to learn, grow, and work together as a team to support one another.

Our community notices when our staff are engaged and excited to be at the library. They know when staff are educated and diligent in their duties, provide accurate information, and impressive customer service. Patrons notice the quality of programs, classes, and workshops through the confidence of the professionals who serve them. We are here as a foundation for our community. We provide more than just a space; we are places for families to discover and develop, and for the lonely to feel like they are a part of a community by nourishing the need for people to connect with each other. We as leaders and managers can provide our staff with the upper hand to help our world to win, one neighborhood at a time. Ultimately, when the community reaps the benefits of inspired and creative staff, the house always wins.

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Even the Odds: Libraries Tackling the Textbook Problem

by: Rebecca Donlan, Amy Filiatreau, Peggy Glatthaar and Danielle Rosenthal

“There has to be a better way to learn than via textbooks. The information is presented in the least joyous form of writing and makes me want to just fling the thing as far away from me as possible.”

-Mahjabeen Syed

We have to try to fix that. Not only are textbooks not joyous, they are a serious source of stress for our students. In this article, the authors describe initiatives at Lynn University and Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) that aim to alleviate that stress while promoting student success.

Academic libraries have not, traditionally, added textbooks to their collections. There were plenty of good reasons for this—textbooks are expensive, they change frequently, our budgets are limited—but times are changing. Consortial agreements and reciprocal borrowing mean that libraries can leverage their collection budgets more effectively, and academic libraries are re-examining their services and collections in light of how these contribute to student success. If our students are asking for textbooks, why not consider them?

First, some context. In their 2014 report entitled “Fixing the Broken Textbook Market,” the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG) surveyed more than 2,000 students from over 150 university campuses. They reported that 65% of these students had decided not to buy a textbook because it was too expensive. Of those students, 94% were concerned that this decision would hurt their final grade—and more than half of these students were significantly concerned (1). The concern over the expense was greater than their significant concern over their performance. Yet the handful of textbook publishers continue to drive up prices because they have almost no competition. From 2002 to 2012, new textbook prices rose 82%, approximately three times the rate of inflation (2). Imagine the pressure that our students experience every time they register for classes and step into the bookstore.

Slightly less than half of the FGCU student population identifies as first-generation college students, a group that is especially prone to leaving college. According to the First Generation Foundation, 89% of low-income first-generation students leave college within six years without a degree (3). Many students drop out for

financial reasons, unwilling or unable to take on more student debt—yet staying in college pays. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2018 median weekly earnings of \$730 for high school diploma holders compared to \$1,198 for those with a bachelor’s degree, a difference of \$468 per week. That’s a monthly student loan payment per week (4).

Lynn and FGCU are different in many ways. Lynn is a small, private liberal arts university with 3,093 students. FGCU is a regional comprehensive public university, with more than 15,000 students. But we both face the textbook challenge. Recently, we began to wonder if there was something our libraries could do to help, to “even the odds” so our students had a better chance of making it through to an undergraduate degree and the increased earning power that degree brings. What follows is a description of each institution’s approach to addressing the textbook problem.

Lynn University: Supporting Faculty Authorship

Lynn is an iPad-powered university. Starting in 2013, with the iPad Mini distributed only to freshmen, Lynn’s iPad program has grown to include all students, graduate and undergraduate. Students are issued iPad Pros with real keyboards and Apple pencils, with more than 40 primarily academic apps pre-installed at no cost to the student. Even before the Minis were distributed in fall 2013, Lynn faculty decided that they should take advantage of the iPad’s capabilities and create iBooks for Lynn’s undergraduate general education classes. Since 2013, the program has expanded to include upper-level and graduate-level classes. Faculty receive stipends based on the kinds of books they write: \$1,500 for a full textbook, \$750 for a smaller workbook, and \$500 for an iBook they compile of Open Educational (OER) resources. Some faculty are not interested in writing their own course texts and may choose library-licensed books or open educational resources. Faculty that redesign courses around these resources receive an incentive of \$500.

This program was somewhat successful, with up to 50

titles published or in process. The aim is not to re-create a textbook in PDF. The iBooks software and apps installed on student iPads permit nearly unlimited opportunities for including such elements as in-text quizzes, multimedia, widgets, videos, and more. This appeals to different learning styles, for those who are visual or aural learners. Internal survey results consistently show that students feel the iBooks are much more effective than print textbooks. But there were editorial concerns with the final products. There were citation problems, version control problems, quality control problems, and more. So, the library established a formal Digital Press to manage the production of faculty-authored iBooks. We developed guides, workflows, and procedures, and hired professionals to edit, add multimedia and digital widgets, and ensure copyright laws are respected and citations are correct. After years of trying unsuccessfully to establish a peer-review process, we turned to the Grandview Group, which offers an affordable software product that handles the reviews, and ensures they are thorough and easily interpreted. Reviewers address accuracy and currency, organization and presentation, and chapter assignments.

Even with faculty-authored iBooks and faculty-compiled OER content, there were plenty of expensive required texts that remained. The library had a policy of not purchasing textbooks, but staff were tired of saying “We have everything you need at the library! ...Except what you actually need.” In 2015-16, the library bought a textbook collection, dedicating almost the entire print book budget to this program. The collection was a success and we received a huge budget increase to pay for the textbook collection in 2016-17, with at least one copy of every required text. Texts circulate for 3 hours. There are 290 titles, which have been checked out more than 4,500 times as of spring 2019. There are challenges—raising faculty and student awareness, working with the bookstore to order the correct titles, and late faculty course adoptions—but the payoff is great. This collection costs the university about \$24,000 per year, but it is estimated that this collection saves our students around \$275,000 per year.

Florida Gulf Coast University: Textbook Affordability Project (TAP)

FGCU opened in 1997 in response to the need for more higher education opportunities in Southwest Florida, and has grown quickly since then, from 2,000 students to over 15,000 in 2019. The student body comes from financially modest backgrounds. In 2019,

29% of students qualified for Pell Grants, which means that a third of the FGCU student body either earn, or come from a family with an annual income of less than \$20,000. 84% of our financial assistance is need-based. Library staff knew, from years of getting the same questions Lynn staff got, that the old “the library does not purchase textbooks” policy needed to be challenged. After researching what other Florida universities were doing, library administration approached the provost, who granted us \$40,000 in year-end funds in 2018. This was not ideal, because funds had to be expended quickly, but there was no information available about fall text adoptions. The funds were put on deposit with the campus bookstore, which took care of the year-end urgency, and also established a solid working relationship between the library and the campus bookstore.

Working with the bookstore makes sense for several reasons, not least of which is establishing the library and bookstore as partners, not rivals, in the enterprise of student success. Bookstore staff were supportive and immediately understood the impact that this project could have on student success. They

"Working with the bookstore makes sense for several reasons, not least of which is establishing the library and bookstore as partners, not rivals, in the enterprise of student success."

agreed to forego their 25% profit from book sales, extending the library 25% off list price for every title purchased. The bookstore manager understood the value of students being able to preview texts because the student might then see that the expenditure was really worth the value.

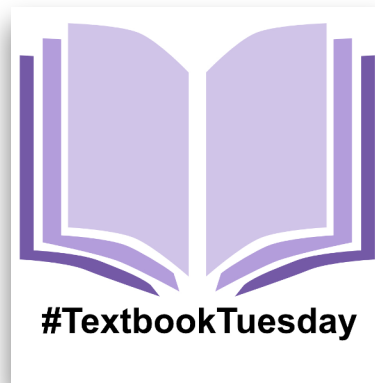
The bookstore sent the list of fall course adoptions, and the library's information analyst added several data points to help with final selection. The analyst put together a comprehensive spreadsheet that included the number of course sections and enrollment, cost and purchase history, and courses with high rates of students getting a D or F or withdrawing (DFW courses). Two staff members looked up every item on the bookstore list in the library catalog, and confirmed item format on the bookstore website or through Amazon. By determining whether an item was digital (or some combination of print and digital) the initial list was narrowed considerably, since most digital textbooks are licensed to one user using password authentication. This means that they cannot be shared. We also solicited student input by means of a whiteboard near our main circulation desk. We asked "if the library purchased any textbook for course reserves, what would you choose?" and responses were in line with expectations—expensive science textbooks, as well as "any book over \$150."

After intensive analysis and discussion, we decided to limit purchases to undergraduate (1000-4000 level) courses, with text cost greater than or equal to \$100. Two copies were purchased for some of the classes with the highest enrollment (biology, anatomy & physiology, organic chemistry, college algebra). Two staff members hand-selected titles, picking used copies in good physical condition whenever possible, in the end saving nearly \$20,000 over buying new. Three hundred eighteen textbooks were purchased for fall and spring semesters. We cataloged texts so they would appear in the catalog as well as in the course reserves module. About 40 textbooks were in loose-leaf format or had high potential for theft or damage (workbooks, answer keys), so night circulation staff scanned archival copies that are stored on a secure drive, though as of yet no missing pages have been reported.

To promote the collection, we made some changes to our website and circulation policies. We added a button to the library home page, which brings users into the course reserve module, where they can search by course number, instructor, or title. We also decided to allow students to place holds on textbooks. In order to place holds, users need to create a patron empowerment account within the OPAC that permits them to save searches, place holds, and renew items. But many of our students are not aware of the service and have not set up an account. When these students

come to the circulation desk to reserve a text that is checked out, we use that opportunity to tell them how to create an account. In the meantime, we use the LibAnswers module within Springshare to send the student a notification text when the item is returned. If the user next in line does not report to the desk within 30 minutes, the hold is released to the next user.

To promote awareness of the textbook collection, we have weekly Instagram and Facebook posts on



Tuesdays using the hashtag #TextbookTuesday. The post features an image of the book and a descriptive caption which includes title, edition, and course number. We use six-sided table top acrylic stands to market a variety of library offerings,

including textbooks. This year, we have buttons for staff to wear. By far the most effective marketing approach has been our liaison librarians working with their faculty to let them know about our collections.

At the beginning of the fall 2018 semester, many students reported that they were using the text collection because their text had not yet arrived in the college bookstore, they were not sure they were going to stay in the class, and their financial aid refunds had not yet been disbursed. Library staff were able to educate students that the bookstore allows students to pick up their course texts, charging them against the student's financial aid balance. In return, over the past year, they taught us a few things, too. Students surprised us by neglecting our free public scanners, standing instead at the circulation desk to use their cell phone cameras to shoot page images. One student reported that she had an app on her phone that would compress the file and put it in a folder for her.

At the end of the spring semester, we asked our students via whiteboard how the textbook collection had helped them. Many of their answers indicate that our goal of helping students save money was realized: "they save me so much mullah," "saved literal thousands," "love it, very grateful," "lib.genius," "free textbooks," and the like. Other answers shed light on student behavior: "Having a time limit motivates me to get work done," "Very efficient for when I don't have the textbook." Anecdotally, we have heard students tell us that they are delighted not to have to carry heavy textbooks around with them, preferring to borrow while they are in the library to get

work done. Some expressed disappointment in terms of the process: “Not much, you never have the edition I need, I would use it,” or “You don’t have the ones I need.” Since we only purchased textbooks that, if purchased new, would cost the students \$100 or more, it is true that many texts were omitted from the collection. We did purchase many titles on request; this fall, our circulation staff created a form to take student requests, which are promptly reviewed and, if enrollment is high enough to indicate demand, purchased if funds are available. Liaison librarians have also purchased texts that do not make the cut using their disciplinary funds.

After the first year, we have learned a few things about tackling the textbook problem. As a percentage of the overall collection, textbooks are minuscule—only two-tenths of a percent of the whole. Yet they accounted for a fifth of the overall print circulation for fall and spring semesters. They also accounted for 84% of the total loans from our Course Reserves. Usage data supported what students told us via whiteboard—expensive science texts were well used. *Campbell’s Biology* (which would cost \$180 used) had 244 loans, evenly divided over fall and spring semesters. General Biology I, for which this is the text, is the number one DFW course, with high enrollment and an expensive textbook. Any title that fulfills all of those criteria is a must-buy. But the runner-up with 126 loans, *The Civically Engaged Reader*, was a surprise—it wasn’t purchased as part of the TAP pilot and cost less than \$20 for students to buy. It was already in our collection by faculty request, as the assigned text for a required junior-year course. We conclude that the faculty who had requested the title were also actively promoting the library’s copy.

Much of the collection, however, was under- or un-used. Seventy-six of the items we purchased were never used at all, and 47 were only used once. Based on these results, we changed our approach to purchasing. Many of the titles we purchased last year are assigned this year. This fall, we raised our cost threshold to \$150 or higher, still focusing on undergraduate courses. We learned that buying all undergraduate textbooks is not necessary, buying multiple copies of high use titles is a good investment, and keeping funds aside for student requests is prudent. The word is out and this year’s usage is robust—427 loans in the first week of classes. Clearly, for FGCU at least, textbooks are a worthwhile use of library funds, staff time, and space.

1 Senack, Ethan. "Fixing the broken textbook market." *US Public Interest Research Group, Student PIRG* (2014), p. 4.

2 Ibid., p. 6.4 <https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm>

3 <http://www.firstgenerationfoundation.org/>

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The Magic of the Archive: Lydia Cabrera and her Material Record of Afro-Cuban Religions and Culture

by: Dr. Martin A. Tsang

Lydia Cabrera (1899-1991) may not be a familiar name to many Floridians, however her vast archive of papers at the University of Miami Libraries is a veritable jewel of the Cuban Heritage Collection (CHC). Both Cabrera's papers and the CHC as a whole, which is the most extensive repository of materials on Cuba and the Cuban diaspora, are freely accessible to any student, researcher, or visitor. Cabrera was born in Havana, and from an early age, the art of writing was a constant for her. Her father, Raimundo Cabrera, an esteemed Cuban lawyer, writer, and publisher, encouraged her to write for his periodical, *Cuba y America*, in her teens and this spurred a lifetime of putting pen to paper for her.



A portrait of the young Lydia Cabrera. Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables, Florida.

Cabrera studied art in Paris and there, began penning the Afro-Cuban folktales told to her by her childhood nanny. She recalled these colorful, spiritual narratives to entertain her partner, Teresa de la Parra, who was being treated for tuberculosis in a Swiss infirmary. Her studies in France elicited an intellectual curiosity for the Afro-Atlantic, a theme that was in fashion in the early decades of the twentieth century in Europe and Cabrera's remembered Afro-Cuban folktales represented a sliver of rich and expansive current of knowledge, history, and practice of religion and



Lydia Cabrera (second from right) with a group of religious participants in Cuba. Courtesy of the Cuban Heritage Collection, University of Miami Libraries, Coral Gables, Florida.

culture of African descent brought to the Americas by enslaved Africans. Cabrera turned her prodigious intellect, her investigative and writing abilities to researching Afro-Cuban religions and her substantial legacy of published work continues to draw wide acclaim. In tandem with this, awareness of Cabrera's broader impact on the themes of gender, sexuality, and art has fueled and put into motion dynamic studies of Caribbean literature, and have framed her work in hemispheric and global contexts. Cabrera's ethnography and methodologies as reflected in her archive help a myriad of contemporary researchers in the arts and sciences create new avenues for investigation across the disciplines that reach far beyond Cuba and its people.

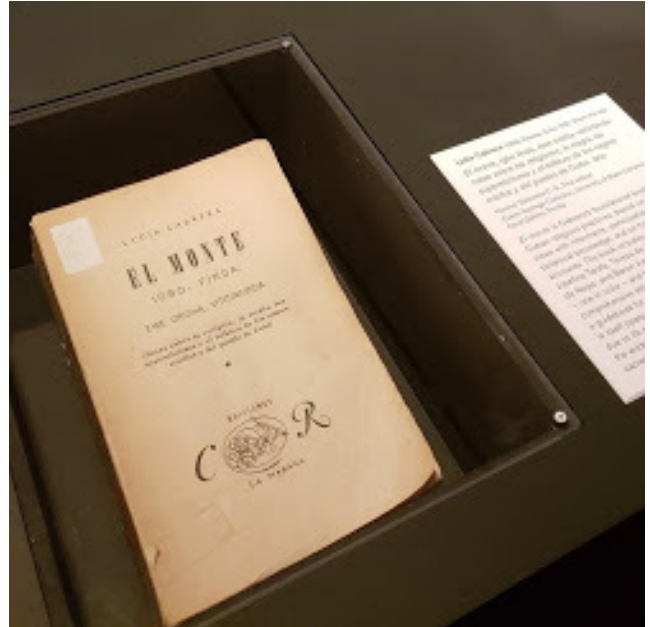
Ever the creative sojourner, Lydia Cabrera blurred the lines between historian, ethnographer, artist, and storyteller in works that combined both reality and fiction in bold new ways. Cabrera authored over twenty books in Spanish on Afro-Cuban religiosity in which the voices and wisdom of her participants can be discerned, many of whom were the descendants of those brought to the Antilles in the trans-Atlantic Slave

Trade. Lydia faithfully recorded their treasured narratives, biographies, and sophisticated worldviews, amplifying them to reach and educate both academic and public audiences in sensitive ways that many researchers had previously failed to do. While few of Cabrera's works have been translated into English, there are currently multiple projects underway to remedy that being actioned by several scholars who see the value of her work reaching new audiences.

At the University of Miami Libraries, Cabrera's archive contains a wealth of materials written in Spanish, English, and French and contains many vocabularies and treatises on several African languages and sacred vernaculars cultivated in Cuba by religious practitioners. Cabrera's work on religion was based on extensive fieldwork and participant observation among Black and Creole communities in Cuba, especially in rural areas connected to the sugar plantation industry which relied on the forced labor of enslaved Africans. On her return to Havana from Paris, Cabrera dove deeply into the religions known as Lucumí, Palo Monte, and Arara, as well as the male secret society Abakuaá. Later exiled from Cuba with the Revolution, she resided in Miami until her passing in 1991. As a result of her long and constant record of work, Cabrera's legacy is far-reaching, and her ethnographic and literary contributions are unparalleled. Cabrera's archive also includes drafts of her published works, saved correspondence with literary and academic figures, some of her art, and a host of personal papers and research notes. Her extensive investigations with Afro-Cuban religious practitioners remain a vital facet as she helped to shatter racism and ignorance of the sacred and material worlds of the deities brought to the Americas through the slave trade. Cabrera's work culminated in her scholarly masterpiece, *El Monte*, in which the voices and rituals of gods and ancestors of African descent animate Cuba's landscape. Consulted by practitioner and scholar alike, the encyclopedic tome has become a vital resource for understanding the ritual practices, stories, pharmacopeia, and history of the Lucumí religion, often called Santería.

As a testament to Cabrera's importance, several exhibitions, panels, and events have and continue to be inspired by or dedicated to her work, often in collaboration with or featuring materials loaned from her archive held at the CHC. In October 2016, a type of celebratory altar was erected at HistoryMiami Museum which, once activated, became the central focus for thinking about the nature of archives and honoring Lydia with a performance piece, libations, interactive works, and a lively scholarly panel. More recently, in New York City, the Americas Society and Council of the Americas held an exhibition entitled *Lydia Cabrera and Édouard Glissant: Trembling Thinking*, from

October 9, 2018 through January 12, 2019, which featured original works on paper by Cabrera and some of her rare first editions loaned from her collection.



A first edition of Cabrera's *El Monte* (1954) on display at the Americas Society Visual Arts Gallery October 2018 to January 2019.

Closer to home, Miami Dade College's Museum of Art and Design currently progressed from the Americas Society work and program of events through the exhibition *Where the Oceans Meet*, placing Cabrera and her archive in dialogue with contemporary Caribbean artists who explore the themes of borders, margins, and movement in and through these spaces. The exhibition is open until January 12, 2020, and allows for visitors to understand the critical linkages and artistic inspiration made possible through her dedicated exploration of Afro-Atlantic ritual themes. Cabrera's work is impressive both for its breadth and depth as well as her unique methodologies and ability to traverse sacred lines that are otherwise inaccessible to outsiders and those uninitiated. In her writing and other papers, we can glimpse into the private and veiled worlds of Afro-Cuban religiosity and have reliable and accurate information on carefully-guarded and otherwise invisible sacred traditions. Cabrera's material legacy is available for all to discover at the Cuban Heritage Collection and it continues to inspire new knowledge and provoke discussion, ensuring that her words and thoughts encourage scholars, practitioners, and the community at large in imaginative and creative ways.

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Dr. Martin A. Tsang is the Cuban Heritage Collection Librarian and Curator of Latin American Collections at the University of Miami. He is a socio-cultural anthropologist whose work explores Afro-Chinese religiosity in Cuba as well as working on issues concerning HIV in the wider Caribbean.

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