Beyond Equity and Diversity
Inclusion in the Library

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
SESSION 1 - 11:15 - 12:00
ROOM 322
Your Hosts (in Alphabetical Order)

Ben Bell (panelist) is a Reference Librarian & Instructor at Southeastern Louisiana University and an adjunct instructor at the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University. He is the liaison for Southeastern’s College of Business and received Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society’s Outstanding Teacher Award in Spring 2018. When not at work, Ben enjoys his family, cooking, and being a singer/songwriter.

Sonnet Ireland (panelist) is currently a reference librarian for the St. Tammany Parish Library. With a background in both public and academic libraries, she has presented at numerous conferences, including the IFLA World Library and Information Congress. She is the current First Vice President/President-Elect for the Louisiana Library Association. She is also the current Chair of GODORT for the Southeastern Library Association. Her main research interests are government information, news literacy, Google, and social media.

Megan Lowe (moderator) is the Director of the Library at the University of Louisiana at Monroe where she has worked since 2003. She is the editor of the peer-reviewed, open-access journal *Codex: The Journal of the Louisiana Chapter of the ACRL* and the author or co-author of several publications. Her research areas include emotional intelligence, emotions in the workplace, deselection, and crises. Megan enjoys travel, music (especially heavy metal, rock’n’roll, and synthwave), memes, and video games.

Sarah Simms (panelist) is the Undergraduate and Student Success Librarian at Louisiana State University. Before entering academic librarianship, Sarah worked in the antiquarian book trade in New York City. Her interest in history, culture, and social justice advocacy has fueled her research into Japanese American internment during World War II.
Our Rationale

This panel-presentation reflects the prompts and discussions that were the driving force behind the NOLA Information Literacy Collective’s 2018 Forum (held at Loyola University in July).

The images you will see throughout the presentation were the prompts used by the session moderators to stimulate conversations with participants (just adapted to the LOUIS/LUC palette).

The Executive Board of the ILC felt that the topic of inclusivity, particularly inclusivity which empowers library personnel and library users, affects many, many dimensions of what libraries do and the services and products they offer. This is why this discussion is “beyond equity and diversity” – these concepts are important, and the Board felt the concept of inclusivity or inclusion unified those concepts in actionable ways.

Some of the information we’ll share today is the product of the discussions and conversations that were had at the Forum. The Board wanted to share the fruits of those labors with a wider audience, and LUC seemed a great place to do that!
K Through Life Information Literacy

- Grade School / High School / College Transition
- Metaliteracy
- Public Library as Academic Space
- Transitions to Adulthood
- Inclusive Classrooms
- Workforce Development *
- Collaborations
- Lifelong Learning
- Home School

* Added by ML after the fact.
Outreach

Image borrowed from Lindskog (2018).
Outreach

- Identifying Populations
- Networking
- Identifying Partners
- Respectful Outreach
- Definition of Outreach
- Budgetary Constraints
- 1st Gen College Students
- Underserved Populations
The Info Literacy Framework

- Authority is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Intersectionality
- Accessibility of Framework and Its Language
- Representation
- Feminism
- Searching as Strategic Exploration
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Research as Inquiry
Empowerment in Libraries
Empowerment in Libraries

- Perception of MLIS
- Collaboration Across Types of Libraries
- Professional Development
- Administration & Management
- Mentorship
- Professional Opportunities/Barriers
- Patrons’ Rights
- For Self
- For Peers
- Social Justice
- Authenticity
- Toxic Environments & Situations
- Diversifying the Field
- For Peers
Technology
Assessment
Assessment

- Measurability
- Time Constraints vs. Immediate Needs
- Qualitative vs. Quantitative
- Accuracy of Data
- Collection of Data
- Needs Assessment
- Statistics
Debrief from the Forum

1. Nobody knows how to do ADA or accessibility
2. Assessment - types of info that people want out of librarians (retention, etc), no easy way to get this info - lots of discussions about how to do this and how to define and how to collect the data - what are we assessing and why?
3. ROI - demonstrating value - of the profession, of libraries in general (Amazon article)
4. #economicsaintreal
5. Amazon = federal checklist!!!!!! Privacy protection by libraries still a thing and still a good thing
6. Inclusion is not just being static - but trying to go out and incorporate other viewpoints and people..... Inclusion not being for the people you see, but for everyone (ie new immigrants in the community - might think they are not in the community because not coming to the library, but you have to think about the people you don’t see in the room) - THINK about space, programming, and WAY OF BEING! Don’t have to make those groups visible - you don’t out someone - but you make sure that they know we as a profession that sees them
Debrief from the Forum

7. ADA Compliance & Inclusivity & invisible disabilities ---- proactive in making spaces inclusive to EVERYONE. People afraid of searching for information on health (invisible chronic illness, etc)
8. COLLABORATIONS
9. MONEY and budgetary issues
10. ADA improvements seem impossible sometimes (there are many grants that will help with this tho)
11. ADVOCACY FOR OTHERS and for OURSELVES --- SELF ACTIONATE --- advocating for ourselves can be exhausting when you feel like you are alone - need to realize we are in this together - again with collaboration and breaking down silos
12. ADA compliance can sometimes make it harder for some to use our services - might have to get creative -- this creativity can also be used in other areas as well
Debrief from the Forum

13. Intersectionality between all librarians - we are all facing the same issues and we need to fight for the right to librarian

14. MENTORING - peer mentoring and Mentoring with a capital M --- we will be starting a mentoring program that will be free and voluntary and no aligned with any professional association but only with the profession itself --- LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED

15. Importance of authenticity and willingness to push back - don’t be afraid!

16. Fear can be applied across the spectrum - and how it affects what we do, how we do it, how we are perceived, etc. --- lack of fear = strength, but remember diplomacy (but not being push overs)

17. Collaborating within the profession, but must collaborate with other players in the community
Debrief from the Forum

18. Moving beyond the library school syllabus --- need to learn negotiating skills, but the idea of negotiation is based on perceived value - we need to remember our intrinsic value as WHOLE persons and all around awesome people that are information professionals
19. How do we do this in a state that hates education and spending $$$$$$
20. Gender pay gap
21. How aware are we as “boots-on-the-ground librarians” as to what is going on behind the curtain (administration, budget)
22. Tow the line between promoting professional development and forcing it
Debrief from the Forum

Didn’t hear... Empowerment: nothing about our support staff - what does that say about ourselves and our community - how do we advocate, empower, include our staff--- not including library staff in these conversations is alarming.

- When we are having conversations about librarianship and librarians must include support staff but do not patronize
- Layoffs - “eliminating overhead”
- Must recognize support staff are vital and again, bring them into the conversation - the idea that it is “WE” and we are all in this together
- Support staff feel left out
- Wall that you’re not fighting your employer - you’re fighting the state
- ADVOCACY
- Visibly letting your staff know that you support them
- What kind of opportunities can we give to support staff to help them grow their portfolio to go on towards a better paying opportunity (if they want)
- How do we help empower our staff?

Some of the discussion that ensued indicates that empowering staff is a problem in some places but not in all; this may be cultural (e.g., academic vs. public), but we need to be clear that “we” includes EVERYBODY for NOLA ILC, not just “MLISers.”

*...but this is not entirely accurate, because staff DID speak and participate.

THANKS FOR COMING AND PARTICIPATING!