

Annual Report

2007/2008

LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee

Committee members

Penny Coppernoll-Blach, (2nd year)

Maria Din, ex officio

Michael Smith, (1st year)

Marlo Young, (1st year)

Craig Haynes, Chair, (2nd year)

Activities

- Highlights

The attached timeline and spreadsheet of activities illustrates in graphic detail, the many activities the committee undertook this year. Two of the highlights from this list of projects, includes the creation of a mentoring website primarily for UCSD student employees and staff, but actually the site is open to anyone interested in a single location of resources pertinent to the career of academic librarianship.

Another highlight would be the creation of the mentor brochure. This item was created to provide to librarians (and others), a tool they could place in the hand of an interested individual and sort-of 'break the ice' on the topic. The brochure was distributed to LMG and to each LAUC-SD member. The committee sponsored the ACRL eLearning Webcast on mentoring, which was well-attended and provided a forum for discussion of some of the issues related to mentoring and mentor programs specifically within academic libraries.

UCSD (the campus) has a formidable mentor program (the only one among the UC campuses, by the way). The committee met with Jorge Rios, (director of this program from its inception), and was very impressed with the work this program has accomplished across many departments throughout the university. The committee met with Jorge to determine if there might be some synergies between what the LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee is trying to accomplish departmentally and with what this well-funded, chancellor-supported program is accomplishing across the campus. There will be more to come on important partnership from next year's committee.

- Funding

The committee made a few budget requests to the LAUC-SD Executive Board in order to pay for the printing of the brochures and to fund the webcast. As a result of these requests, it became apparent

that the committee should probably re-establish a budget line and index for the new fiscal year, not only to support ongoing materials maintenance needs, but to support any programming or new initiatives needing financial support.

- Infrastructure

The committee worked very hard this year to establish a framework from which the mentor program could emanate. The previously mentioned website, the brochure, Google shared documents creation, these tangible products from the work of the committee, should allow the committee to focus more on both in-reach and outreach.

Horizon Issues

- Outreach

The committee's focus this year with regards to the charge, was really to reach librarians, library student employees and staff with the message that librarianship is—or indeed could be for some—a wonderful career possibility. The committee observed that librarians, often do not perceive themselves as mentors or they may be very interested in mentoring, but do not think they have the skills or knowledge to be effective in that role. So, the committee believes that educational opportunities for librarians, is ongoing. The committee had one formal mentor application this year. However, when contacted directly with specific mentee information, 100% of the 6 librarian mentors needed this year readily, enthusiastically responded in the affirmative.

The other aspect of the outreach for the committee is of course, reaching library student employees and library assistants. The personal touch of the mentor matching program along with the practical and useful information provided from the website in one coherent location should go a very long way to providing momentum in this area. While the committee felt compelled to focus first on library employees—academic librarianship, indeed, librarianship, deserves a wider audience. Partnerships with the campus Career Center and UCSD Mentor Program already have an infrastructure in place to support this cross-pollination, if you will, of career development across departmental lines.

- Evaluation

The success of any program is determined not only in quantity, but quality. While the number of matches made this year (6), seems low, it is three more than the previous year and from these six matches, we know of at least one person who is going-on to library school. Nonetheless, as the matching program grows, feedback from both mentors and mentees should be actively and formally sought, to determine effectiveness and whether all the effort is time well-spent.

- Maintenance

The committee was fortunate to have access to a very talented and creative CRS (Sami Gholam, MCL), who created the web presence (look and feel) for the LAUC-SD Mentoring Website. The content was provided by members of the committee with suggestions from LAUC-SD members as well. The downside

to web resources is the old bugaboo of maintenance. Thus the committee will need to explore where this site will live and how ongoing updating and maintenance will be affected. Likewise, with the brochure—tweaks and edits will most likely be needed from time to time. The committee’s shared space on GoogleDocs,[®] is also a maintenance concern for future committees as well.

- Culture of mentoring

The committee had some rather interesting discussions regarding the various challenges related to promoting—among Librarians and indeed among the entire library staff—the sensibility or culture, if you will, of mentoring. Unlike certain other careers with built-in mechanisms and opportunities for mentoring, e.g., physicians, plumbers, skilled crafts persons, librarians (generally speaking), do not normally, enthusiastically, compellingly communicate the true value of what is that librarians do and why it is that someone should choose/consider librarianship as a life’s career. As a result, most individuals discover the career of librarianship on their own. The committee thinks this is unfortunate, but it is a reality and as a result will take constant vigilance and prioritizing among library leaders, particularly if we are going to retain and fill the scores of librarian leadership roles and positions throughout the organization, which are slated to be vacated in the next few years by those retiring from the profession.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Haynes

LAUC-SD Mentoring Committee, Chair 2007/08