

2010 FLA Conference Report

By Liz Gray

Attending the 2010 Florida Library Association annual conference was a valuable and enriching experience. I was fortunate to meet many interesting and inspiring library professionals and students and attend relevant and though provoking sessions. While at the conference, I attended the *Art of Strategic Influence session*, the *Jumping on the Twitter Bandwagon: Fad or Information Revolution? Session*, the University of South Florida Reception, the First General Session, and the *Unmediated Borrowing and Single Bibliographic Record for SUS Libraries Session*. The SIS scholarship enabled me to attend the conference on Wednesday, April 7th and Thursday, April 8th.

I arrived in Orlando at noon on Wednesday and started the conference off by attending the *Art of Strategic Influence Session* which was presented by Elaina Norlin, the Director of the African American Research Library and Cultural Center of the Broward County Library. Ms. Norlin gave an energetic and inspiring presentation about strategies for public speaking and library advocacy. She advised grabbing the attention of your audience by using humor, telling a personal story, posing a thought provoking story, sharing a quote, or presenting a startling fact. She shared examples of her successful use of this strategy in the past to engage audiences. She also suggested that presentations should have a structure that begins with creating interest, shares a problem, offers evidence, presents a solution and finally ends with a call to action. Ms. Norlin referenced the book *Influence Science and Practice* by Robert B. Cialdini and the principles of reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity as factors in successful influence. Finally, Ms. Norlin ended the session by breaking the audience into groups to analyze infomercial products and identify the characteristics of influence in their advertising strategies. I came away from the session with practical strategies for public speaking and advocacy which will be a valuable asset in my professional career.

Next I attended the *Jumping on the Twitter Bandwagon: Fad or Information Revolution? Session*, presented by Susan Ariew, the Academic Services Librarian for Education at the University of South Florida Libraries; Gina Clifford, the Web Administrator at the University of South Florida; Britta Krabill, the Reference Librarian at West Palm Beach Public Library; and Catherine Lavalée-Welch, the Associate Librarian at the University of South Florida Polytechnic Library. The session began with a brief introduction to Twitter and how to use it. The presenters went on to explain how Twitter can be used in both academic and public libraries and gave examples of its use from their own libraries. I came away from the session informed about the free and easy ways that Twitter enables libraries to engage with their users and promote their services.

That evening, I attended the University of South Florida, School of Library and Information Services reception. Refreshments and conversation flowed and I was able to meet and network with many fellow USF SLIS students. Many SLIS faculty were in attendance as well.

The next morning I woke up bright and early to attend the First General Session. The guest speakers were Keith Michael Fiels, the Executive Director of the American Library Association and Helene Blowers, Creator of Learning 2.0: 23 Things. Mr. Fiels and Ms. Blowers discussed the challenges that libraries face and innovative ways librarians can advocate for their profession. In particular, Ms. Blowers discussed how libraries can use Web 2.0 tools to engage communities.

I then attended the *Unmediated Borrowing and Single Bibliographic Record for SUS Libraries*

Session presented by Caroline Reed, the Interim Director of Public Services of the Jane Bancroft Cook Library at New College of Florida; Jennifer Kuntz, the LMS Field Specialist for Public Services, and Jean Phillips, the Manager for Aleph Services at the Florida Center for Library Automation. The session served as the annual meeting of the State University Libraries Member Group and presented a panel discussion format. Updates on the progress of both the U Borrow and Single Bib projects were given by panel members. I came away from the session with a good understanding of how U Borrow and the Single Bib Project will be changing the State University Library System in the near future.

Finally, I met with the Museum and Cultural Heritage Institutions Member Group. I was appointed as the Chair and fellow USF/SLIS student Jessica Davis was appointed Co-Chair of the group in the coming year by the current Chair, Linda McKee. We discussed possible projects and set the goals of recruiting more members, establishing a dedicated listserv, setting up a blog, and creating various social media profiles.

Attending the FLA annual conference has been a great benefit to my career. It gave me the opportunity to meet and network with other Florida library professionals and could help me in the job search I will soon be conducting as I approach my graduation date. Attending the sessions I did will help me to enter the profession with up to date knowledge. Overall, the 2010 Florida Library Association Conference has provided me with an invaluable education about the hot topics and issues in my new profession and I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the Suncoast Information Specialists for their generosity.