Hand on the Net: Helping Land Job Candidates for Liaison Departments

John Glover
Virginia Commonwealth University, jglover2@vcu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_pubs

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Downloaded from https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/libraries_pubs/71

This Book Chapter is brought to you for free and open access by the VCU Libraries at VCU Scholars Compass. It has been accepted for inclusion in VCU Libraries Faculty and Staff Publications by an authorized administrator of VCU Scholars Compass. For more information, please contact libcompass@vcu.edu.
Liaison Engagement Success

Supplement:

Stories of Liaison Engagement Success

A Practical Guide for Librarians

ELLEN HAMPTON FILGO
AND SHA TOWERS
List of Contributors

- Teaching Evidence Based Practice in Physical Therapy – by Karen S. Alcorn, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University
- Chemistry Lotería – by Aida Almanza, Texas A&M University San Antonio
- STEM Librarians in the Triple Helix Mix – by Innocent Awasom, Texas Tech University
- Creating Artists’ Statements – by Andi Back, University of Kansas
- Classical Virtual Reality – by Caitlin Bagley, Gonzaga University
- Collaborating Across Campus to Support Interdisciplinary Field Experiences – by Jennifer Beach, Longwood University
- Providing Library Outreach to Artists – by Nimisha Bhat, Smith College
- Collaborating with the Office of Graduate Studies for a Graduate Research Showcase – by Roxanne Bogucka and Meryl Brodsky, University of Texas
- Becoming the Bloomberg Expert – by Afra Bolefski, University of Manitoba
- A Practical Story about Public Poetry – by Patricia Brown, Northwestern State University
- A Librarian Makes a Zine – by Jill Chisnell, Carnegie Mellon University
- Liaising Where They Live: Hosting Library Office Hours at the First-Generation Student Dorm – by Kristina Clement, University of Wyoming
- Transcending “Us” and “Them” – by Ameet Doshi, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Liaison Engagement through Art and Museum Visits – by Jenna Dufour, University of California, Irvine
- Partnering with Peer Mentors to Engage First Year Composition Students – by Erin Durham, Zoe Hwang, and Elaine MacDougall, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- Creating a Doctoral Support Center – by Amy Dye-Reeves, Texas Tech University
- Milestone Anniversaries Celebrating Authors – by Jeanne Ewert, University of Florida
- Connecting Research to the Community – by Kian Flynn, University of Washington
- Hand on the Net: Helping Land Job Candidates for Liaison Departments – by John Glover, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Liaisons Connecting to Community Telehealth Practitioners – by Terry Henner, University of Nevada, Reno
- Embedded in the Life of a Medical School – by Marisol Hernandez, CUNY School of Medicine
- Exhibiting Student Artwork in the Fine Arts Library – by Courtney Hunt, The Ohio State University
- Campus Collaborations Outside of Traditional Liaison Roles – by Chad Hutchens, University of Wyoming
- Special Collections Instruction Exchange – by Amy James, Baylor University
- Connecting Special Collections to the Digital Humanities – by Autumn Johnson, Georgia Southern University
- Health Data Stories Using Infographics – by Jesse Klein, Florida State University
- The Art Library Coloring Book – by Megan Lotts, Rutgers University
- Creating a Library Staff Liaison Program to Non-Academic Departments – by Derek Malone, University of North Alabama
- Fellowships for Special Collections Engagement – by Joyce Martin, Arizona State University
- Partnering with Knowledge Enterprise Research Support Staff – by Rachel Martinez and Matthew Harp, Arizona State University
- Building Together: A Dedicated Space for Student Art Exhibits – by Courtenay McLeland & Tom Caswell, University of North Florida
- World War I Events and Exhibits – by Robert S. Means, Brigham Young University
- Collaborations between Research and Instruction Librarians and Instructional Technologists – by Sarah Moazeni, Wellesley College
- Developing Data Skills in Political Science Using ArcGIS – by Susan E. Montgomery, Rollins College
- Global Engagement: Liaison Librarianship on Campus and Beyond – by Abby Moore, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- Inhabiting a Professional World – by Sarah Nicholas, Cardiff University
- Latin American Indigenous Languages Collections – by Kathia Salomé Ibáñez Oliva, University of Colorado Boulder
- The Mobile Maker Cart: A Rolling Makerspace Concept – by Zachary W. Painter, Joseph Makokha and Michael Nack, Stanford University
- Advocating for Books in Print – by Alexis Pavenick, California State University, Long Beach
• Gathering Around the Table: Promoting community and relationship building in STEM Disciplines – by Stephanie Pierce, University of Arkansas

• Partnering with Publishers for STEM Database Awareness – by Kimberly Reycraft, Florida Gulf Coast University

• Fragments from the Library of Babel: A Student Mural Collaboration – by Jenna Rinalducci, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

• Predatory Journal Continuing Education Credit – by Michael Saar, Lamar University

• Special Collections Library Liaison Engagement: The Power of “Yes and” – by Greg Schmidt, Auburn University

• Engaging Education Students in Tutoring and Service-Learning – by Michelle Shea, Texas A&M University – Central Texas

• Teaming up with Career Services to Serve the Local Community – by Sandra Shoufani, Sheridan College

• Creative Collaboration: Research as Creative Act in the Art Studio Classroom – by Bria Sinnott, Towson University

• Dramaturgy in Action: Research out to the Stage – by Scott Stone, University of California, Irvine

• Makerspace partnerships – by Andrew Telep, Baylor University

• The Liaison Librarian as Artist – by Sha Towers, Baylor University

• Opening Doors for Engagement with Students – by Garrett Trott, Corban University

• Pivoting Your Strategy when Pandemics or Other Unexpected Twists Come Your Way – by Erin Ware, Louisiana State University Health, New Orleans

• Extracurricular Engagement as an Alternative to Traditional Instruction – by Jennifer L.A. Whelan, College of the Holy Cross

• Outreach Events as Liaison Work – by Laura Wimberley, California State University Northridge

• Embedded in Game Design – by Shelley Woods, Sheridan College
information on the “public website.” As with Group A, the other groups received training on LibGuides through group sessions and one-on-one consultations. By the end of the semester, the undergraduate cohort was able to successfully develop a permanent digital exhibition using twenty-five of the library's rarest books as well as an accompanying project website.

Working directly with the liaison faculty, I was able to facilitate an experiential learning opportunity for undergraduates that provided unique hands-on experience with rare Special Collections materials, a commercial institutional repository and publishing software, and a content management system. It has strengthened the overall partnership between the library and the Digital Humanities program whereby librarians are regarded as effective curriculum design and delivery partners. The library will continue to work with Digital Humanities faculty in the coming semesters as there are plans to accommodate full digitization, ArcGIS Story mapping, and usability studies.

Overall, this project highlighted how liaisons can work with their faculty to create experiential learning opportunities that use library work as an opportunity for hands-on learning.

Hand on the Net: Helping Land Job Candidates for Liaison Departments – by John Glover, Virginia Commonwealth University

HOW MUCH TIME does an academic library liaison have to spare for someone who isn't part of their area of responsibility? At some institutions, you're there for everyone, and the “liaison piece” of your work is small. At others, the entirety of your efforts revolves around a fixed group of students, staff, and faculty, and other patrons are to be referred to other liaisons or general library service points. In either environment, or anywhere in between, it is less common for liaisons to devote valuable time to people who may potentially become members of your academic community. That said, planning for visit to the library by job candidates in my liaison departments, participating on the interview day, and following up subsequently has been fruitful for my work as a humanities liaison at VCU Libraries.

Over the years, contacts in a number of my liaison departments have reached out to inquire about “showing a candidate the library.” Sometimes this has meant arranging a substantial tour of the building itself, other times gathering a group of staff who will be relevant to the successful candidate’s work, and still others, shepherding a candidate through a series of brief one-on-one meetings in units around the library. As a rule, departments have sought to arrange equivalent tours for all candidates for a position, to ensure equal opportunity for each person. At
tour’s end, the candidate has gotten some exposure to the people, services, collections, and other resources germane to the position.

Meeting with liaison department job candidates, whatever the encounter’s format, provides multiple points of engagement with liaison departments. The process of arranging candidate interviews typically involves a series of emails with a member of the search committee, and occasional in-person meetings to plan the itinerary and focal points. Such interactions inevitably lead to chatting about what’s going on at the library, as well as in the department. Frequently they lead to library instruction, research support, or other forms of liaison interactions.

In addition to the outreach involved in setting up job interviews, in-reach is frequently required in order to arrange meetings with others in the library. Almost universally, these meetings have been, in my case, with colleagues I already know. Even so, the interactions have very often followed the same pattern as those with the liaison departments: we incidentally pass information back and forth that otherwise might have waited until standing meetings or our next serendipitous interaction. This contact also helps, as with any form of repetition, to increase recall and familiarity. For me, it has helped me to think more systematically about the services the library provides to my departments and to identify more potential collaborations with my library colleagues.

Last but not least, the interview itself offers an opportunity to engage with candidate faculty members. On the surface, this allows me to learn about their interests and what drew them to the institution. Beyond that, the job candidate may share perspectives on the institution and department that may later prove valuable. As with visits with colleagues at conferences, they also can tell you new, useful things about how other institutions work, as well as their perspective on libraries generally. The candidate also offers space for you to share the story of your library and institution. What do you like most about it? What drew you as a librarian job candidate? These things may help “land” the candidate, and I have often heard subsequently from my departments that the library visit was a highlight of the interview. Regardless of any specific candidate’s success or failure, supporting job candidate interviews provides opportunities to share information—a core duty for any liaison.

Classical Virtual Reality – by Caitlin Bagley, Gonzaga University

As a Liaison to a Small Department, it can sometimes be easier to make inroads with faculty and students. I am the liaison to the Classics department at a medium sized liberal arts college in the Northwest. With an average of about 10 majors per year, the majority of Classics students are filling electives or extremely loyal to their program. When I was first assigned to the