

Congratulations . . .

Laura Veatch
*Paraprofessional Grant
Recipient*

John “Mack” Freeman
*Charles Beard Scholarship
Recipient*

Asele Mack
*Hubbard Scholarship
Recipient*

Crystal Vicente
Selected as a Content Management Intern for GobiernoUSA.gov

Welcome . .

Douglas R. Carlson
Dorothy Watkins Ellis
Newsletter Production Editors

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GLA Scholarship Award Winners



There were dozens of students and graduates from the Valdosta State MLIS Program in the spotlight at the GaCOMO conference.

Laura Veatch (left on photo), a 2013 VSU MLIS graduate, received the Georgia Library Association (GLA) Paraprofessional Award. Two current MLIS students also were awarded GLA scholarships. **John “Mack” Freeman** received the Charles Beard Scholarship and **Asele Mack** received the Hubbard Scholarship (center of photo).

Diana Very, the VP/President of the Georgia Library Association presided over the Awards ceremony. Diana is a 2010 graduate of the VSU MLIS Program.

In addition, fully 20 presentations featured MLIS graduates or students. (See the GaCOMO MLIS Hit Parade of Presenters on pp. 4-5).

Meet the ALA External Review Panel, Sunday November 10th at 5 pm

The members of the ALA's Committee on Accreditation External Review Panel will be available to talk with stakeholders (including students, alumni, employers, fieldwork supervisors, part-time faculty, and all other supporters) of the VSU MLIS Program. On Sunday, November 10, from 5-7 pm.

For those of you who would like **to attend this session in person**, come to the Odum Library, Room 1604. For those of you who want to **join the session remotely** you can enter a Live Classroom (Wimba) set up for the Nov 10 meeting either through the MLIS Village or by logging on directly to the classroom using this link: http://valdostalc.wimba.com/launcher.cgi?room=BLTI_wc_5277df98c44807_75856951.

If you want to bypass, MLIS Village and log in directly through the Wimba link (above):

1. Paste the link into your Internet browser (Google Chrome seems to work best with Wimba Live Classroom)
2. Type your name into the single box under "Participant Login"

This connects you directly to the classroom Welcome Screen. You will need a headset or speakers to hear us. You will need a microphone to speak or you can use the chat box. We are not sure of the points the External Review Panel will cover or whether they will invite conversation. Feel free to join us.

SOLIS Leaders Reflect on Their First GaCOMO Conference

I attended GA COMO this year as my first library conference. It was a great learning experience and a wonderful opportunity to connect with the library community in Georgia, VSU professors, and fellow MLIS students. I knew I wanted to go to my first conference this year, but I wasn't sure which one to choose. ALA is expensive and felt overwhelming for my first conference, but other options seemed too narrow. GA COMO was a perfect choice; it was large enough to have a lot of options, but small enough that I got to network with many attendees and make important contacts.



Courtney Baron
SOLIS Advisory Board
Member

I got to meet current VSU students and alumni, including some familiar names in person, which is invaluable in a distance program. Since the MLIS program at VSU is relatively new and we currently have conditional ALA accreditation, and I know it's a cause for concern among students, I was grateful to meet so many VSU alumni who have found professional positions and success in the field. I also really enjoyed the opportunity to learn about the exciting things happening at VSU's Odum Library. I attended several presentations by VSU librarians, but I didn't do that intentionally – they just happened to be hosting many of the sessions I found most interesting! I attended the RDA pre-conference session with catalog librarian Guy Frost, "Making Makerspaces Work in the Academic Library" with VSU alumnus and reference librarian Michael Holt, and "Libraries as Art Galleries" with Archives Director Deborah Davis. I left the RDA preconference session with a cataloging toolkit, which I know will come in handy in my cataloging electives. I'm interested in makerspaces, which are a major trend in academia, and Michael Holt had a wonderful presentation on easy and affordable ways to create a makerspace in an academic library. My real passion is art librarianship, so I was excited to learn that Deborah Davis has managed to turn Odum Library into an impressive art gallery that has gotten the attention of major artists like Amalia Amaki. I left CO-MO feeling proud to be a VSU student.

I can't stress enough how important it is to start attending conferences. I met many professional librarians, including several VSU graduates, who shared their job search experiences with me and had excellent advice. I also heard about upcoming job openings as well as volunteer opportunities, and I got a sense of the culture and environment at various libraries. I highly recommend GaCOMO!

If you want to learn more about my experience at GaCOMO, check out my 5 Tips for Attending your First Conference on INALJ at : http://inalj.com/?p=44118&utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=5-tips-for-attending-your-first-conference

(more Reflections on p. 3)

SOLIS Leaders Reflect (cont'd)

Emily Williams SOLIS VP

I spent one day at GA COMO this year and the experience, for me, was more about reconnecting with the people in and with the Valdosta program than with the COMO sessions. As you all know, the online nature of our program makes it challenging to establish connections and cultivate relationships with our classmates and professors. So it was valuable for me to spend a little time with our professors and fellow students who I haven't seen since orientation. I had the privilege to meet alumni as well as hopeful students. I was able to catch up with librarians I know who work at libraries across Atlanta but rarely see. The experience was re-energizing. I was thrilled to have a reminder of why I'm doing this! If you have an opportunity to attend a local conference, take the time to do so. It's likely to be an investment in knowledge and relationships. Remember, your fellow students will most likely be your colleagues in the next 2-5 years. If conferences aren't an option, try to attend the Atlanta Emerging Librarians events or create meet-ups for fellow students in your area. It will truly enrich your MLIS experience.

Douglas Carlson SOLIS International Rep

Every session at the GA COMO that I attended highlighted the increasing need for technical knowledge among LIS professionals. It was stressed that no matter what track you desire in LIS, find ways to integrate and use technology. This cannot be overemphasized. One presentation focused on experience, any kind, which helps greatly when you start seeking a job. The SOLIS sponsored breakfast had a great turnout. It was exciting to see so many people interested in the VSU MLIS program. At the MLIS stakeholder meeting, several members discussed the impending accreditation for VSU, and included the audience in the conversation. I am proud to say that Valdosta State was well represented at the conference.

SOLIS T-Shirt Campaign!



Support the Student Organization of Library and Information Science (SOLIS) by ordering your own T-shirt with the VSU and MLIS insignias!

The 2013-2014 year marks the 12th anniversary of the MLIS program, and the T-shirt shows our founding date of 2001 as an open entry.

Proceeds from the T-shirt sales helped to fund the student-alumni networking breakfast at GaCOMO. There were 40 attendees with lots of productive conversations and many new professional friendships forged.

We're on Facebook



Use our QR for quick access . . .



ALA Student-to-Staff Profile

Justin Nobles



Every summer the American Library Association (ALA) offers roughly 30 MLIS students the opportunity to attend Annual Conference under a program called Student-to-Staff. In exchange for working for ALA for 16 hours during the course of the four day conference, ALA pays for the registration fee, provides room and board for five nights, and gives each student with a per diem food stipend.

Every student chapter across the country is given the chance to nominate one of their students to attend, and this past June I was blessed by the student chapter of Valdosta State University to represent the school at Annual Conference, which was held in Chicago. I'd like to give my thanks to the chapter and its advisors for this opportunity, and I encourage every eligible VSU MLIS student to consider applying for next year's Student-to-Staff Program at Annual Conference in Las Vegas.

The ALA office I was assigned to work for was the Public Information Office (P.I.O.), and my responsibilities included, among other things, to register press attending the conference. It was in the performance of this job that I had the opportunity to meet celebrities of the library world like Nancy Pearl and Rebecca T. Miller, both of whom were gracious enough to let me take a picture with them. Other "celebrities" that attended the conference included Oliver Stone, Temple Grandin and Octavia Spencer. I would say that these are more reasons to attend.

Networking. I think this is an incredibly important aspect of the conference, particularly for new librarians and MLIS students. I was overwhelmed by the size and scope of the conference - a conference so large that Chicago-Midway Airport had a banner greeting all of the ALA Conference attendees. With a conference so large it's easy to get taken aback by the amount of people and lose sight of the opportunity to network and learn from others in the profession. The various groups and committees of ALA coordinate several after hour networking opportunities, and I felt that these events provided a much more relaxed atmosphere to network and get to know others. I met several recent MLIS grads who were excited because they just got hired in their first professional librarian positions. Hearing their experiences in the job hunt first hand was a great opportunity to learn "how the game works", if you will. The most consistent advice from these people was to network. And what better place to meet library professionals than at the national conference for librarians.

Learn from Others. If you talk with others, you will learn so much. Breaks between sessions and the shuttle rides back to the hotels provide ample opportunities to chat with other librarians. On the shuttle ride to the conference center one morning I met a university librarian from Texas who had just attended a pre-conference session on Makerspaces. I've toyed around with the idea of introducing makerspaces in my library, but have opted to stay away from them fearing the expense of a 3-D printer, which many cool makerspaces tend to have. I expressed this with him, and he mentioned that the models they showed in the preconference were inexpensive. I attended a session on a successful

(cont'd on page 5)

GaCOMO MLIS Hit Parade Presenters

(MLIS students/alumni in bold)

Chris Baker, Jessica Logan, and Steve Thomas presented the session "Bringing it Home: Using Online Tools and Social Media to Connect Staff to Professional Conferences."

Lynn Futch presented the session "In a Galazy Far Far Away...Lives Your Distance Educatoin Students."

Michael Holt presented the session "Making Makerspaces Work in the Academic Library."

Virginia Feher, Julie Higbee, Kyle McCarrell, Amanda Nash, Peter Shipman presented the session "... And the Two Shall Be Made One: Consolidation and Academic Libraries in Georgia."

Cynthia Horne and Bonnie Morris presented the session "Planning and Implementing a Successful Traveling Exhibition—Cooperative Exhibition Projects."

Bethany Havas presented the session "Web Analytics for All Y'all."

Amy Burger presented the session "Give Your Website a User Experience Makeover."

Ariel Turner, Benji Barton, Lindsay Cronk, and Melissa Perez presented the session "Practical Outreach" Best Practices for Engaging Your Community."

Chris Sharpe presented the session "From the PINES Grew a Mighty Forest: The Evolution and Growth of the Evergreen Open Source ILS."

Eli Arnold, Rita Spisak, Sandra Barclay, Linda Golian-Lui, Jon Hansen, Michael Luther, Cheryl Stile, and Jennifer Stuccliffe Young presented the session "Paying It Forward... And Backward."

Eleanor Kinlaw-Ross presented the session "Library Marketing and Strategic Partnerships: A Blueprint for Success."

Denise Dimsdale presented the session "Course Conten in D2L: Open and Closed."

(cont'd on page 5)

GaCOMO MLIS Hit Parade Presenters

(continued from page 2)

Michael Law presented the session “Paraprofessional Division Presentation and Business Meeting.”

Kathleen Holcomb presented the session “Finding Your Way through ILL for Those with Little Experience or Mentoring.”

Brandy Horne presented the session “Long Distance Library Support: Making the Relationship Work.”

Brandy Horne and Jennifer Harris presented the session “Crunching Numbers, Eating Glass: Making Library Assessment More Palatable.”

Dr. Lynn Futch, Guy Leach, Chris Palazzolo, Olga Russov, and Amy Bursi presented the session “A Learning Curve: Lessons Learned Driving Along the PDA Path.”

Virginia Feher, Kim Boyd, Chris Sharpe, and Autumn Johnson presented the session “Finding a Professional Librarian Position in a Competitive Job Market.”

Jennifer Duke, and Gordon Baker presented the session “Library Book Sales.”

SOLIS

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ALA Student-to-Staff Profile (cont'd)

“Junior Friends of the Library” program out of New York City. They’ve had incredible success drawing in teens through this program. Because of the information taken from this session, my library is looking to implement a similar program, and it likely would not have happened had I not attended ALA. These are just a few of the many stories that make me tell you that ALA Annual offers an incredible opportunity to learn from others in the field and to hear their experiences and, sometimes, their pitfalls. From these people was to network. And what better place to meet library professionals than at the national conference for librarians.

Learn from Others. If you talk with others, you will learn so much. Breaks between sessions and the shuttle rides back to the hotels provide ample opportunities to chat with other librarians. On the shuttle ride to the conference center one morning I met a university librarian from Texas who had just attended a pre-conference session on Makerspaces. I’ve toyed around with the idea of introducing makerspaces in my library, but have opted to stay away from them fearing the expense of a 3-D printer, which many cool makerspaces tend to have. I expressed this with him, and he mentioned that the models they showed in the preconference were inexpensive. I attended a session on a successful “Junior Friends of the Library” program out of New York City. They’ve had incredible success drawing in teens through this program. Because of the information taken from this session, my library is looking to implement a similar program, and it likely would not have happened had I not attended ALA. These are just a few of the many stories that make me tell you that ALA Annual offers an incredible opportunity to learn from others in the field and to hear their experiences and, sometimes, their pitfalls.

Experiences. ALA Annual offers so much “extra” stuff to do while you attend. One example is the exhibit hall. I mailed back four boxes of free items from the countless booths. Another example is each year at the conference the Games and Gaming Round hosts *ALApLAY*, a game night where gamer librarians share their love and enjoyment of games. I will never forget the pure fun of playing games with so many people; people I had never met before and, aside from seeing them at conferences like ALA Annual, will probably never see again. But for that night, we were all great friends. I will also never forget getting lost roaming around Chicago but being able to find where I was going by following other librarians back to the conference center because that’s how big the conference is. I will also never forget spending an evening with the rest of the 30 or so Student-to-Staffers. We were all in the same point in our careers -about to graduate and more than likely looking for professional work in the field. It was great being able to commiserate with others in the same boat. Finally, if you’re still a little hesitant about applying for next year’s Student-to-Staff Program. Let me do the math for you: ALA Student Member registration fee (\$130; non-student members pay \$245), hotel expense (estimated \$250), food (\$200 per diem), and transportation costs (up to \$400 reimbursed by the VSU MLIS Foundation). That’s almost \$1,000. And all you have to do is apply. If you’re accepted, I have no doubt that you won’t be disappointed.

SOLIS website: <http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/solis/index.shtml>

GaCOMO Photo Ops



Networking



Town Hall Meeting



Grad Presenters

