

NLLN Continuing Education Scholarship Reports for 2008/2009

Heidi Kittleson
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Last month I was able to travel to Seattle with three of the Concordia College librarians for the ACRL National Conference. The three day conference was a wonderful opportunity for me to get an inside scoop at librarianship. I am thankful for the Northern Lights Library Network's financial support.

Along with attending several sessions presented by librarians from all over the nation, I had the opportunity to talk with the admissions counselor for the University of Washington Information School. After graduating, I have plans to go to graduate school to get my master's degree in library and information science. My first choice school is at the University of Washington, so I was grateful for the opportunity to meet some people from the school – and to visit Seattle.

The opening keynote speaker, columnist and ethicist, Rushworth Kidder, addressed the audience with jokes and a serious note about ethics and librarianship – the importance of private and public information. As this has been relevant in the news lately, it was interesting to hear his perspective.

That evening, we attended a dinner with some people from Serials Solutions who answered questions and explained database and statistic organization. This was over my head, but I learned or was reminded of two important things during that dinner. It is completely acceptable to have a pleasant dinner as well as 'do business' at the same time, and there are more layers to librarianship than I had realized. This made me more excited to begin my graduate studies because I look forward to learning more about the field of librarianship with other people who are interested in it, too.

I attended several sessions or presentations of papers or panels during the conference. And while all of these sessions had something interesting to grasp, I knew I was missing some important information – or experience perhaps – in terms of my understanding. One thing I did realize though is that as I left the conference, I pictured myself coming to the next conference in a couple of years with more understanding and insight to the issues covered. I feel as though I will enter the graduate program with a bit more knowledge than some people because I participated in the conversations of issues academic librarians are facing right now.

Steven Bell from Temple University led one panel that encouraged me. It was called "Mapping Your Path to the Mountaintop." The panelists discussed how their careers have progressed; then other librarians in the room were able to stand and share advice. It is encouraging to find that everyone takes a different route to finding their niche in librarianship because I am just beginning my work in the field.

Overall, this was a great experience and I am grateful for the opportunity to attend. Thank you!

Heidi Kittleson

Concordia College '09
Library Student Supervisor and Employee

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