

NLLN Continuing Education Scholarship Reports for 2008/2009

**Erin Smith
MLA Annual Conference
November 19-21, 2008**

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to attend the 2008 Minnesota Library Association Conference. Attending the conference helped me reconnect with and meet Minnesota library professionals, trustees and vendors. During the conference, I was also able to attend many educational and motivating workshop sessions and listen to empowering keynote speakers. Attending conferences like the MLA Annual Conference is reinvigorating and, as a result, I am ready to return to my library and apply some of the knowledge I gained at the conference.

As I mentioned above, one of the invaluable opportunities provided by conference attendance is the chance to reconnect with and meet other library professionals. During the 2008 MLA Conference, I was able to learn from and share with former colleagues and new friends alike. It is no secret that the library profession is changing; many of the keynote speakers and workshop sessions held at this year's conference stressed this point. This fact makes the ability to connect and share our experiences, successes, challenges, and mistakes with our colleagues more valuable than ever before. During the conference, I attended an informal gathering of "New Career Librarians." During this get-together, I met a number of my peers and we had a great discussion about the future of librarianship.

This year's conference was focused on the changing face of librarianship. Keynote speakers Tim Spalding and Sandra Nelson and some of the workshop sessions I attended discussed the need for librarians to review our missions and organizations, embrace new technologies that can help us meet our revised missions, and "go boldly where no one has gone before." I am taking their advice and have already begun to reevaluate and review what I think the future of libraries and librarians are in our ever-changing world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to attend the 2008 MLA Annual Conference. I feel this conference has helped me grow both professionally and personally and has also helped me to retool and refocus my view of myself as a librarian.

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