Hot News to Cool You Off!

I don’t know where you are this summer, but I would wager it is hot, hot, and hotter than hot! As you consider ways to stay cool, calm, and collected, grab an iced beverage and recharge as you peruse our “hot off the press” news in this next edition of SLIS Renewals, which covers a variety of events from April 2022–July 2022. You’ll find the following sections: SLIS Happenings, capturing general news events in the life of SLIS; Alumni News, sharing the accomplishments of our graduates; Student News, highlighting some achievements of currently enrolled students; Faculty & Staff News, profiling select faculty and staff highlights; Retiree News, offering snapshots from the lives of retired SLIS faculty and staff; and Announcements, listing upcoming events. If you have news that you’d like to have considered for the next edition of the newsletter or general feedback about the newsletter, please contact me at jcnaidoo@ua.edu. I look forward to hearing from you! You can also find additional SLIS news items on our website along with archives of previous editions of the newsletter. A huge shout out of sincere gratitude to Kim Gilbert, SLIS Program Assistant, for the newsletter layout and design. And, now, on to THE NEWS!

SLIS Happenings

SLIS to Welcome New LIS and Book Arts Students on August 13th via Online Orientation

SLIS faculty and staff will onboard a new group of MLIS and MFA students this fall at the SLIS online orientation on Saturday August 13th. In addition, this fall SLIS will be begin our first cohort of online doctoral students, welcoming 6 new LIS concentrator students as part of the joint PhD with the college.
2022 SLIS Honors Day Recognizes Accomplishments of Students & Alumni

The 2022 SLIS Honors Day was held April 8th. SLIS students and outstanding alumni were recognized for their accomplishments. Alumni honorees included Prof. Sybil Bullock, Coordinator of the UA SLIS Internship Program, as the Outstanding Alumna in Library and Information Studies and John Cutrone, Director of the Jaffe Center for Book Arts at Florida Atlantic University Libraries, as the Outstanding Alumnus in Book Arts. New this year was the Outstanding Faculty Award for teaching presented by the Student Advisory Council. Dr. John Burgess was the 2022 recipient of this student-selected award. Congratulations again to all our honorees!

Student recipients of awards at honor’s day were:

- Rina Fernandez
  Bethel Fite Endowed Scholarship
  Cathy Zeller
  Corr Scholarship
- Valeria Dávila Gronros
  Faculty Scholar Award
- Shelby Epps
  Florien Oltman Award
- Irasema Quezada Hammock
  Raymond F. McLain Book Arts Award
- Rebecca “Becky” Teague
  SLIS Student Paper Award
- Juliana Mestre
  SLIS Outstanding Thesis Award

New Dean for Our College Hails from Information Science

In July 2022, the University of Alabama College of Communication and Information Sciences welcomed Dr. Brian Butler as our new dean. Dean Butler served as professor and senior associate dean of the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland prior to joining UA. He is the first dean of our college to come from the LIS discipline. More information about Dean Butler is available on the UA press release.

SLIS Has a New Strategic Plan

Over the past academic year, SLIS faculty and staff have participated in the strategic planning process to outline a new set of strategic priorities for SLIS for the next five years. The strategic plan is the result of seven-month collaborative discussions across all SLIS faculty members informed by a SWOT analysis with input from our various stakeholders: current MFA and MLIS students, SLIS alumni, and SLIS National Advisory Board members. Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) are embedded within all the work we do at SLIS and form the guiding principles for the strategic plan which can be found on the SLIS website.
Alumni News

Dr. Danilo M. Baylen (SLIS Class of 2013) has been selected as a 2022-2023 Fulbright U.S. Scholar. Currently, he is a tenured professor of Instructional Technology, Media, and Design at the University of West Georgia.

Catherine Oseas Champion (SLIS Class of 2011), was named the 2022 recipient of the American Library Association Rainbow Round Table's Newlen-Symons Award for Excellence, recognizing her exceptional contribution to preserving the history of Alabama's LGBTQIA+ communities.

Sara Clinehens (SLIS Class of May 2022) has accepted a position as the Library Information Technology Specialist at Carl J. Lamb School in Springvale, Maine for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Makiba J. Foster (SLIS Class of 2007) has been named Librarian of the College at the College of Wooster, beginning July 15, 2022.

On May 1st, Deborah Fout (SLIS Class of 1996) retired from the Homewood Public Library where she served as Director from 2009-2022. During her 37 years, she oversaw several major library expansion projects, raised over half a million dollars in grant funding, and worked countless hours to promote the library within the community. In 1997, she received the first ever City of Homewood Employee of the Year, and, in 2017, Alabama Library Association awarded her the Eminent Librarian Award. To honor her service, she received three proclamations at her April 28 retirement party; one from the City of Homewood, presented by Mayor Patrick McClusky; one from the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS); presented by Dr. Nancy Pack; and the final one from the Library Board of Trustees naming the newly built computer lab in her honor.

As of July 1, 2022, Kate Gregory (SLIS Class of 2018) is the new director of the Mississippi Political Collections (the unit within the Mississippi State University Libraries' Archives & Special Collections that contains modern political archives), and David Nolen (SLIS Class of 2007) is the new Associate Dean for Archives & Special Collections.

Matthew Layne (SLIS Class of 2010) was elected in April 2022 as a YALSA Director-at-Large.

Benji Martin (SLIS Class of 2010) was elected in April 2022 to be a member of the 2024 Newbery Awards Committee.

Elizabeth Meads (SLIS Class of May 2022) has had her article “What Do You Meme? Preserving Memes, GIFs, and Emojis as Archival Folklore Objects” accepted for publication in Provenance, the official journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists.

Jennifer Gladden Pearson (SLIS Class of 2003) was named the executive director of the Tuscaloosa Public Library in July 2022.

Jennifer Rosenow (SLIS Class of 2021) will begin a new position as the Library Media Specialist at Zora Ellis Jr. High School in Talladega, Alabama for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year.

Faith Walker (SLIS Class of May 2022) was hired in July 2022 as a librarian in the adult services department of the Baxter Patrick Branch of the Charleston County Public Library located on James Island just off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina.

Judith Wright (SLIS Class of 2011) has been awarded the Alabama Library Association's 2022 Outstanding Youth Services Award.

Student News

Katherine “Kat” Baxter (MLIS Class of 2016 and current School Library Media Education Specialist student at SLIS) has been selected for the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms, a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. In June 2022, Kat was also chosen to participate in the PBS Digital Innovator All-Star Program, which is a two-year program where national educators “share strategies, learn from peers and leverage PBS platforms to elevate their own ideas and voice.” Read more about Kat’s honors here.

In April 2022, the following SLIS students who are part of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) UA chapter Podcast Team: Valeria Dávila Gronros, Nick Wantsala, Laura Daly, Kandi Massey, Aria Skyler, Bryan Bednarek, Curtis Forte, and Matthew Hamilton received the University of Alabama’s Council on Community-Based Partnerships 2022 Outstanding Student-Initiated Engagement Effort for their Archives & Communities Podcast. Thank you to Dr. Bob Riter for serving as their faculty advisor for this project!
Student News (cont.)
Current MLIS student Anita Delp (who will graduate in August 2022) has been working on a Connected Librarian Study with a research team through The University of Washington and The University of Maryland this year. The study, which is related to her work at the Cecil County Public Library (Maryland), will run through 2023 and focuses on using Connected Learning in library services for teens in rural areas. The project she is using for this study is a Teens Give Back program series which offers service learning credits for high school students who participate in community service projects. The success of this program has led to Anita having a proposal accepted for the YALSA Symposium in November 2022 where she will present with UA SLIS alum, Katelyn McLimans (SLIS Class of 2018), as well as another Cecil County teen librarian, on teen leadership and civic engagement.

CIS doctoral student (and concentrator in information science) Kaeli Nieves-Whitmore was selected as the recipient of the 2022 Eugene Garfield dissertation fellowship from Beta Phi Mu. Kaeli received the dissertation fellowship award at the recent American Library Association Annual Conference to support her doctoral research related to “Students’ Experiences of Library Anxiety in Physical Academic Library Space.” In May 2022, Kaeli was also chosen as the 2022 recipient of the Doctoral Student to ALISE Grant.

Jordan Ostrum, a current MLIS student, has received a scholarship to attend the upcoming Appalachia State University's 20th Annual Martin and Doris Summer Symposium, a weeklong symposium on art and photography during and after the Holocaust.

For the spring 2022 semester, Dr. John Burgess successfully offered sections of LS 515 Information Ethics and LS 527 Information Literacy Instruction. He is currently developing a special topics course on Sustainable Librarianship, with a target of summer 2023 for its initial offering, if approved. Over the summer, Burgess helped plan special interest group sessions on Information Ethics and Information Policy for the ALISE conference. At that same conference in October, Burgess will present the paper “Opposing Epistemicide as First Principle: Redeeming Social Epistemology in LIS Education” which he composed alongside SLIS graduate research assistant Gina Fowler. He has also submitted a panel proposal, sponsored by Sage Publishing, on Academic Freedom for the Charleston Conference in September. As the summer winds down, he is looking forward to the ALLA convention and to meeting the incoming class of students at SLIS orientation.

Professor Sarah Bryant delivered an in-person artist lecture at the London Centre for Book Arts in late June titled “Big Jump Press: Gathering, Culling, Reconstituting.” She spoke about the design and production of her book projects, and her tactics for mining material from existing sources to create new work. In early June, Bryant’s recent artist book Fairmont Color Card was selected for an exhibition award by Esther Adler, Curator of prints at MoMA. (Bryant in London pictured to the left).
Faculty News (cont.)

Professor Kyle Holland (pictured above with group) is a co-principal investigator on a $367,000 external grant from the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative which is funded by the U.S Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The research team’s multi-dimensional program, “Gandhi-King: Civil Rights from Then to Now,” will engage participants from India and US in lively debate, lessons of history, exchanges of lived experiences, and experiential learning opportunities and art activities. The goal of their grant is to advance civil rights and social justice while preparing and training 20 students who want to solidify their voice, find meaning in their work, and make a difference in the lives of others.

Dr. Jamie Campbell Naidoo published the invited chapter “The Enduring Value of the Newbery Award” as part of the 100th anniversary celebration of the literary award in the edited book The Newbery Practitioner’s Guide: Making the Most of the Award in Your Work (American Library Association/Association for Library Service to Children, 2022). In April 2022, Naidoo along with MLIS student Cecilia Dupepe presented a virtual session entitled “Growing Young Environmentalists: Fostering Sustainability Literacy in Classrooms and Libraries” at the Annual Fay B. Kaigler Children’s Book Festival at University of Southern Mississippi.

Dr. Miriam Sweeney (with co-author Dr. Melissa Villa-Nicholas) has a new article published in the April issue of American Quarterly, “Digitizing the ‘ideal’ Latina Information worker.” This research investigates the design of digitized information service workers designed as Latinas alongside hidden histories of Latina’s information labor. Dr. Sweeney has presented her research at two recent conferences: She represented her research team—PI Dr. Todd Freeborn and Co-PI Dr. Claire Major—at the NSF IUSE Summit in Washington, D.C. where she presented their work-in-progress “Teaching Ethics Using Problem-Based Learning in an Intro Electrical and Computer Engineering Course”. Later in June she presented her solo-authored paper “Refacing Gender in Digital Assistant Technologies” at the annual Console-ing Passions meeting hosted by the University of Central Florida, Orlando. Dr. Sweeney gave the invited keynote for the 20th Annual Illinois Information Literacy Summit in April. The recording and transcript of her keynote lecture, “Facing Your Computers: Algorithmic Literacy as Praxis” is now available on the conference website for viewing. Lastly, Dr. Sweeney was honored to be the recipient of the 2022 C&IS Board of Visitors Award for Teaching Excellence for her commitment to teaching and student engagement.

Dr. Bharat Mehra contributes prolific scholarship on social justice in LIS. Since March 2022, his refereed article, “Toward an Impact-Driven Framework to Operationalize Social Justice and Implement ICT4D in the Field of Information,” was published in the Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology. Mehra delivered an online keynote speech, “Social Justice Laws of Librarianship: New Directions of Impact in Iran”, at the International Conference on Design and Development of Public Library Services (May: Shiraz, Iran). In June, he presented “Critical Ethnography and Social Justice Intersections in LIS: Then & Now” during the 50th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Information Science (online) and served on a panel “Decolonizing LIS Journal Publishing” during the American Library Association Annual Conference & Exhibition (Washington, DC). In July, he presented a refereed paper, “‘Don't Say Gay' in Alabama: A Taxonomic Framework of LGBTQ+ Information Support Services in Public Libraries” (with Jaber) at the 87th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council (Dublin, Ireland). Mehra is teaching CIS 650 (Community-Engaged Scholarship) during the fall. He serves as advisory board member on three IMLS grants and is Series Editor of Advances in Librarianship (Emerald). Details available at this link.

Carla Diane Hayden (14th Librarian of Congress) and Dr. Bharat Mehra at the Exhibits Opening Reception during the 2022 American Library Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.
**Retiree News**

In more somber news, retired SLIS Professor Michael Malinconcio passed away on April 30, 2022. Prof. Malinconcio was the first EBSCO Endowed Chair at the University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies, a position he held from 1989 until his retirement in 2007. He published widely in the area of information technology and taught graduate courses in the areas of management of information systems and organizational change in library and information science. He was the former dean of the School of Computer, Information, and Library Sciences at Pratt Institute (1987-1989), a position he accepted following an administrative career with the New York Public Library, where he was associate director for technical and computer services (1969-1987).

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As a reminder SLIS turns 50 in 2022! We are celebrating our 50th anniversary on Friday, September 30th via an in-person gala here at the Gorgas Library where we will honor our past and look towards the future. Doors open at 6 pm and the event runs from 7 – 8:45 pm. Dinner will be provided. The 2022-2023 President of the American Library Association Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada will keynote the evening, which will be filled with memories, stories, food, and fellowship. All SLIS alumni, retired faculty and staff, students, and current faculty and staff are invited. Please RSVP using this link or QR code below. For those who can’t attend in person, you can enjoy some archival photos on the SLIS website, and a special video will be made available online after September 30th. We look forward to celebrating with everyone and encourage you to please bring a mask with you for the on-campus event.

To help us celebrate the 50th Anniversary, if you have a brief funny story, memory, etc. from your time at SLIS that you’d like to share, please email it to Interim SLIS Director Dr. Jamie Campbell Naidoo at jcnaidoo@ua.edu. Some of these may be selected for use in the anniversary program or used on the SLIS website (with permission).

Are you attending the Alabama Library Association Annual Convention in Montgomery this year? If so, stop by and say hello at our booth in the exhibits; at the SLIS Alumni Social to be held at 5 pm on August 1st in the Exchange restaurant of the Renaissance Hotel; or at the SLIS presentation “Welcome Back to SLIS: Student & Faculty Research and Creative Works” on Tuesday August 2nd at 11 am. We look forward to catching up with you!