# the informed

A publication of the Department of Information Science

## [IN THIS ISSUE]

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iSchools

Dr. Dan Albertson

Dear Friends,

I hope this column finds you safe and well. It is that time of year again where our department publishes its annual newsletter, *The Informed*. Here, the Chair reaches out to you directly to give insight and perspective on both the previous and upcoming years. As I'm sure you already know, the past year was a unique one. It was a year filled with Zoom, missing colleagues, communities in need of support, and the stresses that come with uncertainty. We had friends who lost loved ones, suffered personally, and experienced many other difficulties of the pandemic. We will not forget the challenges you all faced in these times.

Academically-speaking, things in the department went about as well as they could have, considering the global crisis we were facing. Our programs continued to grow, our student satisfaction remained exceptionally high, our accreditation biennial report was submitted and accepted, and we welcomed back events such as the Research Seminar Series and the annual Bobinski Lecture (over Zoom, of course). It was great to welcome back some of our departmental events, even if they were somewhat different this time around.

As information professionals, we also witnessed firsthand how our work and research are at the very center of some of the most pressing problems of our time. Understanding information, data, and technology is as important as ever. Access to truthful information is a fundamental right. And, we all must help prevent harms on our greater society caused by mis- and disinformation. Keep remembering that the work that you do has an impact – and at the global level!

Looking to the upcoming academic year, it is full steam ahead in terms of getting back to pre-COVID (well, as much as possible). The thought of normality on-campus brings excitement and joy. We are planning on-campus gatherings and events, such as welcoming our PhD students to the first ever on-campus residency week. It will be busy, campus will be buzzing, and there will be a lot of catching up to do, but it will all be worth it. I am looking forward to seeing all my wonderful colleagues from across campus again.

There is additional exciting news to report. This year, we are welcoming the department's newest tenure-track faculty member to the department, Dr. Sam Dodson (PhD, University of British Columbia, 2021). I speak for the full department when I say that we are so happy that Dr. Dodson will join us here at UB. I know that all of you will want to get to know him and to learn all about his impactful research. Again, such exciting things are in store for the department in 2021-22.

As always, don't be a stranger.

Sincerely,

Dan Albertson
Chair
Department of Information Science

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The department was able to host two online research seminars this past year. We are looking forward to several in-person research seminars in the upcoming academic year. Watch for the announcements and join us! Presentations in this series are video-recorded and available for viewing at: http://ed.buffalo.edu/information/research/seminar-series.html.



### Ali Shiri, PhD
**School of Library & Information Studies, University of Alberta**
"Inuvialuit Voices: Integrating Digital Storytelling in Digital Libraries for Cultural Heritage Preservation and Access"
Fall 2020



### Denice Adkins, PhD
**School of Information Science & Learning Technologies, University of Missouri**
"School Libraries Supporting Mental Health in Rural Communities: Strengths, Opportunities, and Barriers"
Spring 2021

# BOBINSKI LECTURE

Emily Drabinski (http://www.emilydrabinski.com), Critical Pedagogy Librarian at the Mina Rees Library at the Graduate Center, CUNY, was this year's invited speaker for the Bobinski Lecture, held on April 5, 2021. The talk was necessarily held online and was titled "Critical Librarianship and the Problem of Empire." Drabinski sits on the editorial boards of *College & Research Libraries*, and *Radical Teacher*, a journal of socialist, feminist, and anti-racist teaching practice. Drabinski also edits Gender & Sexuality in Information Studies, a book series from Library Juice Press/Litwin Books. The Bobinski Lecture Series is made possible through generous donations to the George and Mary Bobinski Lecture Fund. The Bobinski Lecture is an annual highlight of the department.



Emily Drabinski

# [ *alumni* NEWS ]

## 1980s

**DAVID BERTUCA (1984)** After 35 years, David retired from the University at Buffalo Libraries. During his time working in the UB Libraries (1984-2019), David worked in cataloging, serials, website administration and finally as the head of the Map Collection and liaison to the Department of Geography. He also taught cataloging for UB's Information Science program. In 2021, David was awarded the MAGIRT Honors Award (Map and Geospatial Round Table of American Library Association) which is presented annually in recognition of outstanding achievement and major contributions to map and geospatial librarianship and to the Round Table.

**GAIL STAINES, PHD (1986)** In Feb. 2021, Gail retired as University Librarian for the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg, MO. She had also served as Assistant Vice Provost for University Libraries at St. Louis University (2006-2012) and spent many years as the Executive Director of the Western New York Library Resources Council (1998-2006). An expert in equine care, in 2021 Gail founded The Senior Horse, a website that provides quality information about horses 19+ years of age, including updates on research about older equines, evidenced-based advice, finding a senior horse, and end-of-life decision making to "help our senior horses enjoy a better quality of life."

## 1990s

**MARY JEAN JAKUBOWSKI (1991)** Mary Jean has retired after 30 years working in libraries, the last 10 of which were as the Library System Director of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

**MELANIE C. KENYON (1996)** After nearly 20 years in instructional technology roles at Buffalo State College, the most recent being Director for Technology Support Services, Melanie became the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Office for Daemen College in Amherst, NY.

**CHRISTOPHER ALLEN (1999)** Christopher has been working as a library media specialist at Wayland-Cohocton Central School for more than 20 years and, after earning an advanced certificate in 2018 to update his academic library skills, is working as a reference librarian at Nazareth College.

**CINDY EHLERS (1999)** After 24 years, Cindy retired from the University at Buffalo Libraries, where she worked as a Reference Librarian. Cindy also taught reference and foundations courses for UB's Information Science program and supervised/mentored many of our program's students in their practicum experiences.

## 2000s

**SANDRA BLACKMAN (2004)** Sandra is a Sr. Librarian with the New York Corrections and Community Supervision. She is currently the manager of the Inmate General Library at the Wende Correctional Facility in Alden, NY.

**LAURA BENJAMIN (2009)** Laura is Access Services Librarian at Syracuse University Libraries.

**JENNIFER CACCAVALE (2009)** Jennifer is now Director of Seymore Library in Penfield, NY.

**EILEEN RUBERTO (2009)** Eileen is now Senior Insights Program Manager at Zapier and is based in Portland, OR. She is a senior user experience (UX) researcher and creates systems that enable internal teams to find, discover, and make use of existing UX research to inform strategic decisions and build customer empathy.

## 2010s

**BECCA BLEY (2010)** Becca began a new position as an analytics engineer for Mastery Logistics Systems in Chicago, IL. She had moved into data analytics as a Competitive Intelligence Specialist at Highmark, Inc. in WNY after many years as an academic and systems librarian at Daemen College in Amherst, NY.

**CHELSEA DEGLOPPER (2010)** After completing a MS in Human Factors in Information Design at Bentley University, Chelsea is now working as a user experience (UX) designer at Veracode in Boston, MA.

**LESLIE FELDBALLE (2010)** Leslie is a cataloging and metadata librarian in Discovery Services and The Poetry Collection at the University at Buffalo. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Buffalo Broadcasters Association.

**JESSICA SMITH (2010)** Jessica is a full-time instructor of English at the University of Cincinnati's Clermont College and was nominated by her students for the "Promoting Student Development Outside of the Classroom Faculty Award." Jessica is also a part time Women's Studies instructor at the University of Alabama and has the following publication in press:

Smith, J. (in press). Democratized art and mechanical reproduction: Zines, screenprints, and letterpress in teen library programming. In N. Clements (ed.) *Art at the Intersection of Librarianship and Social Justice.* Sacramento, Calif. : Litwin Books; Library Juice Press.

**ROBIN SULLIVAN (2010)** Robin is Project Lead for the State University of New York (SUNY) Exploring Emerging Technologies for Lifelong Learning and Success (#EmTechMOOC), which is an online learning opportunity targeted to college students, faculty, current and career-seeking professionals, and anyone from across the globe with a desire to learn how to use emerging technologies to succeed in today's rapidly changing world. Robin and her colleagues also published the following book chapter:
Sullivan, R. R., van Putten, C., Cole, E., Fulcher, K., Kruger, J., Sipley, G., Rigolino, R., & Herman, J. (2021). Empowering faculty to design technology-enriched student learning: A constructivist and connectivist hybrid MOOC. In P. Maki & P. Shea (Eds.), *Transforming Digital Learning and Assessment: A Guide to Available and Emerging Practices, and Building Institutional Consensus.* (pp. 99). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing LLC.

**ANDREA TILLINGHAST (2010)** Andrea is now the director of the Edith B. Ford Memorial Library in Ovid, NY.

**KELLIE BARBATO (2011)** Kellie is now the Director of Lineberger Library at Lenoir-Rhyne University in Columbia, South Carolina. She formerly served as Access Services Librarian at Palm Beach Atlantic University and Outreach Librarian at Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester, NY.

**ELIZABETH (ARCHER) HAIBACH (2011)** Elizabeth is a librarian at Hoag Library in Albion, NY.

**COLLEEN (CRISPINO) HERNANDEZ (2011)** Colleen just celebrated 20 years at Webster (NY) public library, where she began working as an aide in 2001. She is now a Librarian II and serves as Teen & Creative Experiences Services Librarian.

**JILLIAN SUAREZ (2011)** After more than 8 ½ years at the Gugenheim Museum Library and Archives Department, Jillian is now the Head of Library Services at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

**AMANDA KOZIURA (2012)** Amanda is the Digital Scholarship Librarian, at the Freedman Center for Digital Scholarship at Case Western Reserve University. She was recently promoted to Librarian III and with colleagues, published the following:

Comanda, B., Wilkinson, J., Bradham, F., Koziura, A., and Seale, M. (2021, June 9). Service ceiling: The high cost of professional development for academic librarians. *In the Library With the Lead Pipe.* https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2021/service-ceiling

**NICOLE LAMOREAUX (2011)** Nicole is Assistant Director of Research and Instructional Services at The New School (NYC) Libraries and Archives.

**JENNIFER (CHENEY) LASKI (2012)** Jennifer is a reference librarian at National Defense University in Portsmouth, VA.

**AMANDA (KIESL) MURRAY (2012)** In Feb. 2020, Amanda began a new position as a Preservation Specialist with Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY).

**MELISSA POLOVICH (2012)** Melissa is now School Librarian at Saint Mark School in Buffalo, NY.

**KRISTEN SQUIRE (2012)** Kristen is the Knowledge Director for Talkwalker, an international social media analytics company.

**DANIEL TROUT (2012)** Daniel is manager of serials and acquisitions at RIT's Wallace Library and was named a Rochester Regional Library Council 2021 All-Star. He also published the following article since our last update: Carey, M.G., Trout, D.R., and Qualls, B. W. (2019). Hospital-based research internship for nurses: The value of academic librarians as co-faculty. *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development*, 35(6), 344-350.

**JASON BARONE (2013)** Jason was formerly a librarian for the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library system but recently began a new position with the Western New York Resources Council as their Digital Projects Manager.

**ALISSA STEELE (2013)** Alissa is a knowledge manager for Talkwalker, an international social media analytics company. Alissa is also on the Steering Committee for the Sustainable Progress and Equality Collective (SPEC). SPEC is an open learning organization that empowers individuals to be catalysts for positive change.

**SAADIA IQBAL (2013)** Saadia is a Reference and Scholarly Services Librarian at St. John's University School of Law.

**CHRISTOPHER MORGAN (2013)** Christopher is Adult Programming and Outreach Librarian at the Newburgh (NY) Free Library.

**MICHELE UNGER (2013)** Michele is now a school library media specialist in the Lackawanna (NY) City School District.

**TRACY DUNSTAN (2014)** Tracy is now Head of Adult Services at The Nyack Library in Nyack, NY.

**PHILIP (SIBLO-LANDSMAN) MEIRALCOTT (2014)** After 3 years as a research, instruction and digital services librarian at Lesley University in Boston, Philip has just started a position as Head of Academic Delivery at EMERITUS in the Boston, MA area.

**SUSAN POTERA (2014)** Susan is now a youth services librarian at Richmond Public Library in Batavia, NY.

**TIMOTHY RYAN (2014)** Timothy is now the director of the East Rochester (NY) Public Library.

**SARA BROWN (2015)** Sara was promoted to Librarian III at Baltimore County Public Library, where she has worked for more than 5 ½ years.

**PAUL CHASSE (2015)** Paul is Reference Librarian & Social Media Assistant at the Rakow Research Library in the Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY.

**COLLEEN CORGEL (2015)** Colleen is the Assistant Community Library Manager at the Queens Public Library at Broad Channel in Broad Channel, NY.

**ERIN KEENAN (2015)** Erin was promoted to Medical Research Librarian III at VisualDX in Rochester, NY. VisualDx is a web-based clinical decision support system to enhance diagnostic accuracy, aid therapeutic decisions, and improve patient safety.

**XANTIPPE VANARSDALE (2016)** Xantippe recently began a new position as Digital Production Associate for Online Courses at Aquifer and is part of a team that creates and maintains online courses for health professions students.

**ABBAS AMARSHI (2017)** After 3 ½ years as a reference librarian for the Toronto Public Library, Abbas began a new position as Branch Head in March 2021.

**STEPHANIE (SPROUT) BARRETT (2017)** Stephanie has been working as the Interdisciplinary Social Sciences Outreach Librarian at the University of Rochester, NY.

**COURTNEY CAREY (2017)** Courtney has recently begun a new position as Assistant Director of the Boylston Public Library in Boylson, MA.

**MARC COURSEY (2017)** After working as a medical librarian for the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Marc is now an Oncology Data Specialist at Stephenson Cancer Center in Oklahoma City, OK.

**KATE EICHER (2018)** Kate is Lower School Librarian at the Buckley School in New York City.

**ZACH BASLER (2019)** Zach is Teen Services Librarian, Mobile Public Library in Mobile, AL.

# 2020s

**SUSAN BERNIER (2020)** In September 2020, shortly after graduating, Susan left her position as a Library Technical Assistant at the Cromwell Belden Public Library to become the Technical Services Coordinator at the Bristol Public Library system in Connecticut.

**STEVEN SHON (2020)** In August 2020 Steven began a position as the Children's Librarian at the Ogden Farmer's Library in Ogden, NY.

# DEATHS

**JEAN S. DECKER (1971)** Jean served multiple positions in the UB Libraries including Head of Serial Cataloging where she developed cataloging systems and procedures that earned her national recognition. She was a wonderful mentor teacher of the complex intricacies of serials cataloging and authored several publications in the field. Jean received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship in 1996 and retired from the UB Libraries in 2007. She passed away in Dec. 2020 at the age of 95.

**STEPHEN M. ROBERTS (1982)** Steve served in multiple management positions in his 30+ years at the UB Libraries, where he played an integral role in moving the Libraries into the information age. Steve received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service in 1994, when he was Associate Director of the University Libraries. In 2005, he became the Associate Vice President for University Libraries before retiring in 2009. Steve passed away in September 2020.

**LINDA HERMAN (1983)** Linda was a librarian (retired) at Medaille College and spent the last 25 years volunteering as the New York State Coordinator for the Parkinson's Action Network. She passed away in July 2021.

**AMY VILZ (2006)** Amy started her career in 2005 as a UB student assistant working in the University Archives. Since 2013 Amy was the University at Buffalo Archivist. Amy loved pop culture, especially cheesy 80s music. She enjoyed antiquing and was an avid gardener, often sharing plant cuttings with friends and colleagues. She also taught in the archives area for the Department of Information Science. She passed away in March 2021.

# NOTES FROM ALUMNI: THE PANDEMIC

**RONALD RUSS (1993)** Electronic & Public Services Librarian, Arkansas State University-Beebe

I'm a librarian at a community college 30 miles northeast of Little Rock, AR. We were open during the pandemic but moved to remote online services. We're just starting to return to normal services, for the most part. Overall, I think the library fared better than most when it came to pivoting to online services, since we were already equipped to do this, and the only thing that really changed was where we worked. Other departments had to learn to work remotely, and in a short period of time. The hardest thing for us was having our budget cut, and losing a part-time worker position. But, I know it could have been a lot worse.

**ROBIN SULLIVAN (2010)** Teaching and Learning Strategist, University at Buffalo

The pandemic inspired many people from across the world to learn something new. At the start of the pandemic, the SUNY EmTech project (an online learning MOOC targeted to anyone with a desire to learn how to use emerging technologies to succeed in today's rapidly changing world) had about 5,000 enrollments in our first 3 years. In the past year and a half, we gained another 23,000 enrollments that span across 150+ countries.

**AMANDA KOZIURA (2012)** Digital Scholarship Librarian, Case Western Reserve University

In light of the needs the pandemic made clear, we formed an Instruction Task Force that was tasked with revamping our instruction. We have been replacing single-session introductory information literacy guest lectures with modules for the Canvas Learning Management System that instructors can customize and embed directly in their courses. This has the dual purpose of making the information available where and when students need it and frees us up for more in-depth instructional partnerships. We also developed a hub of online learning modules launched in Aug. 2020 that we continue to produce content for. So far things are going well with it and we will be continuing with this strategy for the foreseeable future. We also launched a credit-bearing course called Interrogating Information: Research and Writing for a Digital Public. It's been a lot of work, but I think we've really done some impactful stuff here.

# WORDS OF WISDOM ON THE JOB SEARCH

**RONALD RUSS (1993)** As far as the job market is concerned, it seems to me that more positions are opening up, since there was a freeze on some as well as attrition due to the pandemic. That doesn't mean that the market isn't competitive though, especially in regions that have library schools. It helps to be able to move, if needed. It will give you more flexibility than someone who can only look locally. A trend I have noticed, is that there are librarian positions that require less post-MLS/MS experience than when I graduated.

**KELLIE BARBATO (2011)** For new grads looking for their first librarian job – don't underestimate yourself. Don't be afraid to apply for a position that seems out of reach. You never know who might hire you!

This has been the case for me in all 3 of my faculty librarian roles - I always felt the role was slightly out of reach, but they hired me because they saw the desire and motivation in me to learn and grow in my librarianship career. It's been an adventure so far, to say the least - 1 staff role, 3 librarian roles, 2 management roles, 1 director role, 4 states!

**AMANDA KOZIURA (2012)** I had a difficult job search after graduate school, and I'm sure it's even harder to break into the field now. With persistence it's possible, and jobs are starting to open up now, but whether or not these jobs will pay well enough to support yourself (much less a family) is hard to say. If you have the luxury of time and choice, it's important to discern what your personal values are and see if you can find an institution (library or otherwise) that matches them because then you'll have the best chance of working in an environment that's a good fit. Also, having an awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics and their impact on LIS is critical - it's very likely topics of inclusiveness in particular will come up during the application and/or interview process. I've found Twitter to be a great place to follow important conversations in the field and broaden my awareness of issues (all, but especially DEI). Even if you don't tweet yourself, it can be a great place to learn a lot.

# PUBLICATIONS BY CURRENT STUDENTS

### LISE HAMILTON HALL

Hall, L. H. (2021). Overview of access to justice via public law libraries in New York State. *GLL News*, 47(1), 15-26.

# UPDATE ON PHD IN INFORMATION SCIENCE PROGRAM ←--------------------|

The doctoral program has a busy first full year despite the challenges of the pandemic. Five new students joined the program in 2020-21 bringing our total to nine doctoral students. These engaged students have been active in department and school activities and participated in several online academic conferences, such as the annual meeting of the Association of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), the Canadian Association of Information Science (CAIS), and ISIC: The Information Behavior Conference. In fact, Monica Rogers presented a poster at the ASIS&T conference about her work modeling COVID-19 infection rates. Kerri Shaffer received a $10,000 research grant from the Medical Libraries Association to fund her work on implicit bias in health care using virtual reality. Jon Goodell participated in the CAIS Student Research Forum. Monica Rogers defended her prospectus this spring. She will be studying data visualization literacy, particularly the data visualization competency of information professionals. Congratulations to these students and to all of our other doctoral students for their steady progress!

Despite being in only its second year, the program is already very competitive. Thirty-nine students applied, with many more expressing serious interest. Nine outstanding students started the program in fall 2021. After the pandemic sent last year's Residency Week online, we hosted a hybrid Residency Week this year. The doctoral students and faculty discussed Jan Van Dijk's book *The Digital Divide*. We are looking forward to additional students defending their prospectuses and moving on to their doctoral research in the coming year.

## *a note of* [THANKS]

**We count on the support of our alumni and friends to benefit our students directly, to provide excellent programming, to enhance our infrastructure, and to bolster faculty activities. Our endowments are critical to keeping us ahead of the curve! Please consider supporting us with a one-time gift, a regular donation, or a legacy commitment.**

### DONORS 2020-21

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## event [ GRADUATION BRUNCH ]

**92** GRADUATES JOINED OUR

**4,700+** ALUMNI

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020-21 GRADUATES! BEST WISHES TO YOU ALL!

## 2020-2021 [GRADUATES]

### MS IN INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SCIENCE

Adam, Samuel
Albright, Nicole
Baker, Bridget Ann
Beaujon, Audra Jo
Boomer-Knapp, Zuzu Grace
Bortle, Samantha Louise
Bouklas, Michael Joseph
Bryant, Marilyn Christine
Cernik, Laura Elizabeth
Cole, John David
Conley, Luke
Cunningham, Caroline
Dehais, Celia Jeanette
Evans, Annamarie Elizabeth
Gerstle, David Stephen
Gilligan, Sioban
Gonzales, Katherine
Gordon, Annemarie
Harding, Alison Veronica
Johnson, Cassandra Lynn
Klopp, James R
Koenig, Mary Lauren

Kotula, Vicky
Larry, Caitlin
LeMay III, Raymond William
Makeley, Jonathan T
Momin, Amatul
Moon, Sumyung
Moses, Lindsey
O'Neill, Matthew Connor
Palleschi, Maureen
Poehnelt, Tommy
Rabkina, Nina
Reda, Anthony Joseph
Roberts, Deanna Kathryn
Ross, Sarah Elizabeth
Russo, Chelsie Marie
Schaeffer, Amy Diane
Snyder, Rebecca Ellis
Soliday, Tina Chay
Stewart-Robertson, Owen
Sullivan, Megan
Thompson, Charice M
Tipton, Melissa Ann
Titus, Samuel
Wilkinson, Ambrosia
Ziarnik, Joanna Knecht

### MS IN SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP

Angell, Matthew Roland
Aswad, Jessica Lynn
Baum, Katherine
Bello, Brianne
Bianchi, Dania
Bradt, Cornelius J
Brodie, Angelina Viveralli
Burt, Meredith Ann
Cleveland-Lancto, Laurie
Degenfelder, Kathy Ann
Drake, Marie
Griffin, Molly Amedio
Grimm, Sandra Donnelly
Hardy, Dorinda Sue
Harvey, Kathleen Patricia
Joslyn, Christine
Leahey, Heather Jane
Learnard, Kirsten Marie
Lovejoy, Samuel Ralph
Anderson
Luck, Sharon
Moelbert, Lauren Jenel

Mosher, Kindra M
Murtha, Tammi
Neth, David
Nobles, Kimberly
O'Shei, Mara Rose
Parry, Aimee Leigh
Pecora, Linda Sue
Riccio, Charlin
Russell, Elizabeth Lavine
Russo, Lizette
Schmieder, Megan K
Schropp, Kimberly Anne
Sibilla, Scott
Smith, Elizabeth Ann
Stang, Brittany
Stewart, Amanda Katharine
Steyn, Erik
Tremblay, Joshua
Valletta, Megan Anne
Varney, Jade Elizabeth
Veyvoda, William S
Wesley, Keri
Wolf, Emily Julietta
Zelazny, Joseph John

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## KUDOS TO RECENT GRADUATES

Congratulations to MS in ILS 2021 graduate Charice Thompson who is the inaugural winner of the Drs. Henry J. and Bonita R. Durand Scholarship, awarded by the Graduate School of Education. See the full story at: http://ed.buffalo.edu/magazine/issues/spring-2021/philanthropy.html. *Charice is shown here, with her certificate from the New York Library Association – she also won the NYLA Dewey Scholarship.*



## MS IN ILS GRADUATE ALISON HARDING SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDS THESIS

Although writing a thesis is possible in the MS in Information and Library Science program, students take up that challenge very rarely. In spring 2021, Alison Harding defended her thesis, titled "Everyday Life Information Source Preferences of Urban Adolescents," based on her research with Brooklyn youth. Alison is building on that research, supervised by Dr. Heidi Julien, starting in fall 2021, as she enters a doctoral program in Information Studies at the University of Maryland, where she will be supervised by Dr. Mega Subramaniam. Congratulations, Alison!



## BETA PHI MU

Congratulations to our 2020 Beta Phi Mu Inductees

– Matthew Alexander
– Lisa M. Buda
– Mallory S. Quinn
– Caterina M. Reed
– Erica A. Soper
– Anne C. Windholz

**Dr. Sam Abramovich** presented papers at the GSE Teach-In for Racial Equity, at the Badge Summit, and presented a symposium at the International Conference of the Learning Sciences. He served on the American Psychological Association Division 15 Early Career Research Grants Committee and was guest editor for *Information and Learning Science*.

**Dr. Dan Albertson** served as Co-Chair of the Jean Tague Sutcliffe Doctoral Poster Competition for the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) 2020 Annual Conference.

**Dr. Heidi Julien** presented papers at the Information Seeking in Context (ISIC) conference, the ALISE conference, the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) conference, and the Canadian Association for Information Science (CAIS) conference. She gave an invited keynote to the Information Without Borders Conference at Dalhousie University. She chaired the ALISE Advancement Committee and the ASIS&T Governance Committee, and served on the ALISE Governance Committee, the ASIS&T Awards Committee, and the Western New York Library Resources Council Strategic Planning Committee. She also served as Chair of the ISIC (Information Seeking in Context conference) Standing Committee. She reviewed submissions for multiple conferences, and reviewed multiple submissions for a range of journals, as well as serving on the editorial boards of several journals, including *Journal of the Association for Information Science & Technology*, *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, and *Canadian Journal of Information Science*. She served on an external review team for the Department of Information Science at Bar-Ilan University in Israel. Dr. Julien won the 2021 Graduate School of Education STAR Award for Research and the 2021 Service to ALISE Award.

**Dr. Valerie Nesset** presented a poster at the annual ALISE conference, a workshop at the ISIC conference, and an invited webinar for ALISE. She remains on the editorial boards of *Library & Information Science Research* and *The Indexer*. She reviewed for the *Journal of Information Science* and *Library & Information Science Research* as well as for the ALISE, ASIS&T, CAIS, and iConference conferences.

**Dr. Dagobert Soergel** presented papers at the International Society for Knowledge Organization. He became an active member of the CIRCL (Center for Community-Invested Research, Collaboration, & Learning), preparing a bold environmental justice proposal, Fair Play Hub, on combatting lead poisoning and its effects on children. One of the core components of the proposal was creating a database of learning materials that are deeply indexed for highly individualized matching. He served as a reviewer for the *Journal of Information Science & Technology*, *Knowledge Organization*, *Pakistan Journal of Information Management & Libraries*, *Perspectivas em Ciência da Informação*, *Review of Information Science*, and *Electronic Journal of the Hochschulverband für Informationswissenschaft*. In addition, he reviewed submissions for the ASIS&T annual conference and the FOIS conference.

**Dr. Ying Sun** served on the ALISE research grant competition committee, and reviewed articles for the *Journal of the Association for Information Science & Technology*, and *Information Processing and Management*. She also reviewed submissions for the annual ASIS&T conference.

**Dr. Amy VanScoy** presented a webinar for the IFLA Library Theory and Research Section. She presented papers at the Libraries in the Digital Age conference, the ACRL national conference, the Hawaii International Conference on Systems Sciences, the annual conferences of ALISE, ASIS&T, and CAIS, and the ISIC conference. She has served as our School Representative for ALISE since 2014. She chaired the ASIS&T Watson Davis Service Award committee, reviewed submissions for the ASIS&T annual conference, and served on the editorial board for *Library & Information Science Research*.

**Dr. Jianqiang Wang** reviewed papers for the ASIS&T conference, and the ACM. He also reviewed articles for *Artificial Intelligence Review*, and *Recent Advances in Computer Science and Communications*. He consulted on a project to analyze online reference data for the Wilson Library, University of La Verne, and consulted on a research project on academic retrieval and recommendation for the College of Data Science, Taiyuan University of Technology (China).

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**VanScoy, A.**, **Julien, H.**, & Harding, A. (in press). "Like putting broccoli in a quiche:" Instructors talk about incorporating theory into reference courses. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science.*

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## Dr. Heidi Julien Wins 2021 Association for Library and Information Science Education Service Award

Dr. Heidi Julien was honored with the 2021 Service to ALISE Award. The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) is the global leader in education for the information professions. ALISE promotes innovative, high-quality education for the information professions internationally through engagement, advocacy and research. In their citation, the Award Committee wrote: Dr. Heidi Julien's "lengthy and exemplary record of contribution to ALISE, extending over two decades, makes her a deserving recipient of this award." Specifically, as a "hard-working and long-serving ambassador for ALISE," Dr. Julien has given multiple conference presentations, has served as Director of External Relations, as co-chair of the ALISE Conference held in Seattle, WA (2013), as Chair of multiple administrative and award committees, as a member of the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* (JELIS) Editorial Board, and of course, as a member of the ALISE Board of Directors and President of ALISE.

As one nominator noted, Dr. Julien's tenure as President of ALISE occurred at a time of "great change for the Association that required new directions to ensure the Association would remain viable and vibrant for the future," and that her efforts as President were guided by a bold and creative vision of the Association that included:

– Appointing new JELIS editors and identifying a new JELIS publisher.
– Overseeing the change of the ALISE management company.
– Decoupling ALISE from ALA Mid-winter to reflect changing hiring schedules and to reduce conference costs.
– Initiating the iFederation collaboration with the iSchools consortium and with the Association for Information Science and Technology.
– Launching a new ALISE book series.
– Leading the first ALISE Leadership Academy.

# AN UPDATE ON OUR MS IN ILS PROGRAM

The Master of Science – Information and Library Science (MS ILS) degree program is the largest program offered in the Department of Information Science and one of the largest in the GSE. This ALA-accredited, completely asynchronous online program continues to welcome an increasingly demographically and geographically diverse student body by offering maximum flexibility for students. The majority of our students pursue the degree part-time from locations all over New York State, the US, Canada, and the world. At the same time, the program provides the highest quality course offerings. Like the student body, the MS ILS curriculum continues to progress and expand, with new courses being offered almost every semester. Several of these LIS 503 course offerings are scheduled in fall, spring, and summer semesters (the course number 503 denotes a course that has not yet been officially accepted into the curriculum). After three successful runs, a course is reviewed and sent for official approval, upon which a new number is designated. We encourage all students to check them out!

# SAM DODSON

Welcome to our newest faculty member, Sam Dodson!

We asked Dr. Dodson a few questions to introduce him to our community:

## What made you choose to come to our department?

I am excited to join the scholarly community at the University at Buffalo, and in particular the Department of Information Science which has a reputation within the field for the excellence of its faculty, students, and graduates. I am eager that the Department is committed to both educating future librarians and archivists, while also envisioning and responding to how technological changes are shaping what it means to be an information professional. I am very keen to work among this vibrant group of faculty, staff, and students in our practice of quality teaching and research.

## ...and what do you expect to teach?

I expect to teach a number of technical courses that are designed for students with multidisciplinary backgrounds. This fall, I am teaching Information Visualization (LIS 503). In the last semester, I most recently taught Information Retrieval, a course which explores how search engines work. While teaching Information Retrieval, I was thrilled that students brought their interests to a technical topic, which is vitally important if systems are to be designed with the lived experiences and priorities of communities in mind. At Buffalo, I would like to continue teaching Information Retrieval and develop courses on related topics, such as Text Mining.

## Can you tell us about your research?

My research focuses on how people learn and collaborate in online information environments. For example, I have studied ways that undergraduates teach each other on Facebook Messenger, how YouTube viewers ask and answer questions in comments, and how software developers discuss source code on GitHub. I am interested in the ways that online information systems enable and constrain the ways that people communicate and make meaning of information. In my work, I ask questions like: How are people collaborating in complex information environments as part of formal and informal learning? What are the implications of these activities for better understanding the information practices of learners and the design of systems to meet learners' needs and potential?

In my work, research and teaching are often inseparable. Learning and teaching are aspects of research projects, and as a researcher I learn from my participants, the wider universe of existing information research, and collaborators. Classrooms can spark scholarly explorations too, which is one of the many reasons I look forward to collaborating with graduate students at UB.

## What excites you about teaching and research?

The most exciting aspect of teaching and research is engaging with other thinkers across time and place — whether in reading foundational texts about information systems, contemporary research reimagining what learning and teaching look like online or engaging with students in conversations.

Working with others who hold different areas of expertise is incredibly rewarding. I enjoy sharing my passions with others, and I am always excited to learn from my students and colleagues. I have found that iSchools are spaces that bring together people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. I enjoy being at this intersection, where the future of information research is being debated and actively constructed across disciplines.

## What are your passions outside of work?

Growing up in the Pacific Northwest, I have developed an appreciation for hiking and camping. I have heard that Western New York is beautiful, and I look forward to exploring it. When the weather keeps me inside, I enjoy playing boardgames. Throughout my undergraduate degree, I worked on a research project that involved creating an artificial intelligence to play the ancient Chinese boardgame Go. I suspect like many at the Department, I am also a big reader. I have a fondness for science fiction, as well as histories of information technology.

## What challenges do you anticipate for information science in the next five years?

The iSchool movement is dynamic and socially oriented to address some of the most pressing issues of our times. iSchools can address the complexity of "wicked problems" which call for multiple groups' expertise and perspectives, such as in information ethics. Artificial Intelligence (AI), for example, is now used at home, school, and work. The collection and analysis of big data to train AIs that are making significant decisions necessitates critical evaluation. iSchool graduates are well positioned to assess the quality of data sets used to train algorithms and the influence that these systems have on the lived experiences of a range of communities. On a planetary scale, it is imperative that the field also finds ways to support adaptations to the climate emergency and necessary changes in our institutions, social structures, and practices to continue learning through these long-term crises. These critical and collective issues necessitate continuing development of iSchools' curricula, research agendas, and engagement with policies to take action.

## What advice would you give our graduates?

I encourage our graduates to remember how transferable their skills are! An Information Science degree has great value within libraries, archives, and museums. I have seen many graduates go on to have successful careers of service in these institutions. However, iSchool training is invaluable to many other contexts. The collection, representation, management, retrieval, and use of information is important in most businesses. Our graduates have the skills and capacities to tackle these activities. I am increasingly finding that iSchool graduates are taking on roles in the information technology industry — a trend that I expect will only continue in the future.

Eli Guinnee

# ALUMNUS
## CHAMPIONS SOCIAL ROLE
# FOR LIBRARIES

In response to our call for alumni news, Eli Guinnee (2008 graduate), State Librarian for New Mexico, responded: I have moved to New Mexico but am still working closely with rural libraries. With colleagues from Western New York, we are now wrapping up a three-year IMLS-funded project called Rural Libraries and Social Wellbeing. The results, including findings, data, and tools co-created with our research subjects are freely available (I'm still committed to Open Access!) at https://rurallibraries.org/. This work recenters librarianship around social wellbeing outcomes as defined by community members themselves. It has highlighted how community members talk about the value of libraries and what makes an effective librarian, as compared to how the library profession talks about those things. What is important to the people we serve is personal connection and having pathways to build belonging and mutual support through contribution to the wider community.

The pandemic has highlighted the need for social connection but may unfortunately lead to some overvaluing of digital services. The social connection work we do as librarians is critical to an individual's ability to feel safe and secure (even if they lack easy access to government support services) and to feel rich (even if they lack financial wealth). Librarianship is a deeply personal and relational field, but we approach it and measure it from a very utilitarian perspective (e.g., we value the circulation count over the deeper value derived from the human interactions around the checkout). As an example, it is worth questioning assumptions that a frictionless no-human-contact ebook checkout has the same value

as a physical book checkout. I fear that too many libraries in the coming months will see the upsides of limiting human contact without realizing the enormous loss from a human wellbeing and capability perspective. I would encourage new and recent grads--especially those who feel skeptical that the way we traditionally talk about libraries is missing a much deeper meaning, or that want to better understand how a library can make meaningful impacts on social equity and inclusion--to read Martha C. Nussbaum's book *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, and think about whether the language she uses fits with their experience and aspirations in their library work.

The book *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*, by Eric Klinenberg, has also highlighted a deeper social role for libraries; and our research at rurallibraries.org helps explain the underlying processes by which social infrastructure is built through libraries. While we focus on rural librarianship, we believe that the deep social connection work that rural librarians are so versed in has wide applicability. Just as we encourage, in our research findings and tools, libraries to see and seek value in every individual in their community, so too we also want the library profession to see and seek value from every library worker—and especially from those who are actively working to build belonging and mutualism one person at a time.

## GSE Student Research Symposium organized by Information Science students

Starting in fall 2020, students from our department did an excellent job of organizing the GSE Student Research Symposium, held in April 2021. Here are some reflections from these outstanding students:

**Nicole Malley** did not have any expectations but was worried she would be overwhelmed. She found it to be very manageable and she enjoyed the responsibility of her duties. She reflected that there is a big difference between planning events in person and remotely. Had it been in person, however, she would not have been able to participate since she lives so far away from campus. She advises students who want to volunteer for this kind of role to be prepared to work together and take on as much as you can handle while still being an asset to the committee.

**Noel Sander** viewed this as an opportunity to meet other people in the program, and work with others on a collaborative project. He had initially expected this to showcase projects that have already been completed, or on their way to being published. However, the scope was much broader. He learned that there was a definite need for a "co-chair" for a committee this size. He noted that the faculty advisors were fairly hands off, so it helped to have a theme in mind as well as a keynote speaker.

**Alison Harding** was excited about the opportunity to work with the broader GSE community, to get a chance to meet and work with some of the students in the other departments that she does not normally get a chance to interact with. Also, the opportunity to see how events like this take shape in the academic world was a big motivation to help. She found that the experience was not all that different than she expected. She comes from a theater background and had worked on similar events, so she had a general idea of how she thought it would go, which reality reflected quite nicely. Alison learned that there is a need for a very delicate balance between the schedule and hard deadlines. The process was so quick, and the team had a lot of tasks that were not laid out in the

guidelines from previous symposiums. This was the first ever virtual one, so the organizers needed to be flexible and allow for change where they could, while still pushing forward. Her advice to future organizers is to collaborate. Find the members of the committee that have expertise that you do not have and empower them to take on aspects of the planning and execution of the symposium. The whole event is a team effort – so work as a team!

**Logan Rath** had a lot of experience organizing the SUNY Librarians Association (SUNYLA) conference both face-to-face and virtually. When he saw that this event was being organized by the Department of Information Science, where his doctoral program advisor is located, he wanted to reach out to share his expertise. He noted that organizing this event was on par with his expectations. He felt that the group worked well together and those who agreed to help did their jobs. Logan learned that he has an amazing group of student colleagues that are dedicated to coming together and delivering an amazing symposium! On the technical side, this was the first time he had used Eventbrite to organize registration. He found their system to be perfect for what was needed. His advice is to start with the timeline and include buffers. He found that once a timeline was agreed upon, the rest fell into place. Self-imposed deadlines helped the team to stay on task and helped to make sure tasks were completed in an orderly fashion.

**Heather Ball** said that she had been wanting to learn what it was like to organize a large symposium like this, so thought this was the perfect opportunity. Because it was virtual this year, she had not realized the team would have so much time to thoughtfully focus on the theme, call for papers, submission reviews, and scheduling, which she thinks really strengthened the overall outcome. Heather feels that she learned the value of having a strong cohort and team in place to help handle things together, not in silos. Her advice for future student organizers is to lean on your committee, previous symposium documentation, and the advice from faculty advisors, and you will be golden!

**Thank you, volunteers. You made us look great!**

## DEREK MOSER
*PhD in Information Science student*

### What led you to undertake doctoral studies?

After undergraduate studies, I found myself working through a couple of different graduate programs. In between the first and second program, while I was working as a practitioner in another field (religious studies), I decided to make the shift from practicing within the field to teaching within the field, and I enrolled in a program that was known for producing great doctoral candidates to well respected PhD programs. After being accepted into a couple of doctoral programs, something seemed a bit off. The timing was not great. So, my family and I decided to turn down the offers and to take some time to really decide what direction I wanted to go moving forward. It was at this time that I started to entertain the idea of completely shifting my professional focus, moving out of religious studies and into library and information science. After landing my first library gig and being accepted into a great MLS program, I quickly fixed my gaze on potential doctoral studies. Needless to say, I've been interested in this level of research for some time now.

### Why did you select UB's program?

The faculty makeup is the primary reason I chose this program. A previous mentor of mine taught me the importance of choosing a doctoral program by the merit of its personnel. In essence, he encouraged me to find a program that had a scholar I could see myself working with, more so than a program or institution with a prestigious name or reputation. Please don't hear me wrong. I'm not saying UB is void of the latter. I am saying that UB has an abundance of the former. After reading through the CVs and UB profiles of LIS faculty, I saw parallels between my own research interests and those of several faculty members. I caught myself saying, "I could really learn from that person" several times. Not having to uproot my family is a big draw as well. The modality of this program (online) is favorable.

### What are your research interests?

I'm really interested in researching how (or if) belief systems, particularly religious epistemologies, impact the ways by which information users interact with information systems. That's broad, I know. Still, that's the general idea. Information literacy, IS theory, knowledge organization, and social informatics are just a few of the branches within our field that I tend to lean pretty heavily into on a regular basis.

### Tell us about your day job.

I am the library director of a small academic library in the Midwest. My primary job is overseeing all aspects of library and information services at the college I work for. I also teach in the Old Testament studies department, which is the subfield of religious studies that I am credentialed in (i.e., ancient Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations).

### What are your passions outside of your program?

Spending time with my family is a big deal, of course. I also enjoy trail running, jazz music (both listening and playing), and reading. That last bit's probably a given, right? About two years ago, my wife let me convert an old deep freeze of ours into a "cheese cave" (we'll put that term in quotations and use it loosely). Suffice to say, cheesemaking is a newish hobby of mine.

### What do you expect to do with the PhD once you're finished?

I want to research. I want to take the skills I'm learning here at UB and incorporate them into my future endeavors as a researcher in the IS field.

## Dr. VanScoy Wins New IMLS Grant

Dr. Amy VanScoy recently received $478,044 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to study the retention of librarians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). VanScoy will be working with another UB colleague, Dr. Sunha Kim, who has a joint appointment in GSE's departments of Learning and Instruction and Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology, as well as Dr. Kawanna Bright from East Carolina University, and Dr. Monica Colon-Aguirre from the University of South Carolina. The research team will use a statistical technique called survival analysis to determine when and why BIPOC librarians are likely to leave the profession. Interviews will follow the analysis to contextualize the results and discussions with key stakeholders will identify potential directions for improving retention of BIPOC librarians in the profession. The research findings will equip supervisors and professional organizations with knowledge that will help make their retention efforts more specific and their interventions more timely and effective. The grant will provide two years of support for a doctoral student doing research in diversity, equity, and inclusion in librarianship.

# MS IN SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP UPDATE

This spring we had a large group of 21 graduates and 10 of those already have been hired under an internship or supplementary certificate before they finished the program.

Susan Allen, adjunct instructor for the school librarianship program saw a great opportunity for learning and community engagement. When she learned that a group of Williamsville high school students formed *More to Learn WNY*, she thought why not have her students in LIS 568 Computer Applications in School Libraries course compile pedagogically sound activities for the tutoring group? More to Learn WNY is a free online tutoring service for kindergarten through eighth grade students that provides weekly 45 minute Zoom tutoring sessions in English, math, French, and Spanish. Under Allen's guidance, her 35-member class developed resource websites focused on math or English language arts and target different student age groups. In the past students have created virtual activities like choose-your-own adventures and escape rooms. Ms. Allen stated in a recent NYSUT United article "It's a win-win. It gives the high school students fresh tutoring materials and provides a very authentic assignment for my graduate students." The MS in School Librarianship program has officially become part of UBTeach (http://ed.buffalo.edu/academics/ub-teach.html), with a 5-year program that allows incoming undergraduates to earn a BA in English and an MS in School Librarianship. This is a new opportunity, and does not replace the MS in School Librarianship program.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO MARY JEAN JAKUBOWSKI ON HER RETIREMENT

Mary Jean Jakubowski, who graduated from our program in September 1991, retired from her position as Director of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library in June 2021. We caught up with her recently and asked her to share some of her story.

### Did you expect to work in public libraries after graduation?

Yes, although I originally set out to be a medical librarian. But, once I was introduced to public librarianship – well, the rest is history!

### How did the program prepare you (or not prepare you) for your professional life?

SILs, as it will always be to me, prepared me for things like how to conduct the reference query, how to seek out information, how to conduct a children's story time or teen program and so on. Back in 1992, when I got my first librarian job, the Internet was a little-known entity, so we relied on books, the knowledge and experience of colleagues and intuition to get patrons the information they were looking for. CD ROMs came into being shortly thereafter and we all thought it was amazing to have information at our fingertips even though it was dated information. In the case of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) System, the Central Library had the largest reference and circulating collections, as well as databases on CD ROM – so patrons were regularly referred to this location. The Internet transformed our libraries, bringing real-time information and information accessibility to all. Once we had Internet access, staff at any library could provide information that was previously inaccessible. The '90s were a revolutionary time for public libraries. Rather than being the "keepers" of information, we became the finders of and discerners of "good" information. By no means does this imply other services ceased, rather they expanded and changed. Libraries were transforming to becoming as they are today – hubs of their communities – where people go for their informational, educational, and often recreational needs.

### What was most rewarding about working in public libraries?

Definitely the people. Helping people has always played a significant role in my life – both personal and professional. It has been rewarding to lead the change in library services. Change, in my opinion, is ever constant in libraries today. It is what makes every day interesting, rewarding and fun!

### What was your experience of leadership at B&ECPL?

I have had many leadership roles within the B&ECPL: Central Library department head, Human Resources director, Chief Operating Officer and Library System Director. Each position offered a plethora of experiences from which I learned and grew as a leader, a team member and as an individual. As a leader you need to be supportive of staff, open to listening, have patience, be willing to try new things, be willing to fail and most importantly be willing to admit when you are wrong. You also need to be strong and stand your ground – even in the most difficult of times. Every one of these traits played a role in becoming who I am as Director of the B&ECPL. I am eternally grateful for the support I have received throughout my career.

### What were the challenges?

Challenges are a part of the job: budgets, staffing, political consternation, uncertainty, etc. I would be remiss if I didn't admit that challenges can be stressful and disheartening. But with most challenges you can find some level of opportunity – maybe not always easy but opportunity nonetheless.

### What were the joys?

My biggest joy has been in bringing our System together: opening and expanding communication amongst libraries, staff, administration, trustees. Teamwork is critical in today's large organizations, as are partnerships. Today, our libraries are doing great things, individually and jointly! B&ECPL's partnerships have increased trifold in the past 10 years. I am very proud of all that has been done to strengthen these relationships.

### What are you most proud of in your career?

In addition to the above, I am most proud of the staff for ALL they have done and continue to do for our communities. Change is inevitable and each and every day, our staff adjust, adapt and do whatever it takes to meet the needs of our patrons. They are truly extraordinary! This year in particular, it was immediately evident, when libraries were required to close, that staff wanted to and did find new and unique ways to provide library services, while keeping health and safety at the forefront of their duties. Amazing, amazing library services happened throughout the pandemic, with our libraries providing increased access to eResources, educational support to teachers, students and parents, virtual programming, online/telephone assistance, etc. Much of which was conducted from the homes of staff, all while juggling home schooling, caregiving, and a multitude of other pandemic related stressors. I am also very proud of the fact the libraries of the B&ECPL were able to be some of the first public libraries in the state to safely reopen following required closures. I will say it again – B&ECPL staff are the BEST!

### What advice would you give current students in the master's program?

The outlook for careers in information services is bright. Do a practicum! Be flexible, be willing to learn, be willing to try and fail, be open to constructive criticism and take responsibility. Most importantly: take advantage of every opportunity that comes before you AND seek opportunities. You won't know what is out there until YOU go looking.

### What are your passions and interests outside of your professional role?

My professional role has been a main focus for years. Outside of the library my family is role number one! Following would have to be traveling, hiking, and reading.

### What are your plans for "retirement"?

This is always a good question. To start my goal is to organize and get back into an exercise routine...the best laid plans. My husband and I do plan to travel. We have a bucket list of places we wish to visit. Our eldest daughter is currently living in Europe, so we intend to visit her and our youngest is likely to return to Florida, so we know we will be heading south as well. Genealogy is also something I am interested in. Who knows, I may even take a class or two from my local library!

### Happy trails, Mary Jean!

*P.S. Under Mary Jean's leadership, BECPL was the 2021 winner of the ALA's Penguin Random House Library Award for Innovation. The award recognizes U.S. libraries and librarians who create lasting innovative community service programs that successfully inspire and connect with new readers. The library was honored at the ALA Annual Meeting in June.*

# SARA MANUS

### *What do you teach for the department?*

I teach Music Librarianship for the department. This course provides an overview of music librarianship, focusing on the aspects that make it unique. Music exists in multiple formats – notated music (scores), recordings (audio and video), books, articles – and this variety poses different challenges for acquisitions, cataloging, reference, etc. This course is taken by students pursuing the combined MS in IS degree with a master's in music, but it is also an elective for anyone that is interested in learning about music librarianship.

### *Tell us about your day job.*

I am the Music Librarian for Education and Outreach at Vanderbilt University's Anne Potter Wilson Music Library in Nashville, TN. I teach all music information literacy sessions for undergraduate music majors, coordinate music reference services, plan outreach events, manage the Music Library's social media accounts, and do collection development for subscription databases and books about music. I am also actively involved in systemwide initiatives and projects.

### *What are your passions?*

I am very passionate about DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility). My goal is to make music librarianship accessible and inclusive for library workers and our users. When we think about efforts to diversify libraries, it's pretty clear that we don't have a pipeline problem, but a retention problem. I want to implement changes to our systems that support and nurture all people, including the disabled and neurodiverse.

### *Do you have any advice for our students?*

I never aspired to become a cataloger, but I am so glad that I got experience with it through coursework and an internship. Having basic knowledge about metadata and cataloging is still very helpful to me for reference work, and it enables me to figure out how the ILS treats certain fields during searches. I always recommend that students get some experience in this area while still in school, regardless of career goals.

**Sincere thanks to our adjunct professors who shared their expertise with our students in 2020-21!**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Susan Allen | Marie Elia | Sara Manus |
| Toni Baller | Matthew Harvey | Elliot McNally |
| James Belair | Christopher Hollister | Toni Olivas |
| Marie Bindeman | Kathleen Jaccarino | Molly Poremski |
| Angela Boccuzzi-Reichert | Jessica Lacher-Feldman | |

# student [PROFILE]

**BRIGETTE MESKELL**
*MS in ILS student*

## Please tell us about your experience in the MS in ILS program. Why did you choose information science? Why did you choose UB?

So far, I could not have asked for a better experience. The faculty is excellent. I find my professors to be knowledgeable, pedagogically experienced, supportive, and responsive. I selected information science as a career path because it brings together two aspects that I love –book knowledge and organization. The classes are very interesting, and I've been exposed to so many new sources of learning that I'm excited by, such as Python programming and databases. I chose UB because it is a flagship SUNY school, it is cost effective, and it ranked extremely well in the list of LIS programs in the country.

## Please tell us about your activities outside of the program. What work or volunteer roles have you had?

My work experience at Barnes and Noble books also guided me towards a career in LIS. I've worked there for three years and have found my passion in learning about organizational skills, information architecture, and guiding people through their information journeys at large. I also have degrees in English and Theatre, and have experience in visual art, acting, singing, and have had roles in local theater productions. I practice piano and guitar, compose music, and am a regular musician at a local church. I roller-skate in my spare time as well! I love learning new things and regularly pick up new hobbies such as cooking and carpentry.

## How are you connecting your learning in the program with your work or volunteer roles? Does your work or volunteer experience inform your learning in the program?

I work as a Senior Bookseller at Barnes & Noble Booksellers: I would have to try really hard to not connect my learning to my day job, and vice versa. I constantly find myself bringing my experience as a bookseller to discussion posts, and what I learn from classes and readings to work with me. A reading and discussion thread from LIS 507 with Dr. Wang helped me achieve an even deeper understanding of the connection between my day job and my passion. We read chapter five, "Information Transfer in the Information Professions" from *Introduction to the Library and Information Professions* 2nd ed. by Greer, et. al. Early on in the reading, the authors discuss the library as supermarket vs. the library as monument. They connect this debate to different models of information systems. They call one the Conventional Library Service Model where the information and the integrity of the information system is prioritized (i.e., monument) and the other Information Transfer Model where the end-user is prioritized (i.e., supermarket). They even go further to discuss the very architecture choices made by professionals designing libraries. This sparked me to write a discussion post about Barnes and Noble, a literal book supermarket, and how, in a way, it is also designed with some simulacral, monument-like features which evoke the feeling, for patrons, that they are in a library. The dialectic impact that this reading had on me was monumental. I realized I was starting to have a global understanding of information centers and reference culture at large exactly because I had prior experience as a customer service agent in a bookstore. Still, I tended to be apologetic about bringing up experiences as a bookseller with relation to the LIS program discussion posts. However, Elliot McNally, my Preservation for Special Collections and Archives instructor, told me to stop invalidating my experiences as a bookseller because they are truly valuable to my education as a LIS professional. I never downplayed it again.

One other notable experience since I have joined the program was when, at Barnes and Noble, I was tasked with completely re-arranging the infrastructure of the children's department. This experience made a huge impact on my understanding of information systems and the goals of the end-user. Usually, we use a PDT, a device you can use to scan a book's CPU in order to see metadata about the book. For example, if I scan the book, *Warriors: Into the Wild* by Erin Hunter, the PDT will list the title, author, and how many we have on hand, the last time it sold, the subject category - Young Reader, etc. Part of the rearrangement of the children's department was that we were no longer going to use PDTs to categorize books: it was up to me to recreate this categorization. Every decision I made was rooted in my experience from this program so far – with the end-user in mind. Readings and discussions about the LCSH, DBMS, user-centered information services, information architecture, ILI pedagogy, etc. composed the toolbelt I drew from for this task.

For example, I ruminated a lot on common customer requests/queries and how I can make the department reflect those. Young Readers used to be a large group of books categorized by author from A-Z. I thought, how can I improve this system to facilitate the customers' information search process? It used to be a hard section to shop. While planning, I remembered having a lot of requests from customers for specific genres on Young Reader novels, such as Mystery, Fantasy, Historical Fiction, and movie novelizations. I decided to divide the entire Young Reader section into those categories plus Fiction, all still alphabetical by author. Since then, customers have had a much easier time finding what they desire! Additionally, my ILI pedagogy experiences with Dr. Julien helped me tremendously while teaching my co-workers how to navigate the new layout of the department – I even made and implemented measurable learning outcomes for them. It was exciting!

## How do you anticipate you will use your learning in the program to inform your future career? What are your ambitions?

I love information. I am possibly obsessed with it. I plan on pursuing a PhD in Information Science with a focus on Philosophy. I would love to work in a university library someday. I also aim to help the arts and humanities in any way I can. I am involved in a lot of arts, literature, and music circles in my hometown (both for work and pleasure), and I have noticed a very real degradation of the humanities in many shapes and forms; it has honestly been happening since before I was born. I use every opportunity I can in the program to explore this passion of mine. I wrote a paper on the Digital Humanities and open access publishing as a means of salvaging the traditions of the humanities in LIS 577 Scholarly Communication with Christopher Hollister. In Information Literacy Instruction LIS 523 with Dr. Julien, I explored things like edutainment, the affective side of information literacy, and metacognition in the humanities. I am in my innocent beginnings of this exploration, but I am making it a life-long goal to achieve more visibility and validation for the humanities in any way I can in the academy at large.

## Can you tell us more about yourself – your passions and interests?

I love to perform, I have not been in a production in a couple years now, but I do have a great deal of passion for acting. I also play the guitar and piano, sing, and record my own music. My current favorite musician is Philip Glass. My favorite album from him is *1000 Airplanes on the Roof* (the version featuring Linda Ronstadt), and I am trying to play my way through a book of his piano Etudes right now. I love to read as well. I read a lot of philosophy. As far as fiction goes, Haruki Murakami and Jose Saramago are my authors du jour.

## Do you have any advice for prospective students?

Dive into anything and everything that comes your way. Every moment is an opportunity to understand something new about the world. Apply what you learn to what you love. Try everything until you find what feels the best. Professors are your greatest resources; do not be intimidated by them. Lastly, save all of your class information and work in an organized fashion from day 1... your future self will thank you profusely.

# student [PROFILE]

**JELICIA JIMENEZ**
*MS in ILS student*

## Please tell us about your experience in the MS in ILS program. Why did you choose information science? Why did you choose UB?

My experience in the ILS program at UB has been enlightening and enriching to say the least. In each class, there is so much enlightening discussion that connects our field to real world implications of equity and accessibility for patrons and our peers alike. I chose information science because I have been enamored with libraries since my childhood. To me, the library is like a treasure chest teeming with riches waiting to be found. UB's program was attractive to me because of its focus on cultural competency.

## Please tell us about your work with NYPL. What is your role?

I've been hired as a graduate assistant with the NYPL to create content for the Change the Subject Project. This project seeks to address and ultimately replace anti-immigration subject headings used by the Library of Congress, and subsequently many library systems. The removal of the "illegal alien" subject headings is a powerful movement that addresses the anti-immigrant rhetoric of the previous president.

## How are you connecting your learning in the program with your work role? Does your work experience inform your learning in the program?

Before I began my coursework, the notion of a radical librarian never occurred to me; I felt that our roles as agents of information required that we take a neutral stance on the information we provide access to. Throughout my learning in the program, I've realized that to take a neutral stance on issues of justice and equity we are doing a disservice to patrons and to our field. My work demands that the Library of Congress take a clear stance on an unjust issue, and I am proud to be a vehicle for activism in our field.

## How do you anticipate you will use your learning in the program to inform your future career? What are your ambitions?

I hope to find ways to continue to embody this idea of being a radical librarian. The more I learn in this program, the more I come to understand the role of the librarian as someone in service to their community. I'd like to find myself at work either in an academic or public library, always providing equitable resources and access to patrons.

## Can you tell us more about yourself – your passions and interests?

Besides my work with the NYPL, I am also a library and media specialist for a K-8 school in the city of Buffalo. I am incredibly passionate about teaching, and I have really found joy in curating meaningful collections for my students. I have also participated in leadership workshops in Buffalo to strengthen my ties with my community and solidify my role as an agent of change in this city. In my leisure time, I enjoy a long yin yoga class and any of the Real Housewives.

SETH GAMBLE
MS in ILS student

*Please tell us about your experience in the MS in ILS program. Why did you choose information science? Why did you choose UB?*

I just completed my very first semester in the MS in ILS program. I decided to pursue this degree to bring some more formal education and practices to my current career path. To date, much of my work in knowledge and information has been based on practice or self-taught. I had looked into other information science and knowledge management programs and ultimately selected UB's because of its excellent reputation for information science professionals and that it offered the flexibility I needed to continue working full-time. Furthermore, as my current position is more than librarianship, I liked that UB's program offered more than just traditional librarian courses and looked at knowledge and information more comprehensively.

## Please tell us about your work in marketing. What is your role?

My current position is a Senior Marketing Coordinator and Knowledge Specialist for a global engineering firm, but I'm based out of our New York office. I have been with the firm for 8.5 years and my career has shifted a few times over that span. In the last few years, I've focused almost entirely on knowledge and information for our regional marketing team. Marketing in architecture and engineering looks a bit different than traditional marketing and is heavily involved in winning new work for the firm. As such, it is a very information and knowledge intensive environment. For my role, I have been looking at managing, improving, and developing the systems, tools, processes, and practices around this knowledge and information. This involves a lot of collaboration with members of the marketing team but also engineers and designers from across the firm, ensuring that the information we need is accessible, accurate, and suited for a variety of marketing and communications tasks.

## How are you connecting your learning in the program with your work role? Does your work experience inform your learning in the program?

I've already learned so much from one semester that I can bring into my day-to-day work! Prior to starting the program, I had been noticing a shift in my thought process around knowledge and information, realizing that systems and tools are only one piece of the puzzle, but that users and user behaviors are a hugely significant part of establishing a good information environment. This line of thought was further reinforced during my first semester, and I look forward to bringing more behavior-based strategies to the work that I do. Furthermore, because marketing in architecture and engineering looks after such a different line of knowledge and information, this has helped me bring a new and different perspective to the library and information science program. I have first-hand experience working with some of the users that have been studied in library science and hopefully can leverage this experience throughout the program.

## How do you anticipate you will use your learning in the program to inform your future career? What are your ambitions?

The firm I work for has a really robust knowledge management approach, with librarians and practitioners across the globe. However, our regional (US and Canada) approach to knowledge management is not quite as strong as I feel it could be. I hope to combine the hands-on experience I've received from work with the learning from the MS in ILS program to help establish a stronger knowledge management program across the region. My aim is to establish and support better knowledge behaviors that will lead to contributing to the global knowledge systems in a more holistic way.

## Can you tell us more about yourself – your passions and interests?

Outside of work and school my primary passion and interest is the theatre. I studied theatre for both my bachelor's and my first master's degrees and am always on the lookout for a new show or play to attend – it was one of the reasons I moved to NYC in the first place! My fiancé and I had been thinking about moving out of Brooklyn for some time, but the pandemic brought that goal into sharp focus and we, along with half of the City it seems, ended up purchasing our first home in the Hudson Valley. In our free time, we have been working on projects around the house, gardening, and exploring all the surrounding areas, especially the local breweries, cideries, and wineries!

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