Welcome Pirate Nation!

Our current issue is all about you and your professional achievements. We have highlighted three East Carolina University students that have shown dedication to the profession. Many of you have been published in professional journals, are author, or are successful grant writers.

Recently the ECU Ambassadors contacted us for help in hosting their Special Needs Prom on April 19, 2008. Having worked with handicapped children for years, many of us simply could not turn down this invitation. It is exciting that 100 special needs children and adults will get the opportunity to shine! Please contact us to volunteer on this important day. Due to security reasons, you will need to contact us prior to the prom if you want to volunteer.

Recently, we hosted a Winter Book Drive that was very successful.

Also in this issue, Dr. White informs us where we stand with American Library Association Accreditation. ALA President Dr. Roy gives her perspective on how important having ALA Accreditation is to our department. I spoke with her on the phone the other day, and she was very personable. It was exciting to find out that she is the first American Indian to serve as ALA President. Please stay tuned to our listserv. We have some very exciting changes that are about to occur that we think you will like!

We hope that you enjoy this issue as much as we have putting it together for you. We also want to thank Paul Goodson, Betsy Merricks, Mary Kathleen Sontag Richardson, and Jill Whitson for helping out with this issue. If you are interested in helping with our next newsletter, please let us know.

Sincerely,
Kevin Vickers
President
ECU ALA Student Chapter

“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.”
- Erin Majors

Notable ECU Students:

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Addressing community, collaboration, and culture was Dr. Roy’s agenda as she ran for ALA President. This same theme continues to run through her veins as she tirelessly visits children, adults, colleagues, and students around the world.

It is exciting to know that she is the first American Indian ALA President. Having this connection can prove very positive as she addresses native people not only in America but around the world. For example, she was part of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) discussion on the much noted High Definition (HD) broadcasts that will involve all televisions in the US starting February 17, 2009. Doing so, she placed a national focus on lower economic people and organizations across the country. This is important because many people and organizations such as low economic school districts across the US cannot afford new televisions, cable or satellite TV, and all television broadcasts will be transmitted via HD in less than a year. During this discussion, the FCC provided alternatives including discounts in the form of coupons for HD converter boxes.

She continued to address ECU involvement as we strive to achieve ALA Accreditation. She noted that our student chapter is a great place to start. This chapter helps us put one more link in our chain for all ALA members. It is interesting to note that both Leslie Burger (former ALA President) and William McGee (NMRT) also stressed this same involvement.

Dr. Roy applauds our commitment to the North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) and hopes that members will continue to extend their talents to the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA). It is exciting to see students, faculty and staff not only attend these types of events but to share what they have learned. It is obvious that our chapter members are very committed to their profession as our student body continues to get published in scholarly journals and books.

Dr. Roy understands the importance of technology in the 21st century. This becomes clear as you examine her interest in blogging. For example, when she was campaigning for ALA President, she posted weekly on her blog. She made it clear that she took this idea from her students and relied on their ability to set up the site on her behalf. She continues to surround herself with people that have a wide range of abilities and interests.

Dr. Roy stressed having an eye to spot an opportunity. We must learn how to deal with all members of our community in order to make sure that all patrons feel comfortable. Librarians and students can find this “eye” better by becoming members of organizations such as NCSLMA or NCLA. Finding out your resources and utilizing them in the library is an important step to make when trying to make all patrons feel comfortable. In other words, we need to be able to go into the world and bring those strengths back into the workplace.
We understand school is your main focus right now, but as a future librarian or information science professional, it's never too early to start planning your career. Get a head start on that career by becoming an active member of a professional association like the American Library Association (ALA)!

If you feel a little intimidated about working with long-time librarians, or are not sure where to start, consider joining the New Members Round Table (NMRT), one of several ALA Round Tables. NMRT membership is open to any member of the American Library Association who has been an ALA member for ten or fewer years.

NMRT is a gateway to the profession and offers opportunities for you to develop leadership skills, build working relationships with colleagues, and learn about the profession as a whole. As an NMRT member, I cannot emphasize enough how beneficial NMRT membership has been to me.

As an NMRT member, we encourage you to take advantage of a number of services and programs to assist you in your professional development:

- Have your resume evaluated by a professional librarian through the resume review service;
- Apply for an NMRT-sponsored scholarship or grant;
- Attend NMRT ALA conference programs;
- Take an active role in NMRT by volunteering for one or more NMRT committees.

Members of the Student and Student Chapter Outreach (SASCO) Committee of the New Members Round Table are here to help you jump-start your career and take an active role in your career development. We invite you to join NMRT this semester, then get the most out of your membership by being an active member. Most prospective employers view association involvement favorably, as it demonstrates a commitment to service for the growth of your institution and profession.

Our committee is here to help you become informed about and involved in ALA and NMRT this semester. Please explore the NMRT website (www.ala.org/nmrt) and check back frequently. We will be posting new information of interest to you throughout the semester!

Lisa Allen - Student and Student Chapter Outreach (SASCO) Committee of ALA's New Members Round Table (NMRT)
Robin Boltz of Creedmoor, NC, is a PhD candidate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a Media Specialist for South Granville High Schools. Her article, “What We Want: Boys and Girls Talk about Reading”, was recently published in School Library Media Research journal of the American Association of School Libraries. She was a graduate student in the 2000-02 ECU MLS program.

How does it feel to get an article published?

I can’t decide whether it’s elation or relief! I was pleased by the results of the study and wanted to share it, and it feels great that it’s out there for others to read. Publication is also a requirement in the PhD program at SILS, so I was really relieved to see it.

Did you learn anything that surprised you during your research?

One interesting point to me was that so many of the boys have learned to “work the system” so to speak. Over half, if you add them up, indicated that the reading assignments were either only in order to get good grades or that they were basically valueless to them as individuals. It worries me that we’re losing them so early. I was also extremely interested that so many of the girls were so far into pop culture that this was their favorite type of reading material. Maybe I’m just old fashioned, but the days of the American Girl books aren’t really that long ago!

Did the boys change the way they look at and approach reading?

The object was not to get the boys to change anything themselves. The object was to get information for library media specialists and classroom teachers that would help them understand their boys’ point of view, and then hopefully to help them design instruction and purchase materials that would help the boys enjoy reading more. If this changes the boys’ reading behavior later, then that is icing on the cake.

Do you have any suggestions for new Media Specialists as they begin their careers?

If you don’t already thrive on chaos, learn to. The part of this job that I enjoy the most is the fact that no two days, and even no two periods, are ever the same. Choose your school well, and in relation to your interests and abilities. For instance, some schools want and need more tech-savvy LMSs than others. If you have no interest in computers, then these would be places you might want to avoid. If you get a chance, talk to the last LMS that worked in the school and also examine the collection. Ask questions, questions and more questions.

Any other words of wisdom you would like to impart to ECU MLS students?

Get to know your kids personally so that you can converse on a more than a student-teacher basis. And for heaven’s sake, LISTEN to what they say.
Celebrate National Library Week
April 13 - 19, 2008
What are you doing now?

Currently, I'm working as a children's librarian with the Lee County Library system. I decided to get my MLS because I realized that I had spent most of my life hanging around libraries and that libraries were where I seemed to feel the most "myself." Someday I would like to run a small branch library, or just a library in a small town. It's such a great way to be connected to your community!

Please tell me your impressions of the MLS program.

So far, I've really enjoyed the online MLS program at ECU. It's amazing how much of an impact some teachers can have on you, even if you never meet them face-to-face. Kevin Cherry, with whom I took "Foundations," had a tremendous impact on me. It was providence that I had him as my first professor in the program--I was so nervous after being out of school for so long, and never having been a really exemplary student, and he was so encouraging. Another teacher who really was able to provide a personal touch despite being a distance education professor is Dr. Patrick Valentine. I really enjoyed his course and learned a tremendous amount from him. I've got quite a way to go in this program, but I've really gotten a lot out of the courses I've taken.

What's your favorite book that you've written?

One of my most favorite books to write was a biography of Patrick Henry. I spent a lot of time in Virginia, learning a lot not only about colonial history but Civil War history as well. It's very compelling to find out how the lives of some of our most noted historic figures were related. Biographies are my favorite books to write.

What's the hardest part about being a writer?

In my opinion, the hardest thing about writing nonfiction is making it "sparkle," as a friend of mine once said. You do a lot of research, so you have a tendency to want to get in all the facts and not leave anything out.

What are some of the major challenges that you have faced in your career?

You have to do a lot of work to keep writing. You have to be proactive about keeping your name out there and getting new contracts. There are a lot of writers out there, and fewer publishing opportunities all the time.
Kristie Fischer Speaks About The Library & GLBT
By Mary Kathleen Sontag Richardson

One of the aspects of the distance education program is we often know little about our classmates other than the brief introductions we sometimes share at the onset of a new semester. Beginning in this issue, the ALA student chapter is will be interviewing people all across the Pirate nation to share their stories.

With an anticipated graduation date of fall 2009 over one-year away, graduate student Kirstie Fischer has already made significant contributions to the Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology and to the profession. While a student in Kevin Cherry’s introductory LIBS 6010 course, Fischer wrote a paper about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) issues in school libraries. The topic was selected because of Fischer’s personal commitment to social justice, support of diversity, intellectual freedom and youth empowerment. Her former career as non-profit youth education program director gave her background in youth issues. Her belief that community organizing can address global issues and social injustices along with how intellectual freedom impacts communities and education spurred her decision to tackle this issue in the paper. Fischer has said that her focus came from her belief that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are on the forefront of our country’s current civil rights struggle, and they are one of the last populations for whom flagrant discrimination is still socially and institutionally acceptable. Research for her paper included interviews with local media specialists across the North Carolina along with surveys of a listserv, which is used by media specialists. She conducted independent research at dozens of public schools libraries across the state through their online catalogs. She made contact with youth who identify with GLBT as well as family members. She also located scholarly articles about local challenges to these materials being located in a school library that had garnished national attention. Throughout the process she examined how access or lack of GLBT information and literature impacts the climates of schools and communities.

Cherry shared with Dr. John Harer that she had written a paper on GLBT issues in relation to school libraries. NCLA had chosen “Defending Gay Positive Literature” as the topic for its Intellectual Freedom panel. Dr. Harer invited Fischer to sit on the panel as a student representative. Fischer felt her participation on the panel was a positive experience.

Fischer currently is working with teens and adults with autism through the Autism Society. Born in a rural town outside of Columbia, South Carolina, she now lives in Asheville, North Carolina. The location affords her the opportunity to enjoy wilderness hiking and camping. She also enjoys literature, cooking, social justice organizing, Latin American culture and politics, travel. She recently returned from a vacation to Vieques, Puerto Rico. Upon graduation, Fischer is planning on a career as a middle or high school media coordinator.
During the 2007 Christmas season, the ALA Student Chapter teamed up with the faculty of the Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology for the annual Goodwill and Good Books Book Drive. This is the second year that the Student Chapter has joined the professors in collecting books for those in need.

Books collected by the faculty, Paul Goodson, and Jill Whitson with Snow Hill Primary were all donated to The Family Violence Center in Greenville, NC.

The look on the faces at the Family Violence Center when we dropped off more than 275 books was priceless! One lady commented that a client had just mentioned how she wanted to get books for her kids for Christmas and didn’t know how she was going to do it. She couldn’t wait to call the lady to tell her that her Christmas wish had been answered.

It was a great experience for everyone who participated and plans are underway to continue this project next Christmas. Everyone is invited to join us next year so plan now to help with this great service opportunity as the ALA Student Chapter continues this annual goodwill event for Christmas 2008.

Traditionally, as part of the annual Christmas party, the faculty collects new books and donates them to programs that help adults and youth in need. This year, ALA Student Chapter members across the state joined them in collecting new and used books to contribute to good causes. Almost 700 books were collected and donated to organizations that aid the disadvantaged.

Bev O’Neal with the Albemarle Chapter of Bikers for Christ donated 74 books to a shelter in Elizabeth City, NC, for abused women and children.

Katie Richardson donated 41 books to the New Directions in Greenville, NC.

Dr. Carol Brown received over 100 books from her church youth group!
Can you briefly summarize where we stand with the accreditation process?

We are preparing the response to the requested additional information / clarification on areas of the LS program sought by the Committee on Accreditation (CoA). The next draft of the report / request for candidacy will be sent out about May 15, 2008 to the CoA, as they are expecting us to respond to their information needs at their June 2008 meeting at ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California. At the conference, the CoA will review our report / request for candidacy and announce their findings within 15 business weeks. If we are successful in responding to the clarifications, we will hopefully be considered for candidacy status at this meeting, which is the second step in the 3-step process of accreditation.

Once accepted into candidacy, the third step would begin. The third step is the site visit from CoA external and internal review teams who would assess our abilities internally and externally through visits, interviews, and reviews of program facilities, activities, etc. documentation. The site visit, once successfully concluded, would result in initial accreditation for the program that would be for seven years. Besides annual reports and statistics, each renewal of accreditation is a two-year process with a site visit, where the program must demonstrate it is still meeting ALA standards or face loosing accreditation.

You can find additional information on this process and a copy of our last report at http://lsit.coe.ecu.edu/ALA_Accreditation_Process/. We will be continuously updating this information as we go along in the process.

What can we as ALA Student Chapter members do to help with the accreditation process?

The things that the ALA Student Chapter (and all of the students in the program) can do include the following:

- Attend our program meetings in the field, (i.e. 3 city tour, conference gatherings, etc.).
- Be active in communicating your program / educational needs and suggestions to us.
- Participate in our strategic planning process through feedback and input.
- Share good news of your accomplishments (professional, educational, etc.) with us so we can share them with the world for you.
- Participate in our program committees by serving as members in such committees like the Curriculum committee, Advisory groups or alumni activities.

Other than accreditation do you have other goals or plans for the department that you would like to share with us?

Our new MLS 2.0 curriculum is being implemented this semester and seems to be on track so far; in fact, we are taking requests from other ALA accredited schools to have us help them create curriculum and delivery for their programs. We will be undertaking a process to develop a new strategic plan and assess student needs and achievement. We are preparing a new portfolio process that will hopefully be more user friendly.
Upcoming Free Webinar Events

- **Wednesday, April 9**  “Technology-Energized Teaching for the 21st Century Classroom” - Featuring 2007 Illinois Teacher of the Year, Joe Fatheree

- **Thursday, April 17**  “Financial Management for Educators” - Featuring Rich Hawk, Vice President – Wealth Management at Smith Barney

- **Tuesday, April 22**  “Weaving a Curriculum with Children’s Literature” - Second in the series of children’s lit conversations – This one will focus on creating a common thread through multiple content areas

- **Tuesday, May 13**  “Books that touch your heart” - Last in the series of children’s lit conversations – rescheduled from February.

All events start at 8:00 p.m. eastern standard time. To register for one of these free Webinars, please contact Kevin Vickers at alastudent@ecu.edu.

The ECU Ambassadors has teamed up with our chapter in hosting a prom for special populations members of Pitt County that are freshman in high school and older on April 19, 2008.

We are anticipating that over 100 individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities will be in attendance the night of the function. It is our hope that hosting this event will allow special population members to experience not just a prom, but a milestone occasion for many. We are very excited to put ECU’s motto *servire* meaning “to serve” into action!

If you can help during this worthy endeavor, please let Kevin Vickers know at alastudent@ecu.edu.
ECU on the move!

Visit the ECU MLS faculty and staff at:

- April 5 Mooresville Public Library, 1:00-4:00
- April 12 Eva Perry Regional Library in Apex, 10:00-1:00

Dr. Jami Jones will be presenting a research paper on August 3-6 for the International Association of School Librarians in Berkeley, CA.

The American Library Association (ALA) currently has 49 active Student Chapter Groups. Any member of an ALA student chapter is welcome to join, network, and connect in Facebook. Click the photo to register and join.

ECU ALA Student Chapter Scholarship

Our chapter is excited to announce our first “ECU ALA Student Chapter Poetry Scholarship.” We will be awarding $50.00 to one library science student who writes an original poem about their experience as an ECU MLS student. Visit our website for more information (http://www.ecu.edu/org/alasc/).
Library Science Society

Notable News

40 people attended our first Student Chapter Tail Gate Party!

Go Pirates - Argh!
Visit us on the website at: http://www.ecu.edu/org/alasc/

Visit our chat website at: http://www.ecu.edu/org/alasc/

Visit our Wiki at: http://www.ecu.edu/org/alasc/