



## **FINAL REPORT**

**Submitted by Shannon Alueta, UHMC Librarian**

### **Overview**

The Association of Academic & Research Libraries Conference (ACRL) entitled, “Forging the Future,” was held in Pittsburgh, PA from March 15-18, 2023. This event is offered once every 2 years and is considered to be THE place for anyone working in academic librarianship. ACRL 2023 featured more than 2,000 attendees (in-person & virtual), 500 programs, and a chance to meet with 50+ vendors whose products support academic libraries every day.

### **Purpose**

As someone who very recently made the transition from K-12 School Librarianship to academic librarianship here at UHMC, I was eager to learn. Specifically, I wanted to hear about the latest in Information Literacy Instruction; find out about ways others have strengthened connections between K-12 and College; and immerse myself in the stories of other indigenous leaders.

### **Information Literacy Instruction (& Misinformation)**

- One of the key takeaways from these sessions revolved around the urgent need to raise awareness of bias -- internal and external – when teaching information literacy. It’s more important than ever to transform learning and break the habits of mind that lead to conspiratorial thinking, including the spreading of misinformation.
- One presenter was critical of widespread resource evaluation tools (CRAAP or SIFT) as being too superficial, much like a grocery list one would use to check off items at a supermarket. Instead, she suggested that students should be challenged to construct their own authority measures, do their own fact-checking and defend their source selections.

- A panel suggested that perhaps the time has come to consider Information Literacy as an academic discipline. It noted that the Information Literacy community has grown beyond library walls and into almost all aspects of academia; it has a long standing history of inquiry, similar to other sciences; and it has created curricula to support itself.
- The challenges of ensuring that all first-year students are equipped with the Information Literacy Skills they need to be successful in academia was also discussed. Various models were proposed and evaluated. The most successful model featured Academic Librarians teaching a 1-credit required writing lab that was tied to a required writing course (such as English 100). They found that not only did they reach more students, but students of all demographics were more successful in this model than in the other models. Still, the ability for every academic library to provide any model will depend heavily on staffing levels, instructor willingness to collaborate, and system-wide buy-in.

### **Collaboration between K-12 Schools & Libraries and Higher Ed Colleges & Libraries**

- I learned that New Jersey is currently the only state in the union that has codified the requirement of K-12 instruction on information literacy, something to keep an eye on as it develops. If done right, students would leave the K-12 system and enter academia with a greater set of tools that would set them up for success.
- One panel noted that they offered Information Literacy training for all HS School Librarians and their English teachers in their local area so that they could align vertically to prepare students for entering college. The end result was the development of a K-12 scope and sequence which detailed what would be taught when.

### **Standing up for Indigenous communities**

- Keynote Speaker Rebecca Nagle (advocate, writer and citizen of the Cherokee Nation) provided numerous examples of how indigenous groups are often left out in the media. For example, she shared a news article about the 2020 Election Results in Arizona, which provided a vote breakdown of White, African American, Asian, Hispanic and Other ethnic groups, but left out Native Americans even though there are 300,000 in Arizona. A closer look also reveals that Native Americans are largely Democratic, and therefore, they had a major impact on President Biden's winning Arizona. Another example was a study that examined the ethnicity of female actresses in top grossing movies over a 20-year period – only to find that a tiny percentage included an indigenous woman. Finally, she compared the extensive media coverage of the murder of Gabbie Petito (a white woman and social media influencer) to the lack of coverage of indigenous women who also go missing or end up dead. Her message: When the media fails to portray indigenous groups in the same way that it portrays white people, indigenous groups are then erased from history. It's important to keep telling the stories of indigenous people.

### **Impact on my position as a UHMC Librarian**

The impact this conference had on me as a brand new academic librarian was immense. While librarianship at its very basic core is similar no matter where one works, the needs and challenges surrounding higher education librarianship are very unique and require a specific knowledge base and approach. On a very personal level, this conference afforded me the opportunity to delve into some of these topics that would have been challenging for me to pursue on my own. Additionally, one of the benefits of attending this conference is that I will have access to many of the recordings, research papers, and presentation slides from ACRL 2023 for up to a year. This will allow me to go back and revisit this wealth of information as I continue to grow professionally here at UHMC.

### **Benefit to the UHMC Library, UH System and the wider community**

My immediate plans are to share general takeaways of the convention with my fellow UHMC Library staff members to inform and educate them about trends and innovation in the academic library field. I plan to share the information about K-12 and Academic partnerships with the Maui District School Librarians at an upcoming meeting. Further, I will share some of my takeaways with the UH Libraries Information Literacy Committee (UHLILC) and possibly include it in an upcoming UHWO Misinformation Week panel session led by the UHLILC. Finally, in conjunction with UHMC's Lau'ulu Native Hawaiian Council and its goal to support, advocate and advance Native Hawaiians, I will be actively looking for ways to keep telling and encouraging Native Hawaiian stories now and for generations to come by hosting special guest speakers and events in the UHMC Library.

### **Mahalo!**

In closing, I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to the UHMC Faculty and Staff Development Fund (FSDF) team, as well as the UH Foundation, for their generous support of my most recent professional development endeavor.

With gratitude,

Shannon Alueta, UHMC Librarian