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From the Director’s Chair

We have two great accomplishments this year. First, our graduate certificate in Data Analytics for Decision Making will likely start in January 2019 at rates similar to in-state tuition! The certificate is fully online and you can take one course at a time. The curriculum is designed to create data savvy general managers and course content is applicable to organizational management and project planning. Courses include: Introduction to Data Analysis, Data Visualization and Communications, and Planning and Managing Data Mining Projects.

Second, the UX certificate started with much success this fall. The first cohort includes alumni, other librarians and archivists in the field, and a variety of professionals from health care, software, communications, etc. Students who complete either certificate, and are admitted to an iSchool master’s program, can use the credits toward a master’s degree. The certificates will be an important recruiting pipeline for our graduate programs. Alumni endorsements are crucial for recruiting, so please continue to recommend the Information School to people who are interested in data analytics, user experience design, librarianship, archives, and all our other areas of expertise. Learn more by contacting Certificates Coordinator Jenny Greiber (jgreiber@wisc.edu) or visiting the iSchool website.

Student Emmon Rogers visits New Zealand

The possibility of a trip to Aotearoa (New Zealand) was a (fantastic) surprise to second-year student Emmon Rogers. She spent an enlightening eight days observing the world’s best system for collaboration between indigenous knowledge paradigms and Western library practice. New Zealand—with its two created-equal library associations and its systematic, almost-required attitude toward cultural collaboration—has surpassed the US in the cultivation of respect and understanding between indigenous and European epistemologies.

The trip included visits to Auckland Central City Library to talk with Pouarataki Rautaki Maori (Principal Advisor Māori) Judith Waaka and LIANZA President Louise LaHatte. Later, Rogers headed south to Wellington to chat with LIANZA staff about their insight into NZ library biculturalism, and to sit in on meetings of Te Whakakaokao (Māori Subject Headings working group) as they add to and critique a culturally tailored (though LOC-compatible) Māori Subject Headings List. The great honor of meeting with Tumuaki (Leader) CJ of Te Rōpū Whakahau (Māori library and information worker’s association) to discuss everything from what libraries should be, to how American libraries and indigenous peoples can improve their relationships, capped off the week. Emmon Rogers’s trip was funded in part by donations from Ms. Patricia Coatsworth.
Distinguished Alumna
Dr. Rhea Brown Lawson, PhD 1998

Dr. Rhea Brown Lawson began her career in libraries as a para-professional at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, MD. Though she was not seeking a career in libraries, she had been a devoted patron throughout her life. Like most people who “stumble” into the LIS profession, she fell head over heels in love with it. Early on, Dr. Lawson found that she loved providing the array of services the library had to offer, and she especially enjoyed getting kids excited about the stories and adventures found in the pages of books. At Pratt, innovation and creativity were encouraged and celebrated and she flourished in that environment. She eventually earned an MLS from the University of Maryland.

From there, Dr. Lawson was recruited to the PhD program at the (then) UW–Madison School of Library and Information Studies by the late Deb Johnson. Their paths crossed often through their respective work in adult and family literacy. Additionally, she was drawn to the work and publications regarding planning and role setting for public libraries that Doug Zweizig and others at UW–Madison championed. Dr. Lawson says her time in Madison broadened her knowledge of the profession and expanded her thinking through interaction with the talented faculty and staff and the students in her cohort. Many of the concepts to which she was exposed at UW–Madison still influence her leadership philosophy and problem-solving strategies. In the school’s rich and supportive environment, she had the opportunity to develop and teach classes in urban librarianship and multicultural library services. Dr. Lawson discovered she loved teaching and is still teaching graduate classes in leadership today.

Alumni Update

Jim Rettig (MA’75), library director at the US Naval Academy, retired in May 2017, concluding a career of more than 40 years. He served as university librarian at the University of Richmond, in administrative positions at the College of William and Mary and the University of Illinois-Chicago, and as a reference librarian at the University of Dayton and Murray State University. His reference book review column ran in the Wilson Library Bulletin and online for 18 years. His Distinguished Classics of Reference Publishing received the G.K. Hall Award in 1993. He served as president of ALA’s Reference and Adult Services Division and as ALA president (2008–09), and was named distinguished alumnus of the year by the (then) UW–Madison School of Library and Information Studies.

In Memoriam

Philip Q. Sawin (MA’66) passed away on Feb. 7, 2018. Philip spent many years as Head of Acquisitions for UW-Stout.

Enhance the profession:
LEB Walker Memorial Diversity Fund

In a 2010 study, the American Library Association reported only twelve percent of creden-tialed librarians in US public, academic, and school libraries were members of racial and ethnic minority groups. By contrast, according to the most recent census, people of color represent 39 percent of the country’s total population. This disparity highlights a severe underrepresentation of individuals of color in the library and information professions. To combat this troubling imbalance, the iSchool’s Louise Elizabeth Butler Walker Memorial Diversity Fund was created to attract and support students from racial and ethnic minority groups.

Diversifying the profession, the ultimate goal of the Fund, will have a ripple effect. New voices and fresh perspectives will be represented in library services and practice; new partnerships will be realized; and more users will recognize themselves in library staff. A diverse profession encourages more creative services for all.

To make a difference, please consider contributing to the Fund. It’s possible to contribute a single sum or donate at a low monthly level. Every donation helps the iSchool recruit students from underrepresented groups and enhances the profession overall. Submit your donation today! [https://go.wisc.edu/384265](https://go.wisc.edu/384265)

Thank you to the following friends of the Information School who have pledged $5,000 or more to the Fund’s endowment: Susan Brynteson, Veronica “Ronnie” M. Gillespie, Louise Robbins, Beacher J. Wiggins, Christine S. Windheuser, and Jennifer A. Younger. Please contact iSchool Director Kristin Eschenfelder (eschefelder@wisc.edu) if you would like to support the Butler Walker Diversity Fund at the Founder level.

How to Give to the Information School

To make an online gift or contribute to a fund not listed below, visit [go.wisc.edu/ischoolgiving](http://go.wisc.edu/ischoolgiving)

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Please make your check payable to the University of Wisconsin Foundation and mail it to:

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For planned giving, contact UW Foundation representatives: 608-262-7225 or [http://www.supportuw.org/how-to-give/](http://www.supportuw.org/how-to-give/)

Questions? Call 608-263-2909.

Louise Butler Walker (’35) was the first African American graduate of the Information School. Ms. Walker attended UW from 1931–1935, and obtained her BA and library diploma concurrently with Phi Beta Kappa honors. She worked as a young adult/children’s librarian in Wisconsin from 1954–1969, and passed away in 2000.
Alumni Profiles

When Robin Rice (MA’91) attended UW in the 1990s, email was a novelty, Gopher was used instead of the web, and computer searching was learned through paid sessions using dial-up databases. Through a student job at the Data and Program Library Service, Robin gained technical skills that helped her become an academic data librarian after graduation.

In 1998, the University of Edinburgh was seeking an experienced data librarian and Robin’s skills were so rare, she earned a permit to work in the UK. Robin is now Head of Research Data Support at the University of Edinburgh and recently co-authored The Data Librarian’s Handbook.

Robin also shared career advice, “Skills are important, but so is the big picture. Learn all you can about what it means to be a librarian or information professional while you are at the iSchool, because whatever the specific modes of information are at the moment, they will keep changing. That’s the difference between preparing for your next job and a life-time career.”

April Rodriguez (MA’15) is a Film Archivist at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Archive Collections. The most rewarding aspect of her job is that it is what she has been setting herself up to do all these years, which is to work with audiovisual collections in order to preserve the story.

At the iSchool, April sought out every opportunity to pick up hands-on experiences pertaining to her field, which she says are plentiful at UW. While the iSchool gave her the experience to be a competitive candidate, April points out that today’s job descriptions require more than just a degree. To add to her knowledge base, April took advantage of the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) courses and the school’s subscription to Lynda.com.

When asked if working for the Academy is as glamorous as one may imagine, April stated, “To me, glamorous has meant the opportunity to see a nitrate print of Casablanca projected, hearing in-person from cast and crew about their projects, watching film being projected every week, and handling film every day.”

Mary Kate Kwasnik (MA’15), manager of exhibitions and public programs at the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York City, builds digital exhibitions with archival materials and manages grant-funded programs that send exhibitions and programming funds to schools, public libraries, museums, and universities.

In August, Mary Kate and colleagues were awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant that will send funding to public libraries to run programs based on Gilder Lehrman’s lesser known Founding Era documents.

Mary Kate says the iSchool did a fantastic job of getting her ready for the work force. “By being flexible about what kinds of jobs I was applying for, I was able to find a really neat, unusual position that I love. My work and classroom experiences while I was in the iSchool prepared me for all different kinds of jobs.”
While our students were on winter break, the Information School staff was hard at work transforming the library. This process has been thoughtful and gradual—five years in the making! Duplicated materials were removed, allowing for books to be shifted and, most dramatically, the periodicals stacks to be dismantled. This all led to more study space and light in the library. Additionally, students now have access to materials that were previously uncatalogued, and the AV materials were preserved, improving the collection.

Natural light now fills the new hardwood floors, and you can see the iconic view of Lake Mendota as soon as you step off the elevator. The open space better matches the open and welcoming atmosphere cultivated by the library staff.

Bronwen Masemann, collections librarian, states, “It has been rewarding to work with a team of dedicated and professional student assistants, who have been involved throughout the entire process in planning and problem solving.”

The next phase of the process will be replacing and updating furniture in the new space.
Faculty and Staff News

Michele Besant, associate director, was pleased to have a 2001 paper she co-authored with Gary Burnett and Elfreda Chatman, “Small Worlds: Normative Behavior in Virtual Communities and Feminist Bookselling” appear in the “Best JASIST Paper of the Decades” list. Her interest in how we facilitate reaching beyond our individual small worlds is evident in participation in the advisory group for ALA’s Public Programs Office research project, National Impact of Library Public Programs Assessment.

Allison G. Kaplan, faculty associate, was awarded the Ezra Jack Keats/Janina Domanska Fellowship to work with the collection at the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection, University of Southern Mississippi. The work was to investigate the personal papers of children’s book author and photographer, Tana Hoban (1917-2006).

Kyung-Sun “Sunny” Kim, professor, presented a poster “Perceived usefulness of social media features/elements: Effects of coping style, purpose, and system,” co-authored with Sei-Ching Joanna Sin (PhD’09), Associate Professor of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, and authored “Personal information management by social scientists in academic contexts” in *Documentation, Information & Knowledge*.

Meredith Lowe, outreach specialist, is leading the 2018 Librarians’ Tour to Scotland in July, and planning the second Power Up Conference for Youth Services Librarians and Staff, coming up in March 2019.

David B. Price continues to enjoy working with students and helping them with their questions and concerns as part of the front office staff. Rock on, librarians!

Associate professor Alan Rubel contributed to an article on brain-computer interfaces and privacy in the November 9, 2017, issue of *Nature*. Imagine being able to control a robotic arm with a device attached to your skull or a chip implanted in your brain. This type of innovation presents a powerful way to address mobility issues among persons with disabilities and is already being developed. It also raises issues about how to protect identities when computers are attached directly to human brains.

Jonathan Senchyne, assistant professor, published articles in *Technology and Culture*, *PMLA*, the Cambridge *Thoreau in Context* companion, and, with doctoral student Mei Zhang, in *Libraries: Culture, History, and Society*. The essay in *PMLA* recounts the rediscovery of a manuscript essay written by the 19th century African American enslaved poet George Moses Horton, a story also featured in the *New York Times* and on NPR. He was a Pine Tree Foundation Distinguished Visiting Fellow for the Future of the Book in a Digital Age at the City University of New York.

Dorothea Salo, faculty associate, won the National Digital Stewardship Alliance’s 2017 Innovation Award for educators. With Dr. Kyle M.L. Jones (PhD’15), she authored the article “Learning Analytics and the Academic Library: Professional Ethics Commitments at a Crossroads” to be published in *College and Research Libraries*.

Debra Shapiro, faculty associate, taught a new class, Digital Image Archiving, in Spring 2017. She also updated Information Architecture to include more UX design. She continues to be active in professional associations, and organized a panel presentation for the ALA Annual Conference, followed by a reaction panel on the opposite side of Chicago’s sprawling McCormick Place. A headcount showed that, happily, at least 3/4 of the audience for the first panel made it to the reaction panel.

Catherine Arnott Smith, associate professor, will work with iSchool students on a contract from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to investigate the health information needs of public librarians. This follows on her national survey of challenges for public librarians during Affordable Care Act enrollment. Her research appeared in venues from the Cogan Ophthalmic History Society and the American Medical Informatics Association. She is a Discovery Fellow, attached to the Virtual Environments Group, Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery.

Rebekah Willett, associate professor, received a three-year grant from IMLS entitled “Navigating Screens: Libraries as Community Hubs for Teaching Positive Screen Media Practices,” with June Abbas, University of Oklahoma, and Denise Agosto, Drexel University. Willett published two articles about public library makerspaces: a single-authored article in *Learning, Media and Technology* and a co-authored article in *International Journal of Designs for Learning*. She was a keynote speaker at conferences about children’s media in Melbourne and Brisbane, Australia.
Located between Memorial Union and the Red Gym, the new Alumni Park brings green space, gardens, and lake views to the heart of campus and downtown Madison.

All are welcome!

ALUMNI & FRIENDS REUNION AT ALA IN NEW ORLEANS

Date and time are not yet set. Please check the iSchool website and social media for details. This year, we will be part of the ALISE shared reunion. We hope to see you!