

This year the QUT Information Professionals Alumni Chapter were extremely pleased to be able to offer not one, but two, bursaries to the ALIA Access 2010 conference. In line with the conference theme, we were able to offer a bursary to an alumnus and to a current student in the Masters of IT (LIS) program. The bursaries were awarded to Kelly Johnson, QUT LIS student, and Elizabeth Smith, from Wide Bay TAFE. Both bursary recipients gained some valuable insight and information from the conference and also had a lot of fun.

Elizabeth Smith of Widebay Institute of TAFE was the recipient of the QUT Alumni Bursary. She writes:

My attendance at the ALIA Access 2010 conference, having been in the library wilderness for a few years, gave me the opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and friends I had not seen for a number of years. This seems similar to the way I have been reconnecting to friends on Facebook and the only way I have been using Web 2.0 technology. I learnt that there is so much more I could be using Web 2.0 technology for and the conference certainly opened my eyes to the different applications that could be used within the library sector. It was the first conference I had attended where it was possible to tweet into the different streams with questions and ideas. Some attended one stream whilst following another through the Tweets. I regret I didn't take up this opportunity but it seemed successful and will, I am sure, be used again in other conferences.

As a TAFE librarian I attended the TAFE Stream, where I heard thought-provoking presentations, innovative ideas and some which just made me green with envy – 45 subscription databases at Southbank, versus two at my library!

Stand outs for me were: Michael Coghlan from TAFESA spoke about the way Web 2.0 is changing the locus of control to everybody as we can all contribute, share and connect on the web, and the positives and negatives this has.

Sophie McDonald from the University of Technology, NSW inspired many to think about how to use Web 2.0 in their libraries to make them more fun, engaging places for the clients. Thanks for introducing me to the concept of QR codes; I had to go and ask what they were and my colleague has demonstrated one to me. Now I need a new phone.

Judith Peacock from QUT introduced QUT's new StudyWell resource which provides new students with tips and tricks on how to study in just three clicks. I am thinking this might be worth considering in the TAFE environment. A fairly dry subject topic about a study skills module was presented in an entertaining and engaging manner.

The live link up with Stephen Abram of Cengage/Gale worked successfully and he provided a thought-provoking presentation on the issues libraries need to face to prepare for the future, in terms of books, media, collections, mobility and legal frameworks. He predicted the way ebooks would develop

but I hope that this won't herald the end of the paper-based books because (call me old fashioned) but I still prefer the feel of a book to the IPAD I got to test out, even though they had some good applications.

I found the sessions on the marketing of special libraries useful as we are always looking for ways to better market to our clients in TAFE. Again Web 2.0 could have its uses in this area and this is one area my library is already branching into with a library blog <http://widebaytaferics.blogspot.com/>

I understand the sessions on library leadership were extremely good and I wished I had tweeted into them. Oh well, next time. I also understand that the discussions taking place in the Library Camp were successful and are probably still going on in the Web 2.0 environment.

So I have concluded that I really need to get more involved in Web 2.0/Library 2.0 and learn more about future technologies but I will fight for the preservation

of the hard copy book. It hasn't had its day.

I thank QUT Information Professionals Alumni Chapter for the opportunity to get attend the

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conference.

It was a valuable experience and I have taken away much from the event.

Kelly Johnson received the QUT student bursary to attend Access 2010. She writes:

A recurring piece of advice from my lecturers is to be open to new experiences and say yes whenever possible. That isn't often easy but going to networking events like those hosted by the QUT IP Alumni Chapter is an excellent way to learn from a diverse group of colleagues, build confidence, enhance professional development and, most importantly, have fun. When I heard about ALIA Access, I didn't know much about it but I decided to take a risk and was generously given the chance to attend free of charge. I wouldn't have been able to go on my own, so I determined to make the most of this rare opportunity. As a current MIT-Library and Information Science student at QUT, attending ALIA Access 2010 was an amazing and eye-opening experience.

So what was it like attending a conference for the first time? Well, I did not know what to expect and was apprehensive walking into the convention centre knowing no-one. Before the conference started I had been following the ALIA Access Twitter feed and blog which was excellent preparation and increased my excitement. Then I just had to show up.

The first day I attended the library tour of North Brisbane public libraries. As a novice, what I know about public libraries is limited to my personal experience as a member and theory from readings and lectures. In practice, visiting just three

nearby libraries showed a wide range of options and ideas on how to deliver services. But I was more impressed with my fellow tour mates than the libraries themselves. Most of them were public librarians with years of experience and they were full of questions and comments, both negative and positive. Looking at each service through their eyes, I gained a host of different perspectives and real world practical ideas about librarianship. This kind of experience is important for students and new grads to reinforce critical thinking about what we encounter in the workplace. Also the value of sharing ideas with colleagues was obvious.

The second day I devoted to the New Grads stream. In general, it was a hard decision to pick which streams to attend but this one was a pretty obvious choice for me as I explore my career options. It was amazing to have a whole day dedicated to developing new professionals. It made me feel confident I chose the right area of study and that there are many ways to use my degree. The main thing I got from the day was an emphasis on getting involved at whatever level is comfortable; such as

"The main thing I got from the day was an emphasis on getting involved at whatever level is comfortable; such as writing articles, doing independent research or volunteering on committees. It isn't all about advancing individual careers but about adding to the overall profession. As well, there was a wealth of practical advice and interesting ideas for work exchanges and defining what a library professional's career actually is – basically anything you can imagine. On the last day I split my time between streams. I listened to some excellent speakers in the public and special libraries streams and was impressed with the variety of programs and services being used in various types of information services. Presenters stressed user needs, values and evaluation and I heard about some exciting and unique programs. I also attended the lightning talk session of LibraryCamp where many topics were covered and then breakout discussions were held. This was an amazing chance to hear really passionate people talk and discuss important issues. This unconference style is ideal for new grads and students to participate in informal but structured knowledge sharing. I hope to be able to add more the next time I attend one of these sessions. Besides the sessions and tours, networking was the main activity of the conference. There were several fun networking events like New Grads in the Pub, as well as chatting between sessions throughout the day. I think networking is particularly hard for students to tackle, especially if like me they haven't worked in a library yet, but I found that every person I met was unfailingly friendly and interesting. Every student and new grad should make an effort to attend any alumni or other new grad

events in their area to meet colleagues in similar situations. Maybe that librarian on the barstool or conference seat next to you is the perfect person to help shape your brilliant idea and put it in practice.

If you didn't get to Access 2010, check out the papers at <http://conferences.alia.org.au/access2010/program.html>



Snapped in Brisbane

A rare moment when the ALIA Board is all in one place at one time. Back (Left to Right): John Bayliss, Julie Rae, Graham Black, Andrew Hocken. Front (Left to Right): Gill Hallam, Kate Sinclair, Margaret Allen.