

iNews

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Brian Bannon, Distinguished Alumnus 2015

By Clark Heideger



Brian Bannon, the 2015 iSchool Distinguished Alumnus, considers himself an unlikely librarian. Dyslexic as a kid, he never felt fully at home in the environment.

"It wasn't until college that I understood libraries were actually radical institutions," Bannon said. "Their missions are much bigger than what I fully understood as a kid. I quickly got excited about the possibilities given what libraries are really about and the idea of leveraging that mission to do good in the world."

A Bellingham native, Bannon received his undergraduate degree from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma before applying to, and attending, UW's Information School. His first year at UW in 1996, Bannon admits he had a bit of a rocky start. With the MLIS program in transition and in search of a new dean, the road was challenging.

"I had big aspirations about the field of libraries and the world," he said. "But what I found was a program that had probably more than one foot in the old ways of libraries, but was on a quest to find an inspirational leader that would move the library program into the 21st century."

Luckily, the iSchool found that person in Mike Eisenberg.

"I was inspired by him as a person," Bannon said. "He represented why I loved libraries and why I got into the work. He worked with me, along with other students, to make this a great experience."

And Bannon's second year was miles above the first. He got an iSchool graduates assistantship and took multiple internships, including one at the Seattle Public Library, gaining exposure to interesting things happening in the space of libraries at the time.

After graduating from the iSchool in 1999, Bannon's internship with the U.S. Library Program of the Gates Foundation turned into a job. Holding multiple positions within the program, Bannon soon realized the direction he wanted to take with his career.

"The experience exposed me to the power of public libraries," he said. "I realized it was the place I could achieve what I wanted to do within the field of library science."

Bannon went on to take a job heading User and Technology Instruction at the Seattle Public Library, even managing the opening of a new library in Delridge.

"The leadership challenges, the community and development challenges, are what made me realize I had aptitude and interest in management and leadership," he said. "But also that it was something that I was really interested in and passionate about."

From there, Bannon was eventually recruited to the San Francisco Public

Library where he was the general manager for the neighborhood library system. Making strides towards innovation in the Bay Area, six years later, Bannon got a call from Chicago. At the time, Mayor Rahm Emanuel was looking for a new leader for the Chicago Public Library.

"He was really interested in looking at ways of leveraging the unique mission and footprint of the library to be transformative as part of his new vision for the city," said Bannon.

Bannon got the job. And for three and a half years, he's been serving as commissioner of the Chicago Public Libraries. And as the second largest library system in the country, CPL has a long track record for being an innovative library organization.

When Bannon first started, the library was piloting a program called YOUmedia, a digital media program engaging teens in learning. Now he has helped operationalize the program as a central part of what CPL does to serve teens.

"It represents for me the kind of library that would have been welcoming to me as a kid," Bannon said. "The mission is really to connect people to ideas and knowledge to make a stronger and more competitive and democratic society. It was an insight into how libraries might lead the transition in a thoughtful way, and be more impactful against the radical mission that they have."

"Probably our biggest challenge as a field is to continue to fully exercise and realize the radical mission we have as public libraries in the rapidly changing world around us."

But Bannon continued to seek ways to evolve the CPL, staying ahead of the trends to create the right experiences to grow both customers and business. Invited to join the Strategic Advisors Network for the Gates Foundation Global Libraries in 2011, in addition to his role as commissioner, he and the eleven other advisors once again brought up the discussion of innovation.

"How do you innovate rapidly against the world that's changing around you?" asked Bannon. "I think one of the issues that happens with libraries in many industries is seeing an interesting idea down the road but just copying what's working somewhere else. There are risks with not actually changing the DNA of the organization to understand for itself what the problems are to solve."

Partnering with Aarhus Public Libraries in Denmark, with the assistance of leading design firm IDEO, Bannon and the CPL received a \$1 million grant from the Gates Foundation to begin the process of creating innovative library services and programs.

Its new Maker Lab allows the public free, hands-on experience with 3D design software, 3D printers, and other 21st century tools. With the grant, CPL saw the expansion of YOUmedia and revamped the 2013 Summer Learning Challenge, offering kids more ways to participate in creative learning activities. These astounding accomplishments even earned the CPL the 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, for which Bannon accepted the award from First Lady Michelle Obama.

Recently, Bannon has overseen the start of several new programs that are turning heads across the nation. In February, CPL piloted a hotspot-lending

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Harry Bruce, Dean

Dean's Message

Information changes lives.

The iSchool's passion for the social good is what has drawn us all, from many fields and disciplines, to work here. Quite likely it's what attracted you to the UW Information School when you were a student. Today we continue to recruit students in our programs who tell us that they desire a career where they can make a difference.

Our mission is to prepare students to be leaders and innovators, to make information work in the lives of individuals, communities, and organizations; and I'm happy to say we've never been in a better position to do so.

As an alum, you'll be proud to hear that our Informatics program has grown into one of the most competitive programs on campus, and we'll soon add an Informatics minor to provide access to more students; our MLIS program is a model in the field and is defining the future of librarianship; our MSIM program is in high demand, attracting the very best students from around the world; and our Ph.D. students are integral to our vibrant research culture and teaching mission.

The new University president, Ana Mari Cauce, is a strong ally for us, someone who understands that what sets the iSchool apart is its focus on people. She shares our passion for information, because it is essential to the lives of individuals, organizations, and communities.

As we look to the years ahead, to iSchool 2018, we must continue to take stock of trends in the information field and in the needs of information and technology professionals. We will prepare students as thoughtful leaders of the 21st century global information economy while emphasizing what's truly distinctive about the iSchool.

Over the next three years, the iSchool will invest in four areas of strategic importance that reflect our core principles and engage our faculty and students in solving information-related problems of social and economic significance:

The Future of Libraries. Every day, it seems, brings another effort to reimagine the library. In an era of technological transformation, how do libraries fulfill their vital role in scholarship, research, preservation of cultural heritage, sustaining diversity, and providing information services to communities? As a highly ranked program with a rich history, the iSchool is where students come to prepare for leadership in a field ripe for new innovations and ideas. The iSchool attracts the highest-caliber faculty and the brightest students, and is a role model for innovative program development and leading-edge research. We train the visionary leaders of the library world, and our work will lead the way forward.

Our successful Digital Youth initiative is an example of the iSchool's innovative approach to the future of libraries. Led by five members of our faculty with strong local support from the Seattle Public Library and the King County Library System, Digital Youth is a first-of-its-kind effort to more deeply explore how young people are using technology to solve problems, learn, and communicate with one another.

Native North American Indigenous Knowledge. iSchool faculty and students have generated a series of activities, including funded research projects, leadership in national organizations, and community-based work within Native-serving organizations, which have deepened our understanding of Native North American indigenous knowledge at practical, conceptual, and theoretical levels. With our strategic focus on Native North American indigenous knowledge, it is our intention to raise and expand the level of discourse concerning the intersection of information, knowledge, technology, and Native American communities within higher education, broadly and at the iSchool in particular. At the iSchool, we are giving an unprecedented level of intellectual emphasis to this vital research area. We will add faculty and Ph.D. students, and we will train students to be change agents and innovators, to work with Native communities. Our hope is that our work in this area will be recognized and emulated by iSchools around the world.

Data for Social Good. The iSchool looks beyond the hype surrounding "big data" to look more broadly at its ethical dimensions — the human side of data. Data-centered fields are among the fastest growing sectors of the global economy, and the Puget Sound region is brimming with industry partners that support our efforts to educate students who understand how data can be used in effective decision-making and policy. The iSchool's DataLab, for example, is a nexus for conducting research on large datasets to help understand the behavior of individuals and societies. With our strengths in data curation, visualization and knowledge organization, we have the extraordinary ability to produce students who are both tech-savvy and well versed in the social and ethical implications of their work.

Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) for the Social Good. The UW is a leader in HCI research and education — easily among the top three programs in the world — led by iSchool faculty and others distributed across campus in disciplines including Computer Science, Human Centered Design and Engineering, and the School of Art + Art History + Design. An exciting startup, AnswerDash, resulted from our research, and we are a key partner in a new master's degree in HCI and Design. We provide a critical perspective, viewing HCI through the lens of social progress in areas such as learning, literacy, health, access, and justice.

In each of these areas and in all other information disciplines, we focus on solutions that make information work in a way that benefits people and their communities.

Information changes lives. That's why we love what we do. @

Brian Bannon, Distinguished Alumnus 2015 (continued from page 1)

program, allowing Chicago residents with library cards to check out Wi-Fi hotspots like a book. The CPL has also made 500 programmable robots, donated by Google Chicago, available for checkout to help teach and practice computer programming. In April, six Chicago-area education, media, and maker startups, hoping to connect their business with the city’s most utilized public resource, even pitched partnerships to CPL.

In his time as commissioner, Bannon has seen the CPL rise to new heights, living up to its reputation as one of the most groundbreaking public libraries in the world.

“I see my role as establishing this new direction of the libraries,” he said. “I want to build the right culture and organization that will allow us to fulfill our mission, and continue to make the connections externally with the great work that we’re doing internally.”

And in May, Bannon came back to Washington to attend the Dean’s Club Dinner. Awarded the iSchool’s 2015 Distinguished Alumnus, Bannon is still touched by the honor.

“I feel privileged to be part of the legacy of such a great and well-respected school,” he said. “To be identified as someone distinguished among an already distinguished group of alumni is a humbling experience.”

As for what’s next for him and public libraries, Bannon says the future is now.

“When I think about the future of libraries, I go back to our roots, our mission as civic and learning institutions,” he said. “Probably our biggest challenge as a field is to continue to fully exercise and realize the radical mission we have as public libraries in the rapidly changing world around us. We need to adopt and implement the techniques and organizational tools that allow for rapid change and experimentation so we can continue to realize that mission.” @

MLIS alumni play key roles at Library of Congress

By Mary Lynn Lyke

John Cole was in danger of becoming a TV-snubbing book snob in the 1960s when the director of the graduate School of Librarianship — now the iSchool — shook up his thinking. Even if they didn’t watch TV, Professor Irving Lieberman told his students it was their duty to learn about it and keep informed about it. The director’s eyes were on the future.

“He kept reminding us that it is a wide and ever-changing world of technology, and as new professionals we should look carefully at new developments and see if we can use them to our advantage,” says Cole, who has carried that message with him throughout his storied career at the Library of Congress — a grand institution undergoing profound changes in the age of digitization.

History buffs who once shuffled through enormous card catalog files can now, in a click, access everything from 19th-century baseball cards and Civil War tunes to presidential papers without ever stepping foot in the library’s reading rooms. Those rooms may be emptier now, but the library’s website is hopping, constantly bringing in new audiences of educators, students, scholars, and others.

“When we started sharing materials online, it transformed the opportunities of our library users and changed the way the Library of Congress is oriented,” says Cole, one of a number of iSchool alumni in leadership positions who have helped guide the institution in the electronic era.

Cole has dedicated almost half a century of service to the library, passionately promoting reading and literacy as Founding Director of its Center for the Book. He has used lectures, conferences, symposia, publications — even that provocative medium of television — to get his message across. He plays a key role in the library’s National Book Festival, which attracts more than 80,000 visitors, and chairs its Literacy Award program. He is also the library’s leading historian, with a doctorate in American civilization from Georgetown University.

Cole was one of two outstanding graduates nominated for a Library of Congress management internship by leaders at the UW school in 1966, when libraries were just beginning to explore automating operations and the new field of “media studies.”

“Even then, people at the iSchool had the foresight to see what was happening in the field,” he says.

The other top graduate chosen for a ’66 internship was Mary Levering, who would spend 45 years in key positions at the nation’s library, putting to use problem-solving skills honed at the UW school. Her responsibilities ranged from directing legal research for the institution’s massive Law Library of Congress to reviewing materials for the Congressional Research Service, which prepares background reports on pressing issues for legislators.

“We would read everything produced by CRS analysts to make sure it was unbiased, non-partisan, well-researched and documented, and understandable

by a reasonably educated layperson,” says Levering. Some of the studies ran 200 pages — “and we never missed a deadline.”

In the 1990s, she traveled the country as a senior manager of the U.S. Copyright Office, which is part of the Library of Congress and the source of much of its deposited material.

“The copyright world was grappling with implications of the Internet at the time,” says Levering, who holds a J.D. from the Georgetown University Law Center. “I was helping to develop fair-use guidelines for using copyrighted works in digital form.”

Levering retired in 2011 with a big-picture perspective of what is now the world’s largest library, overseen by a staff of more than 3,000.

“The Library of Congress is an enormously important institution. This is our national repository, the repository of our culture, our history, our literature — one of the most important cultural centers of our patrimony,” says Levering, who, like Cole, is a Distinguished Alumnus of the iSchool.

She describes the Library of Congress’ collections as “rich and magnificent.” On average 15,000 items pour in each working day, from maps and music to movies and manuscripts from around the world. Library staff sorts and sifts and adds approximately 12,000 of those items to permanent collections before the next day’s deluge.

Keeping the behemoth institution apace with ever-advancing technology has been a formidable challenge. Government watchdogs have recently criticized its top leader, retiring Librarian of Congress James Billington, for letting it lag behind in technological areas, including digitization of its more than 30 million books. First priority for digitization has been rare manuscripts, maps, and images.

“I think the library is struggling with the rate at which technology is changing and keeping up with the enormity of its collections,” says 2013 iSchool graduate Jennifer González, a legal information analyst at the Law Library of Congress. “For me, working with digital collections, it is exciting to work on creating some of the solutions to these challenges.”

The Library of Congress dates back to 1800, when Congress first founded it as a research arm in the Capitol building. In 1814, British troops burned that stately building to the ground, destroying the library’s volumes. An almost destitute Thomas Jefferson offered up his personal 6,487-book library — more than twice the size of the original collection, with an added international focus — as a replacement, and Congress snagged it for \$23,950.

“His library was comprehensive,” says Cole. “People eventually realized it could be used not only for Congressional reference, but also as a great base for a national people’s library.”

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Photo by Jan Chipchase, www.janchipchase.com

Mobile-izing Savings in Afghanistan

By Dan Raley

A typical mobile phone used in Afghanistan costs around \$10 and has just nine symbols on it.

This no-frills model won't thrill the average American teenager or gadget geek, but it signifies technological advancement for one of the world's most impoverished countries. People are better connected to each other now in the isolated, mountainous region that's continually in need of modern-day convenience. They previously had only the occasional land line at their calling disposal.

Yet a mobile phone in the hands of an Afghan has the power to do far greater good than simply enable people to communicate more freely, according to Josh Blumenstock, University of Washington assistant professor in the Information School and founding member and co-director of its DataLab.

For the past several years, Blumenstock has been working with other prominent university researchers to understand how Afghans might be encouraged to do something that has proved exceedingly difficult for those living in developing nations — save money. Through a series of projects designed to “Mobile-ize” savings in Afghanistan, they have developed and tested new ways to save money with mobile phones.

“It's important to understand the day-to-day problems faced by people struggling to get by,” Blumenstock said. “As much as we can, we sit down and have tea with ordinary Afghans, to get a sense for what possible solutions might look like. Recently, we've been focused on helping design a new financial product, which is a phone-based savings account.”

The need is obvious. Less than 3 percent of all Afghan citizens currently have bank accounts. There are few banks to access in the country. Many of the banks that do operate are perceived as untrustworthy by a large number of Afghans.

While Afghans typically are paid in cash for work performed, it can be dangerous to carry around large sums in a country that often is lawless in places or still at war. Corruption is widespread and many employees must deal with opportunistic job supervisors who help themselves to a percentage when doling out employee wages, convinced it's the normal way of doing business.

“For a lot of reasons that feed into this project, there are very serious constraints faced by everyday Afghan citizens,” Blumenstock said. “There is considerable potential that new technologies might be able to alleviate these constraints.”

The California native first became interested in Afghan issues after meeting Michael Callen, now assistant professor at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and Tarek Ghani, currently an ESOC Postdoctoral Fellow at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School. Their paths crossed when all were graduate students at the University of California-Berkeley.

They were pulled closer together by research networks and workshops that highlighted their common interests. They shared the same passion for influencing social change. They sat together and came up with ideas that addressed Afghan problems, particularly those involving financial inclusion.

Blumenstock came armed with a computer science and engineering background, and a passion for working in poor and marginalized communities. His expertise previously took him to Rwanda for several months to study the role of mobile phones in that country's economy. He also visited China, South America, and other parts of Africa in his educational pursuits.

Callen and Ghani spent considerable time in Afghanistan, developing networks with policymakers and the private sector while becoming deeply passionate about the struggling nation.

Their collective Afghan research studies have been supported from the beginning by humanitarian foundations and institutes. Outside of the University of Washington, funding and support have come from the Institute for Money Technology and Financial Inclusion (IMTFI), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Innovations for Poverty Action.

The need is obvious. Less than 3 percent of all Afghan citizens currently have bank accounts. There are few banks to access in the country. Many of the banks that do operate are perceived as untrustworthy by a large number of Afghans.

An important first step for Blumenstock and his colleagues was to form a partnership with Roshan, one of Afghanistan's largest telephone companies and a part of the Agha Khan network well known for its mission to help the world's poor. Roshan was interested in learning how to support its mobile phone business while simultaneously catering to the needs of the ordinary Afghans.

The researchers initially studied how 400 people responded to having their salaries placed in an electronic format over the phone, leaving them with mobile money, rather than getting paid in cash.

A dozen or so Afghan nationals were hired to conduct focus groups, help with implementation and manage survey data collection. They conducted thousands of surveys, often interviewing the same person on multiple occasions to see how opinions changed over time. Focus groups were held, three people to a room, where everyone just sat and talked for hours at a time.

Results were positive. Recently, policymakers in the Afghan government have begun to explore how mobile money accounts could help bypass different levels of theft and corruption in the government salary system. Blumenstock's team has been involved in discussions with senior officials about the possibility of transitioning the country's civil service — tens of thousands of employees — to this system.

The second study came next: A mobile phone-based savings account. “It

was a simple idea, but one that needed to be carefully adapted to the Afghan context,” Blumenstock said. “We’ve seen lots of examples of savings technologies that worked in one place and failed miserably in another.”

Over several years, the researchers designed and tested 24 variants of a single basic savings account. Some accounts featured automatic salary deductions and matching incentives, much like a 401(k) account. Other accounts were no-frills and simply provided a safe place to store money. Earlier this year, 1,000 people were monitored as they used their accounts over six months. Through careful tracking of account usage and with several thousand interviews, they learned which accounts worked and which didn’t.

“The end-of-the-day effect, the top-line effect, was that the 401(k)-like accounts were very popular and effective,” Blumenstock said. “People saved a lot of money.”

If given the right tools, Afghans have shown they are no different than anyone else — they will set aside funds for the future. The next step is to build similar technology into other mobile money platforms, both in Afghanistan and around the world. Today, 3.5 billion people in developing countries, including Afghanistan, use mobile phones, even if they’re crude at best; 15 years ago, it was none. That’s a lot of people who might stand to benefit.

“That’s an incredible transformation,” Blumenstock said. “The question now is how is that transformation affecting people?” @

Bill Schrier ('01), CIO for the Seattle Police Department



Last May, Seattle’s aptly nicknamed “chief geek” retired after 30 years of service. As Chief Technology Officer for the city of Seattle, Bill Schrier was responsible for setting standards and policies governing the use of information technology in City government. As the director of the city’s Department of Information Technology, his responsibilities included the city’s data center, computing services, information security, website, municipal television station, community technology, electronic mail system, public safety radio system, telephone network and data communications network. He recently took a new job with the State of Washington, helping to build a nationwide wireless network for first responders.

Then Schrier surprised most everyone by stepping in to fill the role of Chief Information Officer for the Seattle Police Department. Schrier, “a proud, raving Husky,” graduated from the University of Washington Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance in 2001, where he earned a Master of Public Administration. For the past five years, he has served on the iSchool’s Advisory Board for the Master of Science in Information Management Program. Assistant Professor Emma Spiro, whose research interests include crisis informatics and social media, interviewed Schrier about the information challenges he faces as the new CIO of the Seattle Police Department.

Q: You recently retired from service as Chief Technology Officer for the City of Seattle and as the director of the city’s Department of Information Technology. Why did you take on this new role as CIO of the SPD?

A: Earlier this year, recognizing the need for high tech to support law enforcement, SPD created the position of CIO. They did a national recruitment and hired Amazon executive Greg Russell to do the job. Greg left suddenly in early September, so the Chief Operating Officer, Mike Wagers, called me to take over the many projects the department had started. I already knew many of the elected officials and other senior officials in city government, and I have a keen interest in public safety technology. Plus, from 1973 to 1977, I was a street cop in Dubuque, Iowa. I have some feeling for the challenges patrol officers face, and I want to make that job easier. Finally, I’ve lived in Seattle for 38 years and am extraordinarily proud of the city — I want to improve the already high quality of life here.

Q: What have your first couple weeks looked like as the new CIO for the Seattle Police Department?

A: It is a little like drinking from a fire hose — or whatever the law enforcement equivalent of that is. Perhaps jumping into a speeding police vehicle while it is involved in a car chase! There is a lot going on here. We just signed a contract with Accenture to build a data analytics platform, opened a real-time crime center, and are planning to deploy body-worn video cameras to 1,300 police officers. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg. Already SPD has a lot of technology deployed to support public safety — a records management system, computer-aided dispatch system, dashcam video in every patrol car, microphones on every officer, public safety radio network and much more — all of which must be maintained and continually enhanced.

Q: What do you hope to achieve during your term?

A: First, I think every police officer needs a department-issued smartphone. Only about 500 out of 1,300 have them now. I suspect many use their personal smartphones now, even though that is against department policy. At the very least our officers need access to the same technology a majority of adults carry around in their pockets. Next, we need much better field reporting software. Police officers spend a lot of time in front of a computer typing reports. The records management system is clunky and not user-friendly. We need speech-to-text and great software that helps officers write reports so they can spend more time on the street. Lastly, we need a real-time crime center. This center would get intelligence to officers as they are responding to calls. For example, when an officer walks up to a house, he or she should know about all the previous calls to that residence, who is likely to answer

the door, if anyone there or nearby is known to use weapons or has a warrant. In fact, such information also should be available to others such as public health nurses and Child Protective Services caseworkers who come to homes.

Q: You have said that all law-enforcement agencies like the SPD have challenges, but that some of those challenges can be met through wise application of information technology. What are some of the key challenges you hope to address first? What technology do you think will aid in addressing these issues?

A: We need better analytics. When an officer stops a car, for example, he should know almost instantaneously who might be driving, whether they are dangerous, whether they are known to own or use weapons or drugs. We need to deploy body-worn video cameras. This is extraordinarily expensive for many reasons, but the public expects it. Nearly 90 percent of Seattle residents support the use of such cameras according to independent polling. We need simple software like time-keeping and scheduling. The 911 center is staffed 24/7, but all the scheduling of shifts and dispatchers is still done by hand using sophisticated software from Microsoft called “Excel.”

Q: How do you think the new SPD data analytics platforms and mobile policing strategy will fit in with how you are using technology?

A: The Data Analytics Program (DAP) has two purposes: to improve how we train and support police officers in their interactions with the community, and to help solve crimes and direct police resources. As you may know, the Department of Justice sued the City of Seattle because some police officers used excessive force and treated people of color badly. The city entered into a consent decree with DOJ, and now a DOJ monitoring team is in place to monitor improvements the police department is making. These improvements include more training, training on de-escalation, crisis intervention and more. The Data Analytics Program will help us track such training, track every use of force, and also help us address issues by identifying officers who are prone to use force rather than other techniques to resolve issues. Eventually the Data Analytics Program will also include analytics to help solve crimes. Mobile policing will allow for better information when an officer approaches a home or stops a car, but it also should include “next generation 911”. We probably have 400,000 people in Seattle who have smartphones which can snap photos and take video. When they observe crimes or public safety hazards, they should be able to get those images or video to police officers rapidly to help capture criminals.

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Bill Schrier (continued from page 5)

Q: In my own work I study how emergency responders use social media. This work suggests emergency responders use social media as another channel for dissemination rather than a platform for interaction with the general public. Do you anticipate trying to improve on the SPD's social media strategy?

A: Actually SPD has been a leader in using blogs and Twitter for interaction with the public. That's a credit to Sean Whitcomb and his team in the public information office. I'd like to see easy ways for the public to contribute tips and photos and video of crimes and hazards, so the police can address them, but that also gives rise to privacy concerns. We don't want to become a nation like those dictatorships where citizens were encouraged to spy and report on each other. There's a fine line here. I'm not sure where it is.

Q: Emergency responders can rapidly gain the spotlight on social media when crises occur. These accounts often gain a very large audience during crises, but in doing so the cost of mistakes also increases. Do you see this as an opportunity or a challenge?

A: We — the government — take far too long to act and respond and give advice in crisis. Again, the City of Seattle is actually one of the leaders in this — we have a nationally renowned Emergency Management Director in Barb Graff, and the city has an active use of social media in its Twitter accounts and set of linked blogs at <http://citylink.seattle.gov>. Most of that work was done when I was CTO, although the ideas mostly came from Mayor Nickels and his team. I'd like to support emergency management by figuring out a way to better crowdsource information from people at the scene of incidents and disasters.

Q: You are assuming the role of the CIO at a time when Seattle Police Chief Kathleen O'Toole is restoring the public's perception of the SPD after many challenging and turbulent years. What part does the CIO play in this campaign? How much information technology be used to aid these plans?

A: It is all about community engagement. I see great promise in electing seven City Council members by district. Up until now, people did not know who really represented them in city government, so they called the mayor. Now, after January 1, they will have a City Council member representing their district, as well as the mayor and two at-large council members. They will know who to call! And that council member will engage other city resources such as the police department. I see great hope in a constituent relationship management system and maybe

311 — a single number to call for non-emergencies just like 911 is for crimes and life-threatening emergencies. Every call for a non-emergency should be tracked and followed up. These might be broken parking meters, water leaks, damaged street signs, damaged park equipment, electrical outages and potholes. You can report those things now, but finding which number to call is bewildering, and there is no central tracking mechanism. Once there is a council member in each district, she or he will want to know about such complaints and make sure they are being tracked and fixed.

Q: What do you think about body-worn video cameras?

A: Almost 90 percent of Seattle residents want police to wear body-worn video cameras. However, Washington state law says anyone can request such video and it must be turned over to the person who makes the request unless the video is part of an active criminal investigation. The State Attorney General has written an opinion stating police officers do not need to inform anyone in a public place — or a private residence — that the cameras are recording. This video has great potential for making police work more transparent, but poses great dangers to privacy. The mayor and the police chief have committed to deploy these cameras, but we need to proceed very cautiously in doing so.

Q: What are your thoughts on transparency and privacy?

A: We have to get better at this. Actually the SPD has been a leader in this area — almost all calls to 911 are publicly listed on an open data website, <http://data.seattle.gov>. Almost no other department publicly reports those. (They will publicly list crimes, but not 911 calls.) We have to get better at getting timely information to the neighborhood blogs and block watch captains. They actively want to help improve public safety. With only 1,300 officers and a daytime population approaching 1 million people, we cannot expect only police officers to “do” public safety. We need to share information with others who can help. Privacy, however, is an issue. Those 911 calls we publicly report? They do not include specific addresses or the caller's name, in order to protect privacy. We spend a lot of time redacting the names of victims, complainants and witnesses from police reports before making them public. You always have to balance the public's demand for transparency with a citizen's right to privacy. That keeps my job interesting. @

MLIS alumni play key roles at Library of Congress (continued from page 3)

Two centuries years later, that national people's library has grown into an international people's library — the world's largest. It has offices everywhere from Islamabad to Nairobi dedicated to acquiring materials in almost 500 different languages.

Michael Neubert, a 1990 graduate of the UW school, can attest to the reach of the library's international expansions. His 25 years at the Library of Congress include stints directing the Cairo acquisitions office, establishing library exchanges in three newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union, and helping train librarians in Iraq.

Neubert began his career at the Library of Congress in 1990 as a reference librarian specializing in Russian language collection development. For more than 10 years, the Soviet studies scholar personally reviewed the bulk of Russian monographs coming into the institution. He, too, had been selected by the UW library school for a prestigious Library of Congress internship.

“Having completed my master's degree, I felt I had a particularly well-informed point of view about the role of libraries in society that was more helpful in day-to-day work than I would have guessed.”

The public Internet was still in its fitful infancy when Neubert arrived in 1990, a year before the debut of the World Wide Web.

“In essence most of what I work on now didn't exist,” he says.

His official title today is Supervisory Digital Projects Specialist in the Collections and Services Directorate. He spends part of his time coordinating digital conversion projects and part overseeing the hands-on archiving of websites to add to permanent collections. His team captures website content from around the globe, terabyte by terabyte.

“We have prioritized certain areas, such as national election campaign sites, sites of the legislative branch of the federal government, or sites of noted think tanks and organizations influencing public policy,” says Neubert.

Harvesting is comprehensive, right down to the Facebook page of a here-and-gone campaign opponent in a Congressional election. “For campaign websites, we don't assess the sites, we just crawl them,” says Neubert. “The challenge is in finding them all.”

Jennifer González's research focuses on one site. She is web editor for the Law Library of Congress, in addition to working as legal information analyst and digitization coordinator. She champions the easy download. “I work behind the scenes to keep our content user-friendly in searches.”

González graduated from the iSchool with a certificate from its Law Librarianship program — a program ranked No. 1 in the country by U.S. News and World Report. She also holds a J.D. from Pace University School of Law. The iSchool, she says, gave her a broad grounding in librarianship that serves her well.

“The Library of Congress is an enormous institution and my iSchool training enables me to understand and engage with the wide range of colleagues here.”

She has been at her Law Library job for two years and remains staggered by the scale of this 2.65-million-volume institution within an institution.

“The Law Library is the largest in the world,” she says. “Over half the books are in foreign languages. We have specialists writing about every jurisdiction in the world.”

One of her first big projects there was putting American Indian legal materials online, including constitutions and charters signed with Indians dating back to 1810. Many are in original native languages.

“We wanted to put the collection online so that Indian nations would have access to these laws,” she says. “It's an exciting collection.”

The next project is to finish putting online all of America's historic treaties and statutes.

“I am thrilled,” says González, “to be part of making U.S. laws freely and easily accessible to the world.”

Her advice for future Information School graduates considering working at the nation's most prestigious library is to stay flexible. Know technology, but master traditional librarianship skills.

“One is essential to understanding the present and future, the other to understanding the past and the present.” @



Research aims to better inform patients and doctors

By Doug Parry

iSchool Professor Wanda Pratt has seen the danger of medical errors first-hand.

In 2013, her husband became ill and went to the emergency room with an abnormal heart rate and rhythm. He was given a drug and sent home, where his blood pressure bottomed out and his heart rate slowed to 20 beats per minute. He spent the next week in intensive care for what was eventually diagnosed as Lyme disease. The drug he had been given was contraindicated for his situation, and had made his condition much worse.

Pratt’s husband recovered completely, but their story is all too common. A 2013 study in the Journal of Patient Safety found that medical errors contributed to as many as 400,000 deaths per year in America, making it the third-leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer.

Now Pratt and her research team, made up of iSchool students, physicians, and other colleagues, are working on research they hope will improve patient safety by reducing the number of medical errors — through better use and sharing of information.

Their research focuses on whether patients and their families can help prevent errors by taking a more active role in medical care. To do so, they need to be better informed.

“Our idea is to set up information systems that help enable patients to be much more informed about what should be happening, what could be happening, what they’re doing and why,” Pratt said.

Pratt and her team have recently completed the first year of a five-year study funded by a grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality. They’ve focused initially on surveying patients and their family caregivers at Seattle’s Virginia Mason Hospital and Seattle Children’s Hospital, asking them how they think communication could be improved.

Sonali Mishra, a second-year Ph.D. student at the iSchool, said patients and their families have been very receptive to their efforts.

“A number of patients and caregivers we’ve interviewed, when they hear about the project, they say, ‘Wow, this is so valuable.’” Mishra said. “They tell us, ‘You don’t even know how much this would mean to have a way to be more active.’”

Among the ideas that have surfaced so far is a “One Doc Away” app, modeled on One Bus Away, that would give family caregivers a better idea of when a doctor is likely to stop by the patient’s room. Without knowing when a doctor might stop by, family members don’t know when they can safely step away from the patient’s room.

“The way that they get that information is primarily through conversations with physicians who come by the room, so if they miss that, now they may not see the doctor until 24 hours later,” Mishra said. “The patient’s situation might have changed dramatically in that time.”

Mishra said one theme that emerged quickly was a desire among patients and their families to give more information to doctors.

“We weren’t expecting that to come out so strongly,” Mishra said. “It was striking how many of the participants in our study were really appreciative of our efforts and really want to be involved, and they want a good way of doing that.”

The need for better communication goes both ways. Patients and their families also can have information to share that helps doctors decide on a course for care. Pratt said the value of these interactions to doctors has been one of the most surprising things to surface so far.

“It’s important for doctors to listen to their stories and to know more about that patient,” Pratt said. “Some things happen because the clinical care team doesn’t know things that the personal family care team knows.”

Ari Pollack serves as part of the research team and as a liaison with Seattle Children’s Hospital, where he works as a physician. A 2014 graduate of the iSchool’s Master of Science in Information Management (MSIM) program, Pollack said he’s looking forward to testing solutions based on the initial research.

“What’s exciting for me is being able to take the ideas and listen to the needs of people and then turn them into something that will actually benefit them,” Pollack said.

In addition to Pratt, Mishra, and Pollack, the research team includes physician Barry Aaronson of Virginia Mason; Biomedical & Health Informatics (BHI) Ph.D. students Logan Kendall, Shefali Halder and

“A number of patients and caregivers we’ve interviewed, when they hear about the project, they say, ‘Wow, this is so valuable.’ They tell us, ‘You don’t even know how much this would mean to have a way to be more active.’”

Maher Khelifi; BHI post-doctoral researcher Andrew Miller; MSIM student Alex Filipkowski; and Informatics students Kelsey Aiello and Cory Brown.

Over the next four years, the researchers will create new methods and technologies to share information. They plan to try them out in hospital rooms to see what helps and what further steps could be taken to prevent medical errors.

It’s a process of finding people’s needs and designing around them, Pratt said.

“It’s all about the information,” she said. @

We thank the many alumni, friends and organizations that supported the Information School through their gifts during the 2014-15 fiscal year (July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015). Your support helps build a dynamic community where we educate the next generation of information leaders and find innovative solutions to information challenges.

For questions about this list, please contact Michele Norris, Director for Advancement: 206.543.4458 / mnorris@uw.edu

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Alumni Updates

Informatics

Amber Amin (2015) is living in Portland, working as a product manager at Nike on the Nike Football (soccer) app. She’s also continuing to work on her Capstone project, Achilles, with her original team.

Hamed Barahimi (2011) is now IT Applications Manager for the oncology service line and hospital outpatient departments at Stanford Health Care in Palo Alto, California. He also recently started on his master’s in health informatics and health information management (MHIHIM) at the UW.

Ian Burns (2014) is working as a software engineer with Slalom Consulting.

Meran Hill (2013) is an interaction designer for Fjord and a UX Lead on the T-Mobile project with Accenture Digital.

Ang Li (2015) is working as a front-end engineer at an open data company, Socrata, in Pioneer Square in Seattle.

Clint Malcolm (2015) is working as a software engineer at Indeed.

Andrew Martin (2006) earned an MS in Statistics from Stanford in 2012. More recently he started working in the Data Science team at Zillow as a statistical modeler for its home valuation algorithm, the Zestimate.

Jason Nutter (2012) began working as a front-end engineer at Porch.

Brendan Ribera (2007) creates tech startups in Seattle at Madrona Venture Labs. Previously, he founded PaperKarma (acquired in 2013).

Tim Tan (2013) began at working as a solutions consultant at Highspot, a sales enablement startup. He was previously at Accenture.

M.Lib

Melinda “Mindy” McCormick Coslor (1979) completed a Ph.D. in Education in 2015. The title of her dissertation is “Libraries and the Community College Baccalaureate: Meeting the Challenge.” She studied Washington community college libraries whose institutions implemented baccalaureate degrees.

Marjorie Doyle (1983) is retiring from Missoula Public Library, where she has been an adult reference librarian managing senior outreach, the computer classroom, local history indexing projects and a corps of more than 150 volunteers. She most recently served the Montana Library Association as Chair of the Public Library Division.

MLIS

Mike Bergeson (1991) transferred from the Special Collections Department, where he was the archivist for the entire library system, to the Interlibrary Loan Department at Seattle Public Library.

Teresa Bateman (1986) recently published her 25th children’s book, “Job Wanted.”

Maxine Amaral Braude (1963) retired in 2006 and married in 2007. She has been doing a great deal of traveling.

Colleen Brazil (1994) is Content Access Manager at Sno-Isle Libraries north of Seattle. Sno-Isle Libraries was selected as one of 12 public libraries to participate in the LibHub Initiative Early Adopter Program in 2015. As project manager, she is guiding its efforts to publish catalog metadata to the Web for search engine optimization.

Catriona Buhayar (2008) published a comedic romance, “Mistakes Were Made,” as her alter-ego Taylor Rush. A second novel, “Best Laid Plans,” should be published by the end of the year.

Kaijsa Calkins (2004) is an Associate Librarian at University of Wyoming Libraries. With Cass Kvenild (MLIS 2000), she co-edited “The Embedded Librarian’s Cookbook,” a follow-up to their “Embedded Librarians: Moving Beyond One-shot Instruction” of 2011.

Moriah Neils Caruso (2014) works as preservation librarian at the University of Washington, responsible for digital preservation libraries-wide.

Kari Costello (1999) works with foster kids as a case aide for Community and Family Services Foundation.

Lillian Dabney (2011) is working as a librarian in the LIP program at Seattle Public Library.

Kristen Dietiker (2009) recently was appointed Chief Information Officer for Menlo College, in Atherton, California.

Mike Doane (2005) became a full-time lecturer at the iSchool starting this year.

Amy Donahue (2007) has returned to school to pursue a B.S. in Biological Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, with the intention of matriculating to a genetic counseling master’s degree program in 2016. She hopes to combine her clinical, bioinformatics, and information science interests into a new career involving direct patient care.

Sarah Drerup (2014) was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army National Guard and was assigned to the 792nd Chemical Company as a Platoon Leader. She was the Distinguished Honor Graduate for Phase III of Officer Candidate School (the best of 190 candidates) and also received the Leadership Award for the State of Washington Officer Candidate Class.

Anna Endter (2012) is a reference librarian at the University of Washington School of Law. She recently was elected Vice-President/President Elect of the Law Librarians of Puget Sound. She was also appointed to the American Association of Law Libraries’ Digital Access to Legal Information Committee, which works on national issues related to the digital publication of state laws and regulations, and ensuring permanent public access to these resources.

Violet Fox (2013) began working as metadata librarian at the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John’s University in Saint Joseph, Minnesota. She continues working as news editor for the journal *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*.

Claudia Haines (2013) is the Youth Services Librarian at the Homer Public Library in Homer, Alaska. She recently co-authored the white paper “Media Mentorship in Libraries Serving Youth” for the Association for Library Service to Children.

Irene Haines (1987) is in her 32nd year at Seattle Public Library. She’s currently Adult Services Librarian at the Broadway Branch Library.

Kathleen Johnson (1977) is a librarian for a 6-12 private school, Seattle Academy.

Cassandra Kvenild (2000) is currently serving as Interim Associate Dean at the University of Wyoming Libraries. She is co-author (with Melissa Bowles-Terry, UNLV) of the book Classroom Assessment Techniques for Librarians, published by ACRL Press in 2015.

Jessica Jones (2015) started working full-time as archivist at the Museum of Flight.

Christina Kulp (2004) accepted a new job as the first ever Data Services Librarian at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. She had spent 10 years as the Life Sciences Librarian at the University of Oklahoma.

Amy Massey (1991) works as Communications and Information Manager with North Central Washington Economic Development District.

Monica McQueen (2002) has been Head PYP Librarian at the International School of Geneva in Switzerland since 2012, promoting reading, information and technology skills and experimenting with gamifying the library program.

Amy Mikel (2012) was promoted to Coordinator of School Outreach in September after launching her career as an Outreach Librarian at Brooklyn Public Library. Amy oversees a school partnership project with over 125 schools, and she and her team support other school outreach initiatives throughout BPL’s 58-branch system.

Jennifer Morales (2010) has had a diverse career since leaving the iSchool, including working as a Catalog Specialist for Amazon Kindle and an Indexer for Microsoft Project. Jennifer now works for Google Maps in Bothell, Washington, providing administrative support and developing information products (websites and content) to a Program Management Group.

Cheryl Morrison (2012) presented a poster at ALA Annual June 2015 on the change to a new ILS as part of a consortium with a focus on impacts in acquisitions.

Rachel Price (2014) is a user experience designer and lead user researcher at Factor, a Seattle-based information modeling firm. She is also the organizer of the IA/UX Meetup, chairperson of ASIS&T Pacific Northwest Chapter, and last but not least, she sings and writes for the Seattle jazz-folk band Tofte.

Marjorie Ann Reeves (2006) has published her second book entitled “From Paradise to Hell,” a historical fiction work set in Alabama during the 19th century.

Tod Robbins (2012) is digital asset manager at Boncom in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Lisa Sanders (2001) is librarian of the newly founded Folio: The Seattle Athenaeum, a member supported library and cultural center in Seattle opening in January 2016.

Rivkah Sass (1978) is the executive director at the Sacramento Public Library. The library’s Design Spot and Library of Things were prominently featured in a September New York Times article titled “These Public Libraries Are for Snowshoes and Ukeleles.”

Myra Waddell (2013) is an instruction and research support librarian in the Science & Technology Department at the Hamilton Library of the University of Hawai’i at Manoa.

Genevieve Williams (2005) is serving one year as president of the ACRL Washington State chapter.

Jana Lu Williams (2010) completed her three-year review process to attain full tenure as faculty librarian at Walla Walla Community College. In addition to serving on its curriculum and outcomes assessment committees, she recently started mentoring honors students in their capstone projects.

Sue Wozniak (2014) is a temporary librarian at the UW’s Foster Business Library.

MSIM

Jin Ahn (2009) became a new business manager at SK Global, searching for new items in conjunction with financial technology.

Winford Dixon (2009) is a manager with Deloitte in San Francisco in Enterprise Risk Services.

Doug Duncan (2003) welcomed a new granddaughter and continued to work remotely from Madison, Wisconsin, as Associate University Counsel for Seattle University.

Gauravee Gandhi (2011) works as an Integration Engineer at Intel, acting as a liaison between stakeholders, users, and development teams.

Delong Gao (2014) has been working as a software developer at Tyemill in Seattle.

Del Hazeley (2013) is IT Manager for UW Police, assigned the department’s Technical PM role for the new building coming online in Summer 2016. The job is providing an opportunity to put a significant amount of MSIM course theory into practice.

Zhuang (John) Jiang (2007) is working as a Senior Business Analyst / Marketing Information Consultant at Bank of America.

Zheng Li (2013) is working for a startup company called TimeXtender in Bellevue. His job is about data warehouse and business intelligence.

Karl Nelson (2003) became the Chief Operating Officer of the K-12 OER Collaborative, a nonprofit creating comprehensive, high-quality, open educational resources supporting Mathematics and English Language Arts aligned with state standards.

Shekhar Parkhi (2015) has moved to the San Francisco Bay area to pursue a sales engineering opportunity with PayPal. He works directly with PayPal’s partner clients and internal teams to deliver the most optimum solution, using the right combination from the array of PayPal products, creating superior experiences for merchants and customers.

Brian Smith (2015) is working as a Windows Systems Engineer at UW IT.

Ph.D.

Bryce Newell (2015) began working as a post-doctoral researcher at the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society (TILT), a department within Tilburg University’s School of Law in The Netherlands.

Marc Dupuis (2014) began a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Cyber Security in the Division of Computing and Software Systems at the University of Washington Bothell. He’s contributing to its growing Master of Science in Cyber Security Engineering as well as its Computer Science and Software Engineering degree programs (BS and MS). He has also recently been appointed to two advisory boards: Certificate in Digital Forensics and Certificate in Ethical Hacking, both with UW’s Professional & Continuing Education.

Submit your alumni update online at:

ischool.uw.edu/alumni/submit-update



Photo by Dennis Wise, University Marketing & Communications

Brewing up apps

Story by Hannah Gilman, University Marketing & Communications

A first-generation college student from Kent, Washington, Stephen Ramirez, '15, always wanted to give back to people. He grew up watching his grandmother spend her life in the public service industry, volunteering and working on behalf of others — it's part of what inspired him to help others better do their jobs as an application developer at Starbucks.

It was Ramirez's grandfather, a retired employee of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, however, who inspired him to attend the University of Washington.

"He used to pick up Metro shifts on the weekends that took people to the games down at the stadium, then he'd watch the game and take everyone home; that was his routine during football season," recalls the Informatics major. "He was always really big into the Huskies, and when he took me to my first game, I fell in love with the campus. For me, with all the opportunities at the UW, it was here or bust."

Ramirez was a member of Running Start at Kentwood High School — he earned his associate degree the day before he was handed his high school diploma — and qualified for the Husky Promise, which allowed him to attend the UW without having to worry about finances.

"If I didn't have the Husky Promise, it would have been really hard for me to do all the things I did in college and engage in student life," says Ramirez, who, among being involved in activities campus wide, was invested in the iSchool — he served as president of the Informatics Undergraduate Association, acted as an executive officer of the UW's

first-ever hackathon DubHacks, and led his classmates through commencement as the iSchool's gonfalonier.

Receiving the Husky Promise was also instrumental in his ability to get involved off campus and intern at Starbucks. "Starbucks has an amazing relationship with the iSchool," says Ramirez. "Starbucks sits on the board, is involved in what we're learning, and comes to all the career fairs, which is how I got connected with my internship."

Ramirez was one of three students from the iSchool to participate in the program his junior year.

"Every week during the internship, we got to sit down with vice presidents and directors in the company, and they told us about their departments, or what they did, or how they got to where they were," he says. Because Starbucks is headquartered in Seattle, Ramirez was able get a comprehensive overview of what it takes to make a company of that size and scale run — from a behind-the-scenes look at the roasting facility, to actually talking with the store managers and baristas who serve the coffee. "It was far more educational than it was vocational," he says. "It was all about learning."

And he learned a lot. So much, in fact, Starbucks offered him a job as an application developer for the business intelligence department before he'd even started his senior year. Now, he's a full-time employee, packaging data and building applications that optimize workflow within the company while volunteering his IT skills throughout the community on the side. ☺

Seattle Opera Librarian: Emily Bolton Cabaniss

By Amy Goodloe

Emily (Bolton) Cabaniss has her "13-year-old self's dream job": building a library from scratch.

Cabaniss worked in the Seattle Opera's ticketing office while she was a student in the iSchool's Master of Library and Information Science program. About six months after she graduated in 2014, the opera asked her to create a library from its trove of 14,000 items, including music, video recordings, and books.

Other opera companies have orchestra librarians who help maintain their music, but Cabaniss is believed to be the only dedicated opera company librarian in the United States.

Cabaniss spends much of her time problem-solving. One day she might be oiling the company's instruments, and another she's figuring out how to transfer videos from Betamax to the cloud. She also coordinates all the performance auditions and contracts Trappist monks in Oregon to bind the thousands of pages that comprise an opera's score into a single volume. Along with her assortment of operatic responsibilities, her main objective is to create a library that houses more than 60 years of company knowledge.

The training that Cabaniss received in the MLIS program in knowledge design and classification theory give her the technical expertise to be able to create the opera's library. Beyond that, her MLIS courses helped shape the way she thinks and approaches problems.

When asked which MLIS classes prepared her most for her job, she had some surprising choices.

"My Governmental Publications course actually helped a lot. Government documents are very complex, just like music scores. There's a lot of crossover between the two," she said.



Her courses in Indigenous Knowledge Systems taught her that there's more than one way to organize information. And her Power Structures course gave her the skills to advocate for the library in a group of non-librarians.

"I'm able to understand that there's a lot of competing interests and limited funding, so I've learned how to make the case for the library to those higher up in the company," Cabaniss said. ☺



iSchool interns' ideas take off at Alaska Airlines

By Mary Lynn Lyke

They may have been interns, but iSchool students working at Alaska Airlines this summer say they felt more like peers, working side-by-side with co-workers to identify and solve major problems in the Information and Technology Services division (ITS). Their contributions had substantial impact. One intern proposed advanced technology for baggage tracking that could shave up to 15 minutes off the handling process. Others created new guidelines that will speed up delivery of mobile apps within the company and developed software aimed at greater customer satisfaction and fewer operational hitches, including flight delays.

Managers were impressed — so impressed that they rejiggered budgets in order to offer all eight iSchool interns part-time jobs, an unprecedented move at the company. “We had allotted only three jobs for interns on the part-time basis, but when we went to decide on which three, no one wanted to let their intern go,” says Alaska Airlines Senior ITS Recruiter Lani Pedersen. “They have all just knocked our socks off — far beyond our expectations.”

Interns also gave the experience a thumbs-up — both for the opportunities offered them and for the inclusive culture they found at Alaska Airlines. They felt part of their teams and felt their ideas were respected, interns report.

“From the get-go, everyone was very welcoming. They were quick to bring me up to speed, to fill me in on their projects, and to help me figure out how I could help. They let me do things that took trust on their part,” says iSchool Informatics student Peter Lu.

Interns did face the challenge of navigating a complex corporate environment, where new-gen breakout ideas can clash with established ways of doing things. “It’s hard to be traditional in a field that is always changing,” notes one intern.

But gaps were bridged and channels opened as iSchool students rolled up their sleeves and went to work, ending their 11-week internship with polished “report-out” presentations Sept. 2 before company managers and executives.

“Their presentations were absolutely awesome,” says Kris Kutchera, the recently retired Alaska Airlines ITS Vice President who oversaw the summer intern program. “The kinds of projects they worked on and the contributions they made were just amazing in terms of tangible things that we really needed to have done.”

Kutchera says the company — which is revamping to become “the easiest airline to fly by 2017” — wanted to increase its capacity in mobile social data and cloud service fields. The new fields required fresh thinking and new cutting-edge skills — skills she saw in evidence in the iSchool’s Informatics program, where she focused her attention for this year’s expanded intern roster. “We are less concerned about coding these days and more concerned about design, architecture, user experience, and delivery of project,” says Kutchera, who sits on the iSchool’s Founding Board. “We felt the iSchool’s Informatics program was a good fit for that.”

Six iSchool Informatics students and two graduate students from the Master of Science in Information Management program made it through the formal selection process at Alaska Airlines.

“Half of the interns we hired were women, and there was a lot of ethnic diversity in the mix. That’s something I really like about the iSchool, the amount of diversity. It’s a good pool to be drawing from,” says Kutchera, who was recently joined on the iSchool Founding Board by Alaska Airlines Chief Information Officer Veresh Sita.

The paid internships began with a full-immersion orientation that gave students a nuts-and-bolts look at what’s involved in managing, on average, almost 900 flights per day at Alaska Airlines.

“It’s incredible when you think of all the pieces that have to come together perfectly to get a flight off,” says Kutchera. “Everything has to happen at the right time. The interns got a real appreciation for that.”

After their orientation, interns quickly put iSchool coursework to work, from database management lessons to practiced ways of working collectively on projects.

“At the iSchool, we are constantly doing projects and interacting with each other, and that allowed me to grow in how I worked with people at Alaska,” says Informatics undergraduate Memie Huang, whose goal is to become a UX (user experience) designer.

She had the chance to try on that career full-time this summer as a UX intern working on mobile design guidelines — guidelines that will make employees’ multiple apps more consistent and easier to use. As lead on the project, she used job shadowing, journey mapping, wire-framing, user flows, and testing to accumulate the user data that informed design decisions.

“I was able to really take control of this project,” says Huang, who has accepted part-time work at the company as a junior interaction designer. “As an intern you think, ‘Is what I’m doing really good enough?’ This project validated all the hard work I’ve put into developing my UX design skills. It empowered me,” she says.

Managers at Alaska Airlines, named one of the nation’s 100 most technologically innovative companies by InformationWeek, worked hard to match student interests with meaningful projects. For Informatics student Michael Dang, whose concentration is cybersecurity and information assurance, that meant taking on multiple roles. He worked on security guidelines for mobile development and developed an automatic testing framework for Web services that helps ensure online customers have positive experiences booking reservations, checking bags, and doing upgrades. He also worked on a mobile location awareness tool that could, among other things, alert travelers with mobile devices who get to the airport long before takeoff that there is an earlier flight available.

The work opened Dang’s eyes to new career possibilities. “When I went to the iSchool, I was not sure about what I wanted to do: Do I want to do cybersecurity or software development? Working at Alaska gave me a better sense of how those two are integrated,” says Dang, who accepted a part-time programmer II position at the company.

Intern Peter Lu found an exciting career path in an area he would have never expected: baggage. Nobody thinks about it, he says. Neither had he, until he was presented with the challenge of creating a new way of looking at it. “I started working on getting new technology into an area of the aviation industry that has been ignored,” says Lu.

One of his projects focused on employing electronic bag tags that would allow both passengers and airline employees to track any particular piece of luggage through the handling process, reducing mishandling problems and speeding up processing. Permanent electronic tags could also eliminate laborious check-in procedures, says Lu. “It’s a cool way to streamline the process and get through the airport as quickly as possible.”

To explore the idea, Lu and his manager flew to Las Vegas’s McCarran International Airport, one of the first to try out the radio frequency identification (RFID) bag tags. The iSchool intern, now a part-time technical requirements analyst at the company, was also flown to Minneapolis for an International Air Transport Association convention with leading international carriers and vendors.

“I was sitting there thinking, ‘This is a crazy internship. I’m in touch with people who will be setting policies that will have effects worldwide,’” says Lu. “At that moment, I realized this is the industry and the community I want to fall into.”

Like many other iSchool interns, Lu spent his weekend off-hours over the summer taking advantage of one of Alaska Airlines’ greatest employee perks: free one-way stand-by flights to any of its 104 destinations — a benefit extended to the 2015 summer interns. They were quickly up, up, and away, some leaving Friday after work and returning Monday morning. Kutchera reports that, during the 11-week internship, one iSchool student managed 22 one-way flights.

Lu’s personal itinerary included Maui, Orange County, Mexico, Boston, and, in Alaska, Anchorage and Barrow, with a Prudhoe Bay stopover. “It was awesome to feel like part of the jet-set,” he says. “It expanded the idea of how small the world really is.” @



Hala Annabi returns to iSchool faculty in new role

By Rudy Yuly

When the iSchool's newest associate professor, Hala Annabi, had just graduated from high school in Amman, Jordan, back in the mid-1990s, she loved the idea of studying overseas, but couldn't imagine how her circumstances would ever allow it.

"I thought coming to the U.S. was a pipe dream," she said. "But it happened in a very serendipitous way."

She shared her interest with a family friend, a priest who mentioned he'd helped other students go abroad to study. After asking her mother's permission, he recommended Annabi to the president of Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York — who just happened to be in Amman at a conference of Jesuit university leaders.

"A few months later I was in Syracuse, with an academic scholarship," Annabi said. "It was such good fortune."

Annabi made the most of it, earning a B.S. and M.S. in Business Administration at Le Moyne, along with winning multiple awards and scholarships. She also met a mentor, Dr. Martha Grabowski, whose example convinced her that teaching and academic research was the career and life path she wanted to follow.

Annabi's next stop was Syracuse University's School of Information Studies, where she earned her Doctorate in Information Science and Technology. While there, she honed her teaching and research skills, and fine-tuned the areas of study she wanted to pursue.

In 2004, she landed her first academic position — as an assistant professor at the iSchool. It was a time of profound change and evolution for the school, as it transformed from a library sciences focus to become one of the first modern information schools in the country.

"When I first came here, there was such a spirit of innovation, and a desire to impact the world in a meaningful way," Annabi said. "I grew a deep appreciation and love not only for the iSchool, but also for the University of Washington."

Annabi taught at the iSchool from 2004 to 2007, making her mark as one of the founders of the Institute for Innovations in Information Management (I3M), which has since evolved into the iAffiliates Program.

In 2007, she accepted a position at Ohio University's College of Business, where she served until 2015 as assistant and associate professor, later chair, of Management Information Systems, and was founding director of Ohio's College of Business Honors Program.

Then, in 2014, her husband, Sean McGann, was offered a position at the iSchool as Senior Lecturer, MSIM Program Chair, and iAffiliates Director.

"Coming back to the iSchool was something I've always been open to, and this was a great opportunity for us to work in an exciting place together," Annabi said. "The iSchool community has changed and grown, and there's so many exciting new things taking place. It's also nice to see that all our core values — the innovative, entrepreneurial nature of the faculty and the program, our focus on interdisciplinary work, and student involvement in both our teaching and in our research activities — continues to improve and get better."

Annabi brings a broad range of research expertise to her new role at the iSchool. Her primary areas of scholarship include the impact of ICT on organizational learning, the retention and development of women in IT, IS enrollment and pedagogy, and leadership development pedagogy.

Annabi says she's been intrigued for more than 20 years by the impact of information technology, including social media, on organizational learning, and is sometimes surprised by persistent gaps in the way these technologies are applied.

"We're still not capitalizing on the benefits and possibilities of social media tools in a more systematic way," Annabi said. "It means companies are still not getting the best return on their investment. After all these years, our efforts are still fragmented."

Annabi said one possible solution might be better integration of collaboration and social media tools.

"But it's really less about the tools and more about the strategies and processes organizations put in place to use the tools," Annabi said. "These tools enable us to connect in many different ways. But are they enabling us to think and learn more deeply? Because that's what leads us to innovation and changes in paradigm."

In terms of her work on the retention and advancement of women in IT, Annabi said she's heartened to see such a strong percentage of women students at the iSchool — much greater than the national average.

"What the iSchool has done in terms of recruitment for more technical degrees like Informatics is remarkable," Annabi said. "We have an enrollment of 40+ percent women, compared to around 18-20 percent elsewhere. Promoting women in IT is a value that the leadership of the iSchool have had for a very long time, and we do a really good job of demonstrating our commitment."

Annabi's other primary field of study is information systems and leadership development pedagogy — and she hopes to bring that expertise directly into her classrooms.

"As someone who's studied learning both from an academic and professional viewpoint, I see my role as someone who facilitates student learning," Annabi said. "A lot of my activities and my pedagogies are experiential and social. They're highly influenced by communities of inquiry. I see teaching as creating space so a context can emerge for deeper learning."

Along those lines, Annabi's students can expect a lot of active learning, and very little passive lecturing in her classes. The emphasis will be on reading, work outside of class, and collaboration on projects and discussion in the classroom.

Annabi cites the main pillar of her teaching philosophy as compassion. She believes that emphasis helps make deeper learning possible in her classes.

"You have to be ready to engage in discourse and activities to reach higher levels of learning, alongside of your teammates, classmates, and instructor," Annabi said. "That requires building trust and a sense of community. That's where compassion comes in. It's about providing a space where students feel safe, engaged, excited, and daring, so they can experiment and put their ideas out there. You have to be compassionate towards them and learn more about them — so you can create the right standards and expectations." @



iSchool Summer Abroad: South Korea, Ghana, Denmark

Informational Literacies and Instructional Design students headed to Copenhagen to work in collaboration with the Royal School of Library and Information Science (RSLIS). RSLIS has strengths in specific areas of information literacy research — such as the use of persuasive design, physical architecture, cultural contexts of information use and systems, and multimedia literacies — that complement the work we do at the iSchool. Similarly, RSLIS does not offer a course in instructional design for information professionals, which is a strength of the iSchool. The course was designed to attract both RSLIS and iSchool students to share information about their respective schools.

Information, Technology, and Society in Modern Korea program was held in collaboration with Kyung Hee University (KHU) in Seoul, Seoul National University (SNU) in Suwon, and Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) in Daejeon. Korea is a leading country in the adoption of information technology and mobile devices. Per capita, it has the most broadband access of any country in the world. Its fast moving Internet-based applications, culture and life provided students a sense of what will come to the United States in the next five years.

Communication Technologies and Development in Southern Ghana students traveled to Accra to develop research skills by examining how people in different types of communities, both urban and rural, use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their daily lives. Access by people to ICTs in Ghana ranges from limited in many rural areas to high access levels in urban areas comparable to major U.S. cities. ©

New DPLA exhibit features MLIS Capstone project

It is a story that captured our imagination and resulted in astonishing breakthroughs in science and technology. Combining images from popular culture, politics, and even space suit technology, America’s space race is explored in a new and permanent exhibit at the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA).

The DPLA “Race to the Moon” exhibit started as 2015 Capstone project by Master of Library and Information Science students Danielle Rios, Dianne Bohach, Jennifer Lam and Bobi deMontigny. They focused on the period starting with the launch of Sputnik I in 1957 through the landing of Apollo 11 on the moon in 1969. The students addressed copyright issues, gained permissions as needed for the images and references, and developed metadata according to Dublin Core standards.

It is the second Capstone to achieve permanent exhibit status at the DPLA and one of 29 to date. In 2014, Greg Bem, Kili Bergau, Emily Felt, and Jessica Blanchard developed “From Colonialism to Tourism: Maps in American Culture,” which demonstrated the influence of maps of how Americans ‘imagine, exploit, and interact with national geographies and local places.’ Senior Lecturer Helene Williams served as advisor for both projects. ©

About the DPLA

The Digital Public Library of America brings together the riches of America’s libraries, archives, and museums, and makes them freely available to the world. It strives to contain the full breadth of human expression, from the written word, to works of art and culture, to records of America’s heritage, to the efforts and data of science.





PROJECT

Information Literacy

The Livelong Day | Office Hours

By Michael Stephens, reprinted with permission from Library Journal

We spend a lot of time talking about various forms of literacy. Various approaches have risen up and faded quickly — transliteracy, metaliteracy, etc. — but the idea remains: How can everyday folks navigate a continually plugged in, all-access world? I think of these skills as life literacies or simply how we make sense of the world. (See “Infinite Learning,” LJ 10/15/13, p. 58, for more.)

LEARNING FROM PIL

Serving as a member of the advisory board of the Project Information Literacy (PIL) Lifelong Learning study has impressed on me the importance of understanding and addressing the information needs of citizens throughout their lives, especially as they move into the “real world,” postuniversity.

The board recently discussed the findings and these results/outcomes should be of interest to all information professionals. We are all in the business of lifelong learning. One of the study’s overarching findings is, “Today’s young graduates prefer lifelong learning resources that have three information qualities: usefulness, connectivity, and currency.”

Barriers exist. Obstacles prevent people from feeling informed or current. From the findings:

The large majority said it was hard to find the time for continued learning (88 percent) and staying on top of everything they thought they needed to know (70 percent). At the same time, half (50 percent) of the sample was frustrated by no longer having access to academic library databases...and to college professors and their lectures.

The biggest red flag: only 27 percent of the graduates reported they had left college with the ability to formulate questions of their own. Further, Alison Head, director of PIL’s two-year study, which was funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant, stated that “more graduates who had attended a teaching college or university rather than a research university reported that questioning was a critical thinking skill they thought they had acquired in college and applied now in their lives.” What’s going on in some of these classrooms?

HELPING REENTRY

What could be done to help recent graduates keep current with the “rapidly changing digital age”? Could life literacy instruction begin via the academic library and then transition to the public library? What might the “continued learning” requirements be? Is there a place for large-scale online courses or individualized instruction devoted to personal finance, household tasks such as cooking, and handling other life situations?

Peter Morville, an advisory board member, weighed in on the “difficult to stay informed” obstacle, noting three problems: “most people lack the

necessary search skills and information literacy; our information environment is increasingly fragmented, hard to use, and dangerous to trust; and technology is driving rapid change across all areas of life and work.” Later in our discussion, Morville shared the words of Internet Librarian keynoter Lee Rainie from the ongoing Pew Internet and American Life Project: “Librarians have a mandate to intervene in their communities.”

This is a loud call to action for public libraries to engage with folks to find out what they might need to know — the 70 percent mentioned above — and for improved, upgraded, and out-of-the-box learning opportunities for all. We focus so much on services to youth, older adults, and teens, but maybe the next frontier of the evolving public library is pulling in the twenty- and thirtysomethings for creative courses devoted to the above.

We can’t do it all with our own staff, but we can engage with residents for support. We can position public libraries to be the place in the community where learning happens.

INVISIBLE ACCESS

Finally, that 50 percent surveyed desire continued access to scholarly research databases is fascinating in light of data (from OCLC, etc.) that states that library users have little knowledge of the databases available to them. Would learning opportunities hosted by libraries and created by community experts (professors, businesspeople, etc.) fill this gap and educate folks about access? Is it an issue, once again, of marketing what we have to those who need it?

DATA AS INSPIRATION

Our offerings must be useful and current and provide an interactive experience. This requires a nimble approach to services that might elude some libraries. Perhaps as we learn more from large-scale studies like these, community learning centers will become commonplace within our information institutions, helping patrons find the way to solve problems and get answers to questions they might not even know they have.

The full PIL report comes out in November. This is an important, evidence-driven opportunity for public libraries and other institutions that serve learners. We shouldn’t miss this chance.

This article was featured in Library Journal’s Academic Newswire e-newsletter, October 13, 2015.

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Alison Head is Principal Research Scientist at the University of Washington Information School and Director of Project Information Literacy. [@](#)

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