

# THE PITTSBURGH PULSE

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NEWSLETTER OF THE PITTSBURGH REGIONAL CHAPTER, MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, INC.

## From the Chair...

### Looking Back

I attended my first Pittsburgh MLA chapter meeting while working on my MLS at Pitt. It was 1994. I was intimidated by all those medical librarians with real jobs in the real world. Would I ever be as confident and competent in the profession? The chapter provided local role models of what I could be. I felt encouraged to continue pursuing a medical library career.

Move forward a few years to 1996, and I've landed my first permanent professional position, in the library of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. I participated with other Pittsburgh librarians in BHSL and learned the value of sharing resources. Attending the 1998 joint meeting with MAC in Station Square so ably organized by our chapter, I saw that a small chapter could work cooperatively with other chapters to bring high quality events at an affordable price to the region.

Move a little farther forward, and it's 1999. I'm trying to decide, should I apply for a position open with the University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library System? Knowing many of the librarians there through MLA helps me to decide I want to apply for the job.

My point? Having an active local chapter was a valuable asset to me, and can be for you. Pittsburgh MLA is worthy of your support and participation for both selfish and altruistic reasons.

Every step of the way in my library career, the Pittsburgh Chapter of MLA has been there as a resource. Other organizations, such as MLA National and SLA, have also been there and been of tremendous value, but no other organization allowed me to get to know the other practitioners of my branch of librarianship in Pittsburgh.

### Looking Forward

Today's chapter has weathered the ongoing restructuring of the healthcare field. We exist despite controversies within the chapter such as the debate over the merits of merging with a larger chapter. We are small, but we are capable of service to our profession, the communities in which we practice, and to our individual members.

We can learn together and have fun together. I urge all members to take an active role in our chapter. Your contribution will truly make the chapter your own. Come to chapter events. Meet a friend, make a connection.

**Barbara Folb, Chair  
Pittsburgh Chapter, MLA**

## Collaborations, Partnerships, & Solutions: The QuintEssential Conference

Submitted by Nancy Tannery, Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh

For those of us on the east coast it hardly seems like summer has begun but it's time to think about the fall. October 26-28, 2003 to be exact. The dates for "Collaborations, Partnerships, and Solutions: The QuintEssential Conference" to be held at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel in historic Philadelphia.

The preliminary program provides you with an outline of the three-day conference:

### Sunday, October 26

CE Courses

Evening Reception in Exhibit Hall

### Monday, October 27

Continental Breakfast

Keynote: Robert Martin, PhD, Institute of Museum and Library Services

Concurrent Program Sessions

Cocktails, Dinner Reception, Speaker: John Morreall, PhD

### Tuesday, October 28

Breakfast Roundtables and Meetings

Concurrent Program Sessions

Luncheon, Speakers: Presidents of MLA and SLA

CE Courses

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## AHIP?

Submitted by Linda Hartman, Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh

### What is AHIP?

- a) The joint at the top of your leg
- b) Something to do with HIPAA
- c) The Academy of Health Information Professionals, a professional development and career recognition program of the Medical Library Association

I know I don't need to give the answer since as information professionals if you don't know it, you know where to find it.

### Why should I apply for AHIP credentials?

- Professional Recognition – credentialing by MLA recognizes your qualifications and knowledge in health information as determined by the Code for the Credentialing of Health Information Professionals.
- Career Planning – you can use checklists, evaluation grids, articles, and mentors provided by the academy program to plan professional growth and development in an ever-changing profession.
- Career Advancement – in the competitive health care environment, a credential may assist your career advancement or salary increase by providing confirmation of your special area of expertise or professional growth. The results of a 2001 MLA salary survey reported that mean salaries of AHIP-credentialed respondents were 28.5% higher than salaries of nonmember colleagues.

- Prestige – credentials add credibility, professionalism, and excellence to the image and identity of health professionals. You are perceived by others to be motivated, accomplished, and up-to-date in your knowledge.
- Personal Achievement – membership levels give you a way to measure your career progress and give you a sense of pride in your accomplishments.

The above is taken from the MLA brochure "What is AHIP?" available at:  
<[www.mlanet.org/academy/forms/ahip\\_mbr\\_bro2003-03.pdf](http://www.mlanet.org/academy/forms/ahip_mbr_bro2003-03.pdf)>.

### Why am I telling you all of this?

I am the Pittsburgh Chapter's new Credentialing Liaison. A year ago I was completing my application to AHIP (for about the third time). I had started the process several times and always stopped somewhere along the way. Other activities took priority. What better priority is there than you and your career? (OK, family and friends, chocolate, a good book...)

Seriously, it really does not take all that long to fill out the application and pull together the required paperwork. In future newsletters I hope to walk you through the process so a year from now you can be ready to drop your application packet into the mail!

Have a great summer!



## New Mentor Database Debuts

MLA announces newly created mentor Web pages that are part of the career section of MLANET.

- Sign up online to serve as a mentor to your peers, as a provisional mentor, or as a mentor to students interested in learning about the profession.
- Search the database to find a mentor.
- Link to mentor tip sheets and guidelines.
- Access Web resources to help you in your mentoring role.

The success of the mentor database depends on the number of members who sign up. Go to [www.mlanet.org/mentor/](http://www.mlanet.org/mentor/) to explore the possibilities.

## Share Your Knowledge – Write a Book!

Submitted by Marcy Brown, Forbes Regional Hospital, Books Panel Member 2002-2005

There's no way around it, writing a book is not an easy task.

Even in the best of situations – academia – writing is a challenge. For librarians in academic settings publishing is often a required activity, so the resources needed to succeed – comp time, project oversight, and clerical services – are more available.

But for hospital, association, or corporate librarians, many of whom work solo or with one other professional, finding the time and support to complete a book project stands as the most difficult part of the project. It is often more challenging than the writing itself! The MLA Books Panel, of which I am a member, has recognized this fact and is developing support resources to help librarians become published authors.

Mentoring is an invaluable support resource for a new or aspiring author. The newly established MLA Mentoring Database can be used to search for a publishing mentor and may be modified in the future to specifically include those authors who have published with the MLA Books program. A mentor can be assigned at any point in the process: before you submit your initial book proposal, after proposal acceptance, or at any point

in the writing phase. The Books Panel hopes that published librarians from all settings will volunteer to serve as mentors for others with dreams of authorship.

Upon acceptance of a proposal, the Books Panel appoints a peer review manager for the volume. This peer review manager is another wonderful resource for an inexperienced author. As the project progresses, (s)he serves as a link between the Books Panel, the author, and our co-publisher Neal-Schuman. If an author has contract questions or wants to recommend specific peer reviewers, the peer review manager can provide assistance.

And finally, Books Panel members are always available to discuss your unique ideas, the proposal process, the new Quick Guide format, or the list of current “hot topics.”

There are many Pittsburgh-area librarians out there with innovative ideas who want nothing more than to communicate those ideas to colleagues. If you are one of them, please consider writing a book for MLA. For more information on the Books publishing program, please see [www.mlanet.org/publications/books/booksprog.html](http://www.mlanet.org/publications/books/booksprog.html). I would welcome your interest and would be happy to speak with you personally about your ideas. Please contact me initially by email at [mbrown1@wpahs.org](mailto:mbrown1@wpahs.org).

### MLA's 2004 Rittenhouse Award Jury Seeks Powerful Unpublished Papers and Web-Based Projects

Calling on all students enrolled in ALA-accredited library and information science programs and trainees in health sciences librarianship internships or medical informatics to seize the creative power of your mighty pen, pencil, and/or keyboard. Submit your unpublished bibliographical, issue/topic based, research results paper, or Web-based project on health sciences librarianship or medical informatics for the 2004 Rittenhouse Award competition. Manuscript submission information and procedure links may be found on MLANET at [www.mlanet.org/awards/honors](http://www.mlanet.org/awards/honors) or you may phone Lisa C. Fried, MLA Headquarters, 312-419-9094 ext. 28 or email

[mlapd2@mlahq.org](mailto:mlapd2@mlahq.org). To submit a paper contact: Professional Development Department, Medical Library Association, 65 E. Wacker Place, Suite 1900, Chicago, Illinois 60601-7298. **Submission deadline is November 1, 2003.**

The Rittenhouse Award, presented annually by the Medical Library Association, was established in 1967 and is sponsored by Rittenhouse Book Distributors, Inc., King of Prussia, PA. The cash award of \$500 and a certificate will be presented to the winner during the 2004 MLA Annual Conference to be held in Washington, DC.

## TechLine: Automation – Systems Migration, Part 2

Submitted by David Brennan, Barbour Library, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

In the last issue, I began looking at matters related to migrating from one library system to another. In this column, let's examine some of the nuts and bolts of actually working with your old data to get it into a new system. I won't be addressing bibliographic/item/subject authority records here. I'll make the assumption that both systems do MARC just fine for those types of records.

The most troublesome aspect in any migration is records in proprietary formats, such as patron, circulation, serials, and acquisitions. Since almost all documents on vendor data formats include dire warnings about trade secrets, I'll create examples to illustrate the kinds of data manipulation we did. Also, I will try to keep things fairly general. We migrated from DRA Classic to Innovative but you will encounter similar situations when moving from any system to another – even when both systems are from the same vendor (although one would hope that they have good tools to migrate their own systems!).

### The Critical Role of the Library Staff

The single most important thing you'll need to successfully move your data is your staff. They know what the existing data looks like and which elements are most important to move. As I said in the last column, not all of your data will migrate. The staff decides what absolutely must move and what they can either live without or recreate. The next thing you'll need in abundance is creativity and flexibility. For example, our acquisitions data used fairly long codes for fund and vendor names but the new system limited those codes to 5 digits. We couldn't simply truncate them because "Blackwells" and "Blacks Booksellers" would both end up with the code "BLACK." How to get them out matched up with the right record? Prior to the final data extract a work study added new codes to an unused field in the old database. When we extracted the data the codes were already matched and ready to map to the correct field in the new database. In other cases we moved data that didn't fit anywhere else into a note field that could be edited later in the new system. Don't be bound by the structure of the data if you don't need to be.

### Tools Needed

Of course data manipulation requires tools and the knowledge to use their full capabilities. Generally speaking, the usual office tools, plus a couple of additional programs should do the trick. One problem is that the files are a good bit larger than average documents. However, they are not as big as you might think, for example, our serials holdings extract for 1200 journal titles

was only 1.4 MB. Start by determining what tools you already have, and what you will need.

If you plan to extract your own data, do you have the required report writing tools and are they flexible enough to output data in a form acceptable to the new system? Look carefully at the documentation for the report writing program as well as the import specifications for the new system. Our toolbox choices included:

- Microsoft Office 2000 Suite – although any suite with a good word processor, spreadsheet, and database will suffice.
- PFE Editor – a programmer's text editor that can handle very large files. Windows NotePad isn't up to this task and Word is too willing to add its own junk to text files.
- askSam – a database application that can handle unstructured data. Other similar programs are available.
- MarcEdit – a MARC record utility set available at [oregonstate.edu/~reaset/marcedit/html](http://oregonstate.edu/~reaset/marcedit/html). Even though your bib/item/authority records move over okay, you actually may have to take a non-MARC data set and create MARC records for the new system. Our serials holdings data came out as non-MARC and had to be converted.

If your existing vendor is going to extract the data, will it be in a format acceptable to the new system? If not, a) how much will it cost for them to get it that way, or b) how much work will it take you to do it? Data almost never moves without some external manipulation, even when a vendor does the extraction. In the date format example below (continued on page 8), a vendor-supplied extract will give you the date stamp field but it's up to you to change it into the form the new system accepts. At a minimum, you'll need a test extract and a final extract. In between those two, you'll manipulate and test until you're satisfied with the result. That's why last time I said again and again, allow plenty of time for a migration – it may seem like a lot of trouble but it beats manual recreation of your data. It's also vital to work with a single set of data at any one time. It is confusing enough to do this process without worrying about whether a data element is in circulation or in acquisitions.

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## Stethoscoop

Submitted by Cindy Robertson, Heritage Valley Health System

- ◆ Who ever said that medical libraries do not have Romance sections has not met **LEANN ISAAC**. Leann, librarian for the Jameson Health System of New Castle, Pennsylvania and an independent library consultant for the Sharon Regional Health System of Sharon, PA, was at the circulation desk on February 14, 2003 (a very auspicious day for Romance), when Vito Restaino, Jr. arrived with an engagement ring, got down on one knee and proposed marriage. Leann and Vito plan to reside in Girard, Ohio following their wedding on May 15, 2004. Our congratulations and best wishes to them.
- ◆ **HEATHER BRICE**, director of the Laurel Highlands Health Sciences Library Consortium, is happy to report that an NLM Internet Access to Digital Libraries grant has funded the development of their website and shared licenses to several health care databases. All the consortium members have small libraries and are excited about having access to these otherwise unaffordable resources. The consortium will be placing computer kiosks in public places at each member site and consumers will be linked to MedlinePlus and several databases recommended by MLA in their "Top Ten" listing. Volunteers will be trained to assist the public in use of the databases. Congratulations to Heather and her colleagues on this fine achievement. The website address is <www.lhslc.org>.
- ◆ Good news from the other side of the great state of Pennsylvania. **BRAD LONG**, former Pittsburgh Chapter member, is currently serving as chair of the Philadelphia Regional Chapter. Our loss is Philadelphia's gain and we wish Brad the best in his tenure as Chapter Chair. Brad sends this message to his Pittsburgh Chapter friends: "I hope to see my old friends and colleagues at the Quint Meeting in Philadelphia this October."

### FOUR EASY WAYS TO GET YOUR INFORMATION INTO NEXT ISSUE'S STETHOSCOOP

**Mail:** Cindy Robertson, Manager  
Library Services/CME  
Heritage Valley Health System  
Dutch Ridge Road  
Beaver, PA 15009

**Phone:** 724-773-1940

**Fax:** 724-728-7429

**Email:** crobertson@hvhs.org

Be sure to include your name, business address, and telephone number with the news you are submitting

## New Pulse Feature - Health Sciences Librarians in Nontraditional Roles

Submitted by Marcy Brown, Forbes Regional Hospital

Does your work as a health sciences librarian involve "nontraditional" responsibilities? In addition to your work as a librarian, do you also perform the tasks of an archivist, informatics specialist, meeting planner, technical writer, or applications developer? If so, I'd like to hear from you. I'm planning a regular feature for the *Pittsburgh Pulse* to profile the innovative and nontraditional work being done by Pittsburgh-area health sciences librarians.

If you would like to share your experiences with local colleagues, and are willing to be interviewed (either via phone or email), please contact me privately. After I find

out what your "specialty" is, I'll prepare a list of interview questions for your review. From your answers I'll develop a short feature article telling the world (or at least the *Pulse* readership) about your success in transferring your skills to new ventures.

Feel free to call or email me: 412-858-2422; mbrown1@wpahs.org. Unsure whether or not your work would qualify as nontraditional? I'd still love to hear from you! We know that our skills are broad-based and applicable to many job roles. This is the perfect opportunity to demonstrate our ability to take on new projects and responsibilities.

## MLA Grants, Fellowships, Scholarships, and Awards Submitted by MLA Chapter Council

### Continuing Education Grants

MLA members may submit applications for these grants of \$100-\$500 to develop their knowledge of the theoretical, administrative, and/or technical aspects of librarianship. More than one CE grant may be offered in a year.

*Application Deadline: December 1.*

### Cunningham Memorial International Fellowship

This fellowship is available to health sciences librarians from countries outside the U.S. and Canada. The grant provides up to four months of observation and supervised work in one or more medical libraries in the United States or Canada. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

### EBSCO/MLA Annual Meeting Grants

EBSCO Information Services sponsors four grants of up to \$1000 each to enable medical librarians working in health sciences libraries to attend MLA's annual meeting.

*Application Deadline: December 1.*

### Hospital Libraries Section/MLA Professional Development

This grant, given twice a year, sponsored by the Hospital Libraries Section, provides librarians working in hospital and similar clinical settings up to \$800 for educational or research activities. *Application deadlines are February 1 and August 1.*

### David A. Kronick Traveling Fellowship

One \$2,000 fellowship covers the expenses involved in traveling to three or more medical libraries in the United States or Canada, for the purpose of studying a specific aspect of health information management. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

### Donald A. B. Lindberg Research Fellowship

The Lindberg research fellowship has been established to fund research that links the information services provided by librarians to improved health care. A \$25,000 grant is awarded through a competitive grant process to a qualified health professional, researcher, educator, administrator, or librarian. *Application Deadline: November 15.*

### Medical Informatics Section/MLA Career Development

This grant provides up to two individuals \$1,500 each to support a career development activity that will contribute to advancement in the field of medical informatics.

*Application Deadline: December 1.*

### MLA Research, Development, and Demonstration Project

This grant provides support for research, development, or demonstration projects that help promote excellence in the field of health sciences librarianship and information sciences. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

### MLA Scholarship

A scholarship of up to \$5000 will be granted to a student entering an ALA-accredited library school or with at least one-half of the requirements of the program to finish when the scholarship is granted in February. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

### MLA Scholarship for Minority Students

A scholarship of up to \$5000 will be granted to a minority student entering an ALA-accredited library school or with at least one-half of the requirements of the library school program to finish when the award is granted in February. African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander or Native American students who wish to study health science librarianship are eligible. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

### Thomson ISI/MLA Doctoral Fellowship

The Institute for Scientific Information sponsors a fellowship in the amount of \$2000 to foster and encourage superior students who have been admitted to candidacy to conduct doctoral work in an area of medical librarianship or information science. The award supports research or travel applicable to the candidate's study within a twelve-month period. The award may not be used for tuition. The award is granted every other year with the next award scheduled for distribution in 2003. *Application Deadline: December 1.*

### MLA/NLM Spectrum Scholarship

MLA and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) jointly sponsor a scholarship through the ALA Spectrum initiative program. A \$5,000 donation each year supports minority students in their goals to become health sciences information professionals. For more information, contact the ALA Spectrum program at 800-545-2433 ext. 4276 or email the Spectrum Inquiry Line. *Application Deadline: March 1.*

*More information and applications are available at <[www.mlanet.org/awards/grants](http://www.mlanet.org/awards/grants)>, or contact Lisa C. Fried at MLA Headquarters at [mlapd2@mlahq.org](mailto:mlapd2@mlahq.org).*



## Nominate Yourself or an Outstanding Colleague for an MLA Award!

### **Lois Ann Colaiani Award for Excellence and Achievement in Hospital Librarianship**

This award is given to a member of the association who has made significant contributions to the profession in the area of overall distinction or leadership in hospital library administration or service, production of a definitive publication related to hospital librarianship, teaching, research, advocacy, or the development or application of innovative technology to hospital librarianship. The recipient receives a cash award of \$500 and a certificate.

### **Estelle Brodman Award for Academic Medical Librarian of the Year**

The award recognizes an academic medical librarian, who at mid-career demonstrates significant achievement, the potential for leadership, and continuing excellence. The Award was established in 1986 with a gift from Irwin H. Pizer. The recipient receives a certificate and a cash award of \$500 at the Association's Annual Meeting.

### **Majors/MLA Chapter Project of the Year Award**

This is a general award for excellence, innovation, and contribution to the profession of health sciences librarianship. These attributes must be shown through special projects beyond the normal operational programming of the chapter. The recipient receives a certificate and a cash award of \$500.

### **Janet Doe Lectureship**

The Janet Doe Lecturer is an individual chosen annually by the Medical Library Association for his/her unique perspective on the history or philosophy of medical librarianship. The selected lecture is presented at the Association's Annual Meeting and is subsequently published in the Bulletin of the Medical Library Association. The Lecturer receives a \$250 honorarium, travel expenses to the site of the Annual Meeting, hotel expenses for 1 night, per diem for 1 day and a certificate.

### **Ida and George Eliot Prize**

The prize is presented annually for a work published in the preceding calendar year, which has been judged most effective in furthering medical librarianship. The award was first presented in 1962. The recipient receives a cash award of \$200 and a certificate.

### **Thomson ISI/Frank Bradway Rogers Information Advancement Award**

The award is presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions for the application of technology to the delivery of health science information, to the science of information, or to the facilitation of the delivery of health science information. The Award has been sponsored by the Institute for Scientific Information since 1973. The recipient receives a cash award of \$500 and a certificate.

### **Louise Darling Medal for Distinguished Achievement in Collection Development in the Health Sciences**

The medal is presented annually in recognition of distinguished achievement in collection development in the health sciences. Ballen Booksellers International established the Medal in 1987. Blackwell North America currently supports it. The recipient receives an engraved medal, a certificate, and a \$1,000 cash award.

### **Murray Gottlieb Prize**

The prize is awarded annually for the best unpublished essay on the history of medicine and allied sciences written by a health sciences librarian. The Prize was established in 1956 by Ralph and Jo Grimes of the Old Hickory Bookshop, Brinklow, MD in order to recognize and stimulate the health science librarian's interest in the history of medicine. The author of the winning essay receives a cash award of \$100 and a certificate.

### **Lucretia W. McClure Excellence in Education Award**

The award honors an outstanding practicing librarian or library educator in the field of health sciences librarianship and informatics who demonstrates skills in one or more of the following areas: teaching, curriculum development, mentoring, research, or leadership in education at local, regional, or national levels. The recipient receives a cash award of \$500 and a framed certificate.

### **Marcia C. Noyes Award**

The Noyes Award is the highest professional distinction of the Medical Library Association. The award was established in 1947 and recognizes a career, which has resulted in lasting, outstanding contributions to medical librarianship. The recipient receives an engraved sterling silver Revere bowl at the Association's Annual Meeting.

### **Fellows and Honorary Members**

Fellowship is conferred on Regular MLA members in recognition of outstanding and sustained contributions to the advancement of the purposes of the association. Fellows receive a certificate at the association's Annual Meeting and lifetime Regular Member benefits at no charge. Honorary Membership is conferred on individuals, not formally MLA members, who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the purposes of the association. Honorary members receive a certificate at the Association's Annual Meeting and lifetime Regular Member benefits (except voting privileges) at no charge.

*Nomination deadlines for all awards are November 1. More information and applications are available at <[www.mlanet.org/awards](http://www.mlanet.org/awards)>, or contact Lisa C. Fried, Professional Development, Medical Library Association, 312-419-9094 ext. 28, [mlapd2@mlahq.org](mailto:mlapd2@mlahq.org).*

## TechLine

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### Converting Date Formats – An Illustration of a Challenge

Once the data is extracted, it is time to start changing things around. Here's where knowledge of your tools is essential. One of the most difficult things to deal with is date stamping. It seems that every program does it differently. So how do you get a column of dates (e.g. April 13, 2001 12:45PM) formatted like:

YYMMDDHHMM to look like MMDDYYYYHHMM

0104131245                      041320011245

It actually isn't that hard using Excel. Take the column of dates and copy it to a text editor, which strips out the table formatting. Reimport to Excel as a "fixed-width" file, which will allow you to set the size of your columns. Separate the elements into their own columns (MMDD and HHMM can stay together):

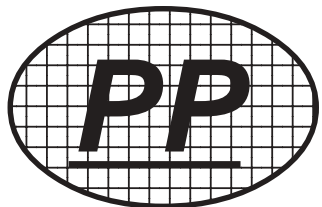
01 | 0413 | 1245

Then, move the columns into their correct order using cut and paste. Then do a find/replace in the YY column, replacing any "01" with "2001," any "98" with "1998," etc. Presumably, at least for circulation or patron data, you won't have any 60s, 70s or 80s to replace. It does help to purge old data before the final extract...Finally, copy the columns to Word, then convert the resulting table to text, find/replace any spaces to collapse the data back to:

041320011245

### Conclusion

These examples, multiplied many times over in different situations, illustrate what we had to do to migrate data from one system to another. There really are too many issues to cover here, but hopefully you now have a feel for the thought process and can at least look beyond the existing data structure when you need to convert one thing to another. I certainly can offer suggestions if you have a specific problem.



## QuintEssential Conference

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Concurrent program sessions will cover a variety of topics. The program session on *Communication* will include presentations such as 'Showing the Difference You Make: Libraries and Evaluation,' which will introduce outcomes logic models as a strategy to develop consensus, design effective programs, and plan evaluation. 'The Light at the End of the Funnel: Prospects for Digital Preservation' and 'Managing e-Content/Usage Statistics of Electronic Resources' are two of the presentations to be featured in the *EContent* program session. During the *New Roles* program 'Lights! Camera! Action! Desktop Training with Streaming Video' and 'Once and Future Internet: Trends for Libraries' are just two examples of presentations that will be available.

Marketing Library Services, Fund Raising is Everyone's Job, Consumer Health Information, and ESL/Low Literacy Clients are a few examples of the many Continuing Education courses that will be offered at the beginning and end of the meeting.

**Mark your calendars for October 26-28, 2003!**

**Collaborations, Partnerships, & Solutions**  
**The QuintEssential Conference**  
**October 26-28, 2003**  
[www.quintmeeting.org](http://www.quintmeeting.org)



**Sheraton Society Hill - Conference Hotel for the QuintEssential Conference**

## MLA Task Force on Information Specialists in Context (ISIC) Submitted by Dianne Wolf, Task Force Chair

The October 2000 Chapter meeting about the informationist concept was the beginning of spirited discussion among our colleagues around the country. In 2002, MLA sponsored a conference at the National Library of Medicine, a Web discussion, and an open forum at the Annual Meeting, all devoted to this concept. Following those meetings, the MLA Board accepted an action agenda drafted by the Informationist Task Force. The action agenda spoke of the information specialist working in the context of a clinical or research setting. Given the debate over the word, "informationist," a decision was made to use the phrase, "information specialist in context."

At the winter 2003 meeting, the MLA Board established a Task Force on Information Specialists in Context (ISIC) to coordinate implementation of the Informationist Action Agenda <[www.mlanet.org/research/informationist/pdf/informationist\\_action\\_agenda\\_200209.pdf](http://www.mlanet.org/research/informationist/pdf/informationist_action_agenda_200209.pdf)>. The Task Force will identify the duties and qualifications of a Consultant on Information Specialists in Context to act as a project manager for this initiative. Then the Task Force will work with the consultant to:

- Seek sources of funding, develop and evaluate model ISIC services and training programs, and prepare background documentation and compile information for publications

- Contribute to publications and the Informationist web site on MLANET
- Solicit, recommend, and fund one or more model programs
- Seek partnerships with organizations sharing this interest; and communicate with academic, health care, and industry leaders about progress
- Promote involvement by MLA units in achieving the agenda
- Develop a program for the 2004 annual meeting to report to members on progress implementing the Action Agenda
- Prepare a final report in 2005

The Task Force met at the MLA Annual Meeting to review the possible role and qualifications of the consultant. Future meetings will be conducted by email and conference call. There will be an opportunity for MLA members to hear from the consultant and the task force at the MLA annual meeting in Washington. If you are interested in the continuing evolution of the informationist concept, please look for future announcements of an open forum to be held in Washington next year.



### ***THE PITTSBURGH PULSE***

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*THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED OCTOBER 1.  
DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES IS SEPTEMBER 10.*

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