

NASIG Newsletter

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Interview with Angela Dresselhaus, the 2015 Merriman Award Winner

Please start by describing your current position and how you've been involved with serials?

My current position is head of electronic and continuing resources acquisition at East Carolina University. I manage the Electronic and Continuing Resources Acquisition Department, consisting of three staff members and one faculty librarian. We are responsible for acquisition and access for journals, databases, and other electronic resources. My first job was in print serial acquisitions, then I moved to serials cataloging, and finally I've landed in electronic resource management.

What initially led you to NASIG and why you continue to stay involved?

A supervisor encouraged me to apply for the Fritz Swartz Serials Education Scholarship, and after winning that award in 2007, I stayed active in NASIG. NASIG service has been a rewarding experience for me and I enjoy the friends and professional contacts I have made over the years. Attending the NASIG conference is not only a great learning opportunity for me, but a chance to meet up with friends.

What prompted you to apply for the Merriman award?

A curiosity about the UKSG conference prompted me to apply for the award. I wanted to experience the conference that inspired NASIG. On a personal note, I'm a Doctor Who fan and I longed to be around other Whovians.

How did you react when you found out that you were the recipient?

I reacted by promptly driving 8 hours to the Seattle Passport Office! Unfortunately, I discovered that my passport was missing and after turning my apartment upside down I had no other choice but to present myself at a passport agency. On the upside, I was able to get a passport for my infant so my entire family was able to go to Scotland.

What were your first impressions of the UKSG conference?

My first impression was that the conference had a narrow focus on how the library can serve researchers and provide services to grant funded scholars. Second impression... I needed to ask a bunch of question about acronyms and open access mandates in the UK.

How do you think the experience of attending the UKSG will affect your career?

International travel will be on my radar and I may consider preparing a paper for a future UKSG conference.

How was the UKSG conference different from the NASIG conferences that you've attended?

In my experience, many NASIG sessions are practically oriented, and less focused on scholarship. UKSG concentrated more on the impact librarians have on

researchers, and there was a selection of breakout sessions that presented study findings. I'd like to see more of that at NASIG.

What was your favorite USKG session and why was it your favorite?

Rick Anderson's plenary, "A quiet culture war in research libraries," spoke to me. I've struggled with defining where I fit on the solider/revolutionary spectrum and Rick's talk reminded me that it is okay to be a foot soldier and not out ahead leading a revolution.

What are the differences between the two organizations, USKG and NASIG?

Non-librarian participation seemed to be higher at the UKSG conference, but I'm not sure if that gets to the question at hand.

For those who might be interested in going to UKSG and perhaps applying for the Merriman award, what advice would you give them?

I am a quiet person and I knew that traveling to and attending a conference so far away from home would be a challenge for me socially. It was a challenge, but there were so many warm welcoming people that I felt just fine quietly enjoying the UKSG conference. My advice, set aside worries and just apply for the award.