Post Conference Wrap-Up

Interview with Christopher Bulock, the 2016 Birdie MacLennan Award Winner

Please start by describing your current position and how you came to be involved with information management (i.e. serials, e-resources, collection development, etc.).

I'm currently the Collection Coordinator for Electronic Resource Management at California State University Northridge. I work on trial management, licensing, access, and evaluation for electronic resources. I'm lucky to have a lot of colleagues who also work with e-resources, so I don't handle metadata, acquisitions, or most activation tasks. We're currently migrating to Alma, so it seems like a lot of my work right now is trying to configure the ERM parts of that new system.

I first got involved with e-resources as an undergrad, working as a reference assistant. During down time, I would download usage reports from vendors and the proxy server, also working with the library's home-grown ERMS. That was almost exactly ten years ago.

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

I was a very new professional and had almost no money for travel. I was in the St. Louis area at the time, and I could get just enough support to handle registration for NASIG's St. Louis conference. It was a great experience, where I got to meet experienced librarians, other new professionals, and vendor employees besides my own sales reps. I had a lot to learn about journal management and evaluation, licensing, and more, so it

was immensely helpful. I became a member of the Communications and Marketing Committee (well, it was the Electronic Communications Committee at the time), and I've been going to NASIG ever since.

What prompted you to apply for the Birdie MacLennan award?

I almost didn't apply at all. It felt a little presumptuous to apply, as I still feel fairly new to the profession, but I met the qualifications for this mid-career award, so I thought I'd give it a shot.

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

Birdie's work with SERIALST has certainly enriched my career, so I had a tremendous sense of honor. It has been very gratifying to get so much support and trust from NASIG and its members this past year.

Which NASIG session(s) did you enjoy the most? Why?

There were so many good sessions this year that it's hard to pick. I'll cheat a little bit and say that the pairing of T. Scott Plutchak and Heather Joseph's talks was excellent. OA inspires a lot of vitriol and simplistic arguments from its supporters and detractors, so it was nice to get two talks which were at times opposed to each other, but both well-argued and nuanced.

How might the sessions you attended at the NASIG conference influence your daily work?

Getting back to that Alma migration, I managed to attend a couple sessions on that very topic and even

snagged a couple audience members to speak about it further. E-book management within Alma (or really in any system) is a challenging affair, and it's great to hear what others are doing.

What advice would you give to anyone interested in applying for the Birdie MacLennan award?

Just go for it! Your chances might be better than you think, but if you don't apply you have no chance at all.