



## Interview with LaQuanda Onyemeh, John Riddick Student Grant Winner

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### **Why do you feel it is worthwhile for students to attend a NASIG conference?**

Attending the NASIG conference this year afforded me the opportunity to connect with librarians in the field. I met influential librarians in the profession, attended informative sessions, presented at the student spotlight session, and played Superfight (a card game you should play) with a group of cool librarians. I was able to build friendships and long-lasting relationships with librarians and future librarians from all over the world.

### **Did attending the conference influence your career plans? If so, how?**

Yes, I was able to speak with seasoned professionals in the field and build a network of librarians. I had in-depth conversations about successes and challenges people were currently facing in their libraries, both in their roles and responsibilities. I received great advice about new workflows, trainings, and professional development opportunities. I was immersed in discussions about the future of collection services and how librarians are embracing and adapting to the changes in the field. I was able to hear real-life examples from librarians who have been in this field a long time. I received helpful tips about the job market. Many librarians shared valuable information I need in order to be a successful candidate for employment. I left the conference with an idea of what kind of skills and experiences I need to develop so I can make a meaningful contribution to the profession. It also felt great to receive a positive response to my Coral electronic resource management system presentation.

I was excited to be surrounded by future colleagues who were supportive and welcoming.

### **How did attending the conference benefit you personally?**

I met students who were in the same point of their career just like me! We were able to share our experiences from internships and graduate coursework and to discuss the gruesome process of job hunting. It felt good to know that I was not alone in my career journey. I enjoyed attending the dine arounds and speaking with librarians in an informal environment. We exchanged stories, laughter, and great food dishes. Oh yeah, I gained more Facebook friends and started a Twitter account while at NASIG.

### **How/where did you learn about NASIG's awards?**

I learned about the NASIG awards from my supervisors Shoko Tokoro and Liz Siler. I was an electronic resources management fellow at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I was introduced to NASIG, and shortly after I decided to become a member. My supervisors talked about the professional opportunities, conferences, and various scholarships available to students like me.

### **What could NASIG and/or the Awards & Recognition Committee do to improve your conference experience?**

NASIG can make an improvement on spreading awareness to LIS students so they can be aware of

opportunities and take full advantage of them. I would like to see NASIG organize an event to visit a main attraction in the city to create more opportunities to bond casually with colleagues.