



# Michigan Bulletin

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## P resident's Letter

Dear SLA Michigan Chapter Members:

It is an exciting year for the chapter! At the annual conference in June, the Board of Directors of SLA will formally ratify the merger of the Michigan and Western Michigan and Upper Peninsula Chapters. For the first time in more than two decades, there will be one statewide chapter for special librarians. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Western Michigan members! I look forward to working with you and seeing you at chapter events!

The chapter's programming season is now in full swing. We are trying out some new things this year. In April, we held our first daytime program in quite sometime. Chapter members toured the EPA library in Ann Arbor. This month, the chapter holds its program in Lansing, to give members from the west side of the state more of an opportunity to attend a program. As we develop our fall program schedule, please share your opinions with me and members of the program committee about meeting times and locations. We would like to create as many opportunities as we can for members to attend our programs.

Along with experimenting with time and location, the chapter is now actively exploring hosting

virtual programming. A committee has been formed to research what technological resources we will need and funds in the budget have been set aside to make such purchases. We are also looking at how to do on-line registration. Likewise, SLA headquarters has purchased a computer system that may help chapters host virtual programs and manage their programs on-line. Look for more details to come!

Last but not least, the SLA annual conference is fast approaching. This year's conference is being held in Denver and features former Vice President Al Gore and Scott Adams, creator of the Dilbert cartoon. As always, many, many great programs and workshops are being held which explore all avenues of special librarianship. I hope Michigan has a strong turn-out at the conference. For those of you that are attending, there will be a reception for mid-western chapter members on Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. I hope to see many of you there!

Best wishes,

Laura Mancini  
SLA Michigan Chapter President

# Networking 2.0: Introducing LinkedIn

By Sophia Guevara

With the interest social networking technology has generated among members of the younger generation, this technology has taken on a decidedly professional spin. With LinkedIn, users can post professional profiles as well as connect and introduce themselves to other professionals within the Web 2.0 environment. The service allows users to develop and maintain relationships with current and former colleagues, reunite with old classmates, and interact with other professionals. With over nine million members, you're bound to run into someone you know.

## Connections, connections, connections

There are three levels of connections available to a user through this site. First-degree connections include those members with whom you are mutually connected. Second-degree connections are those whom you are connected to via your primary connection. Third-degree connections follow the same idea. As an example of the power of this network, you can gain numerous second-degree connections for every direct one you make. These could then produce several hundred third-degree connections. Building the number of your connections is easy with LinkedIn. When you sign up for a free account, you can introduce yourself to others via two methods. If you know a member's e-mail address, you can invite them into your network with the form provided on the site. If their address is unknown and you find that they are in your extended network, you can ask for an introduction. Simply send an introduction request to your connection and ask him or her to introduce you. If they agree, your e-mail is passed on to the person with whom you are trying to connect. You are limited to five revolving introductions with a free account; more features are available if you upgrade to a paid account. These accounts provide additional introductions and grants use with the site's InMail service. This service allows you to directly e-mail someone without having to go through a primary connection, but at a price of \$10 a piece.

You can also recommend a member in your network. Know a star colleague or boss with whom you've worked? Simply fill out the form and provide them with a worthwhile recommendation. It's a great way to provide an e-reference and lets others in on what you know about that person.

## Moving you forward

Here are several reasons why you should join LinkedIn:

- ❖ Increase your career connections: Building your professional network increases the potential for future job opportunities. A personal connection might make you aware of positions well before

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### Correction

The Winter 2007 issue of the *SLA Bulletin* misspelled Judy Eastland's name in the "Milestone Anniversaries for SLA Members" article. Our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

## 2007 Tentative Chapter Program Schedule

**SEPTEMBER** – Panel of veterans to offer encouragement and guidance to students and members with less experience.

**OCTOBER** – Talking to Vendors/Negotiating Skills to be held at Michigan State University, East Lansing. A three-person panel will talk about negotiating skills, negative tactics, etc.

**NOVEMBER** - Social Love-Fest to be held in the Brighton/Novi area. The social gathering will include stress management by Lisa Gossen of Balance Spa (may include sample facials, massage etc.) and wellness/ergonomics in the workplace by Shauna Bourbonniere of Wellness Institute.

**DECEMBER** – Christmas Gathering and Silent Auction to be held at the Ford conference center in Dearborn. A wine and cheese event, coupled with a silent auction to raise money to send a Michigan MLS student to the 2008 SLA annual conference.

Dates, times and locations are still being determined. Check the SLA Michigan Chapter website at <http://units.sla.org/chapter/cmi/index.html> for the most current information regarding upcoming events.

## Bring People Together: 2007 Mentoring Opportunities

Ever had that lost, direction-less feeling in your career? Chances are a senior colleague helped you navigate pit-falls and problems early on.

The Michigan Chapter will be running a series of programs designed to help members of all experiences connect with students and our newest members. Look out for chances to mentor public business librarians and MLS students. We also aim to run a panel discussion with veteran members offering tips on surviving the ups and downs of our industry, as well as hearing from members who have chosen alternative careers after completing their MLS degrees.

If you feel you could offer guidance, experience or industry contacts to a student then please contact our career guidance officers Karen Bacsanyi and Susan A. Pritts, or members of the programming committee. Offering a few hours of your time will make a big difference to someone starting out.

Alternatively, if you would like to be mentored, sign up with us!

- ❖ Karen Bacsanyi, Career Guidance - Wayne State University, [k.bacsanyi@wayne.edu](mailto:k.bacsanyi@wayne.edu)
- ❖ Susan A. Pritts, Career Guidance - University of Michigan, [spritts@pritts.com](mailto:spritts@pritts.com)
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## Librarian Helps Other Librarians Excel

by Pamela Repp

Because library patrons are seeking information from the Internet with increasing frequency, customer service is becoming a very important aspect of librarianship. Melissa Behrens, MLIS, is a special librarian who is dedicated to providing excellent customer services to other librarians so that they can fulfill the expectations of their patrons.

Ms. Behrens is a Library Programs and Services Consultant with Thomson Gale. She has been with Thomson Gale for a little over one year and brings a wealth of library experience to her position. Her previous library positions include a stint as a public librarian, an internship at JSTOR, and a contract position as a web content librarian at General Motors. She uses all of the skills acquired in these positions to accomplish the multi-faceted tasks of her position.

For many special librarians, providing excellent customer service to patrons can be a challenge in terms of time and staff available. Creating tip sheets, users' guides, and in-service materials takes precious time. Providing training to library staff to become proficient with new library products requires training. To assist librarians and educators, Thomson Gale created a Customer Resource Center (CRC) that provides customer care before, during, and after the sale. The CRC offers many services and solutions to Thomson Gale customers including marketing and public relations materials, product training, collection development assistance, project management, and even MARC record support. These extra services help to reduce the work load of the librarian as new products are implemented. For those libraries with little technical expertise, the CRC offers technical consulting offering an array of support from integrating a federated search engine with Thomson Gale products to web portal creation. Their primary goal is to ensure the customer's success with Thomson Gale products.

The CRC provides a wealth of after care services. They can monitor product usage and provide the customer information about progress and usage patterns. CRC staff members have the technical expertise to develop customized Web tools and portals or to help integrate the product content into the customer's existing systems. "We work very closely with our customers to identify their needs and assist them in finding just the right solutions," states Melissa Behrens, MLIS, library programs and services consultant.

Behrens works with a team of reference and technical specialists to service K-12, Academic, Public and Special library markets in the United States. As a product is being delivered to a Thomson Gale customer, the Customer Resource Center team provides the technical support. Many times this is initiated by a phone call from a customer with a question about the product. The team is very skilled at asking just the right questions and is able to identify opportunities to help the customer get the best use from the product.

They also staff a virtual reference desk so that customers can call in when they have a question. Behrens mentioned that this virtual reference desk is also available to a library's patrons. For example, if a student is working on a paper during a school break when there are no teachers available, he or she can call the virtual reference desk and receive help with one of the Thomson Gale products.

In addition to working with external customers, Behrens and the Customer Resource Center team have internal customers at Thomson Gale. They work closely with the sales and marketing staff, apprising them of new products and changes to existing products. She provides the subject matter expertise whenever sales or marketing staff have questions about products.

While her job is challenging, Behrens enjoys the multi-faceted aspect and fast-pace. “No two days are ever the same,” she states. “My job includes all facets of the library profession: reference, cataloging, acquisitions, and collection development.” She enjoys the quick-paced environment and the opportunity to apply the library skills she developed in her previous positions as a web content, cataloger and reference librarian. Because of her expertise and dedication, her customers, are better prepared help their patrons.



## Networking 2.0

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they are posted. For hiring managers, a searchable database of professionals is available to help you find the ideal candidate. With the Simply Hired job search engine, LinkedIn allows for both hiring managers and candidates to connect with each other.

- ❖ Receive consulting offers and expertise requests. Connecting to other professionals within your field can provide you with the expertise you need when making an important decision. Opening yourself up to consulting offers allows you to share your knowledge.
- ❖ Learn about new ventures and business opportunities. Get in on the ground floor for new projects within the area.
- ❖ Get back in touch. Keep in touch with old colleagues and classmates.

### Building your network with style

As a LinkedIn member, you will most likely build your network adopting one of two major styles:

- ❖ Close network builder: You personally know most or all of your connections and have gained experience in working with these individuals while in school, at the workplace, or in other professional situations.
- ❖ LinkedIn Open Networker (LION): These individuals’ networks are made up of a majority of weak connections with the user knowing only a few personally. Often the most brazen, they may bypass the use of introductions in order to contact members directly. Admittedly, these efforts pay off allowing them to claim up to 500 or more connections. While their networking circles are impressive, one has to wonder how much good a connection can be if they are only remotely familiar. But then again, that one individual may serve as a bridge to connect you to someone who may be the most influential in your future endeavors.

### It’s not what you know but who you know

In short, LinkedIn is a useful tool for professionals who are looking to expand their horizons and increase their networking beyond the standard business card exchange. You can get back in touch with those you haven’t seen in a while, recommend a star colleague, or get introduced to someone new. If you aren’t already registered on the site, what are you waiting for? With so many new professionals added every day, you might just come across the one that can help you unlock your future growth. I highly recommend this site to anyone who is interested in strengthening their network within the profession.

#### References

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