Hello SLA Pittsburgh Members.

I want to take some time to express to you how honored I am to have served as your President for the 2018 year. My professional librarian life was greatly enhanced due to joining and being involved with this great Chapter.

We were able to succeed in some of my goals this year. We surveyed our membership to help guide future event planning and to get a better sense of what our members are doing in their careers.

To help our geographically challenged members, we held two webinars this year on blockchain technology in libraries and on data visualization. These webinars were co-sponsored by our friends at the SLA Philadelphia Chapter, and I’m happy to say that we have strengthened relationships with SLA Philly and hope to do more co-sponsored programming with them in the future.

In an effort to be more inclusive and transparent, we held a board meeting using webinar technology and invited all SLA Pittsburgh members to attend.

Lastly, we held successful elections for three board positions, and also filled other vacant positions for webmaster and archivist.

I would like to thank everyone on the board this year for their guidance, hard work, and dedication to our Chapter. I would also like to thank our Nominations Committee for putting together a wonderful slate of candidates and for running successful elections.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the SLA Pittsburgh members for trusting me to be your president, and for making me a better information professional and a better person. I now pass the torch to Jennie Crowley, SLA Pittsburgh President of 2019.

Photo Credit: Stock Snap, https://stocksnap.io
Q&A With 2019 SLA Pittsburgh Chapter President Jennie Crowley

Favorite SLA Moment:
One of my favorite chapter events was actually my very first event as a new member of SLA in the Fall of 2012: “Build Your Own Box, A Panel Discussion on Alternative & Non-Traditional Careers.” My husband and I had recently moved to Pittsburgh, and I was struggling to find a “traditional” library position. This event served as a great reminder that information-related skills are needed in all types of organizations. A few months later, I started working for a small startup that helped businesses publish data online and later moved into the role of quality assurance analyst.

Favorite Part of Your Job:
I consider myself a personal librarian and activities coordinator for my two children. I love making up songs with my daughter, Evie (4), and having impromptu dance parties which always make my son, Ethan (5 months), giggle and kick his feet. We’re also big fans of storytime at CLP-Squirrel Hill.

Least Favorite Part of Your Job:
Changing diapers!

Goals for the Coming Year:
My goal as chapter president is to personally invite at least one chapter member whom I never met to each of our events. My other goals are running the 10K Great Race in September and taking a photography class at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

First Library Job:
I cataloged digital media for the business school at Indiana University Bloomington. I also conducted user interviews with current students to help inform the redesign of the business school’s website.

Last Book Read:
Two years ago, I started choosing books to read based on the author’s last name. I started at the beginning of the alphabet and I recently finished my “N” book, The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen. Next on my list (for “O) is Warlight by Michael On-daatje.

What made you want to become a Librarian?
I was a volunteer docent for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and I loved how the information I shared during a tour helped visitors understand and appreciate “non-traditional” art. I believed that as a librarian, I could continue helping people benefit from the power of accessible and relevant information.

Anything else you would like to share:
My bachelor’s degree is from Notre Dame and my master’s degree is from Pitt. I always root for Pitt...unless they happen to be playing Notre Dame. Go Irish!
Upcoming Event:

SLA Philadelphia & SLA Pittsburgh present
USE AN ELEVATOR SPEECH TO PROVE YOUR VALUE
WITH
KATHY DEMPSEY

When you have just a moment to make an important point, you must use it wisely. During this webinar, Kathy will teach you how to speak efficiently and effectively so you’ll always be ready!

Date: Thursday, March 28, 2019
Time: 11:00am Eastern
Registration Link:
https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4668570748931194636

Thank you to our sponsors!

Congratulations, Kiera Mudry!

Kiera Mudry was presented with the 2018 Pittsburgh Chapter Leadership Award at the 2018 Chapter Annual Meeting.

Kiera has shown outstanding leadership this past year. She is the current chapter webmaster and is leading our chapter website migration. In addition to this, she has taken on the role of chapter secretary and was chair of the 2018 nominations committee.

Thank you, Kiera, for all that you do for our chapter!

New Chapter Website Update
Kiera Mudry, Chapter Webmaster

Amy Burke, Executive Director of SLA, announced at January’s Open Board meeting that all WordPress sites will be turned off by April 1, 2019.

I have made backups of the WordPress site and will have no issue deactivating WordPress before the April deadline. The new microsite has been easy to navigate and I hope you enjoy the new interface for our chapter’s content.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about the migration. Thank you!
2018 Annual Chapter Meeting and Awards

The 2018 SLA Pittsburgh Chapter Annual Business and Awards meeting was held on December 8, 2018 at the home of Mary Callison in the Allegheny West area of Pittsburgh’s North Side. The meeting was lovely and included a brunch pot-luck.

A special thanks goes to hosts Rachel Callison and her mom, Mary, as well as Barley the cat who was a strong, quiet presence at the event.
My Key Aims for the Conference
My major development goals for this conference were to learn about the following:

- market research
- trend tracking
- data analysis
- Technology

In addition, I wanted to build upon my development strengths and planned to hone my customer orientation skills, collaboration skills, time-management skills, and my business acumen skills. This conference was timely because I was transferred to a new team in my organization titled Product Management. In my new role, I conduct research to support the Product Management team in their market and customer driven approach to selecting product opportunities. I will also continue to support the library and research needs of DDI’s global associates.

At this conference, I attended sessions and networked with a focus on the above development goals. This conference allowed me to identify and utilize new sources of information for learning and expanded my knowledge in these new focus areas.

Additionally, attending this conference helped me get out of my comfort zone and take risks. For example, my new core team, DDI’s Center for Analytics and Behavioral Research, has a data analytics focus; however, I had not been asked to participate in data analytic-related analyses. After attending this conference, I sought out learning resources I discovered at the conference and have started to participate in data analysis.

Next, I will discuss the sessions I attended and the keynote speakers so the reader can get an idea of what the conference had to offer.

Who Were the Keynote Speakers?
The keynote speaker at the 2018 SLA Annual Conference was U.S. Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden. Dr. Hayden spoke about her journey to her current position and emphasized that all libraries should work together. She told those in attendance that we need to be the ones that help find the authoritative information in this new world of unreliable sources. My favorite part was the Q&A at the end of the speech.

On Tuesday, Sayeed Choudhury, the Associate Dean of Research Management at Johns Hopkins University, gave the keynote presentation. Mr. Choudhury emphasized preservation, data, technology, and inclusion. My favorite quote from his speech was, “There is a discussion—and in many circles concern—about a global culture. The only global culture that would frighten me is one where Madison Avenue dictates how we behave, and Wall Street allocates our resources…and Silicon Valley tells our stories.”

Sessions Attended: Sunday
I arrived on Sunday and was able to attend the Unit Leader Colloquium. First, we listened to unit success stories, where our very own Ryan Splenda shared a few of the Pittsburgh Chapter successes. Some of the highlights Ryan shared included our new members, our events, and the 95th anniversary of our chapter. We also heard from the DICE Caucus, Solo Division, and Education Division. We broke off by tables and participated
in an idea exchange. The first question was, “You’ve been given the power of time travel. The year is now 2023 and SLA has emerged as the leading association for information professionals. How did we get there? What do we need to do to make sure this becomes a reality?” The second topic that was given to my table was, “Sponsorship: Sponsorship for unit events. How to fund programs, travel scholarships and more.” After the idea exchange, there was a Chapter Cabinet Meeting, Division Cabinet Meeting and Joint Cabinet Meeting.

**Monday**

Monday morning, I attended Reference Requests: Time Management and Expectation-Setting. I really enjoyed the roundtable format and will seek out sessions with this format in the future. I liked the discussion among my table and the entire room. It was a flexible format that allowed us to brainstorm and answer our own questions about work/life balance, communicating with library stakeholders, time management, and project management skills.

Next, I attended The Evolving Global Information Manager: Staying Ahead of the Curve. The women giving the presentation were lively and knowledgeable. They discussed the challenges that come with working as an information specialist in a global corporation. A few of the key take-aways from this presentation were:

- Stay highly relevant and visible in your organization and establish strong collaboration with partners;
- Shift from being a service provider to a business partner;
- New technologies like AI can create seamless, experiential interaction with content at points of need. We can participate by understanding and leveraging what it can do and sharing our expertise on critically evaluating information;
- Learn all you can about the culture(s) of your global teams; and you must have tools that can facilitate integrated search across many different sources

My last session of the day was titled The ABCs of Emerging Tech in Info Pro Work: AI, Blockchain, and More. This was the session I was looking forward to the most; however, I left a little disappointed. It was presented well and they did an excellent job of reviewing new technology, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence. However, I would have loved to hear more examples of how new technology will impact our research and projections on how they will be used in libraries.

Monday night I attended the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter dinner. It was a great opportunity to connect and recharge. A few people from the Philadelphia Chapter stopped by and I was able to introduce myself. I didn’t make it to the IT dance party but I heard it was a blast!

**Tuesday**

In the morning I attended the Solo Librarians Division Board & Business Meeting. At the meeting, I was presented with a certificate recognizing my participation in their mentoring project.

I wish I would have attended Data Management, Data Analysis, and Visualization using Excel. The description said that I needed to know how to use formulas and apply basic math functions in Excel and that dissuaded me from attending. My biggest regret of
the conference is not attending this session.

Instead I attended Going Global: 7 Information Management Considerations to Keep in Mind. This session had some of the same presenters and information as the session The Evolving Global Information Manager: Staying Ahead of the Curve that I attended on Monday.

A few key take-aways from this session:
- Effective communication is key with new technologies and global groups;
- Look beyond technology and implantation and focus on human factors and system adoption and use; and
- User support is necessary to communicate the value of the new technology.

Next, I attended New Approaches to ROI: How to Talk About the Value of Information. This was a very informative session and I took lots of pictures to share. I specifically liked the questions the presenter suggested we ask our clients:
- Where would you go if you couldn’t call us?
- How much do you pay for ad hoc info purchases?
- How much time did this project save you?
- How do you describe our services to a colleague?
- What will you be doing with my deliverable?
- What would make it more useful for you?
- What’s the ultimate outcome of your project?
- May I follow up?

The late afternoon session I attended was titled Best Practices and Strategies for Vendor Negotiation. The session had panelists that were buyers and vendors and they shared their negotiation experiences with the audience. It was interesting to hear from both sides and listen to them share frustrations with other librarians.

After the negotiation session, I joined Brooke from the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter for dinner on the harbor.

**Wednesday**

On Wednesday I attended a two-part session on competitive intelligence. The first part of the session was titled Why CI? Metrics and Best Practices to Demonstrate the Value of Competitive Intelligence. The CEO of Cipher presented using his experience in the military. He told the audience that successful budget requests tell stories using 3 types of data.

1. Quantitative metrics
2. Tangible impacts
3. Vignettes

The next presentation was titled Top 10 Tips for Online Competitive Intelligence. The presenter asked us to make a plan before searching for CI:
- What are we looking for?
- What intelligence is needed? Example of key intelligence needs: competitors, customers, suppliers, markets, M&A, Finances, trends, technology.
- Why is the intelligence needed?
- When is it needed?
- How will the information be used?
- Who should be responsible for it?
- Are there any priorities?
- Why will the information be available?
- Other considerations, such as legal requirements, cultural expectations, marketing, blogs, social media, lucky accidents

After the CI session, I left for Pittsburgh because this adorable face was waiting for me to pick her up from daycare.

Photo credit: Liz Hogan
Networking
The sessions where informative, but the networking was amazing. I wanted to meet as many people as I could. I took a giant handful of business cards and introduced myself to everyone I sat next to. I met people from all over the country and many different types of libraries. To give you an idea, I met people from Kentucky, Illinois, California, New York, Missouri, Indiana, Oklahoma, Canada, etc. They came from companies like Facebook, The Federal Bank Reserve, academic libraries like Temple University, and other Corporate settings.

Info-Expo
I’m not going to lie, I was a little intimidated by the Info-Expo. To help subdue my fear of the Info-Expo, I signed up for a session at the Pittsburgh booth to help familiarize myself with the room and people. I had a great time at the Pittsburgh booth.

It was a great opportunity to connect with the other SLA Pittsburgh members that stopped by. I also made a list of the most important vendors I wanted to visit. Some of the vendors on my list were: PrivCo, ProQuest, MarketLine, Digital Science, Simple Analytics, American Psychological Association, AlphaSense, and Cipher. The best part of the Info-Expo was getting to see the products in person with live demonstrations.

Conclusion
I am very grateful that SLA Pittsburgh honored me with the Promising Professional award. I had a great experience at the conference and it will help shape my career in many ways. My development goals for this conference were to learn about market research, trend tracking, data analysis, and technology. I also wanted to build upon my customer orientation skills, collaborating skills, time-management skills, and business acumen skills. This conference gave me the nudge and provided me with ideas and resources that I needed to start down the right path.

“This conference gave me the nudge and provided me with ideas and resources that I needed to start down the right path.”

For more ways to stay up-to-date with the chapter, be sure to use SLA Connect for chapter conversations and visit the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter Website for information including issues of the Confluence and chapter meeting minutes.

Recent chapter event photos can be found on the SLA Pittsburgh Chapter Facebook Group and by following the chapter on Twitter @slapittsburgh.

Photo credit: Liz Hogan

Photo credit: Brooke Hyatt
What’s trending at SLA?

Did you know that @CLEConventions is home to The Real Farmville? That means one acre of herbs, honey and fresh produce used in daily menu items. We can't wait to meet the goats while in Cleveland! #SLA2019 #SLAeers ow.ly/f5Np30nNILp