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How Public Libraries Are a Boon to Small Business

Information resources are especially valuable to entrepreneurs in tough times. Libraries are making important contributions to the nation's economic recovery by assisting the job creators in small-to-medium-size businesses.

Libraries from coast to coast have won accolades for being oases in the unemployment desert for millions of job seekers using their libraries' free internet computers to sharpen their interview skills and sift through job boards. Much less recognized is that many libraries are also making important contributions to the nation's economic recovery by assisting the job creators in small-to-medium-size businesses.

How important? "In the last 30 years, nearly all net new jobs were created by start-ups, and they will continue to play a critical role in America's economic future," noted the US Department of Commerce's chief economist Mark Doms in a March 23, 2011, post to Commerce's Economics and Statistics Administration blog about business startups. For their part, public libraries provided services to these small business owners and employees 2.8 million times every month, according to the OCLC report *How Libraries Stack Up: 2010*. One study estimated that the Free Library of Philadelphia alone provided almost \$4 million in direct support to local businesses in 2010—and that did not include the exponential return to the community in new revenues generated by the 8,700 businesses that FLP aided, as well as the ripple effects of the spending of those businesses' suppliers and employees in the local economy. (continued on page 2)

I always tell people that I became a writer not because I went to school, but because my mother took me to the library. I wanted to become a writer so that I could see my name in the card catalog.

-Sandra Cisneros



From left to right: Joyce Neuhjar, Sarah Letheby and Julie Beno before their presentation at the 2012 NLA/NEMA/MPLA Conference in La Vista



Ideal Bookshelf by Jane Mount

IMPORTANT DATES & REMINDERS

Registration

Registration for Summer and Fall 2013 classes begin in late February. Consult your Plan of Study and course schedules.

Classes fill quickly on a first-come, first-served basis

Be ready to register on your assigned date and time! Visit http://mudirect.missouri.edu/_catalog/index.asp to complete your registration.

Comprehensive Exams

DRAFT date for Spring 2013 comprehensive exams will be held **March 9-17**.

Graduation Ceremony – University of Missouri Hearnes Center Saturday, December 15, 2012 6:30 PM

If you are graduating in Fall of 2012 and are planning to attend the ceremony in Columbia, you need to be making your travel arrangements immediately as hotels are filling NOW!

If there aren't rooms available in Columbia, there are also hotels in Boonville, Jefferson City, and Moberly.

How Public Libraries Are a Boon to Small Business (cont.)

Unfortunately, libraries may be hiding their light under a bushel by failing to promote their business services on their websites. Many homepages display only a link to “job resources” or “databases” even when the library has a full business and investment reference department.

“The library has many programs that are competing” for promotional resources, explained Mark Andersen, chief of Chicago Public Library’s Business, Science, and Technology Division. Because business services are not highlighted, “a lot of people think the library is good for the kids and good for seniors. But during our [business resource] seminars, people will come up and say, ‘I never knew you had these things!’”

Business librarians step into the breach

Recognition definitely is not a problem in Carson City, Nevada, where the public library has set up a 4,000-square-foot facility in a downtown storefront. The branch anchors an 8,000-square-foot Business Resource Information Center (BRIC), which is seen as the catalyst for a major economic renewal in the state capital of 55,000, whose unemployment rate hovers, like the state's, just below 12%. “While libraries across the country are cutting their hours or going away, our library opened a branch in the worst economy,” notes Deputy Library Director Tammy Westergard, who came from the city’s business development office to help Library Director Sara Jones reverse Carson City’s dubious designation in the January 19 online publication Wall Street Wire as the least-likely place in America to recover from the recession this year.

“We did it in a partnership with the city—with the city building, planning, licensing, and community development departments occupying the second floor,” she explains. “So it’s a seamless portal. People who want to start a business start with us because we can help them with market research, business planning classes, computers, and electronic resources such as sophisticated business-focused databases, and then they can go right upstairs.”

As the driving force behind a huge downtown revitalization project, the library will take center stage as part of a new 65,000-square-foot Knowledge + Discovery Center, with state-of-the-art digital media labs to train students in high-tech skills and a business incubation facility to encourage more entre-

preneurs to build on what are currently six acres of parking lots. “It’s a miracle,” says Westergard, who admits that a serendipitous donation from the late matron of the city’s historic Nugget Casino and the sympathetic vision of the casino family foundation’s director made the exciting new development possible.

Show your stuff

While other libraries may not find the same unbridled enthusiasm as in Carson City, they may still be able to garner high-powered support by demonstrating their economic worth to local business leaders. “You have to go to the chamber [of commerce], go to Rotary, go to the Kiwanis, and write for newsletters and blogs to let the public know what you have,” recommended Nicolette Warisse Sosulski, business librarian for the Portage (Mich.) District Library and recipient of the 2011 Gale Cengage Learning Award for Excellence in Business Librarianship, administered by the Business Reference and Services Section of the American Library Association’s Reference and User Services Association. “You can’t just sit in your library, or nobody will come to you,” Sosulski said.

Starting a business is much more complicated than simply hanging a shingle, and libraries can help with a host of resources and programs. In addition to books and multimedia on creating and running a business, key items include sample business plans, model employee policies, and databases that can spin out community demographic info, industry trends, and sophisticated mailing lists. The Boeings and Motorolas think nothing about buying these resources for themselves, CPL’s Andersen said he learned long ago, but they make a huge difference to the entrepreneur who is struggling just to qualify for a loan. But do not feel you have to know everything yourself, (continued on page 3)

**If truth is beauty,
how come no one
has their hair done
in the library?
-Lily Tomlin**

How Public Libraries Are a Boon to Small Business (cont.)

Sosulski added, who started out without any business background but has learned enough to lecture on this topic at library schools. "It's just like any other subject. You are looking up sources, you're investigating on the internet, you're learning incrementally by helping patrons." She encourages librarians to tap outside experts, too. The nonprofit SCORE association, a resource partner with the US Small Business Administration, often sends counselors to meet entrepreneurs in libraries, and city development advisors and successful local business owners can lead workshops on government licensing and regulations, legal contracts, financing, hiring employees, accounting, paying taxes, marketing, and advertising.

Equally valuable are library facilities: computers with internet access, faxes and copiers, and space for meetings and training. "It's like we're sitting on a gold mine," said Kristin McDonough, director of the New York Public Library's Science, Industry, and Business Library. "They can reserve meeting rooms so they can meet their clients. We let them use cellphones in low voices in certain sections of the library. They can network after work and at our lunchtime seminars. We don't let people sell widgets here—but they can do a lot of business."

As might be expected, NYPL's NYC Small Business Resource Center is huge and offers 10–15 free workshops every week. "But it has to be reciprocal," McDonough added. "Bartering is a big practice I've noticed with start-ups, and space for meetings is a premium everywhere," she said. So consider offering groups a place to meet in exchange for a workshop on their area of expertise. For instance, McDonough's library hosts the Green Breakfast Club, which brings environmentally conscious entrepreneurs together, and its effervescent founder, Danielle Lanyard, reciprocates. "Everywhere Lanyard goes now, she talks about the library," McDonough said. "She can convene a meet-up on a Friday night in a big law firm of 400 20-somethings, and she talks about us and hands out our literature. That is much more effective than us putting up a big sign in the library, because she is with it, and hip and cool!"

"I think of us as being connectors," said Andersen, who also recommends forming relationships with professional associations, universities, and lesser-known private agencies. "The library is a central location. Other agencies do workshops in their places, but a lot of people don't normally come through their space. Having them come here helps their visibility." And then they will send their clients to your library.

Tips for Enhancing Business Services

Post a pathfinder to resources on your website. Outline all the steps involved in a business start-up as well as how to use your resources. Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library is an excellent example with its business and career center site.

Databases and other online services are often available through state library associations or regional consortiums. If you are purchasing your own, look carefully at all your options and keep reevaluating new products. Gale Cengage, for instance, recently released its DemographicsNow: Business & People database, which it says is powerful enough to replace two or three other popular services.

Choose trade journals that fit your local markets, which might mean fashion design in New York but food trucks in Chicago and agriculture in Carson City.

Attend business functions to listen for trends and topics for your programs and to identify speakers. You may persuade even professional speakers to appear pro bono because they may wind up with a customer or two at the end of their program.

Record your workshop speakers for videos or podcasts on your website or on YouTube. Keep them short, or edit them into focused segments. Link to good programs on other library sites as well. The New York and Simsbury, Connecticut, libraries have very good collections.

Join BRASS, the Business Reference and Services Section of ALA's Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). The BRASS website offers some wonderful information, and you can learn even more by networking with others in field.

The Basic Business Library (Libraries Unlimited, 2011) includes a chapter with predictions for the future of business information services. It foresees continued growth in "collaborative ventures between the public librarian, neighborhoods, and businesspeople." And most prescient of all, it says "the expansion of quality business services directly into neighborhoods will be a positive force in the never-ending public library funding battle."

Collins, B. (2012, Aug 13). *How public libraries are a boon to small business*. Retrieved from [http:// americanlibrariesmagazine.org/features/08132012/how-public-libraries-are-boon-small-business](http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/features/08132012/how-public-libraries-are-boon-small-business)

LINKS TO STUDENT RESOURCES

Graduate Office

University of Missouri
Graduate Offices

Academic Calendar

Registration dates, class
dates, and holidays

Graduate Record

Exam

GRE requirements, tips,
and practice tests

Transcript Request Procedures

University of Missouri
transcript procedures

MU Online

Continuing and distance
education support
(formerly MU Direct)

Course Schedule

University of Missouri
course schedule search
page

PHOTO COLLAGE: NLA/NEMA Conference



From top left: Angela Kroeger, Dr. Pasco and Carrie Kimbrough posing with Darth Vader at the 2012 NLA/NEMA Conference. Top Right: Student David Arredondo. Bottom Left: Alumni Terry Wingate presenting. Bottom Right: Students Willa Garay, Amy Wenzl, Stefanie Skrdla posing with Dr. Pasco during a poster session.

ALA 2013

Scholarships

The American Library Association (ALA) has more than \$300,000 for students who are studying library science or school librarianship at the master's degree level.

Scholarships typically range from \$1,500 to \$7,000 per student per year. The application and instructions are available online. The application deadline is March 1, 2013.

There are many types of scholarships available for the study of librarianship. These include scholarships for students who are interested in Children's Librarianship, Youth Librarianship, Federal Librarianship, new media and Library Automation.

In addition, there are also scholarships available for minorities, persons with disabilities and for people who are already employed in libraries but do not have an MLS.

To be considered for one of these scholarships, applicants must attend a master's degree program in library and information science that has been accredited by the ALA. Applicants interested in school librarianship must attend a program that meets ALA curriculum guidelines for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Complete guidelines and instructions are available on the website.

The scholarship process is open annually from October through March. More information is available online or by calling the ALA Scholarship Clearinghouse at (800) 545-2433, ext. 4279.

PHOTO COLLAGE: NLA/NEMA Conference



Top Left: Alumni Marty Magee presenting at NLA/NSLA/MPLA Tri-Conference. Top Right: John Budd Missouri Faculty. Bottom Left: Annette Parde student. Bottom Right: Becky Wymer and Marcia Dority-Baker alumni.

PHOTO COLLAGE: NLA/NEMA Conference



Top Left: Tina Walker, alumna. Top Right: Kathryn Brockmeier and Carrie Kimbrough. Bottom Left: Angela Kroeger posing with Darth Vader. Bottom Right: Dr. Pasco with Jessie Swift.

Nebraska Libraries Named Star Libraries by Library Journal

There were 12
Nebraska Public
Libraries named Star
Libraries by Library
Journal for 2012.

Nebraska's Stars are:
Ashland Public Library

Atkinson Public
Library

Bennington Public
Library

Central City Public
Library

Falls City Library and
Arts Center

Hartington Public
Library

Hruska Memorial
Public Library, David
City

Lied Battle Creek
Public Library

Neligh Public Library

Raymond A. Whitwer
Tilden Public Library

Saint Paul Public
Library

Springfield Memorial
Library

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Amy Wenzl

What is your education/library/experience background?

I graduated from Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri with a BA in English and a BFA in theatre. After working and performing in Chicago for awhile, I realized I wanted to go back to my first love, books, and decided to move back to Nebraska for grad school. My mom was an elementary school librarian in Auburn, my hometown, so, besides just being an avid reader, I had some experience volunteering and helping her. Since moving back to the Omaha area, I've started working as a Youth Services Assistant and Library Aide at Sump Memorial Library in Papillion, and I'm loving every minute of it.

What is on your reading list? What are your favorites? Your recommended? Your want to read list?

My absolute favorite series is The Wheel of Time by Robert Jordan. I'm a big fantasy fan, and I've been in love with WOT since high school when a former teacher recommended it to me. Although, Once Upon a Time has gotten me into a fairytale kick, so I recently read Cinder by Marissa Meyer, a sort of futuristic/Sci-Fi interpretation of Cinderella, and really enjoyed it. (And yes, I am aware that all of the above makes me a total geek and am very proud of it)

What professional journal or article have you read and would recommend? Why?

I recently read the article "Visibility, Core Standards, and the Power of the Story: Creating a Visible Future for School Libraries" by Ross J. Todd and loved the idea of all librarians, no matter what setting, being more visible to patrons and to their communities. I also loved the idea that people learn best through stories, of all kinds, and that a joint effort by school, public, and academic librarians to help patrons discover these stories leads to lifelong learning and an understanding others' points of view.

What do you do in your "down time"? Do you have any hobbies? How do you relax?

Besides reading, I love board and card games. Although, sometimes it's hard to get people to play with me because I tend to get a little too aggressive in my desire to win. The same goes for video games, Xbox and N64 still being two of my favorite gaming consoles. I'm also a big movie and theatre buff. If anyone ever has an extra ticket to a play or musical, just give me call. I am there.

What deep dark secret would you like to share?

Well, I'm a smart alec who overuses commas and likes run-on sentences. But, that should already be pretty obvious by the rest of this interview. To risk adding to my geekiness, I have loved Pokemon Gameboy games since 3rd grade and can't wait until my nephew gets a year or two older so I can share my passion with him and have a reason to play them in public again.

Name one of your personal or professional qualities that will make you a leader in 21st century library and information centers.

I think my initiative and take charge attitude will make me a leader in 21st century libraries. It's not enough for any professional to just sit back and wait for the next task or next challenge. We have to pursue them every day to keep moving our profession forward in this fast paced world and constantly evolving field.

What advice do you have for other students who are currently enrolled in Library Science studies?

Besides never be late for a Dr. Pasco class, I would encourage other students to really seek out the classes that intrigue them and don't be afraid to change up their plan if they find something that really catches their interest.

What do you see as key future trends and challenges for Library Information Specialists?

Right now, for many reasons including budgetary restraints, I feel that many libraries and information specialists rely on patron requests and demands before providing new services and technologies to our communities. A major future challenge for us all is to find a way to step up our game and take the lead in utilizing these new resources and introducing them to our patrons.

What do you think will be your legacy in this profession?

I have so many memories of teachers and librarians in my past that encouraged me to try a new series or a new genre, and that exploration is part of why I fell in love with reading. I hope to be that librarian for a new generation of kids.

What is your favorite quote?

My favorite quote is, "I am no mere morsel. I am a red-blooded creature." It's a line by Mrs. Betterton in Playhouse Creatures by April De Angelis, a play set in 1663 when women were first allowed on the English stage and one of my favorite roles to play.



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

There is funding available for students pursuing library studies. Please take advantage of these opportunities. These scholarships are waiting to be snapped up by deserving students like you. Please make the decision to apply. Your educational journey is worthwhile, but it's not free. Let NLC, NLA, and NEMA help!

For **Nebraska School Librarians Association Scholarships**, visit:

<https://sites.google.com/site/neshoolibrariansassociation/nsla-scholarships>

For **Nebraska Library Commission Scholarships**, visit:

<http://nlc1.nlc.state.ne.us/nowhiring/Scholarships/ScholarshipInfo.asp#apply>

The new deadline for this scholarship is June 1, 2012

Nebraska Library Association Scholarships

<http://nebraskalibraries.org/member-resources/scholarships/>

Graduate Application for Scholarships:

2013-2014 Deadline: March 1, 2013

The graduate application is for new or continuing graduate students enrolled in the College of Education. Applications must be submitted on or before March 1st prior to the fall enrollment. Applications are considered once per year in the spring with awards distributed during the following fall/spring academic term.

Please note that the March 1st deadline may come before your application for graduate school has been fully considered. Applicants need only fill out this one form to be considered for all College scholarships in which they meet the minimum criteria.

The College of Education has a web based graduate scholarship application. The application form will be available after January 1, 2013 [Online Graduate Scholarship Application](#) Please use the link to apply. If you have questions, please call Ruth Gardner, Scholarship Coordinator at [573-884-7848](tel:573-884-7848).

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

It's important for all of our students to keep up with the current library job postings. You never know when your "perfect" job might come along. We regularly send out an email with the current postings. Please read these! Even if you're not looking for a job, you may see something that you want to pass on to a classmate or colleague. In addition to reading these emails, take the initiative to check the website periodically. We only send out Nebraska postings, but you can view regional postings by accessing the website.

Visit: <http://nlc1.nlc.state.ne.us/NowHiring/JobsAndCareers.asp> and check out who is looking to hire in Nebraska and in other states as well. Directions: Once you access this link, select "view by location", pick your state and then hit "GO". This site provides access to postings in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.