

Adult Services Advisory Council
February Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Jo-Ann Benedetti (UHLS), Debbie Canzano (COHS), Michael Catoggio (EGRN), Rosemary Engelhardt (GUIL), Suzanne Fisher (VOOR), Rebecca Lubin (RVLL), Katie Quinn (APLM), Mary Trev Thomas (BETH)

Databases:

Jo-Ann asked if anyone wanted database training on the current databases. It was decided that it would be worthwhile to have someone come in to demo the Gale databases since it was so new, maybe in April. Suzanne Fisher said it was hard to get some librarians involved because of their part-time status and Michael Catoggio suggested that database training be a "train the trainer" model so that we can take training back to our respective libraries. Will try to schedule something for April 21.

Since Polly Farrington recently did NOVEL training, perhaps we could wait till fall for this.

Katie asked if any libraries had computers dedicated to databases. Discussion followed about accessing the Internet from database-only computers, and ways to limit Internet browsing.

Michael Catoggio asked if UHLS could update the database handout to reflect the new databases and to make them more patron-friendly (i.e. not promoting Vendor names such as EBSCO or Gale, but promoting the function, such as magazines or business directories). Jo-Ann will work on updating.

Overdrive:

Jo-Ann passed out usage statistics for OverDrive to the group. There have been 1,434 checkouts, about 2/3 of which are audiobooks. The statistics show that over 200 people from Colonie are on the waiting list, and a total of 777 holds altogether. The group agreed that we need content, but many are reluctant to commit until we see where this technology goes in 6 months or so. Group thought that we may want to reduce the number of checkouts from 10 books at once to 5 books. Suggest this be brought to the Director's Association for review. Jo-Ann mentioned that 575 patrons have signed up for the service and 1,434 items have been checked out; this means that most patrons have only 2.5 items out. Jo-Ann will ask OverDrive if they can somehow make available an "early return" option.

The question was raised about more training opportunities for Overdrive. Jo-Ann mentioned that the Overdrive training module is now on the UHLS Intranet. It is accessible from the UHLS homepage, clicking on "Training for UHLS Staff" and entering the Intranet user name/password.

Mini-grants:

Jo-Ann reviewed the Mini-grant awards and announced Debbie Canzano's appointment to the committee. Debbie suggested UHLS keep a file of grant applications that can be used as examples for other libraries to use.

Lobby Day:

The group was reminded that Lobby Day will be March 14 this year. Jo-Ann encouraged participation.

PLA:

PLA will be held in Boston this year. Since few adult services librarians from the system will have the opportunity to go, Jo-Ann asked if there was any special programs, workshops, services, or vendors the group would like her to explore. The group decided it would be good to explore federated searching software, as this is something that might be worth considering with database funds. Jo-Ann will also find out what is new with Overdrive, as it is rumored that Overdrive has a "kiosk" mode that would facilitate downloading content in the library without using up the library's computing resources. The group is also interested in any kind of library PR materials/ideas available at PLA.

The discussion then went to PR that could be done system-wide. It would be nice if UHLS produced a pamphlet or users' guide that would cover libraries and their hours, available databases, and how to use OverDrive. It would be nice if this were fully customizable for each library. Jo-Ann mentioned that this would go out of date quickly because services change each year, and potentially become quite expensive to produce. The group suggested finding someone to underwrite the entire project.

2006 Plans:

- Writing Effective PR – class on April 27th. This will be a joint project with Youth Services.
- LifeLinks has contacted UHLS. They provide a video relay service to the deaf over broadband and will provide it for free to any library that wants it. The group thought it was a good idea, but felt it would not be of much use. The group also questioned what to do if the computer broke down, how much bandwidth it would use, who would maintain the computer and what staff training would be required. It was thought that someone in the system should have this. It will be brought to the Director's Association meeting for consideration.
- Jo-Ann will start forwarding programming leads to the Adultserv list. If this becomes too odious, the group will consider alternative ways to get the information out.
- UHLS and MHLS are jointly providing a workshop On Wednesday, May 3, that gives a practical approach to sustaining technology in the public library. All UHLS libraries that serve fewer than 25,000 people are encouraged to send at least one person. All expenses will be paid by the Gates foundation. The workshop will be held in Poughkeepsie. Debbie Canzano said she went to a similar workshop two years ago and it was excellent and well worth it. She encouraged everyone to take advantage of this.

Other:

Suzanne Fisher would like a copy of the agenda ahead of time. She also said her librarians miss Ebsco Premier. Mary Trev misses Books in Print, and finds that it is the best place to get reviews. The group asked Jo-Ann if she could find someone to provide a training session on alternatives to Books in Print, such as amazon.com, bookbrowse.com, etc. Jo-Ann will follow up.

Next Meeting: March 16, 2006.