

Adult Services Advisory Council
July 20, 2007 Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Tom Barnes (GUIL) Jo-Ann Benedetti (UHLS), Laurie Burns (TROY), Debbie Canzano (COHS), Michael Catoggio (EGRN), Suzanne Fischer (VOOR), Macaire Hill (VOOR) Meg Maurer (APLM), Jane Minotti (SNLK), Maureen Brown (BETH)

LSTA Customer Service Grants:

The council reviewed the list of customer service workshops and dates. The group discussed which classes would be appropriate for clerical staff, and if so, which sessions? The workshop on disability awareness and the workshop on customer service as marketing would certainly be appropriate for all library employees.

Databases

Jo-Ann reviewed how the Central Library Advisory Committee worked with the Central Library to spend xxx. APL now has an interim director, and since we have not worked with Tim Burke before, things may go a little differently.

We reviewed the current databases to which we subscribe. The group agreed that all are up for discussion. The databases which the group wants to keep are New York State Legal Forms (Gale), Testing and Education Reference Center (Gale), Reference USA (Info USA).

The subject areas we'd like to keep are Literature, Biography and American History, although we'd like to see if there are alternatives. Suzanne Fisher would like us to try out Ebsco's Literature Database. Tom Barnes wondered what Novel was planning on doing, and if Novel was considering a biography database. Jo-Ann will check. The group agreed that Book Review Index (Gale) could be dropped, as very few reviews are full-text, and the information is available elsewhere.

The group then discussed new databases for consideration. Laurie Burns and Debbie Canzano would like to see an automotive database and/or a small engine repair database. The group suggested looking at a home improvement database, a genealogy database (specifically Heritage Quest) and Novelist (although it was noted that each librarian is probably better at readers' advisory than the database) and Novelist K-8. Jo-Ann will set up trials for these, and by the next meeting will have a price on each.

Jo-Ann passed around marketing materials from Morningstar, America's Genealogy Bank and AP Images. The group did not want to pursue any of them.

The Big Read

Jo-Ann updated the group on the 2008 Big Read grant and it was suggested that the Palace, Troy Music Hall, and Emma Willard would be great venues for events.

Legal Reference Training

Jo-Ann received an email from Barbara Mule, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives (apparently part of the NY State Court system). Her office is offering librarians a class on “what librarians can do to assist the self-represented”.

There was much discussion about UHLS sponsoring this class. Tom Barnes felt strongly that this is beyond the purview of librarians. If it were a class on how the law is organized, it would be fine, but to have librarians “helping the self-represented” is not what we should be doing. The group agreed to have Jo-Ann gather additional information about the class.

24/7 Reference Redux

Jo-Ann brought up the idea of 24/7 reference to the group again. Although this had been discussed at length in March, Jo-Ann mentioned that there was an opportunity to become part of Western NY’s Library Resource Council’s program “Ask US 24/7”.

The committee took this question seriously back in March and felt quite strongly that they had had a thorough, deep and compelling discussion about 24/7 reference at that time. Statistics show that college kids use it, but its use is limited in the public libraries. Many questions posed are not reference questions, but relate to policy questions which cannot be answered by staff manning a 24/7 computer. The Council still recommends UHLS not provide this service, and suggest leaving it up to individual libraries if they want it.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be August 16th at 9:30 AM.