

American Library Association Annual Conference
Washington D. C.
June 24 - 29, 2010
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Before I begin I would like to take the opportunity to thank LIBRAS for awarding me the Continuing Education Funding Grant, which was used to attend this year's American Library Association (ALA) 2010 Annual Conference, at Washington D.C. In view of the fact that economic times are harsh, funding for professional development can be quite costly. Therefore, I am grateful to the Staff Development Committee for their generous support, which made it possible for me to attend this year's ALA Conference.

Briefly I would like to provide you with some account to my activities at the conference. My attendance at ALA I gave me the chance to get acquainted with many of the services that the organization had to provide for its members and guest. I had an opportunity to visit with many vendors, view several exhibits and poster sessions, and listen to a few instructional programs. In addition, I was able to meet and network with other librarians from around the United States who had a lot of professional advice to share with me. Below is a list of some of the activities that I attend at ALA.

Exhibits and Vendors

As this was my first time ever attending the ALA Conference I made sure to visit as many vendors and exhibits as I possibly could. There was a myriad of publishers, furniture vendors, circulation equipment vendors, database vendors, etc. It was an overwhelming experience for me to be immersed in all of this. I am not familiar with purchasing anything for libraries yet, but seeing all the products that were being offered, helped me to understand the responsibilities that certain librarians have. Librarians have to be very selective about the products that they purchase for their libraries. They have to evaluate the needs of their staff and patrons before they make any purchase that will change the way they serve the libraries.

Poster Presentation

I next, attended several poster presentations that were demonstrated by individual librarians or libraries. The poster presentations provide librarians the opportunity to share with others graphic representation of their current research, programs, and any creative solutions to their library problems. Some of my favorite poster sessions dealt with outreach services to specific groups. Some of the research that was demonstrated during this session introduced how libraries cater to specific groups by providing them reference and information services. The information I saw here allowed me to evaluate the type of services I provide to the Dominican Community.

Programs

Finally, several of the programs that I attended were geared towards young adults with emphasis in poetry, technology, and literary services. The first program entitled *Celebrating the Spoken Word with Poetry for Young People* introduced the current Children's Poet Laureate, Mary Ann Hoberman, who shared her work and creative process. Another program I attended, entitled *Technology Skills for Incarcerated Teens*, introduced how several librarians provide outreach services to incarcerated teens. This specific program provides troubled teens with programs that will help them improve their technology skills through the use of gaming, pod casting, and blogging.

I had a chance to see and experience a lot at ALA. Yet, there were many other interesting programs and exhibits that I did not have an opportunity to see. However, this conference was, for me, an introduction to what I am to expect at other ALA Annual Conferences. This conference served to help me examine my current skills and how I can develop them to better serve my patrons at work. I only hope that I may have many more opportunities to attend as many conferences as I can. In addition to that, I hope to also have a more active role where I can share my own experiences and research with my fellow librarians. Again, I would like to thank LIBRAS for making this experience possible. Thank You!