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## Community Engagement as Collaboration

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## Community Engagement as Collaboration

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Librarians and information professionals are expanding their collaborative practice through community engagement. In some cases, this community engagement is about redefining long-term relationships, while in others, librarians and information professionals are forging relationships with new partners. Community engagement has become an important focus for higher education institutions, so understanding this landscape is critical for librarians. This issue of *Collaborative Librarianship* explores ways in which community engagement is evolving.

The multiple authored “What Collaboration Means to Me” explains how a group came together from Twitter (™) exchanges to plan and put together an open science massive open online course (MOOC) geared towards helping researchers develop open science practices. The intent of this project is to create a community beyond the project that can have continued engagement. It is an exciting project creating pathways for the barriers to scholarship to be fractured and allow for a more open environment.

In our other column, Lori Bowen Ayre makes the case for public libraries to do away with late fees. While some libraries have done away with late fees, there is still plenty of room of the practice to become the norm instead of exception. Late fees distract the community from using public libraries and make the library appear to

be unkind and unwelcoming. An essential way to engage with the community is to remove barriers to library use.

Our From the Field reports describe how academic libraries engage with their research and teaching and learning communities. In the first report, the University of Florida Libraries (UFL) present the work they’ve undertaken with a major commercial publisher to enhance journal access. Librarians and publishers have historically collaborated through financial interactions on scholarly content supply. UFL’s work with Elsevier has resulted in improved compliance with funder public access mandates. Through this partnership, the libraries have been able to strengthen the relationships between the library and the research office as well as with the research faculty in general.

Adrienne Gosselin and Mandi Goddsett focus their from the field report on working directly with faculty using the public sphere pedagogy, a teaching strategy to increase students’ sense of civic engagement at Cleveland State University. In this case the community engagement extends to students’ interactions with their course and learning plans. This paper outlines the role librarians play in the development and implementation of critical information pedagogy. The authors also provide a nifty checklist of how librarians can work with faculty on this type of



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pedagogical approach to further develop students' awareness of community issues.

In the first scholarly article in this issue, Braegan Abernethy and Kari Weaver use a mixed media analysis to understand the community service trends in academic librarianship. Their survey indicates that the definition of community is fluid in academia and that there is no correlation between librarians' faculty status and community engagement. They have found that community service is an important aspect of any librarian's academic career and their professional engagement. Academic librarians are taking the initiative to define the communities they are working with and finding new ways to provide relevance in the information age. However, given the multiplicity of definitions of what is a community and what is community service, it is still a difficult area to research comprehensively.

Susan Murphy, Dale Amerud, and Chloe Corcoran provide us an investigation of the emerging partnerships developing between academic

librarians and disability services at the University of Saskatchewan. Their paper outlines how librarians moved from piloting technology to the development of learning spaces and multiple assistive technology provisions. In addition, they reviewed a survey of disability services employees to learn where other intersections could potentially occur. They were happy to discover an array of services and partnerships happening in North America. But they note that this is an area where there is scant research available. There is definitely space for further development of collaborations between the library and disability student services at academic institutions.

This issue of *Collaborative Librarianship* highlights how libraries can engage with their communities in new and different ways. Libraries exist to serve their communities, so librarians must consider how to collaborate with the broadest range of communities possible. Community engagement is crucial for the success of libraries and is an essential aspect of librarianship. We are excited to highlight this work.

