

At Home and Abroad

The Multiple Values of LIS Student Internships

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August 2012

With great gratitude – Interns 2008 - 2012



Reflections – 5 yrs.

Creating student internships for LIS grad students has multi-dimensional value:

- Value for the profession
- Value for organization
- Value for community
- Value for intern
- Value for supervisor

Value for profession

- Building the future
- “I don’t think LIS students realize how much they will be expected to provide managerial level services (even as a new librarian) in their respective work places after graduation. This was my first experience in which my newly developing expertise in digital libraries was treated with professional respect. I believe it helped me make the transition from graduate student to professional librarian.”

Values for organization

- 150 hrs. of work = substantive contribution
- Contributes new ideas, perspectives
- Thoughtful reflection
- Opportunity for mentoring, building professional relationships, possible future hires



Values for community

- Digital collections and resources = increased information access
- Increased awareness of resources
- User education



Values for intern

- Increase skill set w/ practical application
- Meaningful professional contribution – first professional experience is impactful
- Shape future interests
- Employability



Finding employment – cont'd.

- “I’ve had 2 on-campus interviews and in both cases the hiring committees were interested in hearing more about my experience... my internship was instrumental in gaining the position I have now... my co-workers still remember my presentation and ask questions about CR.”
- “The internship helped me tremendously since the intl. exp. was a big plus when I interviewed. My boss is totally into intl. projects and loves it when we expand our horizons.”

Values for supervisor

- Opportunity to teach/mentor/ make contribution to future of profession
- Opportunity to learn from interns
- Build important resources
- Create on-going loyalty to projects and build from this



Surprise values collectively expressed

- Empowerment

"I liked that an individual could come up with an idea, recruit partners across the globe, and devise a digital project that makes an international contribution to information access. This is such an empowering experience for new librarians."

- Value of bilingual experience

"Learning to speak Spanish better has helped me to work with the newly arrived immigrants from Latin America that frequent the public library, and to be asked to do programming targeted to these folks."

"It was also a big plus given that the Bronx is heavily Hispanic, to have worked within a Spanish –speaking country."

Working with interns

- Create internships; be proactive.
- Develop clear description of goals, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Recruit from targeted library schools; require formal application process.
- Build time into your schedule for working with interns.
- Encourage questions, ideas, input, and feedback.



Thanks for listening!
Q and A

