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Thinking Outside of the Library

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Librarians are known for collaborating as well as finding unique and innovative ways for providing needed services. The authors in this issue of *Collaborative Librarianship* have found ways to connect with their alumni, graduate students, and faculty as well as with their broader communities to provide customized services for each group. To begin the issue, the authors of "Connecting with Alumni as an Academic Library" describe their interactions with a group that most librarians fail to consider in their outreach programs. Due to enrollment and retention concerns, most academic librarians' attention has been focused on students, specifically undergraduate students. However, Ruth A. Monnier and Katy Kelly collaborated with alumni associations to create a program exclusively catered to that special audience. One outreach program was called "Final Friends," and the program coordinators asked alumni to write short notes to undergraduate students facing finals week. Monnier and Kelly noted that this activity did not ask alumni for money, and most alumni appreciated that the university contacted them for something other than a donation.

The second article in this issue explores how universities are expanding their use of Open Educational Resources (OER) to try to mitigate the rising costs of tuition and textbooks. For example, open access journals are quality peer-reviewed journals that are freely available to students, faculty, staff, and community members. As a result of their interest in open access practices, Kelly Banyas, Marleen Cloutier, and Col-

leen Farry discuss the creation a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) in their article "Leading an Open Revolution: Promoting Awareness of Open Resources through an Interdisciplinary Learning Community." They note that an FLC is a "community of practice that focuses on supporting the advancement of teaching and learning at institutions of higher education." The authors also noted that their FLC "provides a pathway for librarians to engage in research and advocacy," and they defined their FLC as a seminar to discuss open pedagogy, barriers to open access, and open access publishing.

Patricia B. Condon, Thea P. Atwood, and Catherine DeRose took a different approach in their study, "Connecting Fragmented Support on Campus: Growing Research Data Services Programs through Collaboration." They examine how library data services have been used at their respective institutions on-campus, off-campus, and in the library. As a result of their inquiry, they recommend strategies for advancing Research Data Services (RDS) through collaboration in the often-fragmented higher education environment. Examples of successful strategies that they recommend include building successful partnerships, setting realistic goals, and working through administrative and organizational barriers.

Concluding the issue, Ashley R. Lierman discusses ways to connect with graduate students to help them to stay enrolled in graduate school. In the article, "Partners in Graduate Student Retention: A Library-Led Outreach Collaboration,"

the Campbell Library at Rowan University's main campus connected with Global Learning and Partnerships to create the Graduate Student Library Social. The purpose of the Library Social was to inform graduate students about the library and to connect them with other graduate students. The organizers of the Library Social realized they were competing with other events, but the organizers also saw those competing events as an opportunity to collaborate with other graduate programs and services on campus. As a result of this first program, Rowan librarians have also collaborated with the Dean of Students and the Office of Research to create ongoing Graduate Student Days. Lierman's observations about the graduate student programming reflect what the other authors in this issue have also discovered; through collaboration with each other and other units on campus, librarians can strengthen their services for students, faculty, and the larger community leading to improved outcomes for their patrons and their libraries.