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NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA—COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



School of Information

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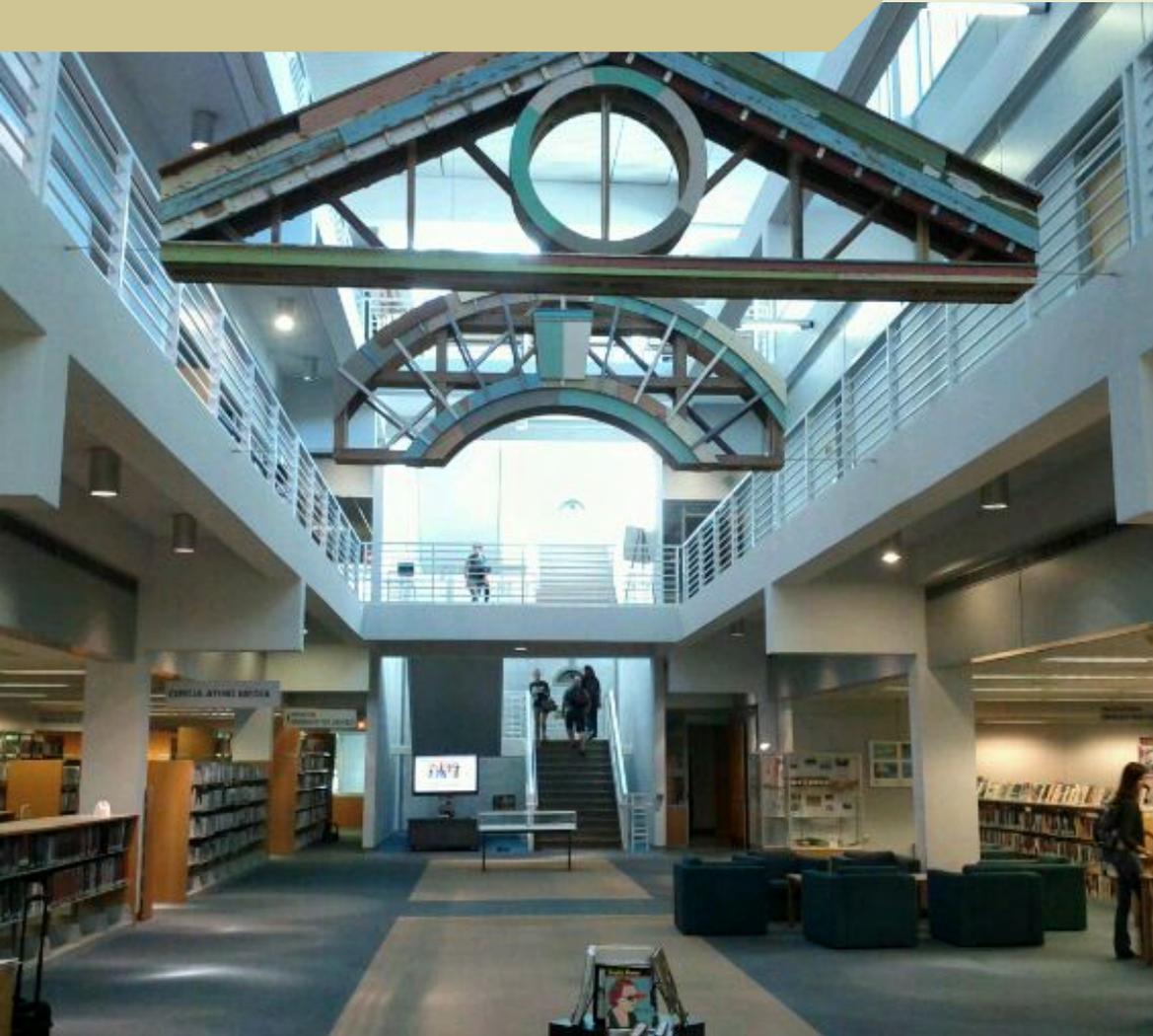
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The University of South Florida School of Information (USF SI) newsletter brings together departmental stories, events, and news important to information professionals. Each volume contains two issues published in the Fall and Spring. The Fall 2023 issue is Vol. 1, No. 2 of the publication. Please contact si@usf.edu for questions, feedback, or more information.

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Remodeling & Reopening of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library (NPML)

The 30-year-old library has a modern, new look with state-of-the-art technology.



After undergoing major renovations, the first floor of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library (NPML) has a new look and greater study space for students. The upgrades include twelve new study rooms and state-of-the-art technology to enhance opportunities for collaboration and learning. The 30-year-old facility is a popular spot for students and the surrounding community, but it was in need of a modern redesign that utilized space differently to better meet the growing population on the St. Petersburg campus. "It's blessed with natural light and beautiful design," said Kaya van Beynen, Associate Dean of the NPML who's been involved with the project since planning began in 2018.

"But the way students use the information and our staff work has changed. So, it was time to rethink the first floor to adapt to students' needs now and into the future," said Beynen. The Student Technology Center, located on the first floor of the library, has been expanded and will now feature an updated digital makerspace and virtual reality studio where students can participate in robotics training and 3D printing. "I can't wait to see the creativity that will happen through the Student Technology Center's makerspace and workshop offerings," said Kristina Keogh, Dean of the NPML who began her position in July. "Opportunities for play and experimentation within these settings can foster innovation and problem-solving skills that will help students in their coursework and careers." A new gallery on the first floor will feature rotating art exhibitions from campus and community partners as well as highlights from the NPML Special Collections and University Archives. "I am excited to ramp up programming and collaboration within the library gallery," Keogh said. "This will be an opportunity to expand partnerships with community arts and culture organizations within the City of St. Petersburg. It will also be a place to feature students' work among our rotating exhibitions."

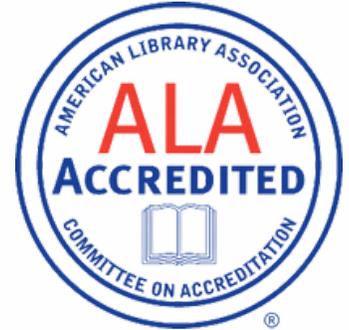
The designers of the project also kept sustainability in mind. The green construction plan included materials with a high recycled content, a pre-fabricated system for individual study rooms to reduce waste, new lights with high-efficiency LED fixtures, and paints and other materials that minimize the use of cleaning products and harsh chemicals that pollute indoor air quality. The library will also be part of a pilot project by Duke Energy that will install a submeter to monitor and collect real-time energy use data. The \$1.25 million renovation project was funded by a \$1 million legacy gift from Josephine Hall, a regular attendee of campus events, and a \$250,000 gift from alumna and longtime supporter Lynn Pippenger. The redesign of NPML has been in the works for four years, but the project faced several delays due to the pandemic, supply chain issues, and rising construction costs. Phase one finally got underway and was completed in 2022 with first-floor renovations. Phase two, slated to be complete in 2023, will include new furniture, a redesigned front entrance, and a plant wall to reduce noise, create a peaceful environment, and purify the air.

Article written by Sarah Sell and published by the USF St. Petersburg Campus Newsroom. Photo courtesy of Alfi Storrs.

50 Years of Library and Information Science

Celebrating the LIS Graduate Program 50th Anniversary: A Brief History of the USF School of Information

In November 2023, the School of Information (iSchool) will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of its Library and Information Science (LIS) graduate program. Since its inception, the LIS program has been continually accredited by the American Library Association (ALA) seven times, and the process for its next accreditation review is underway. The 50th Anniversary celebration will take place at the University of South Florida (USF) campus in Tampa, concurrent with the 2023 Alice G. Smith Lecture. We look forward to a wide array of distinguished guests, including many former directors, Outstanding Alumni recipients, previous Alice G. Smith lecturers, and of course many other friends, faculty, students, and alums of the LIS program.



Throughout our history, we have proudly served thousands of students and built strong ties across Florida's many communities and distinguished ourselves nationally in teaching and scholarship. Below, we briefly review the evolution of the LIS program within the context of the School of Information, from its beginning as a certificate program in the College of Education, across the many years as the sole focus of the School of Library and Information Science, to its part of our growth into a multi-program, interdisciplinary iSchool.

The Beginning—1961

What is now known as the "School of Information" originated with the establishment of the Library/Audiovisual Certification Program in the USF College of Education in 1961. This was a mere five years after USF's founding (1956). At that time, the College of Education was not departmentalized, and joint upper-level undergraduate programs were arranged within the curriculum areas of the College and, when necessary, in conjunction with the discipline areas of other USF colleges. An undergraduate program consisted of two tracks, the combined dual majors of Elementary Education and Library Science/Audiovisual Education. Graduates of these programs were certified as secondary teachers of English and as K-12 librarians.

Dr. Alice G. Smith, who was appointed the first Chairperson in 1965, built upon the early certificate program and created a Department of Library Science/Audiovisual Education in the College of Education. The new department received authorization for 22 faculty members and an undergraduate program for School Library Certification. A master's degree program in School Librarianship was eventually offered in 1965-1966.

Building a Foundation—Accreditation and Expansion

In April 1970, the Florida Board of Regents (now the Board of Governors) approved the establishment of a comprehensive, across-the-board Library Science graduate program at the master's level. Several years later, in 1975, the ALA granted initial accreditation to the USF LIS program, which has been continually accredited since then. USF has a statewide mission to serve all of Florida, so the LIS program broadened its reach to serve Southeast Florida. In 1978, the East Coast Program was established at the request and invitation of the newly created Broward County Public Library System.

In the rapidly growing Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties, there was a recognized need for librarians with the appropriate credentials from an ALA-accredited program. USF supported this effort, and Broward County reciprocated by providing classroom and office space. Initially, the East Coast Program offered one course taught on weekends only, but it soon expanded to include between four and five courses per semester, distributed throughout the tri-county area.

The second ALA review for continued accreditation was in 1985, by which time the LIS program was becoming even more established. During that review, the ALA Committee on Accreditation (COA) recommended that the program be designated as a school rather than a department, consistent with other professional programs. Thus, in 1985 the department was renamed the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) and the title of Chairperson was changed to Director.

In 1989, SLIS memorialized the visionary work of Dr. Smith, its founding faculty member and first Director, by establishing the Alice G. Smith Lectureship Fund. The lecture series is one of the oldest continuing lectures in Library and Information Science.

Move to the College of Arts & Sciences, and Increased Focus on East Coast and Latino Communities

Dr. John McCrossan became Director after Dr. Smith's retirement, followed by Dr. Robert J. Grover (1987-1990). Dr. Fred Pfister was then designated as Director in 1991. Despite earning continued ALA accreditation for a third time that year, the College of Education recommended closing the School due to broader budgetary challenges. Fortunately, the School had a robust alumni association which protested this recommendation. A campaign was initiated, and the university set up an external review of the LIS program. The resulting assessment found the program to be cost effective yet poorly funded in comparison to other accredited programs in the Southeast; that the need for professional librarians in the state was significant; and, with some changes, the School could expand its scope and curricular offering to strengthen the program. In response, School moved to the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) as a Division in the School of Mass Communications later that year.

A key external hire for Director came in 1993 with the acquisition of Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook. Dr. McCook worked to make the School an independent academic unit, creating the School of Library and Information Science in the College of Arts & Sciences. Dr. McCook also further expanded SLIS' commitment to Miami, Broward, and Palm Beach counties by appointing Mrs. Maria Almaguer Treadwell as Assistant Director and establishing an East Coast Program Office at the Broward County Public Library. Mrs. Almaguer Treadwell was critical to program growth and success, and helped in advising students, securing classroom space, recruiting adjunct faculty, marketing the LIS program to new students, planning events (e.g., new student orientations and graduation receptions), and representing USF/SLIS at various tri-county committees and events.

Throughout its existence, particularly as the LIS program expanded to the Southeast Coast, USF SLIS has focused on serving the Latino communities that form a major part of Florida's identity and population. Beyond making the program accessible to diverse students, we have led activities in LIS education focused on these communities.

In 1998, the School held the Trejo Institute on Hispanic Library Education, the proceedings of which were published as *Library Services to Youth of Hispanic Heritage* (McFarland, 2000). In 1999, SLIS hosted an Institute on Library Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Florida funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED).

Increased Reach and Innovations in LIS Education

In 1999, Dr. Vicki Gregory was named as Director. She was able to leverage the School's growth to bring in new faculty, as well as begin exploring new models for instruction and delivery. SLIS has always been an early adopter of distance and online learning. Dr. Gregory built on this, developing more extensive web-based and "blended" distance education offerings. The School would eventually move to a fully web-based distance program, which has enabled asynchronous access to our LIS program by geographically dispersed students.

To expand our reach outside Florida, in 2005-2007, the School partnered with the College of the Bahamas (now the University of The Bahamas) to offer the Master of Arts degree to students in the Bahamas. This partnership with the College of The Bahamas resulted in nine Bahamian students graduating in 2007 and spending their last term on the Tampa campus during their final semester of the program.

SLIS faculty have long explored other innovations in LIS education and outreach. In the early 2000s, the School received a large grant from the Institute for Museums and Library Services (IMLS) supporting the project, "Education of Librarians to Serve the Underserved (ELSUN)." In 2005, the School was awarded another large grant from IMLS to recruit and prepare academic librarians (the ALSTARS Project). Drs. Jim Carey, Anna Perrault, and Vicki Gregory were part of a USF Harvard Challenge Grant responsible for developing models for distance education that allowed for holistic evaluation of a program, as opposed to the evaluation of individual faculty members. These projects are in addition to the various presentations and papers faculty have written on LIS education, as well as the innovations within our own curriculum.

Realigning and Increasing Visibility

Dr. John Gathegi was named as Director in 2007 during a time when the School sought to expand its involvement and visibility in the field internationally. Dr. Gathegi co-sponsored the International Conference on Information Capital, Property, & Ethics (ICPE) with the Department of Information and Communications at Shih Hsin University of Taipei on October 20-22, 2010. In 2011, the Association of Caribbean, University, Research, and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) held its annual conference in Tampa. USF SI was a sponsor and obtained a grant for translation and publication of proceedings in three languages. Since this period, our faculty have continually presented and been active in a range of conferences representing USF and our program proudly on the international stage.

In 2009, Dr. James E. Andrews was named as Director. As Director, Dr. Andrews collaborated with USF administration and faculty governance bodies to expand the mission of the School and facilitated its renaming as the School of Information in October 2010. The name change reflected our alignment with the changing focus in the information scholarship nationally and internationally. One impetus for this was when the school accepted responsibility for the B.S. in Information Technology following the dissolution of USF Lakeland. This STEM-based program was one indication that the School was becoming more intellectually diverse, and the new name better reflected our evolving mission and strategic aims.

In 2012, Dr. Randy Borum joined the faculty and has helped the school move in new directions that have distinguished USF among other information schools. With his leadership, we created a new Master of Science in Intelligence Studies (MSIS), a

STEM-based program built on the theoretical foundations of information science. This program had two concentrations, Strategic Intelligence and Cyber Intelligence, which articulated with the broader USF M.S. in Cybersecurity degree program supported by the Florida Center for Cybersecurity housed at USF. The goal of this program is to enable students to become proficient in finding and evaluating information, generating knowledge, and applying it effectively to improve decision-making for individuals and organizations.

In 2016, USF's School of Information was accepted as an associate member of the iSchools Organization. This reflected a major shift in the direction and international reputation of our School and its impact on the field.

Looking Forward

Since the last (seventh) accreditation visit, USF's iSchool has continued to strengthen its core mission while expanding in new directions. Dr. Borum was appointed Director following Dr. Andrews, who served for 12 years. This is the first time the iSchool has been led by a scholar outside of LIS, but who nevertheless shares core values and commitment to our strategic vision. Our programs are growing, and as they strengthen so does our influence in the university ecology and the disciplines associated with information scholarship.

The M.S. in Intelligence Studies has continued to draw students from many areas, and we have expanded this area to include a new STEM-based Master of Science in Cybersecurity Intelligence and Information Security (MSCIIS), as well as related graduate certificates and a leadership role in USF's new National Security Initiative. The B.S. in IT has evolved to better reflect the iSchool mission and values. Since its arrival in our School, it has evolved to a unique B.S. in Information Science with five concentrations that map to high demand career pathways: Data Science and Analytics, Health Informatics, Intelligence Analysis, Web Development, and Information Security. The program has grown rapidly to over 800 majors.

The LIS graduate program, now led by Dr. Natalie Taylor as the LIS Program Director, is the longest running and most prominent program in our School. We maintain an enrollment of nearly 400 graduate students who represent every region of Florida and many other states nationally. Our graduates become leaders in the profession, working to serve communities in every county in public libraries, schools, universities, and a range of other information agencies.

The faculty and staff are honored to know we have played a positive role in improving the lives of people in our communities. We hope you will join us in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of our LIS program and help us as we look for new challenges in the next half century.

Article written by USF SI faculty members Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook and Dr. Jim Andrews.

4th National Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC) Conference

The USF SI sponsored four graduate students to attend the 4th National Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC) Conference held at the TradeWinds Island Grand Beach Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida, February 8-12, 2023. Aparna Ghosh, Kyairla Davis, Emily Hannum, and Sara Hack were students who after applying were selected and awarded complementary registration to the 2022 JCLC Conference. Students chosen for the paid conference registration attended the entire conference and worked with the Department Operations Manager, David Chapel, to provide materials for the iSchool's social media and website. Following the conference, students were asked to submit statements summarizing their experience and reflecting on the event. These reflections are included on the following two pages.



The conference is co-sponsored, planned, organized, promoted, and presented by the five National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo):

- American Indian Library Association (AILA)
- Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA)
- Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)
- Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA)
- REFORMA: National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking



APARNA GHOSH

Conference Attendee
MLIS Candidate
USF School of Information



KYAIRLA DAVIS

Conference Attendee
MLIS Candidate
USF School of Information



EMILY HANNUM

Conference Attendee
MLIS Candidate
USF School of Information



SARA HACK

Conference Attendee
MLIS Candidate
USF School of Information

Aparna Ghosh, MLIS Candidate—Conference Attendee

“Attending the 2022 Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (rescheduled in 2023) was a truly transformative experience for me. It meant a great deal to me, as a prospective librarian of color, to be able to meet so many others doing important work on making real improvements in the LIS profession in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). Also, as a soon-to-be graduate of USF’s MLIS program, it gave me a chance to connect with prospective employers, both local and further afield. The many presentations were informative, but my favorite talks were the “Call to Action” sessions each day, which provided a safe space for attendees to engage with their feelings and experiences in their professions. What I especially loved about the “Call to Action” is that it was meant to come up with practical ways for us to improve the LIS profession—something that is much needed. We learned on the final day of the conference that a report compiling our feedback and survey results would be published. Finally, JCLC gave me a chance to reconnect with many friends and peers I have met during my education. I had the opportunity to see my ALA Spectrum and ARL Kaleidoscope Scholarship peers again, along with others I have met through online meetings and now finally in person. It was a wonderful time of connection and joy, and I know that these relationships are stronger for it.”

Kyairla Davis, MLIS Candidate—Conference Attendee

“The Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC) will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on my career in librarianship. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to take part in such a transformative experience so early in my LIS journey. I cannot thank the iSchool enough in helping me attend the conference, as I would not have been able to make it without the assistance. The conference was a success despite being rescheduled unexpectedly due to Hurricane Ian. In the end, this may have worked out for the best because the weather was absolutely gorgeous. The overall atmosphere at the conference was very warm welcoming. Everyone exchanged genuine smiles, and it was beautiful to see so many diverse faces. There was a strong sense of community built through our sharing of stories and validation of each other's experiences. We made sure to honor the people who came before us on the land and in this racial justice work. We spent most of the week brainstorming ways to take direct action in manifesting our vision of a more equitable world.

One of my favorite sessions was a panel discussion titled, "What does a racially-just library ecosystem look like?" One of the panelists was our SOLIS advisor, Dr. Vanessa Reyes, who emphasized leveraging students' voices during fights for racial justice. In fact, throughout the conference there was a strong focus on fostering MLIS students for their future in the field. It was inspiring being able to rub elbows with the movers and shakers of our industry. Knowing there is a strong support system at my disposal is beyond empowering. I would encourage anyone who believes in the JCLC mission to get involved in whatever way they can. Joining any of the five National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) is a great way to start, and you don't have to be a person of color to be a member! We need allies who are also dedicated to doing the work. I left with a lot of great resources; some of the most valuable being the connections I made with like-minded people. Not to mention, solid career advice for the future. I cannot overstate how wonderful of an experience I had at JCLC. The next conference won't be for another three to four years, but I definitely don't plan to miss it.”

Emily Hannum, MLIS Candidate—Conference Attendee

"As a new MLIS student with USF, JCLC was a unique opportunity for me to connect with library science professionals in an intimate setting. A priority for me was learning about trending topics particularly as they relate to DEIA. The organization of the event schedule allowed for me to easily see what presentations were relevant to my professional interests. My favorite opportunity was the exhibit hall which gave me a low pressure environment to have one-on-one conversations. It was inspiring to see the depth and breadth of librarianship focused on BIPOC and other often underrepresented communities. I knew coming into my MLIS program that I was interested in community service and social justice. This conference further solidified in me some of my convictions and has influenced the direction of my school work following JCLC. I appreciate this opportunity and hope my future scholarship may contribute towards the field of library science."

Sara Hack, MLIS Candidate—Conference Attendee

"When I started my career in libraries, I was aware that the system was dominated by white women. I was okay at first with that because there were very few female-led professions. However, the more I worked, the more I wanted to join a group where I felt seen and understood. APALA really contributes various toolkits and supplies for their members to ensure a stable career for them—one of these initiatives was participating in JCLC, the Joint Council Librarians of Color Conference. It happens once every four years, and this time it was in St. Pete Beach. My mentor, Dr. Vanessa Reyes, advised me to go. I then applied for the USF Travel Grant, and I was one of the lucky few to be chosen! (Thank you USF School of Information!) The JCLC experience was amazing! This is hands down one of the best conferences I have been to. It was a healthy environment for networking and sharing information.

My favorite part of the conference was a "Call to Action" session along the days of the conference that allowed attendees to express their thoughts and stories on various DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) topics. There were also author meet-and-greets, and panel discussions—one of which I was on. My experience as a moderator was extremely tiring yet exhilarating. My panel and I discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it had on various library types across the nation. We talked about school and public libraries and the "new normal" that has now been established since the pandemic. We also covered DEI issues that have arisen since then—COVID placed DEI initiatives on the backburner and eliminated staff positions as well. I really hope the information and suggestion for improvement in the system helped others. They seemed really accepting! I met so many people who were kind and open to hearing your experiences as well as sharing theirs. It was therapeutic. I also got to connect with NALCO, FLA, and ALA leaders. It really gave me an opportunity to understand the current DEI issues in libraries today, what we need to do to improve issues in different lenses, and what we all expect from libraries moving forward.

The conference also provided a job networking platform, as there were different libraries that sent recruiters out and they offered various jobs in library services. For those that needed help in interviews or writing their resume and cover letter, they also provided a place to help sharpen their skills. Aside from the professional aspects of the conference, it was a lit social scene too. There were tours to local landmarks, photo booths, cultural performances, and we even had a dance party, where we got down with everyone else. LOL. For a conference that was rescheduled quickly due to the hurricane, they did a fabulous job getting things together again. Ultimately, I believe something like this should be held yearly. It was well rounded, professional and fun, and it gives BIPOC members the opportunity to really connect on another level. We heard each other out and we really established a loving community. Attending JCLC and being a part of the NALCOs is a badge of honor that I will forever wear proudly as a librarian. I also suggest fellow students in the MLIS program and librarians in the BIPOC community to attend the next meeting and join AILA, BCALA, REFORMA, CALA, or APALA."

Introducing

New SI Faculty—Fall 2023

Amelia Anderson, MLIS, Ph.D.

Joined the USF iSchool in August 2023 as an Assistant Professor with a focus on autism, neurodiversity, disability, and libraries.



Dr. Amelia Anderson has extensive experience on the topics of autism, neurodiversity, disability, and libraries through her work as a researcher, educator, and former public librarian. Through original research and collaborative partnerships, Dr. Anderson studies and shares best practices and trends at the intersection of autism and libraries and has presented her work at conferences from local to international audiences. Dr. Anderson is the author of *Library Programming for Autistic Children and Teens, 2nd Edition*, published by ALA Editions. She recently served as the managing PI on the IMLS planning grant *Accessibility in Making* (LG-246292-OLS-20), which identified opportunities in public library makerspaces for patrons with disabilities. She has published in journals such as *College & Research Libraries (C&RL)*, *Library Quarterly*, the *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science (JOLIS)*, *The Journal of Academic Librarianship (JAL)*, *Library & Information Science Research*, *First Monday*, and *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities (FOCUS)*. She is an active member of the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE). Dr. Anderson earned her B.S. from the University of Florida, and her MLIS and Ph.D. from Florida State University's iSchool. She previously worked as an assistant professor of library science at Old Dominion University (ODU), and as a librarian for the Orange County Library System and the Hernando County Public Library.

Tameca Jewell Beckett, MLIS, Ed.D.

Joined the USF iSchool in August 2023 as an Assistant Professor of Instruction with a focus on the intersections of data, technology, and community for the public good.



Dr. Tameca Jewell Beckett, a software and data engineer, is a dedicated scholar-practitioner and information professional who is deeply passionate about student success at the intersections of data, technology, and research. With over a decade of experience as an architect for engagement and catalyst for dialogue within communities, she believes in the value of free, open access to information and is committed to sharing innovative, data-driven solutions that blend technology and creativity. Formerly a Board Member for the national Association of Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL), Dr. Beckett was awarded the American Library Association's 2014 Emerging Leader Award and the Rodel Foundation iEducate Delaware Award. In recent years, she has served her communities in various capacities, including as a public library director, data engineering fellow, and academic librarian. Leveraging her background in education, data analytics, and research, she developed a groundbreaking model that combines appreciative inquiry and context personalization, which has been recognized with a peer-reviewed publication. Dr. Beckett continues to forge new paths in the realms of education, data, and information science, inspiring and empowering others to harness the transformative potential of data and technology for the public good.

Karen F. Kaufmann, MLIS, Ph.D.

Joined the USF iSchool in August 2023 as an Assistant Professor of Instruction with a focus on information literacy, user relevance, user information experience, and the intersection of theory and practice in information science.



Dr. Karen F. Kaufmann brings over twelve years of academic librarianship and teaching experience to inform her research interests. Her research interests include information literacy, user relevance, user information experience, and the role of the academic library to support transfer students. The intersection of research informing practice and practice informing research is a space that is especially poignant for information literacy and related information studies. This extends to the complex nature of information literacy as transdisciplinary and evidenced across disciplines. Her doctoral work investigated "The Socio-Cognitive Relevance of Information Literacy: The Impact on Student Academic Work." The thesis was awarded one of the 2017 Beta Phi Mu Eugene Garfield Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships. Current research and writing projects include a cross-institutional study of the impact of information literacy instruction, a book chapter about her experiences as a self-directed doctoral student, and the co-editor of a book project about information literacy as a discipline (Facet Publishing) and co-leader of the international Information Literacy is a Discipline (ILIAD) group. Kaufmann is the co-author of the book *Supporting Transfer Student Success: The Essential Role of College and University Libraries*, published in 2021 by Libraries Unlimited, ABC-CLIO. Her publications and presentations reflect her interest in information ecologies and the international scope of information science and information literacy.

A Message from the SI Director—Randy Borum, Psy.D.

"We are delighted to welcome three new full-time faculty to USF's School of Information. With the surge of interest and growth in our programs, it has been challenging to keep up with student demand. Our new colleagues join an SI team that is strongly committed to student success. Each one brings something special and together the synergy will be amazing. Dr. Anderson will primarily support the SI's M.A. in Library and Information Science (MLIS) program. With her professional experience both as a librarian and a researcher, she brings some incredible expertise in neurodivergent patrons and library professionals that will support our goal of educating future librarians who are responsive to a range of accessibility issues in their work. Dr. Beckett and Dr. Kaufmann will primarily be teaching in our growing B.S. in Information Science (BSIS) program, which already has more

than 600 students across the five concentration areas. Dr. Beckett has a remarkable technical background, not just as an educator, but also as a software and data engineer. She is passionately committed to innovation and excellence in teaching. Dr. Kaufmann has more than a decade of experience as an academic librarian and brings deep expertise in, and a commitment to, information literacy and user information experience. They are both wonderful colleagues and I am confident that their enthusiasm will be contagious and students will love them both. But this is just the next step in SI's trajectory of growth. We will continue to build a cadre of talented teachers and researchers to support our mission to educate the next generation of information professionals for Florida and beyond! Thank you all for your support!"

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Sara Hack, MLIS Candidate—Nominated by Dr. Vanessa Reyes

"Sara Hack is a student in our Master's in Library and Information Science (MLIS) program. Ms. Hack is a devoted information professional, who works for the St. Petersburg Public Library System as she completes her studies. Ms. Hack is also an experienced writer with prior editorial experience and is my graduate research assistant working as my journal editorial assistant for the *Florida Libraries Journal*. In the past semester, Ms. Hack has helped with the ongoing process of publishing the forthcoming issue of the Florida Libraries. She has also been part of the journal's standard revision process and contributed to the various new columns the journal will offer in partnership with the Florida Multitype Library Cooperatives. Ms. Hack excels in all she sets out to do. She is an exceptional student and is diligent in her work. Ms. Hack is a committed academic professional providing service to the profession. She is part of several professional organizations, such as the American Library Association, the *Florida Library Association*, and the National Association of Librarians of Color, specifically the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) organization. Her relationship with these organizations makes her an agent of positive change, where she explores the diversity of libraries and how they affect communities of color that use their services. Ms. Hack's contribution to our profession combined with her support and engagement in our program deserves a student spotlight feature. For these and many other reasons, I want to nominate Ms. Hack for this well-deserved spotlight in recognition of her devotion to our program and the information profession."

Neha Dantuluri, BSIS Candidate—Nominated by Dr. Christina Eldredge

"Neha Dantuluri is a highly motivated and professional student double majoring in Biomedical Sciences and Information Science. Her hard work and dedication in her studies and outside the classroom is exhibited by her scholarly and research achievements. Recently, Neha has been accepted to the 2023 Summer Institute in Biomedical Informatics at Harvard Medical School. Her research interests include health inequities, particularly in data driven research, community engaged research, and preventative medicine. Neha has consistently sought out opportunities to learn and contribute to biomedical and health informatics and social sciences research beyond the classroom. She is eager to apply her multidisciplinary education and research lab skills at Harvard this summer."

Kyle Morgan, MSCIS Candidate—Nominated by Dr. Steve "Scuba" Gary

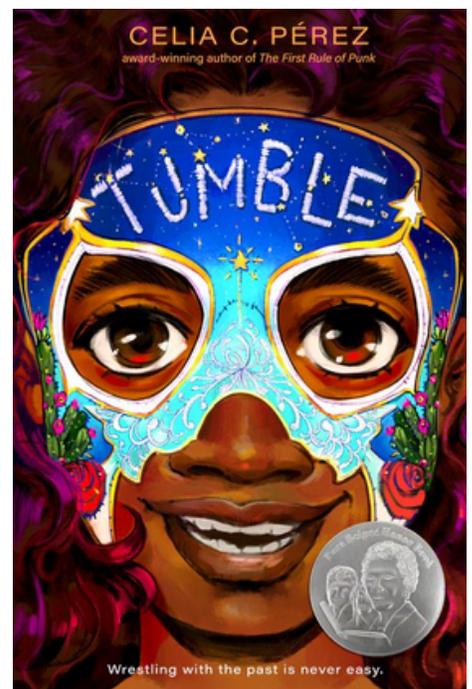
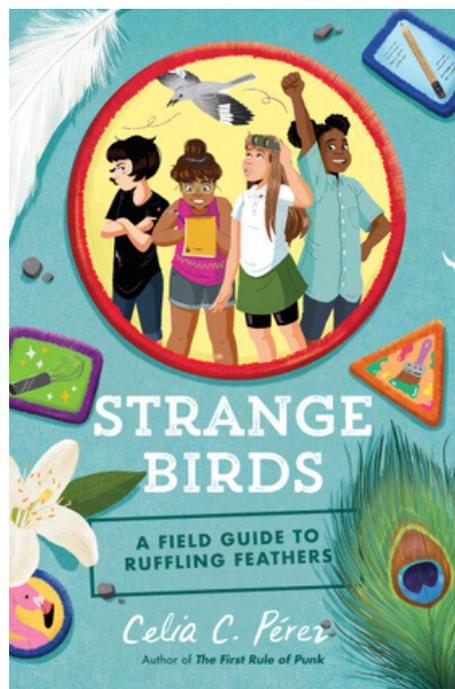
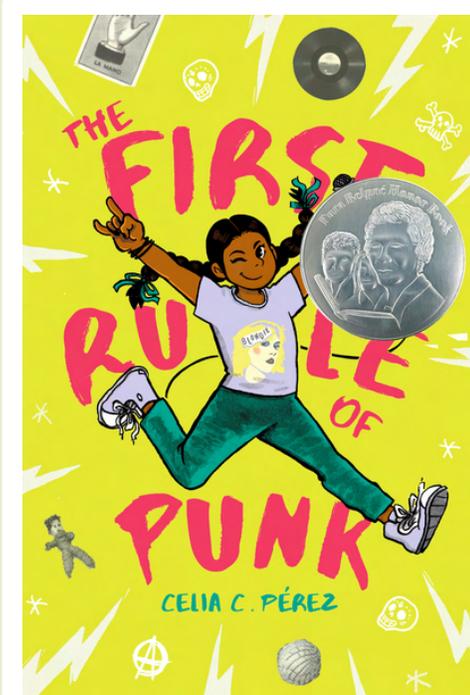
"The School of Information is pleased to announce that Kyle Morgan is the Strategic & Cyber Intelligence Program (SCIP) Outstanding Student of the Semester. Kyle works as an Army contracted Subject Matter Expert (SME) conducting analysis of contracts and their implementation and is also an Army Reserve Military Intelligence Company Commander. In these roles, he successfully applies the education and skills he has learned in the M.S. in Cybersecurity Intelligence and Information Security (MSCIS). He is currently maintaining a 3.5 GPA in the rigorous MSCIS program despite working full-time and serving at least one weekend a month. Besides his patriotism, what stood out was the research he is conducting with other students in the SCIP on assessing the correlation between infectious disease research and the spread of information. He also assists in leading the SCIP's Veterans' Cybersecurity and Intelligence Seminar. Kyle is deserving of this recognition due to his dedication to the intelligence and cybersecurity fields, his exemplary academic aptitude, and his fascinating research with his peers."

Award-Winning Author & USF Alumna: Celia C. Pérez



For more information about Celia, visit her website at www.celiacperez.com. In addition, an Alumni Interview is included on page 12.

Celia C. Pérez is the daughter of a Mexican mother and a Cuban father. Her debut book for young readers, *The First Rule of Punk* (Viking / Penguin), was a 2018 Pura Belpré Award Honor Book, a 2018 Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards Honor Book, a winner of the 2018 Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award, a Junior Library Guild selection, and included in several best of the year lists including the Amelia Bloomer Book List, NPR's Best Books of 2017, the Chicago Public Library's Best of the Best Books, the New York Public Library's Best Books for Kids, *School Library Journal's* Best of 2017, The Horn Book Magazine's Fanfare, and ALSC's Notable Children's Books. Her second book for young readers, *Strange Birds: A Field Guide to Ruffling Feathers* (Kokila /Penguin, 2019), is an Association of Library Services to Children Notable Children's Book and was named to several best-of-the-year lists, including Rise: A Feminist Book Project List (formerly the Amelia Bloomer Book List), the Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices 2020, the Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature Best Books of 2019, the Chicago Public Library's Best Books of 2019, and *The Washington Post's* Best Children's Books of 2019. Her third book for young readers, *Tumble*, is out now! She is originally from Miami and is a graduate of the University of Florida and the University of South Florida. Specifically, Celia is a 2001 graduate of USF's M.A. in Library and Information Science (MLIS) program. She now lives with her family in Chicago where, in addition to writing books, she works as a community college librarian.



How do you remember your experience with USF's School of Information?

It's a little bit of a blur because it was so long ago. I remember having very long days because in addition to classes I was a graduate assistant at the library in the reference and serials departments. Being able to take classes while working at the library was a great experience because I was able to apply what I learned in the classroom to my work at the library. And I was able to learn and gain experience from working in the library that I could not have learned or that wasn't taught in the classroom. On a more personal note, I also met my best friend in the program. My first semester was her last semester. We've been friends for more than twenty years now.



What did you like the most about the program?

I really enjoyed being able to take classes where there were assignments that required me to learn about resources by actually using them. There are a lot of things about librarianship, especially if you are following more of a generalist path, that you learn by doing. At the same time, I enjoyed learning about special topics like the history of libraries. I liked the combination of practical and theoretical. I'm a lifelong reader and user of libraries, but there was a lot I didn't know about the how and why of libraries.

How did the skills that you learned here help you later in life and in your career?

Going back to my earlier comment about being able to apply what I was learning in the classroom to the work I was doing as a graduate assistant, that experience was valuable. Having the opportunity to learn about and become familiar with using resources was something I was able to carry with me into my professional work.

What message do you have for students that are following the same path?

Ask questions, explore different possibilities. Also, seek mentors. Admittedly, I've always been terrible about this, and it can be a lonely experience to navigate through whatever path you follow without someone to share concerns with, ask questions, and bounce ideas off. I would also remind students that your first job doesn't have to be your forever job.

If you had the opportunity to re-write history, would you have pursued an MLIS again?

I think so. I think what would have changed was what I did with the degree or the areas that I focused on while in school. I work in a community college, but I write for children. When I was in library school, I didn't see myself working with kids. But life has a funny way of not always turning out the way you imagine, and now I do work with kids in a sense. If I could have foretold where my life and interests would take me, I would have pursued school library certification or youth services twenty years ago. On a related note, the areas that I've been finding myself more interested in and involved with in my career as a community college librarian are cataloging and archival work which I have no background in. Again, hindsight. I wasn't especially interested in those areas when I was in library school.

What changes do you believe could have been made to better your experience here?

That's a tough question. As far as courses go, depending on the path you are following, there is a lot that is part of library work that you don't learn about in school. I'm speaking as someone who was in library school twenty plus years ago, so this has likely changed. But I think library programs should consider adding more courses or other opportunities that focus on the skills you need in order to work with people. These would cover anything from communication skills to customer service skills to conflict

resolution to library advocacy. There's so much that you don't learn in the classroom, especially when it comes to people skills, and that you don't realize is part of the work until you're in it. As far as my experience in the program and how that could have been made better, I'm not sure. I mentioned the importance of mentors, and that's something I didn't have. Not in a formal nor in an informal way. I think offering mentorship opportunities would be helpful to students, in general, but especially for students who might have a hard time seeking out and forming this type of relationship on their own.

You have published a lot! What tips could you give to students that plan to go into publishing as well?

I've published children's books, self-published zines, and essays and reviews for professional publications. All of those experiences are different but alike in that I've been able to write about the things I love regardless of the type of publication. I would say find your niche, write about what interests you, don't follow the trends, and know that opportunities often come in unexpected ways.

What is one thing you believe the world needs more of?

The world needs more of a lot of things. I'm going to answer this in a library-centered way and say that I think K-12 public schools need more librarians, and that librarians and libraries in public schools that are lucky enough to have these need more support from their administrations and their communities.

Do you have a favorite quote?

The writer Imani Perry publishes an email newsletter sponsored by The Atlantic, and one of her recent issues was about book banning and Black History Month. I think these lines from that newsletter are a current favorite quote: "The forces of exclusion are old and resilient. Then, as now, the only way to defeat them is to pursue that which has been prohibited. We read the banned books, we study the verboten topics, and we share them, still." I love the message of hope and of continuing forward, doing what we've always done despite those who threaten to pull us backward.

What is one inspirational message that you could leave the students with?

Dream big! If you aren't sure what you want to do with your degree, think about the things that you love, and explore how you can potentially find a niche in librarianship that fits your interests and strengths.



Academic Forum—Health Informatics

Background

Dr. Christina Eldredge has been faculty with the School of Information for the past six years and an adjunct faculty member at USF Health's Morsani College of Medicine (MCOM) in their M.S. in Health Informatics (MSHI) program. Her specialty area is in Biomedical and Health Informatics, a relatively new interdisciplinary area. Dr. Eldredge graduated from the University of Miami School of Medicine in 1996 and is board certified in Family Medicine. After serving in the U.S. Navy, she completed an M.S. in Medical Informatics at the Milwaukee School of Engineering, a Fellowship in Academic Primary Care Research at the Medical College of Wisconsin, and a Ph.D. in Biomedical and Health Informatics from the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.



Accreditation Work

Dr. Eldredge serves nationally on committees and working groups to develop accreditation standards for both graduate and undergraduate level accreditation standards. She has served as a member of the American Medical Informatics Association's Accreditation Committee since 2015. In 2020, Dr. Eldredge was selected to be a member of the AMIA Education Committee and the Academic Forum's Baccalaureate Education Community (BEC). Through this work, she was nominated to serve as a member of the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) Undergraduate Health Informatics Standards Workgroup. In 2022, she was elected as the 2023 Chair of the BEC. Also, she led a panel presentation on this work on undergraduate health informatics education standards during the 2022 AMIA Annual Symposium.

Student Group

In 2020, Dr. Eldredge began a grassroots effort to begin a student group in health informatics to address the need for more student opportunities in this field outside of the classroom. Beginning as a small student working group, the students have evolved this group into an official USF student organization called the Student Health Informatics Club (SHIC). Dr. Eldredge serves as the faculty advisor for the SHIC.

Additional Information

- Published several articles in top-tiered health informatics journals with high impact factors
- Dr. Eldredge has given presentations and posters at major conferences in the field
- Co-author to a chapter in two editions of *Clinical Research Informatics* (Springer)
- A consultant on a multi-agency grant (including the CDC, CSELS, and other national agencies) related to transdisciplinary health higher education in 2022
- Chosen as a fellow on a National Science Foundation (NSF) I-Corps grant related to a patient/caregiver decision support app

Google Scholar Profile

- <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=5XpEDBoAAAAJ&hl=en>

Selected Works

- <https://works.bepress.com/christina-eldredge/>

USF SI Graduate Assistantships

Each academic year, several graduate assistantships are sponsored by the USF School of Information (USF SI). The iSchool seeks to recruit quality students to graduate study at USF, offer graduate assistantships to eligible students, and enhance the graduate learning experience. Awards are made on a competitive basis taking into consideration academic credentials, previous work experience, research capabilities, progress in graduate programs, and professional skills. Graduate students may be classified as Graduate Assistants (GAs), Graduate Teaching Assistants/Associates (GTAs), Graduate Instructional Assistants (GIAs), and/or Graduate Research Assistants/Associates. Graduate assistants may teach, conduct research, or perform other tasks that contribute to professional development. [USF SI Graduate Assistantships](#) provide a competitive benefit package including a tuition waiver, bi-weekly stipend, and student health insurance.



Hello, my name is Sydney! I am currently a graduate student enrolled in the M.A. in Library and Information Science (MLIS) program with a graduation date of Summer 2023. This article serves as a reflection of my experience as an SI Graduate Assistant—beginning in July 2022 and concluding in August 2023. Last summer, I began working for the School of Information when I was appointed at 0.50 FTE (20 hours per week) as a Marketing and Communications GA under the Department Operations Manager, David Chapel. As I near graduation, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for this program, reflect upon my work for the university, and encourage other students to pursue assistantship opportunities.

As a Graduate Assistant, I focused on marketing and communication efforts for the iSchool. I designed recruitment materials for events and promotion within the marketing and communication guidelines set by UCM (USF Central Marketing Team) and the School of Information. In addition, I reviewed the iSchool's website and assisted with the overall implementation of the marketing strategy to support the MLIS, MSIS, MSCIS, and undergraduate programs. I also contributed to departmental publications including the bi-annual newsletter, new faculty announcements, SI news and events, press releases, and other items on the website.

Overall, I am incredibly grateful for my experiences as a graduate assistant. Although my work primarily focused on designing and creating the SI's bi-annual newsletter, I was also assigned other projects relating to website development, graphic design, department news, student resources, event planning, social media, and important announcements. The position also encouraged department involvement and professional development. While each assistantship is unique, my position in particular was highly collaborative and designed to be remote. This independent and flexible work schedule allowed me to enroll full-time in graduate courses and continue working at a local public library. Thus, I was able to continue my graduate studies while also gaining experience in both academic and public settings.

Through USF SI Graduate Assistantships, graduate students may document professional experiences that align with their interests and the department's needs. During my assistantship, I completed various projects that connect back to the requirements of the digital portfolio. The ePortfolio represents a culminating assessment of student learning based on the MLIS program's learning outcomes and professional preparation for the field of library and information science. The portfolio itself is organized by the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) determined by the School of Information in accordance with the American Library Association (ALA) core competencies. Each goal is further broken down into the program's standards, paired with

professional knowledge, competencies, and application of program outcomes. I was able to include items completed for my assistantship as supplemental artifacts in my portfolio, connecting my academic employment to SLOs and professional development.

In conclusion, it is an honor to be selected as a USF SI Graduate Assistant. This opportunity transformed my experience as a graduate student, developed my skills as an information professional, allowed me to network with other professionals in the field, and connected me to new resources. The USF SI Graduate Assistant Program is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling, as the work involved directly supports students and the school at large. For more information on Graduate Assistantship opportunities, eligibility, and benefits, visit the [USF Office of Graduate Studies Resource Center](#). Current openings and position descriptions are announced each term. To learn more about graduate assistantships offered at the School of Information and the application process, contact si@usf.edu.



UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA

Article written by USF SI graduate assistant, MLIS candidate, and library assistant Sydney Schermerhorn.

Students interested in publishing articles in the SI newsletter are encouraged to submit work for future issues. Each written submission is reviewed and considered for publication. For more information on student submissions and related opportunities, please contact si@usf.edu.

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