

Learning Center Annual Report 2005-2006

The 2005-2006 school year has been a rewarding one on many fronts. The Annual Report highlights the activities of the Learning Center. Also included in this report are the statistics for this year.

Building Evidence of Our Instructional Role

The April 2006 School Library Journal featured Professor Ross Todd of Rutgers University on its cover and in an article entitled "Ross to the Rescue." Ross was the principle researcher for the groundbreaking study, "Student Learning through Ohio School Libraries" that surveyed more than 13,000 students. The study showed that 99.4 percent of students believe school libraries and their services helped them become better learners.

Todd claims that most of the instructional intervention done by school librarians focuses on the finding, the selecting, the location (of information), in other words – "getting the stuff." Where instructional intervention needs to move, according to Todd, is "what to do with the stuff." "It's in this kind of second part of information literacy that we move beyond the finding and the collecting of the stuff to the complex, intellectual engagement that enables students to come out with new knowledge and new understanding – a deep knowledge and a deep understanding (Todd, 46)." Todd further states that it is "really critical that our instructional interventions are much more carefully planned, based on need, and the students are supported and guided (47)."

The Freshmen Pathfinder Project, now in its second year, is a carefully planned instructional intervention in which students are guided and supported. With each passing year, our daily interventions help students engage with the information in a slightly different way; for example, as students examine periodical articles related to their topics they are asked to determine the author's point of view. As another example, they must examine websites related to their topics and they are asked to compare and contrast the information they

have found across books, periodical articles, general encyclopedias, and websites. These kinds of questions require higher order thinking skills and demand more than "just gather the stuff, put it in a plastic sleeve, hand it in, and I've done my project (Todd, 47)."

In Mike Donelson's freshmen classes, we administered a pre- and post-survey based on some of the questions from the Ross Todd study. The post-survey results were very illuminating. Among the comments were these:

"I got a list of websites and logins to, so that I could get information quickly and effectively. The teachers helped me when I needed it and kept me on task"

"While working on my Pathfinder I got a lot of help in the LC. I was directed to helpful information, that I didn't have to work hours to find."

"I got a lot of help with how I do research."

"It helped me learn where I can find the best sources possible. I learned to be more efficient with my time and resources."

This is the beginning of our efforts to collect evidence about our instructional interventions. Participation in professional development opportunities such as "Can You Find the Evidence-based Practice in Your School Library," "Establishing Evidenced-based Practice in Your School Library," and the AASL Forum in Providence, Rhode Island this fall will guide us in our move to what Todd refers to as the second part of informational literacy or the transformational piece where students are intellectually engaged with the information and come out with new knowledge and understandings.

TRAILS9 (Tools for Real-time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) and software such as IMPACT will enable us to track students' information literacy understanding.

For additional information on our collaboration efforts, see **Attachment 1**.

Parent Workshops

As school librarians we recognize the critical role parents play in the education of their children. To this end the Parent Workshops we organized during the school year were designed to reach parents so they can help students access and use the powerful electronic resources available to them through INFOhio and through the school district. The workshops were held in the Learning Center classroom and CLFF on September 13, 14, and November 15. Between 10 and 15 parents attended each session.

Media Literacy: A Living, Breathing Benchmark

On June 7, 2006 FCC Commissioner Michael Copps called for a "sustained K-12 media literacy program" in the nation's schools. In his address to the forum "Beyond Censorship: Technologies and Policies To Give Parents Control Over Children's Media Content," Copps stated that "the more I grasp the pervasive influence of media on our children, the more I worry about the media literacy gap in our nation's educational curriculum. We need a sustained K-12 media literacy program – something to teach kids not only how to use the media but how the media uses them."

Media literacy appears in the K-12 Library Guidelines. Up until this year, we were rather reluctant to approach this aspect of the Library Guidelines. We also sensed that teachers were in a similar position. What type of professional development have any of us had in examining media? Enter the Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Lecture Series and Collection. Our first speaker for the inaugural Lecture Series was Professor Joseph Kelly from John Carroll University who presented "The History and Fiction of the DaVinci Code." About 60 people attended the lecture on April 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the UAHS Auditorium. Laura created the flyer as well as organized a listserv for the members of the Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Lecture Series Steering Committee. Since the inaugural lecture we have collected almost \$1900 in donations.

In June 2006, the PTO presented us with a check for \$2500 to begin organizing the

resources that will become part of the Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Collection. We have contacted Frank Baker, nationally known media literacy consultant, about the scope and nature of such a collection and he has agreed to work with us this coming year.

In June we were also successful in contracting with Frank Baker to be our second Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Lecture Series speaker. He will offer professional development opportunities for teachers, workshops for students, and a community presentation on November 16 and 17.

Fundraising & Grants

Laura planned and organized one major fundraiser in 2005-2006 at Barnes & Noble – Tremont. In December, we raised just over \$500 at the 4th annual in-store book fair. Since it was far less than we have made in previous years, it will prompt us to consider alternative fundraisers.

In November, we applied for a PTO Mini-Grant and were awarded \$600 toward the purchase of a data projector for the 1st floor computer lab. The data projector and screen are installed and will be functional for the TRAILS9 (Tools for Real-time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) for a PTO Mini-Grant for the Joseph J. Conley Media Collection for \$500. The PTO awarded us \$2500.

LC Advisory Committee

The LC Advisory Committee met once this year. At the April 24 meeting we discussed the following: the Learning Center environment and culture, specifically the use of the LC by seniors during their open periods; the Freshmen Pathfinder project; the online catalog system and OHIOlink; mini-grants from the PTO and the Barnes and Noble Book Fair; the status of the LSTA grant application for assistive technology; Teens Read; the Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Lecture Series and Collection; TRAILS9 (Tools for Real-time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills); and technology issues that effect the Learning Center.

Reading Initiatives

There were seven student winners of this year's Teen Read Week Favorite Book Contest were all seniors in Diane Haddad's class Sales. The faculty committee, which included Joe Hoover, Julie Otten, Karen Patterson, Laura Piazza, Candy Riley, and Susan Yutzey reviewed over 50 Teen Read Favorite Book Contest essays. A reception honoring the students was held on December 14. The posters were done by Frank Tuttle. Betty Sheridan, YA librarian at Upper Arlington Public Library, joined us for the Teen Read Week Reception.

Reader's Advisory Panel (RAP) met sporadically this year. Laura and Tracy served as co-presidents. Winifred served as secretary. Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson, and Monster by Walter Myers were the books selected this year for discussion.

School Library Media Specialists' Professional Activities for 2005-2006

Susan Yutzey

- Presented at the Ohio Educational Library Media Association Conference (OELMA);
- Membership Chairperson for OELMA
- Attended OELMA Midwinter Conference
- Wright University instructor for the OELMA Central Region workshops;
- Attended the eTech Conference, February 14, 2006
- Selected to serve on the Metiri Group Technology Plan Development Process, May 3 and 4, 2006
- Professional Development grant from the PTO for \$250 to attend a summer workshop
- Attended "Developing Strategies for Establishing Evidenced-based Practice in Your School Library," July 11-12, 2006 in Centerville, Ohio
- Nancy Losecamp Career Development Educator of the Year recipient
- Served on the Social Studies Professional Learning Community
- Served on the Social Studies Academic Course of Study
- Served on the Board of Directors of the Upper Arlington Community High School
- Committee participation: Career Development, Building Technology, Department Chair, Building Planning Team, College Transition Action Team
- National History Day Judge, UAHS, February 23, 2006
- Met with Dona Straley, Ph.D., at The Ohio State University Middle East Studies Library to discuss library resources for IB on October 28, 2005

Laura Piazza

- Presented at the Ohio Educational Library Media Association Conference (OELMA)
- Attended OELMA Midwinter Conference
- Attended Ohio Capital Conference school library meetings
- Attended OELMA Central Region Workshops for graduate credit
- Attended eTech Conference, February 13, 2006
- Attended "Can You Find the Evidence-based Practice in Your School Library," July 20, 2005 in Centerville, Ohio
- Committee participation: Faculty Council, Building Technology Committee, Technology Action Team
- National History Day Judge, UAHS, February 23, 2006
- Met with Dona Straley, Ph.D., at The Ohio State University Middle East Studies Library to discuss library resources for IB on October 28, 2005

Volunteers Matter

Thanks to Library Advisory Committee member and parent volunteer, Amy Armstrong, we had a core group of 20 parent volunteers who performed admirably. In late August, we held training sessions for the parent volunteers. Throughout the year, Judy supervised the Circulation Desk volunteers and Laura supervised the Workroom volunteers. On June 5, we held a Volunteer Luncheon in the LC Classroom for parent volunteers and gave them each a plant with a note indicating that a donation would be made in their name to the Joseph J. Conley Media Literacy Lecture Series.

We also trained student LC Helpers to work behind the Circulation Desk. This year's exceptional LC Helpers were: John, Alyssa, Evan, and Matt.

As part of a class project, Evan took pictures of three math teachers. With Frank Tuttle's help, Evan created posters of Chris Bolognese, Brian Chandler, and Jeff Reinhardt and their favorite poems for Poetry Month and Math Appreciation Week. The posters were mounted in the Learning Center 1st and 2nd floors.

Access to Library Catalog 24/7 and OhioLINK

Our circulation and cataloging software through Innovative Interface is now in place. With the cataloging software fully

operational, we have been able to make progress on getting new books on the shelves.

Our position as a K-12 OhioLINK pilot site for the state of Ohio is still in flux. There are apparently additional security issues that must be addressed. With the district's move to MEC, we may be looking at more delays.

Empowering Teachers to Just Say "No" to Googling Continues

In a [USA Today](#) entitled "Test Seeks to Measure Students' Web IQ," Lorie Roth, assistant vice chancellor of academic programs at California State University, remarked that "every single one that comes through the door thinks that if you just go to Google and get some hits – you've got material for your research paper right here."

Although many students use Google as their search engine of choice, as a result of librarian and teacher collaboration we are observing more and more students using subscription databases such as those provided through INFOhio and those provided through District funds. Everyday we had students stop by the Circulation Desk and ask for the gold sheet (Homework Helpers from the UAHS Learning Center 2005-2006).

The Technology Committee, under the direction of Jay Powell, continues to support the Learning Center's efforts to provide quality online databases for students and teachers. In 2005-2006, the Committee funded eLibrary Curriculum Edition, AP Photo Archive, and NoodleTools. In addition, through the LC funds students had access to: Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO); CQ Researcher; CQ Congress Collection ; CQ Supreme Court Collection; CQ Encyclopedia of American Government ; CQ Weekly; Grove Art Online; Grove Music Online; Gale Science Resource Center; Gale Student Resource Center Gold, Gale Opposing Viewpoints, and the Gale Virtual Reference Library. Usage statistics are included in **Attachment 2**.

Gale's statistics provide an interesting picture of how students access information. Take a look at the remote usage figures – students are accessing these databases from places other than school. The Learning Center is a 24/7 virtual library.

Students' use of the Learning Center's databases 24/7 is connected to their growing up digital and demonstrates the necessity for us, as educators, to embrace digital-age learning. Whether it means using technology to tap outside experts; visualize and analyze data; or link to real-world contexts (Bransford et al., 1999), these are all possibilities that can engage students in meaningful, relevant, and intellectually stimulating work.

As a participant at the Technology Plan Development Process conducted by the Metiri Group, I realized the role that we all must play in developing digital-age literacy in our students. At least three of the 21st century skills are integral to the school library guidelines - technological literacy, visual literacy, and information literacy.