

HOTLINE

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Breaking News For Library and Information Decision Makers

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Simmons Dean Jim Matarazzo To Step Down in August 2002

James Matarazzo, dean of the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS), Boston, for the past eight years, has announced plans to step down on August 31, 2002. He will be on sabbatical for the fall semester and will return to teach special libraries courses in 2003. Matarazzo served as assistant dean for 14 years prior to being elevated to his present position.

"There is the regular part of being dean, and then there are all of the other things that I think are important to do for the sake of the alumni. The alumni make possible so many of the things we are able to do at the school," Matarazzo told *Library Hotline*.

The school was able to award more than \$500,000 in scholarships this past spring, 29 of which are named and endowed. There were four endowed scholarships at the beginning of Matarazzo's term. Gifts toward financial aid were around \$50,000 annually when he became dean. The school's endowment has grown from \$900,000 to \$4 million over the past seven years.

Annual giving, which is in addition to donations to the endowment, reached \$1 million this past year. He is most proud of two programs started during his tenure: the satellite program on the campus of Mt. Holyoke in South Hadley, MA, and the Center for Competitive Intelligence. Full-time faculty have increased from 13 to 17, and three GSLIS alumni were named to the Board of Trustees of the college.

The school graduated more than 200 people last year and now has its largest fall class ever. It's a good thing, Matarazzo said. According to his

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records, there were 980 vacancies for librarians in New England this past year. The numbers are "huge" in all but corporate libraries, although he says he has placed ten people in corporate vacancies this fall. "We have a handsome school library media program, but it's not enough," he said.

Matarazzo, a prolific author and consultant, is a Fellow of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and received SLA's Professional Award twice and the President's Award in 1988. He is past president of ALISE, the Association of Library and Information Science Education. He is also a member of the American Library Association Council and is a vice president of the H.W. Wilson Foundation.

Random House for Children Launches E-Book Line

Random House Children's Books has announced the debut of its e-book publishing program, Random View Books. The line is launching with 17 titles for middle grade and young adult readers.

The inaugural list includes such prominent authors in children's literature as Gary Paulsen, Patricia Reilly Giff, and Philip Pullman. The books will retail at \$3.99 and will be available in Microsoft Reader, Adobe eBook Reader, and Palm Reader.

"We have been experimenting with nonfiction and reference books in e-book format, but we have really been looking to include our favorite children's fiction writers," said Caroline Ward, children's supervisor at the Ferguson Library, Stamford, CT. "Random House Children's Books' new publishing program will now allow us to do just that." More information is available at www.randomhouse.com/kids.

Libraries Add Voice, Video To Online Chat Reference

Libraries, both academic and public, are experimenting with adding voice to online chat reference sessions, with at least one library adding a video component. The service integrates the benefits of traditional telephone reference with the advantages of online chat sessions, including application share, co-browse, and text chat. While the libraries are all using the same software, OnDemand Instant Web-Conferencing from Convey Systems, they are doing so in different ways and to address different reference challenges.

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"It is labor intensive to do a reference interview with just chat," said Steven Feyl, head of research and information services at Pace University's Westchester, NY, campus. "A normal reference interaction that takes 15-20 minutes using just text chat may only take 30 seconds to a minute when you talk to each other." The Pace University Library's Virtual Reference Service is offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2 until 4:30 p.m., using five reference librarians. Distance education classes are currently being targeted, a major impetus behind the service. Feyl reports that it is primarily librarians who are talking to students, and not the other way around, "since students are often calling from home on dial-up modems, with limited bandwidth."

In the spring 2002 semester, the library plans to increase the service to five days and add evening hours, double the number of participating librarians, incorporate the remaining Pace University campuses, and aggressively market the service to a student population of over 10,000. The system requires users to download a "plug-in," which Feyl describes as "completely effortless" for those using Internet Explorer.

The University of Wisconsin at

Madison began beta-testing their online voice/chat reference service, tentatively called Libraries Live Contact, in the Wendt Engineering Library last spring. Libraries Live is meant to address the decline in reference desk traffic while providing a "point-of-use service with expert guidance when and where needed." At Wisconsin, the service is being offered through the library's public access computers as well as off-site. According to John Wanserski, deputy director of the Wendt Engineering Library, one of the advantages of Convey's OnDemand is that the icon, or button, for the Libraries Live program can appear on every page of the library's web site, allowing users to activate a session at any time.

Wisconsin will go live with Libraries Live Contact next semester, offering the service Monday to Friday, from 1 to 9 p.m., with two or three reference librarians on at a time. Forty librarians culled from all ten of the university libraries will participate, and the service will be available throughout the campus on 600 library computers as well as through the students' own computers. Wanserski expects many of the students to utilize two way voice communication on the libraries' computers and in the dormitories, which are also wired. The university is distributing the software for Libraries Live to students on a CD-ROM, which includes a variety of other university-wide programs, such as e-mail.

At the Pratt branch of the Tulsa City-County Library System, the public can have an online chat session with a reference specialist at the central library utilizing text chat, audio, and video. The idea came about from studying changing usage patterns in the library, according to Jon Walker, division director for automation and technical support. The library experienced a decline in the usage of its central library, while its 18 branches experienced increasing demands. "We

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□ In Memoriam □

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• **OLAF JACOBSEN** drove the bookmobile for the Hennepin County Library, MN, for 38 years, delivering books to farmhouses and schools. From 1939 to 1977, he drove 500,000 miles. According to the *Star Tribune*, "Pamela Holt, a senior librarian who used to ride the bookmobile with Jacobson, said he became an institution at the library, often taking pictures of patrons, their pets, or the buildings. She said he connected with people...patrons soon came to consider him a part of their social life." Jacobson passed away on October 26 at the age of 89.

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□ Company Announcements □

• **EBSCO Publishing** has combined six subject-specific reference series to create the Curriculum Online Package, accessible via EBSCOhost. The package contains over 50,000 full-text articles from an assortment of magazines, newspapers, and journals in the areas of U.S. history, world history, physical science, and more. Curriculum Online was developed through partnerships with McREL (Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning) and MetaMetrics, Inc.

• **John Wiley & Sons** and **EBSCO** Subscription Services have reached an agreement to link EBSCO Online to more than 300 scientific, technical, medical, and professional journals available online through Wiley InterScience. For more information, visit www.interscience.wiley.com.

• **epixtechs Universal Resource Sharing Application** will link over 160 public, academic, school, and special libraries in southeast Michigan. The Michigan Library Exchange (MiLE) has been funded through a \$125,000 Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum

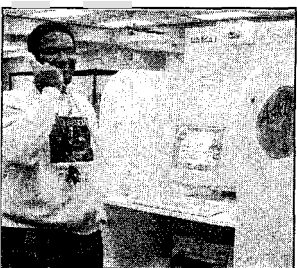
and Library Services, administered by the Library of Michigan. Accessible from any location, the web-based application allows customers to search a virtual union catalog and place online requests directly with member libraries. Vans will transport library materials to the customer's home library. MiLE libraries have 24 online catalogs from disparate library automation vendors. A common circulation procedure manual has been written.

• **Caylord's Polaris system** has been implemented at the Paulding County Carnegie Library, OH. The new automation system is the result of more than \$54,000 in Library Service and Technology Act funds. The library and all branches should be live with the Polaris system during the first quarter of 2002. The library serves a rural population of 20,000 through the main library and branches in three surrounding villages. Visit the library online at www.paulding-countylibrary.org. Polaris has also been installed at the London Public Library, OH, the first Gaylord GALAXY site in Ohio to migrate to Polaris.

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looked at technology to leverage our investment in resources," Walker said.

The library constructed a prototype kiosk for its AskUs service at the Pratt branch, one of the system's smaller branches. In addition to a computer and printer, the kiosk contains a video camera and a phone handset containing a PC microphone and speaker. The service is meant to augment reference services in the



branch. The kiosk connects users with both subject specialists at the central library's research center and the center's rich collections. A scanner at the central library allows librarians to digitize on demand

and send text and images to AskUs customers in the branch immediately. The library will introduce another kiosk in a busier branch next month. After evaluating the experiences in both locations, they will consider expanding the service to its other 16 branches.

Child Literacy Is the Key To a Strong Democracy

The ultimate weapon against terrorism is a well-educated, well-read populace, according to Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA). During a recent visit to the offices of *Library Hotline* and *Library Journal*, she was emphatic in her support of funding for education, and specifically for early childhood reading programs. She sees a strong role for public libraries as partners with other organizations and agencies in reaching the goal of teaching chil-

dren to read by the age of eight. The second part of the equation is to encourage citizens of all ages to read.

Landrieu is confident that the nation will recover from what she calls "the initial crisis" of September 11. However, the level of education in the United States is below where we need to be as a strong democracy over the long term. "The country woke to realize that the ultimate defense against terrorism is a well educated and read population that can rise above threats. Our population didn't focus on terrorism, because of a lack of knowledge." She accused our education system of "dumbing things down." Not only don't children know about the

She sees a strong role for public libraries as partners...in reaching the goal of teaching children to read by the age of eight

world, many children in her state don't even know about the major cities in their own state. She also said that elected representatives develop and maintain an interest in specific issues only to the extent that their constituents are interested. They don't get credit, or votes, she said, for going beyond the public's interest.

Returning to her literacy theme, she referred to Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN), when he was governor of Indiana. He was putting funding in his budget to expand prison spaces but didn't know how to estimate the number of spaces that would be needed in the future. He approached a specialist who told him to look at the percent of third graders who aren't reading and "you can tell how many prison cells to build."

It will take "passion and thinking outside the box" to solve the childhood literacy problems, Landrieu said. Toward that end, as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and

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