



# **Investing in Access Services Student Employees: Utilizing Library Employment Skillsets to Increase Advocacy**

**November 17, 2017**

**Jalesia Horton  
Christopher Bishop**

---



# Previous Experience with Student Management

## Pros:

- Leadership training for selected student workers
- Focus in the development of transferrable skills
- Resume training and support
- Trusted with Daytime Circulation Responsibilities
- Budget allowed for rewards

## Cons:

- Limited Student Feedback
  - Interests not solicited
- When planning student events, little input on student engagement
  - Simple Remedies Available
- Freshman voices not considered
- Lack of Promotions/Advocacy outside of Library
- High turnover
- Lack of investment towards library's mission

# Augusta University

- Much smaller population of student assistants
  - 6 in total: 2 Access Services/circulation, 1 Archives, 1 Technical Services, 1 Admin. Office, and 1 Reference student assistant
  - Students many of the same duties as those who are FT/PT employees
- Currently limited to sitting on desk and shelving
  - Some limited projects
    - Weeding
    - Shifting
- Low Turnover
  - Possible opportunities

# Agnes Scott

- Limited to basic circulation activities, shelving, and some IT troubleshooting
- No feedback or incorporation of ideas from student assistants in circulation concerning planning, promotions, or events
- No feedback concerning job performance beyond Yes/No checklist
- High turnover despite training investment
- No buy-in regarding library's mission
- 6 circulation, 2 reference, and 1 archive student assistants



# Envisioning Students as Outreach Advocates

- Less pressure on staff and faculty
  - Improved sharing of responsibilities with students
- Students provide outreach in places staff and faculty cannot
  - Student knowledge of campus events, class activities
- Increasing the number of student workers because of the need for outreach



# Utilizing Project Management Skills

Student worker participation in promotion, events, activities, collection development initiatives, and/or displays during the semester = project learning opportunities

- Average student has 10 hr. work week
- Dedicate 2-4 hrs. a week to projects
  - Circ desk/work area
- Mix of student and staff led opportunities
  - Based on interests and skillsets
  - Questionnaire used when hired to gauge interests
  - Individual meetings
  - List of updated projects at circ desk
  - Project time part of hourly schedule



# Student Roles

- 1-2 Leads
  - Majority of time dedicated to events, displays, and promotions
  - Dedicated to broad area of focus
    - Blog
    - Social Media
    - Signage
- 10 with changing responsibilities based on needs/interests of the library
  - Area of focus may change during semester



# Serendipity: Women In the Surrealist Movement

Posted on October 27, 2017 by cbishopagnesscottedu

To better facilitate connections between student interests and McCain's collections, we are providing our student workers, via the library's blog and social media accounts, with a platform to explore and share areas they would like to highlight. The following entry is the first in a series by Lucie, a second year student at Agnes Scott.

## Women In the Surrealist Movement: Leonora Carrington

As a visually driven person, I am determined to find sources that make us feel differently about the world around us. My weekly contributions to the McCain blog will connect art and photography to library resources and collections.



Born: April 6, 1917

Died: May 25, 2011

On view: [Museum of Latin American Art](#)

Image Source: [The Art Story](#)

Leonora Carrington was a British born painter and author most notably recognized for her artistic contributions during the Surrealist movement. Her paintings show

## Books that reference her in the McCain Library:

Title: [\*Lilus Kikus\*](#)

Author: Elena Poniatowska ; ilustraciones de Leonora Carrington

Location: Stack 2 / PQ7297.P63 L5 1991

Title: [\*A woman's gaze: Latin American women artists\*](#)

Location: Ground Floor / NX501.5 .W66 1998

Title: [\*Surrealism and Women\*](#)

Location: Ground Floor / NX456.5.S8 S87 1995

Title: [\*Latin American artists in their studios\*](#)

Author: Marie-Pierre Colle

Location: Folio - Floor 3 / N6502.C55 1994



# Investment and Student Feedback

- “The student employee who understands the big picture becomes the ideal student employee.” - Davis, Okana, and Stinnett, 2005
  - Creating project based opportunities and event planning/participation gives the students the ability to leave their mark on the library. They are therefore invested in both the library and the event’s success.
  - After each event, solicit student worker feedback (graduate and undergraduate) on how they believe the event went (from planning to execution, as well as turn out).
    - Survey
    - Verbal
- Charles, Lotts, and Todorinova, 2017



# Planning Committee

- Committee allows students to guide planning in conjunction with library staff
- The committee guides overall project development
- Student workers implement and complete project plans during dedicated shifts
  - Both students who work in the library and campus volunteers participate
  - Provides student workers with a sense of peer involvement and opportunities to expand project planning experience
  - Large events: Game Nights, murder mystery, escape rooms
  - Seasonal: Holiday, Banned Book Week, etc.
  - Displays: Use of Archives, ability to gain increased knowledge of the collection for sharing with peers



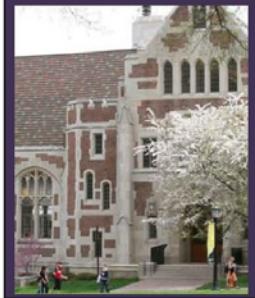
# Handling Less Invested Students

- Most are there to work; Few there for a paycheck
- Give those there to work the ability to do more and invest their time and energy in the success of the library
- How do you tell the difference?
  - Give every student the benefit of the doubt
  - Give them projects
    - If they work well, give them more responsibility
    - If they don't try, then you use them with projects with more directed specifications
- A student's reflection can guide you in understanding their input



# RESUME WORKSHOP

## SPRING 2017



## TIPS FOR CREATING STRONG RESUMES

### RESUME TEMPLATES

- [Agnes Scott Career Guides & Resources Website](#)
- Microsoft Word
- Google

### USE ACTION WORDS

- Begin your bullet points with verbs to demonstrate what you have achieved and focus on results.
- Check, double-check, triple-check! Ask a friend or supervisor to review it for clarity and easy errors.

### PROOFREAD!

### EXAMPLES OF SKILLS DEVELOPED IN THE LIBRARY

- Careful and thorough documentation and double-checking of work
- Responsible handling of items and records
- Creative production and use of media materials,
- Marketing and promotions
- Attentive assistance to patrons
- Responsive to staff and patron needs, anticipating them for present / future
- Reliability
- Attention to detail
- Project management and planning
- Writing content to promote events and services
- Collaboration with peers, staff, and campus
- Designing and implementing displays
- Troubleshooting technology

## EXAMPLES OF STUDENT LIBRARY ASSISTANT JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Provide range of circulation services:** answer questions regarding items, archive material, available resources, and a range of physical items including valuable equipment and print collections; ensures circulation of time sensitive materials; charge out and check in items from patrons; ensure accurate documentation of item processing; monitor use of supplies; oversee appropriate use of library space
- **Assist with data management:** compile statistical data on collections; troubleshoot issues associated with data entry of large numbers of item records; Carefully scan and record data; file documents; scan or photocopy items

- **Monitor and improve access of materials for patrons:** accurately shelf items; check for correct placement of items; shift collection locations for improved access; locate, maintain, deliver patron-requested items and document receipt or return; remediate environmental conditions leading to damaged collections

- **Marketing and Promoting Services:**

- In consultation with supervisors, design, construct, and implement displays to better inform customers
- Collaborate with campus organizations and departments to plan, facilitate, and promote events
- Design and distribute signage to inform customers of upcoming events and product availability

- **Social Media**

- Create content for various social media platforms, including Wordpress, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
  - Weekly blog series highlighting connections between areas of interest and items in the collection
  - Use of images and photography to highlight available collections, upcoming events, and areas of historical interest
  - Create and edit written content for readers based on information need

- **Project Management**

- Collaboratively plan and implement events for varied interests and audiences
  - Utilizing available supplies, create props and accessories
  - Create instructions, directions, and signage to ensure group cohesion and understanding of individual and group responsibilities
  - Scheduling meeting times and due dates for deliverables

sen  
rec  
ing  
les





# Library School Conversions

- Both speakers are library school conversions!
- Multiple majors (Biology, Psychology, English, etc.) have been on different paths
  - Decided library school was best based on their experiences as student assistants



# **Applying Student Advocacy to Staff**

- Also applies to staff (regular meetings, empowerment, etc.)
- Empower them to be able to answer questions and strive to gain knowledge
- Assist them in building their confidence within their profession/work environment

# The Team



**Christopher Bishop, MLIS, MLMT**

User Services Librarian  
Agnes Scott College  
[cbishop@agnesscott.edu](mailto:cbishop@agnesscott.edu)



**Jalesia Horton, MLIS**

Access Services Librarian  
Augusta University  
[jahorton@augusta.edu](mailto:jahorton@augusta.edu)

## References

- Davis, A., Okada, E., Stinnett, R., & Swinson, B. (2005). Managing student employees. *Indiana Libraries*, 24(1), 47-51. Retrieved from <https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/index>
- Charles, L.H., Lotts, M. & Todorinova, L. (2017). A survey of the value of library employment to the undergraduate experience. *Journal of Library Administration*, 57(1), 1-16. doi: 10.1080/01930826.2016.1251248