



A ROUND TABLE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Success Stories Sister Libraries

Appalachian State University, North Carolina., U.S.A. / Biblioteca Th'uruchapitas, Bolivia

Primary contact: Linda Veltze, Leadership and Educational Studies
Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608

Email: veltzela@appstate.edu

Phone: 828-262-3106

Author of summary: Elizabeth Cramer, Belk Library, Appalachian State University

Phone: 828-262-4967

The relationship between Appalachian State University (Boone, N.C.) and la Biblioteca Th'uruchapitas (Cochabamba, Bolivia) began in 1998 when Gaby Vallejo, founder of la Biblioteca, came to Appalachian State University to speak about her innovative children's library program. The program caught the ear and the heart of ASU Library Science professor, Linda Veltze. A conversation began between the two women that evolved into a more substantial relationship when the two institutions became Sister Libraries through the White House Millennial Commission (since defunct) in 2000. The success of this particular Sister Library project has been internationally recognized, receiving the IBBY Asahi Reading Promotion Award in 2003.

In a country that has little money for books, la Biblioteca Th'uruchapitas is the only library in Bolivia that provides picture books and literature to children. La Biblioteca is staffed solely by volunteers, headed by Gaby and a group of dedicated educators who proudly bear the title "las mujeres peligrosas" (dangerous women) due to their progressive ideas about education.

In recent years, ASU and la Biblioteca have worked together in numerous projects. La Biblioteca has hosted several groups of ASU students and scholars who traveled to Bolivia for a number of reasons: conducting research; working on international

service projects; or taking study-abroad courses for credit. In turn, Gaby and several "dangerous women" have visited Appalachian's campus and the surrounding community of Boone, speaking about the economic, educational, and social realities of Bolivia. In so many ways this Sister Library project has affected the lives of librarians, educators, students, and community members from both countries. In summary, our status as Sister Libraries continues to be a source of pride, opportunity, and inspiration for both institutions.

Posted: December 2010