Notes:

Good morning,

Thank you again to everyone who attended or wanted to attend our conversation in Denver. It was a much richer conversation because of your participation.

Laura, Jennifer and I’ve had a chance to gather our recollections and thoughts of plausible next steps to ensure the professional development, education and preparation of library graduates (and our staff) for public library work.

We’ve also outlined what we (Laura, Jennifer and I) will do next to ensure that The Conversation continues.

Because this is a living document, we hope you will add to it, those points that we might have missed or not accurately captured and those thoughts that time and reflection may have offered. We’ll roll that into our final document and then use that as the action plan to carry the conversation forward. Deadline for adding to this document is April 25.

Topics that should continue:

1. Determining a quantitative and qualitative method to understand the skills and needs of graduates and practitioners working in public libraries
2. Decreasing the daylight between education and practice so that public libraries and library schools are on the same page
3. Determining support (mentoring and sponsorship) needed to recruit and diversify library/information school programs and public libraries
4. Determining how to gain audience and engage with the Deans of library and information schools to share the staff skills, competencies and interests of public libraries
5. Identifying differences between general and core skill needs and specializations
6. Finding the balance between “traditional” training/education curriculums and “current/innovative” approaches
7. Determining how to ensure the interests of library/information schools is made known to the public library association (board appointments, etc.)
8. Assessing the work and educational experiences of recent library school graduates working in public libraries to determine additional educational opportunities, training and support
9. Discussing the length of the current educational library and information school training to determine appropriate length of program
10. Enhancing training of library staff for professional leadership positions (directors, CEOs, etc.)
11. Promoting library and information work as a 2nd Career (Marketing and Image)
12. Ensuring that rural and small public libraries are at the table for these discussions
Ensuring that Capstones, Internships, etc., provide opportunities for students to develop real / in-the-field experiences that make them aware of the work of libraries

Offer library spaces as learning / teaching labs for library school classes

Engage with ALISE’s “Teaching and Learning” SIG cluster

Determining whether there are educational curriculum differences between information and library schools and whether one fits the needs of public libraries better

Review recruitment issues to determine if future salaries impact interest in the profession

These are “next steps” or “conversations” that we (Laura and I) will help broker:

1. Bring key decision-makers together to have deeper conversations (ALA, ALISE, COA, IMLS, PLA) that create and develop educational curriculums
2. Ensure the longevity of the profession is not lost (ALA, COA, Future of Libraries, IMLS, PLA)
3. Ensuring opportunities to enhance board diversity for public libraries by inviting / encouraging public libraries to look to academicians to sit on our library boards (United for Libraries)
4. Encourage opportunities to have public libraries represented on the advisory boards for library / information schools (ALISE)
5. Collectively articulate the educational needs of public librarians and library staff (PLA, APA)
6. Determine immediate next steps to keep the conversation going
7. Look to ALA to continue the conversation
8. Seek a facilitator to move such groups as this one through future conversations
9. Identify the commonalities and differences of need for information professionals across academic and public libraries

Thanks,

Laura, Jennifer and MT