NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA—COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

School of Information

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ALSO INSIDE:

UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA
College of Arts & Sciences

UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA

The University of South Florida School of Information (USF SI) newsletter brings together departmental stories, events, and news important to information professionals. Each volume contains two issues published in the Fall and Spring. The Spring 2023 issue is Vol. 1, No. 1 of the publication. Please contact si@usf.edu for questions, feedback, or more information.

National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant Awarded to Dr. Alon Friedman

Dr. Alon Friedman was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, serving as Principal Investigator for the study "Using Behavioral Nudges in Peer Review to Improve Critical Analysis in STEM Courses." This project aims to serve the national interest by increasing the quality of peer reviews given by students. Peer reviews, in which students have the opportunity to analyze and evaluate projects made by their classroom peers, are a widely acknowledged pedagogical method for engaging students and have become a standard practice in undergraduate education. Peer review is most often used in classes with large number of students to provide timely feedback on student assignments. However, peer review has benefits far beyond scalability. Peer review gathers diverse feedback, raises students' comfort level with having their work evaluated in a professional setting, and most importantly, the action of giving a peer review is often more valuable than receiving a peer review. The software platforms in current use that support peer review have seen limited innovation in recent decades, and potential improvements to enhance student outcomes have not been thoroughly evaluated. This project plans to develop and study an innovative peer review system that uses behavioral nudges, a method of subtlety reinforcing positive habits, to improve the evaluation skills of students and the quality of the feedback they provide in peer reviews. This project proposes to 1) create a software system supporting peer review that includes behavioral nudges for guiding the peer review process to hone students' evaluation and critical analysis skills and 2) study how the use of behavioral nudges improves student engagement.

Alon Friedman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
USF School of Information

A Message from the SI Director—Randy Borum, Psy.D.

Welcome to the USF School of Information's NEW newsletter. We have an amazing crew dedicated to keeping you up-to-date on what's happening here. It's an exciting time. The School continues to grow in personnel and in programs. This past Fall, we welcomed Dr. Ly Dinh (a new Assistant Professor) and Dr. Taiwo Ajani (a new Assistant Professor of Instruction). We are currently searching for four new faculty members: two Assistant Professors of Instruction, one Tenure Track Assistant Professor, and our first-ever endowed professorship—The William W. & Judith A. Gaunt Endowed Professorship in Library and Information Science—a joint venture with USF Sarasota-Manatee. We are expanding capacity because our graduate and undergraduate programs are growing at an incredible rate. We maintain our steadfast commitment to educating Florida's next generation of librarians as well as others in the information professions, more broadly. Faculty scholarship continues to flourish with a steady stream of publications going out and an increasing amount of external funding coming in. We are contributing significantly in several of USF's new Strategic Areas of Focus, particularly in Global and National Security and Analytics, Data Science, and Health. Our faculty, students, and alumni can be proud of what the School of Information has accomplished and where we are going. If you want to keep tabs on us more closely, share your thoughts or feedback, or just say "Hey!", we have a presence on most of major social media platforms and would love to hear from you and have you subscribe or follow us!

SI News & Events

ALISE DDC

Dr. Natalie Greene Taylor, Associate Professor and MLIS Program Director, was elected as a Co-Chair of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) Council of Deans, Directors, and Chairs (DDC). The DDC consists of the chief executive officer of each individual ALISE Institutional Member School.

DEFCON30

Dr. "Scuba" Steve Gary, Associate Professor of Instruction, attended DEFCON 30, the largest hacking and security conference with presentations, workshops, contests, villages, and the premier Capture the Flag Contest. Dr. Gary attends every year to keep abreast of the latest innovations in the hacker community. The conference was hosted August 11-14, 2022, at Caesars Forum in Las Vegas, Nevada.

FLORIDA LIBRARIES

Dr. Vanessa Reyes, Assistant Professor of Instruction, was appointed to Editor-in-Chief of *Florida Libraries,* the official journal of the Florida Library Association (FLA). Dr. Reyes hopes to document the important work that information professionals are doing through the journal. She comes to the position with experience in archives, legislative, university, and public libraries.

2022 JCLC CONFERENCE

The USF SI sponsored four students to attend the 4th National Joint Council of Librarians of Color (JCLC) Conference held in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Aparna Ghosh, Kyairla Davis, Emily Hannum, and Sara Hack were students selected to attend the 2022 JCLC Conference rescheduled to February 8-12, 2023.

Strategic & Cyber Intelligence Graduate Programs (SCIP)

M.S. INTELLIGENCE STUDIES

M.S. CYBERSECURITY INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SECURITY

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

The M.S. in Intelligence Studies (MSIS) is an online, STEM-based, applied graduate degree program with a curriculum that emphasizes analytic competencies grounded in the disciplines of information science and informatics. Students may concentrate in strategic intelligence or cyber intelligence.

- *Graduates are working as: senior intelligence analysts, threat intelligence analysts, intelligence officers, data analysts, lead threat analysts, and anti-money laundering investigators.*

The M.S. in Cybersecurity Intelligence and Information Security (MSCIIS) is an online, STEM-based, applied graduate degree program designed to develop information security/cybersecurity professionals who specialize in the intelligence function. It is certified under USF's NSA/DHS Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education.

- *Graduates are working as: senior cybersecurity analysts, cyber threat intelligence managers, senior application security engineers, and cybersecurity architects.*

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The M.S. in Intelligence Studies (MSIS) and M.S. in Cybersecurity Intelligence and Information Security (MSCIIS) programs share a core and follow the same model for degree requirements:

Total Minimum Hours—33 Credits
Core Courses—9 Credits
Concentrations—21 Credits
Practicum—3 Credits
Comprehensive Exam (ePortfolio)

APPLY NOW

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Information about admissions for the M.S. in Intelligence Studies (MSIS) and M.S. in Cybersecurity Intelligence and Information Security (MSCIIS) programs can be found in the USF Graduate Catalog.

For registration dates, please refer to the USF Academic Calendar. Need more information? Contact us.

Introducing
New SI Faculty—Fall 2022

Ly Dinh, Ph.D.

Joined the USF iSchool in August 2022 as an Assistant Professor with a focus on network science, sociotechnical information systems, statistics, and analytics.

Dr. Ly Dinh is a computational social science researcher studying how research methods such as network analysis, social simulation models, and text analysis can be used to advance our understanding of various social and organizational systems. Her current projects place network science at the core to understand and explain a number of social and organizational phenomena ranging from egocentric networks to interagency emergency response networks. Dr. Dinh also develops and tests new measures to capture the complexities of social interactions that can be observed at multiple levels of the network (ego, dyad, triad, subgroup, whole network). Her research has appeared in *Communication Research, Scientific Reports, Communication Studies,* and other peer-reviewed outlets in computational social science. She is also a recipient of the 2020 Grace Hopper Scholar for Women in Computing and a 2018 Network Science Fellow at Visible Networks Labs.

Taiwo Ajani, D.Sc.

Joined the USF iSchool in August 2022 as an Assistant Professor of Instruction with a focus on IT domains including database theory, data analytics, health informatics, networking, and cybersecurity.

We live in unprecedented times with respect to data, information, and the digital space. Dr. Taiwo Ajani studies how these impact socioeconomic systems and how the promises of these domains can be applied in decision making efforts to improve the quality of living. For instance, our vulnerability to diseases and infections puts quality of life at risk every day. Dr. Ajani is interested in harnessing the data and information that is collected from everyday digital activities (in health settings specifically and otherwise) to create models that can ultimately be used to manage and improve healthcare quality while reducing costs for the most vulnerable members of the society. Dr. Ajani is an educator, researcher, and students' mentor/advisor with more than 15 years of service in the higher education sector and specifically in several IT domains including data analytics, database management, cybersecurity, and health informatics. This background provides an understanding of the opportunities inherent in interweaving knowledge from otherwise separate complex entities and to help enhance his scholarship of teaching and discovery as reflected by the interest described above.

Spotlight Interviews

VOL. 1, NO. 1 SPRING 2023

Faculty Interview pg. 8

Dr. Vanessa Reyes is an Assistant Professor of Instruction and Editor-in-Chief of *Florida Libraries.* She holds a Ph.D. in Library and Information Science from Simmons College, an M.S. in Library and Information Studies from Florida State University (FSU), and a B.A. in English from Florida International University (FIU). Her current research contributes to the emerging fields of personal information management (PIM) and personal archiving.

Alumni Interview pg. 10

Leslie Walbolt is a recent graduate of the USF MLIS program. She holds a B.S. in Psychology with a minor in criminology from the University of Florida (UF) along with a J.D. from the UF Fredric G. Levin College of Law. She began the MLIS program in Fall 2019 and graduated in Fall 2021. She now works as the full-time Librarian Branch Manager at the Clearwater Beach Library.

Student Interview pg. 12

Charles Nicholas (C.A. Nicholas) is a literary and musical artist, an award-winning author, and a current USF MLIS student. He holds a B.A. in Communication Studies from Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and an M.S. in Leadership from Palm Beach Atlantic University (PBA). His book *Cycles of the Phoenix: The Whole Interlaced Soul Series* (2019) was honored at a major awards ceremony, presented at the international Miami Book Fair, featured in a large press release, and recognized in the Readers' Favorite International Book Award Contest.

This issue's spotlight interviews feature a current SI faculty member, an alumna of a USF SI graduate program, and a current USF MLIS student.
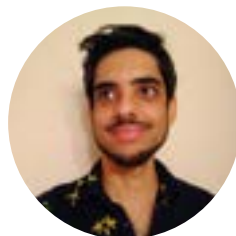
FACULTY

Vanessa Reyes, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Instruction
USF School of Information

ALUMNI

Leslie Walbolt, MLIS
Librarian Branch Manager
Clearwater Beach Library

STUDENT

Charles Nicholas
MLIS Candidate
USF School of Information

Vanessa Reyes, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Instruction
USF School of Information

1. To begin, can you tell us a little about yourself?

I am an Assistant Professor of Instruction at the USF School of Information. I teach for both the BSIS (B.S. in Information Science) program and the MLIS (M.A. in Library and Information Science) program. Before working as an Assistant Professor of Instruction, I worked in public libraries, legislative and special collections, and archives. Working in a variety of information institutions in my career has inspired me to pursue research in preservation, digital libraries, and archives.

2. Can you describe your educational background?

I received my Ph.D. in Library and Information Science from Simmons College, and I hold an M.S. in Library and Information Studies from Florida State University (FSU). I also obtained a graduate certificate in information architecture and an undergraduate certificate in women's studies. I am currently pursuing post-doctoral coursework in program evaluation with a focus on higher education.

3. How did you become interested in libraries and information science? Or what led you to pursue a career as an information professional and educator?

When I was in the second grade, my teacher chose me to adopt a shelf at the school library. In this program, I learned to organize a library section as part of my tasks. I also shared book recommendations with my classmates. At the end of the program, I received a certificate of appreciation, which my parents have kept framed in my room since then. I knew I loved libraries and being a part of this project was proof of my devotion to the career.

4. Can you describe your work in libraries and your current position at the University of South Florida?

I worked in archives, legislation, universities, and public libraries because I was always curious about the field and what happened in different information agencies. I loved the archives the most because I was involved in personal/family records. I come from an immigrant family and our family's history is based on memory and oral histories. There is nothing tangible that my family was able to save as they immigrated to the United States. They arrived in America with only the clothes they were wearing. This motivated me to focus on research related to personal information management (PIM) and personal archiving. Keeping our cultural heritage is especially important to me as it hits close to my heart.

5. Can you talk a little about the classes that you teach and/or your research interests?

I teach for our graduate MLIS (M.A. in Library and Information Science) program and for our undergraduate BSIS (B.S. in Information Science) program. Some courses I teach are Information Behaviors, Information Architecture, the Senior Capstone, Foundations of Library and Information Science, Personal Information Management, and in the Spring semester Metadata. I enjoyed the Metadata course planning process and hope to give students a wide lens.

6. What are some of your philosophies behind teaching?

My philosophy is giving back, contributing to someone's life experiences, and inspiring development. Being an educator requires passion and care for a career that never stops giving. I have always been curious about life and a desire to learn beyond my interests. In this process, through teaching, I learned to better understand others and myself. In my teaching, I try my best to:
- Help students learn and apply what they learn as part of a collaborative learning environment.
- Effectively facilitate learning through real-life learning activities, which requires students to critically think and develop answers to real-life professional experiences.

- Understand students' learning styles and involve them in lesson planning activities and assignments.
- Engage students in learning by demonstrating the importance of their role in the field.
- Respect students and their other obligations, expecting mutual respect in return.
- Keep open lines of communication, encouraging students to communicate with each other and myself.

7. Can you describe your work with the Florida Library Association (FLA) and your role as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal?

I began the journey as the new *Florida Libraries* Journal Editor in July of 2022. I hope to create a collaborative and comprehensive journal that brings together information from a variety of sources while documenting all things related to *Florida Libraries.* In the past few months, I have contacted several notable organizations like the Florida Book Awards and the Florida Humanities. Working with these organizations informs our readers but also highlights all the wonderful things they do and all the opportunities available to libraries. Thus far, I have devoted my time as Editor-in-Chief to connecting our libraries and our state organizations so that the *Florida Libraries* is the one place we can depend on for scholarly articles, valuable news, and resources.

8. How does this work connect with your role on campus and involvement with student organizations?

This is a great question, as all my involvement with authors and other organizations informs my teaching, and it allows me to connect our students and those in SOLIS (Student Organizations of Library and Information Science) to meet and interact with professionals in the field. My graduate research assistant, MLIS candidate Ms. Sara Hack, is the journal editorial assistant, and thus far she has helped set up several parts of the issue. It has been a great learning experience for her, being in touch with authors and Florida Library Association (FLA) members. I appreciate all her hard work.

9. What conferences will you be attending in the future?

I recently attended the ALISE (Association for Library and Information Science Education) and ASIS&T (Association for Information Science and Technology) Conference, and I plan to attend the JCLC (Joint Council of Librarians of Color) Conference in February 2023 along with the American Library Association (ALA) Chicago Conference and the Florida Library Association (FLA) Conference all happening this Spring.

10. Lastly, what are your goals in the new academic year as an Assistant Professor of Instruction for the School of Information?

Goals as an educator and advisor to BSIS and MLIS students and SOLIS in the School of Information:
- I hope to continue to connect students with opportunities for research and scholarships.
- I am proud to work with our SOLIS board to help students connect with other organizations and professionals in our field.

Research and Scholarship Goals:
- I am working on a few book projects as well as composing research articles that I hope to complete soon.
- I look forward to finishing the first issue of the *Florida Libraries* Journal published at the end of this year.
- I am applying for grants that will fund more than one student to help me collect and analyze data in the next school year.

Thank you for this wonderful interview. I am so grateful for all your wonderful questions.

To begin, can you tell us a little about yourself?

I grew up in Jacksonville, Florida, and currently live in Seminole (Pinellas County) with my husband and two boys. I am active in a community organizing group in my county—FAST—which seeks solutions to community problems by holding our elected officials accountable through public actions. I enjoy reading (of course)—one of my favorite books is *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern. Broadway musicals are another of my favorite things; I had the opportunity to see *Hadestown* the last Saturday before the world shut down in March 2020 and I will never forget the experience. I try to always be prepared to give a good readers' advisory or theatre recommendation. Finally, I love visiting the beach at sunset over the gulf; it's a magical experience that never gets old.

Can you describe your educational background?

I attended the University of Florida (UF) for my undergraduate studies and obtained a degree in psychology with a minor in criminology as preparation to attend law school, which I also attended at UF. I worked as an attorney for a few years with the City of Philadelphia, and then I took some time off to be a stay-at-home mom to my two boys. During this period, I was figuring out my next steps for my career since I did not enjoy being a lawyer. A librarian friend mentioned that she thought I would be an excellent librarian and encouraged me to return to school for my MLIS. I began the program at USF in Fall 2019 and graduated in Fall 2021.

How did you become interested in library and information science? Or what led you to pursue a career in librarianship?

Like I noted above, a persistent friend kept encouraging me to attend USF's MLIS program since she loved her job as a school librarian and thought I would excel in the field. I have always loved researching, both as a googling amateur and as part of my legal career, so I thought a reference librarian would be a good use of my talents. Further, I volunteered at both my local library as well as at my children's elementary school library to get a better understanding of the day-to-day activities in library spaces.

Can you describe your work in libraries and your position at the Clearwater Public Library System?

In addition to volunteering, I interned with the Barbara S. Ponce Public Library in Pinellas Park, Florida, as my fieldwork assignment. I knew I wanted to work in public libraries, but I did not have much experience so in-person fieldwork was important to me. I worked mostly in reference but had the opportunity to do a little bit of everything in the library. My special project was a Gratitude Project made up of many components: for the month of November, I curated a word-of-the-day for the community to either meditate on, journal about, or photograph. I kicked off the month with a program about gratitude and finished with a mural where patrons could draw pictures or write their gratitude for the month. I created Facebook content, liaised with the teens so they participated on their library Instagram account, and I made YouTube videos to assist the patrons in what the project was all about. By incorporating all these together, it gave me a great start to programming in libraries.

My position with the Clearwater Library System began shortly after graduation as a part-time reference librarian at its East Community Branch. My responsibilities included answering phones, working the reference/circulation desk, helping with computers and other devices, and assisting wherever needed. I added more hours (but I was still part-time) in the Spring and had the chance to participate in some cool library programs like a Kindness Fair with our joint-use college library partner and RoboFest at the main library. Clearwater has been a great place to lean into the parts of librarianship I am interested in and grow from there. A job opportunity arose for full-time work as a Branch Manager for the Clearwater Beach Library, and I began work there (officially as of June 2022!). It is a cool location in that its building is jointly combined with the City's Parks and

Recreation Department so there are many possibilities for collaboration. I am excited to see how I can connect the library to its community as a hub for residents and vacationers to get materials, rest in the air conditioning, learn new things, and discover their joy of libraries.

How did the MLIS program impact where you are now professionally?

The MLIS program provided me with a solid foundation in all things libraries. I particularly enjoyed Cultural Heritage Institutions and Libraries, Teaching Information Literacy, and Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults, because although these courses are very different in terms of learning requirements, they all opened my mind up to the various facets of knowledge needed to have an expansive view of what libraries can be in our communities.

Moreover, my time as SOLIS President allowed me to better connect with classmates than in classes alone. The leadership team especially became a great unit because we had to learn how to work together from across the state creating online programs for students while navigating the processes USF required as a student organization. It gave me professional responsibility as a student that prepared me for collaborative work in my library job.

What advice do you have for individuals looking to apply to the program?

You do not need to know what type of library you want to work in or how you want to participate in the library field before you apply. I think a passion to learn new things and an organizational system are integral to success in the program because it is online. Trying new things and being open to varied experiences is what the library profession is all about. Libraries are constantly adapting to the needs of communities, so it is good to be flexible. I recommend prep work at the beginning of the semester (like calendaring key due dates and creating a study plan based on required readings and lectures) to free up time for focusing on coursework while staying on top of everything else in your life.

What advice do you have for current students in the program?

Try to have a mix of core classes with electives each semester if you are taking more than one class. Electives give you the freedom to figure out what areas of librarianship you gravitate towards and which ones are not for you. Get to know other students in a meaningful way if that is possible—SOLIS is a great place to connect and so are classes where you have group projects. My last semester, I had a phenomenal group where we met every week online for our assignments' status updates and division of labor, but we could also freely talk about getting our ePortfolio done and the other hurdles of being so close to graduation and finding jobs.

What advice do you have for students nearing graduation or recent graduates of the program?

You are so close to being done with school (likely forever)—that is so exciting! Start applying for jobs the semester or two before you graduate. Many libraries will hire librarians who are towards the end of the program. Try to envision yourself as a librarian in the position when writing your cover letter and adapt it to align with what the position is seeking. For interview preparation, go through the job posting and break it down into segments where you can match your talents with specific examples to the bullet points listed. Good luck!

Can you tell us a little about yourself?

My name is Charles Avinash Nicholas, and my author's name is C.A. Nicholas. I am an Asian-American storyteller with a multicultural heritage, yet I am also passionate about experiencing others' stories, whether they are told through books, movies, television series, etc. The political proposals that I am most passionate about are a Universal Basic Income (UBI) because freedom from poverty is a human right (it should not have to be earned), and a universal public healthcare system, since essential healthcare coverage should not be limited to individuals who can afford it. A UBI and universal public healthcare system should be public goods, as our public libraries are. I have a B.A. in Communication Studies (which included a study in propaganda) and an M.S. in Leadership.

Can you talk about your recently published book and what inspired you to write it?

Cycles of the Pheonix is a multigenerational and poetic saga of short stories, poems, letters, and scripts that cross worlds and genres (while blurring genre boundaries too). Some contain stories-within-stories, while some are written by authors that I created, and all are gradually revealed to be connected on some level.

My inspiration for creating the book was a yearning to accurately communicate the voice, dance, and symphony of my soul through allegories, as well as metaphors. I meticulously nourished this seed out of passion, yet also necessity since I have an INFP personality, a rare personality which means that I communicate differently than most individuals. It is difficult for me to communicate without using metaphors, abstract thoughts, and time to contemplate. Furthermore, shyness is the gatekeeper to my speech and the components of my replies enjoy fleeing into a scatter whenever I speak in-person.

My motivation later evolved into a passion for exploring a myriad of individuals' experiences that manifest from constant depression, which accompanied my desire to provide fierce inspiration without sugarcoating the horrors souls live within when mentally afflicted by it. The progression of wishing to portray this flourished into assorted styles of storytelling, alongside my wish to also represent the traumas of they who are physically assaulted (even by oppressors who reach forth from a distant past) within a geographical scope which ranges from personal aggression to annihilation through warfare. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, these facets encompassed a desire to spiritually humanize and empathically glorify people who are systemically dehumanized.

Do you currently have plans or are you currently working on a new book?

I have a story idea, but my philosophy is to only creatively write when I have an overwhelming hunger for doing so.

What is your schedule like when you're writing?

I don't have an official writing schedule, though I tend to write in the late afternoons and late into the night.

What are some of your current favorite books?

I read *The Poppy War* by R. F. Kuang about a month ago. It's a phenomenal historical fantasy whose themes include the horrors of war for all sides, ethical gray areas, the simplification of nuanced histories, as well as current events, and dehumanization in propaganda.

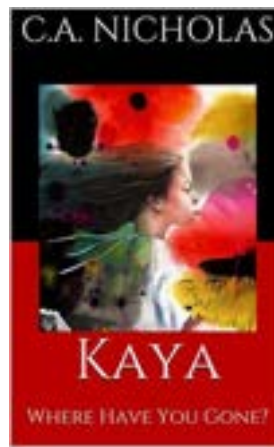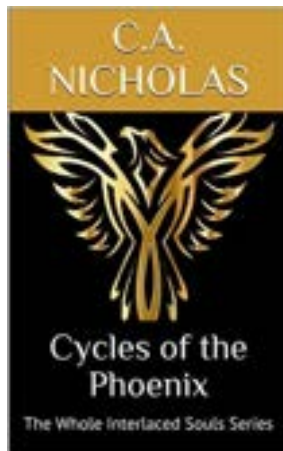**What advice would you have for anyone who is looking to write a book?**
Check out the website Reedsy. They have reasonable prices for self-published author services. Through this site, I hired Will Tyler to professionally edit my book. I tend to be obsessive when I creatively write, so the following advice is for myself as well: commit to a balance between writing, your other work responsibilities, spending time with other people, and general leisure activities.

How did you get interested in library and information science?
I did not consider becoming a librarian until I took an MBTI personality and career placement test in my M.S. in Leadership program. When the results revealed that being a librarian would be a great fit for me, I wondered why I did not realize this sooner. I am an introvert who loves storytelling. I am passionate about being a member of a news literate community, I enjoy regularly learning about a variety of topics, and I have fun being involved with community-led organizations (such as my time with Florida Atlantic University's Asian Student Union in my undergraduate years).

What do you hope to do with your MLIS once you graduate?
My goal is to be a public librarian (though I am open to being another type of librarian). I desire to be a member of a librarian team that makes sure that community members are involved in how our local library is run, which services and goods (beyond books) we can provide, and even help to organize library related community trips.

Library Research Assistant (LRA) Program

School of Information students, have you heard about USF's Library Research Assistant (LRA) Program? The LRA Program provides paid work-study opportunities to USF students to better prepare them for their future careers while also helping to cover all of those college expenses. LRAs are responsible for assisting their fellow students and visitors of USF's Tampa Library with their research questions and basic library assistance. From accessing databases to asking how to use the printers, LRAs are the library's first point of contact for those with questions. If you have ever needed help with an assignment and contacted Ask-a-Librarian or visited the Research Desk at the Library, then you have probably already worked with a Library Research Assistant.

While this program is open, and very beneficial, to students of any field of study, sophomore level and above, I believe that the LRA program is a particularly advantageous experience for those hoping to pursue a career in libraries. Currently, I am a graduate student with the School of Information, earning my M.A. in Library and Information Science. Despite having over six years of experience working in various libraries, it was not until I got a chance to work with Digital Learning Librarian Barbara Lewis and the LRA program that I was able to gain the practical experiences and research based skills needed to feel truly confident in my future career path.

One of the difficulties of entering the library science field, especially if one has prior entry-level library experience, is that the duties of entry-level library positions are very different from the duties of more advanced library positions that require MLIS degrees. Therefore, there are very few opportunities for MLIS students to apply what they are learning in their courses to practical work experiences unless they already have an advanced position within a library. USF's LRA program is a rewarding opportunity for MLIS students to work directly under research librarians actively engaged in the academic environment, assisting not only students with research but also faculty as well.

Overall, the biggest benefit I have experienced as an LRA with USF's Tampa Library is the community connection with other students and the academic support network of faculty and staff members who work diligently every day to maintain a productive, safe, and encouraging environment for the USF community. No matter your field of study or future career goals, the research skills, professional training, and personal experiences gained by participating in the LRA program are extremely valuable for any student.

For open LRA positions, be sure to check out USF Careers and Handshake. For research assistance, please come visit the LRAs at the Tampa Library's Research Desk.

This article was written by USF SI graduate assistant, research library assistant, and MLIS candidate Mallory Moxley.

Students interested in publishing articles in the SI newsletter are encouraged to submit work for future issues. Each written submission will be reviewed and considered for publication. For more information on student submissions and related opportunities, please contact si@usf.edu.

Newsletter Contributors

David Chapel
Department Operations Manager
CIS Building Manager
USF School of Information
Graduate Assistant Supervisor

Sydney Schermerhorn
MLIS Candidate
Marketing & Communications Graduate Assistant
USF School of Information
Content Writer, Editor, & Graphic Designer

Mallory Moxley
MLIS Candidate
Marketing & Communications Graduate Assistant
USF School of Information
Contributing Editor

Please contact si@usf.edu for questions, feedback, or more information.