

Letters

Education and ALIA membership

Dear Editor,

I would like to offer my comment in response to Ed Parr's encouragement for discussion on standards of entry to the profession of Librarianship (*ALJ*, May 1991, p 98-111).

As a 3rd year undergraduate student shortly to enter this profession, I found the suggested 'three levels of increasing competence' an enticing proposal. Regardless of how high the standard of the first academic award achieved by students of librarianship, the ensuing first few years putting theory into practice are really no more than a period of continuing education. Therefore the suggested 'presentation of a written "professional statement" for assessment by practising professionals' (p 108), with a personal interview, appears a most appropriate method of assessing the new librarian's professional and continuing competence.

Students work towards their initial degree in order to enter their chosen profession. However, without the necessity of proving their increasing competence, some may acquire their first job in a library or information centre and then make no further effort to keep up with the changes in their profession.

Ed Parr's article suggests that the responsibility for librarians proving their continuing professional competence should belong to ALIA, which is in the best position to run such a scheme. However, I tend to support the suggestions of Margaret Trask (*ALJ*, Feb. 1983, p 5-13). Librarians must take responsibility for themselves. ALIA would benefit from an increased level of competency in its members and should be involved in their assessment, but continued professional development requires the stimulus which comes from within each one of us.

If ALIA takes up Ed Parr's suggestions and requires continuing education and proof of professionalism in the workplace, then the value of membership of ALIA must increase. We may then see librarian's jobs being advertised as requiring membership of ALIA, not just eligibility to be a member. The benefits of involvement in the activities of ALIA would be more clearly visible to new graduates and therefore encourage them to become members.

Carolyn Clarke
3rd Yr Undergraduate
School of Information and Library Studies
Curtin University of Technology

Jobs — filling them begins at home

Dear Editor,

In response to 'Open Up the Jobs!', *inCite* Vol. 12 No. 11, 22 July 1991, could the CAA Librarian please advise me of the number of Professional Officer Class 1 (Librarian) positions she has seen advertised in the Gazette which have only been available for filling within the Public Service? I am an ASO1 (holding Library Qualifications) and would feel that maybe I might have some hope of actually being selected for a professional position if I had seen such an advertisement for Melbourne positions.

There are a number of very capable recent graduates employed within the Public Service in administrative positions who would clearly love to utilise their training, but due to the effect on libraries of the recession have been unable to do so. We see positions advertised outside the Public Service and in every case I am aware of, an appointment has been made from non-permanent applicants, thus eliminating *our* right of appeal!

The Public Service gets 'new blood, new ideas, new visions' from the pool of its own qualified internal applicants who are not working in their field. These internal applicants have been able to observe the running of their departmental libraries, noting the strong points and developing strategies to improve on the weaker aspects — if only they

were given the chance. Any employer should consider their own employees first.

Margaret Simpson

Open up the jobs!

Dear Editor,

Thank you Louise! I agree with your letter in *inCite* of 22 July 1991 that base grade librarian positions should be advertised for open filling, and not only be available to permanent members of the Australian Public Service (APS).

Many APS departments do advertise in the press and in *inCite* for base grade positions and this should occur in all APS departments. Library managers should fight for the right to attract the best field of candidates, particularly for base grade positions. Although this may require some effort and require justification to senior managers or personnel areas, it can be done.

As some departments do advertise appropriately for base grade positions, I believe that ALIA should not write to all APS departments. However, the Special Libraries Section of ALIA will be prepared to write to any department which adopts a 'closed shop' approach to base grade positions, advising them of the advantages of more open advertising.

To do this, we will need *inCite* readers'

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assistance. Please send me details of any problems in this area and I will write to the relevant department. My address is in Vital Link or in ASL (Australian Special Libraries).

Denise Bird
Special Libraries Section

Towards better decisions...

Dear Editor,

At its meeting in Melbourne in April ACLIS National Council decided to produce a follow up to the lobbying brochure *Decisions are only as good as the information they're based on* that was produced in 1989.

The focus of this new edition will still be on the contribution and value of information to economic development, but this time we are looking for actual examples of instances in which access to timely and useful information has saved money and/or contributed to organisational bottom lines or national development.

Your assistance is sought in providing examples of how the information you have provided has lead to cost savings or contributed to economic development. Please forward your examples to me at the State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 by 20 September 1991. Confidentiality will be respected where required but the purpose is to produce a brochure that is impressive and convincing by including real examples of the value of information.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Alison Crook
President, ACLIS

Board of Education continued from 6...

with the Professional Development Officers from the Branches, and the second link-up was with the Regional Groups. The teleconferences indicated that the development of a database of training and development activities and providers was seen as being of high priority, as was the need for the ALIA Office to play a coordinating role, particularly in relation to planning programs for overseas visitors.

Government reports

A number of recently published government reports have implications for the education of library and information services personnel. Reviews of a number of them were provided to the Board who then decided to consider the overall implications at its October meeting. The reports under consideration are Australia as an Information Society, *The Review of Library Provision in Higher Education Institutions*, *The Review of the Teaching of Modern Languages in Higher Education*, *Australia and the Northeast Asian Ascendancy* and *Exporting of Education Services*.

Deadline for Board of Education Agenda

People wishing to include items on the agenda of the October Board meeting should ensure that they reach the ALIA Office by 13 September. There is at least one Board member in each State (except the Northern Territory) who will be pleased to discuss with you any items relating to education for library and information services personnel.

Ann Hazell

Elections

Reminder: There is still time to nominate for Vice-President 1992! (See details in *inCite* 10, p 6). Nominations close at 5 pm on 1 September.

Reminder: The leaflet that reached you with *inCite* 11 listed calls for nominations for officers in Branches, Sections, and Sectional Groups. Note that these, too, close at 5 pm on 1 September.

Late calls for nomination have been received from:

SA Branch: Vice-President, *Secretary, Treasurer, *General Councillor, Newsletter Editor, *Professional Development Officer. Nominations to: Di Booker, Learning Resource Centre, Adelaide College of TAFE, GPO Box 1872, Adelaide, SA 5001.

TAS Branch: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Professional Development Officer, Membership Officer, Publicity Officer, Newsletter Editor, Branch Councillors (4). Nominations to be sent to Andy Smithies, c/- Clinical Library, University of Tasmania, 43 Collins Street, Hobart, Tas 7000.

Cataloguers Section, NSW Group: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Members (4).

Children's and Youth Services Section, NSW Group: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Members.

Health Libraries Section, NSW Group: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Members (3), Branch Councillor. Nominations to be sent to Bronwyn King, Library, Westmead Hospital, Westmead, NSW 2145.

Special Libraries Section, NSW Group: Committee Members (12).

* 2-year term.

Two little reminders...

☛ Know someone who's worthy of a Letter of Recognition? Nominations may be made at any time. For further information and/or nomination forms contact the Membership Services Manager at ALIA National Office.

☛ Library Manager of the Year Award. Full details were given in *inCite* 11. There is just time to send nominations before the deadline of 1 September.

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