

The 2009 ALIA Research Mentoring Program begins

Congratulations to Tania Barry and Kerrie Burn, the successful applicants in this year's ALIA Research Mentoring Program.

The Research Mentoring Program is a new initiative for 2009. The member survey conducted last year clearly showed that ALIA's members were eager to have access to more research support and guidance. Research skill and knowledge are the essential tool kit for ensuring that libraries and librarians continue to effectively and efficiently meet the evolving needs of the clients and communities they serve.

The ALIA Research Mentoring Program provides the opportunity for professional members to develop and refine their skill, knowledge, and confidence in conducting research. Working as a librarian at the Yarra Plenty Regional Library, Tania Barry applied because she saw the program as a great way to develop her research skills.

"I want to undertake a higher degree by research in the near future and knew this program would be ideal for laying the foundation for me to go down this path."

The purpose of the Program is to provide the opportunity for recipients to receive expert coaching and guidance as they undertake a research project on a selected library or information issue. This year Tania will undertake a project exploring the role of gaming in public libraries. More and more gaming is being used in libraries in the US as a literacy tool. While the use of gaming in Australia is becoming more prevalent in Australian libraries, there doesn't appear to be a body of knowledge that can be drawn on to help library services create and evaluate gaming experiences. Tania's work will help fill this gap.

"I have worked a lot to develop myself personally and professionally and now want to move a step further and contribute to the body of knowledge within our profession, especially when it can feed into industry practice," said Tania.

Kerrie Burn, a librarian at Southern Cross University in Lismore, will undertake a study that will build upon the work she has already undertaken at the SCU library in her role as repository manager. In the last year Kerrie has been exploring how library staff might best relate to academics and researchers in order to improve faculty engagement with SCU's institutional repository. Kerrie's project will establish strategies that can be used by all academic libraries to ensure the successful implementation of new research technologies into the academic environment.

Kerrie is confident that the support of the program will help to move potential research projects beyond the 'great idea if I had more time' stage. "I am keen to learn how to better integrate my research and publishing interests into a busy professional working life."

Over the next twelve months Tania and Kerrie will work with their mentors to develop and implement their research. Tania will be working with Mary Carroll from Victoria University, and Kerrie will work with Damian Lodge from Charles Sturt University. The results of both projects will be published next year.

"What I would really like is to be able to inspire people in the industry, in any sector, to look at the research and think outside the square, to realise that there are new and different ways to bring learning and knowledge to their customers," said Tania.

Further information on the program can be found at <http://www.alia.org.au/research/>

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South Australian Library Achiever of the Year

Lindy Hillman, Manager of Burnside Public Library, was named the 2009 South Australian Library Achiever of the Year at an award ceremony at the State Library of South Australia on Wednesday 10th June. This annual award is organised by the ALIA SA Group, and very proudly sponsored by Ex Libris, who, with SA Library Supplies, also sponsored the presentation evening.

Lindy was nominated for implementing a raft of new services and programs, which have been delivered using a range of new technologies, and successfully instigating cultural change to create a more positive, vibrant workplace. Lindy and her team also demonstrated creative approaches to marketing, and successful collaborative ventures.



Lindy Hillman with Jo-Anne Rivers from Ex Libris

Lindy was nominated by Jane Trotter, General Manager Corporate and Community Services, Burnside Council and Tricia Foster-Jones, Team Leader Customer and Information Services, Burnside Library.

In their submission, Jane and Tricia said "over the past 18 months... Lindy has led a number of significant innovations... transforming the library from a pleasant but fairly conservative library to a vibrant, exciting, and cutting edge one which has immersed itself in a range of different services and new technologies for our customers."

A vodcast of Lindy's acceptance speech can be found at <http://www.burnside.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1463>

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