

The selection panel for this award and Susan's referees agreed that Susan consistently applies the core ALIA values in her work: connecting people to ideas, displaying commitment to literacy, information literacy and learning, showing respect for the diversity and individuality of all people, and fostering partnerships to advance these values.



SUSAN COURTLAND: LIBRARY TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR 2013

At the 2013 National Library and Information Technicians' Symposium in Canberra, Susan Courtland was honoured with the Library Technician of the Year Award for 2013. Susan is currently Convenor of the ALIA Western Australian Library Technicians Group and sits on the Western Australian Library Technicians Group Student Grant Award panel. She is also a proud ALIA Silver Pin recipient. Susan shared her thoughts on receiving the award with INCITE.

It is indeed an honour to be bestowed the title of ALIA Library Technician of the Year 2013 and join an illustrious group of award winners dating back to 1989. To receive my award during the National Library and Information Technicians Symposium at the National Library of Australia in Canberra late last year was an extraordinary career moment.

I would like to thank my peers for the nomination and the ALIA National Library Technicians Group for the award. The Group administers the award and also runs

the biennial national symposium targeted specifically to library technicians, providing valuable professional development and networking opportunities. ALIA National Library Technicians has become one of the most active ALIA groups since its formation in 1979.

My career in libraries is a relatively short 14 years but my passion for my work and the industry has carried me at full speed on an amazing journey, from first-time national conference attendee in 2007 to Conference Convenor for the national conference, Back to Basics, in Perth in 2011. This was an excellent professional development opportunity and it was a pleasure to lead and work with an outstanding LibTech Conference Committee of 15 in presenting a phenomenal event, which also showcased Western Australia and the professionalism of Western Australian library technicians.

Our LibTech team had a combined total of 260 years industry experience working in state, public, special, school and academic libraries. Members of the team hold a range of professional positions including Senior Library Officer, Library Technician, Senior Library Technician, Manager Library Services, Collection Research Programs Team Leader, Senior Librarian, Library Student Assistant Administrator, and—my position at the time—Manager Multimedia Resources. I am now employed as an eServices Specialist.

As a result of substantial technological change over the past decade, the role of libraries and library professionals has changed significantly. The requirement for each of us to learn, develop and grow as professionals in the digital age is one of the myriad of qualities that has seen the library technician role expand from the stereotypical library employee to a committed professional at the forefront of an information-driven and information-hungry world.

Our highly developed skill set and expertise are recognised in the professional positions we hold. Roles have changed and the boundaries between library technicians and librarians have shifted dramatically, so much so that ALIA no longer uses the term paraprofessional; we are all library professionals and I believe we need to collaborate in order to secure our future and the future of our industry.

At the 2009 Adelaide National Library and Information Technicians' Conference, Rebecca Evans presented the Dunn & Wilson Oration. She said, "Library technicians are no more important than shelvers or less important than librarians, we all offer something in our own unique way."

My passion for my work and for libraries has taken me on an incredible journey of opportunity and recognition. I am proud to be part of this wonderful industry.

SUSAN COURTLAND

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