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Delaware State University Guides Patrons into more Effective Research with Standardized Lib Guides

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Claflin University Implements Successful Information ...
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3. Define your student learning outcomes. What is the focus of your lesson? What key points do you want your students to take away? Incorporate an activity that summarizes what you have taught.

4. Network. Partner with faculty and staff members on your campus. Having people onboard makes it easier to get the message out. This semester faculty members specifically asked their students to stop by the library if they have questions. This has helped students become more comfortable asking for help.

Montgomery shared that she has been affected by the information literacy program personally and professionally: "My definition of information literacy has been enhanced," she reflects. "I believe, aside from teaching students how to locate, evaluate, and utilize information, you must make the entire process relevant. By engaging students in discussions, various instruction methods, utilizing assessment tools, and connecting the process to real life experiences, the students will be able to see the big picture."

For more information about the **H.V. Manning Library**, visit *http://www.claflin.edu/library/index.asp*.

Mrs. Bernestine Haynes, Library Assistant (Serials Department), and Mrs. Mamie Huggins, Library Assistant (Technical Services), engaging in cross-training. Photo © Ms. Marilyn Y. Gibbs.

Delaware State University Guides Patrons into More Effective Research with Standardized LibGuides

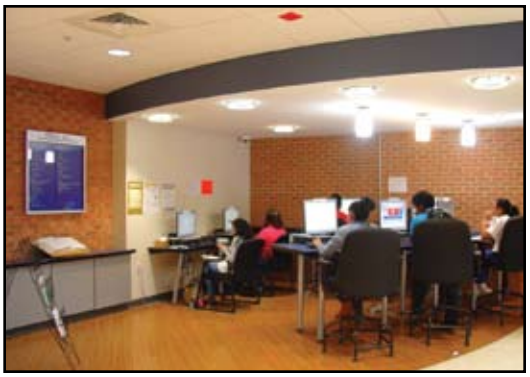
by **Shanesha R. F. Brooks-Tatum** (Project Coordinator/Writer, HBCU Library Alliance) <sbrooks-tatum@hbculibraries.org>

Delaware State University serves nearly 4,000 students on its 400-acre campus. The oldest building on campus is Loockerman Hall, a restored national historic landmark from the 1700s that once served as the center of campus. In 1971, the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the **National Park Service**. Loockerman Hall functioned as the center of resources for the then "Delaware College for Colored Students" and as a guide and a haven to slaves traveling the Underground Railroad. Today at **Delaware State University's William C. Jason Library**, innovative LibGuides, or library guides, are the central resources for student and faculty research.

LibGuides are electronic guides for subject-specific resources. **Mr. Jéan M. Charlot**, Systems/Library Technology Officer, explained that prior to developing LibGuides, the library used subject guides, which were separate Web pages linked to the library's Website. The subject guides provided limited information and were not easy to update and expand, since not all librarians had access to the Web design software. Librarians at the reference desk were inundated with questions and inquiries from students and faculty. "Since we have a small staff, it was challenging for us to quickly and effectively address all of the questions that we were getting," **Charlot** reflected. The library staff set about securing Title III funding to create LibGuides.

Beverly Charlot, Coordinator of Technical Services, created a "one-stop-shop" LibGuide for students to use. With very specific subject headings, searchable eBooks, and a new database tab, students who do not have specific questions or who are trying to figure out the direction of their research projects can browse and get a sense of what is available.

Shown above: Librarian Beverly Charlot leads an instruction session. Below: Students use computers at terminal near the library front entrance.



The front entrance to the William C. Jason Library. All photos included with this article are courtesy of Delaware State University.

A Meebo chat system and an interlibrary loan form are embedded into several of the LibGuides, so that students have even more immediate access to librarians and the ability to quickly request items not offered by Delaware State. The library's interlibrary loan statistics show that in 2010, there were 759 requests. As of October 2011, there have been 870 requests, a nearly 15 percent increase, not including the remainder of the year.

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"LibGuides must be in line with course curricula," **Charlot** explained. **Gretchen Starling** explained that many courses are taught from LibGuides: "No matter what course it is, LibGuides make it easy to show students what resources are available, and it is something that they can easily come back to on their own time." Some LibGuide material is specific to certain audiences, such as the New Student Orientation pages, whereas other guides (such as **Ronald Davis's** "Going Green" LibGuide) are used by individuals all over the world. "It's something that offers a different and contemporary perspective on world issues," stated **Davis**.

Library staff keeps statistics on which LibGuides are used most. The top ten LibGuides are advertised on the main library Website. LibGuides direct students to general areas while staff members search for specialized information to address their queries. "Often, students will find the answers that they are looking for in the LibGuides, which enables us to move on and help other patrons," **Mr. Charlot** explained.

Librarian Ronald Davis assists a student.

LibGuides are not only a way to address short staffing, but also a way to standardize messaging to patrons. "Through LibGuides, we are able to be consistent with our communications," explained **Dr. Rebecca Batson**, Library Dean. Recently, the library staff has been focused on streamlining pages and standardizing them to make sure that they fit the library's mission. "Our mission is to increase student access, and one way to increase student access is through standardization," said **Charlot**. Library staff engage in LibGuide quality control not only by standardizing the information offered in each guide, but also by unpublishing LibGuides that do not get many hits and by addressing data from feedback forms and surveys.

How does **Jason Library** ensure consistent and accurate messaging? LibGuides are reviewed every semester by librarians to ensure accuracy. Librarians continue to revise them to ensure that the most up-to-date information is publicized. Every semester, the staff runs an in-depth report on the LibGuides that assesses their needs for new ones.

Additionally, new librarians are trained in using and creating LibGuides. "We want to make sure that there is consistency across the LibGuides, even though they refer students to different resources. We also refer to other institutions' LibGuides as we market and create our unique LibGuide branding," explained **Mr. Charlot**.

LibGuides have been especially useful for the satellite campuses (in Wilmington and Georgetown), online students residing in other countries, and students working late at night from their dorm rooms. "We include interactive videos on most of our LibGuides, which explain how to use a database. Students can have private tutorials even at 2:00 a.m.," **Rosamond Panda**, Reference and Public Services Librarian, explained.

What librarians like about LibGuides is the flexibility. The system allows them to update guides on their own time. Variations within standardizations reflect the different personalities of instructors. Some librarians create and upload humorous tutorial videos with skits and jokes that entertain while instructing viewers. **Sarah Katz**, a new librarian, is focused on making her LibGuides user-friendly by including an overview on the first page and linking to LibGuides in other subject areas.

"LibGuides do not take the place of person-to-person contact," **Charlot** noted. The system acts as a funnel to bring students into the library. Students are often asked to come into the library to address questions that are more detailed. LibGuides enable librarians to dedicate more time to answering higher-level, more rigorous questions. They assist students and faculty in obtaining gateway information more quickly so that they have more time and resources to produce quality work.

LibGuides not only assist in instruction but also provide an outreach tool to help publicize each subject area with which librarians can assist. **Mr. Charlot** explained: "LibGuides also help bring patrons into the library for print resources that they see on the LibGuides. They bring a whole new group of library users."

To learn more, visit *http://www.desu.edu/library*.

Rumors
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she will be getting another little brother or sister). And more good news! **Deb**'s mom has been released from the hospital and is slowly but surely recovering.

From the Baby Front! See our picture on p.1 of **Easton Matthew Ricords (Jackie LaPlaca's** baby) who arrived on Christmas Eve, a month early! Isn't he a cutie! Remember **Jackie** of **CredoReference** and **LibrariesThriving.org**? She and her colleague **Heather Blaine** collaborated with ***Against the Grain*** for a debate titled "Are Libraries Thriving?" during the **2011 Charleston Conference**. *http://www.librariesthriving.org/home/online-seminars/11-fall-2011/58-fallseries*

More news from ***ATG*** column editors! The vivacious **Robin Champieux** is now **Scholarly Communications Librarian** at **Oregon Health & Science University**. She and **Steve Carrico** are deciding how to reorient their column since they are both now in librarian positions! Congratulations, **Robin**! *http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/library/about/staff-directory/robin-champieux.cfm*

And he's not a column editor (yet) but he is planning on guest editing the November issue of the print ***ATG*** on **Demand Driven Acquisitions/Patron-Driven Acquisitions**. And he is doing a great job of giving us Friday **Hot Topics** for the ***ATG*** **NewsChannel**! His name is **Jonathan Harwell** and he is relocating

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