MLA: Future of Libraries Interest Group (October 2018)

Meeting Date & Location
10/1/2018 @ Charlotte Hall Branch of St. Mary's County Library

In Attendance
Michael Blackwell, Jennifer Hopwood, Conni Strittmatter, Anna White, Ashley Biggs, Cindy Pol, James Donaldson, Nini Beegan, Pam Taylor, Tracy Miller, Allison Jessing, Shannon , Annie Kovach,

Communication

Some people are getting bounced back emails when trying to post to the listserv. Conni will ask Bob Kuntz about authorized posting onto listserv.

Anna White has created a Google account for FoLIG. Information is posted on Slack.

In order to ensure everyone gets the needed information, we will continue to send emails to the MLA FoLIG listserv, but also communicate through slack by using @everyone. This will notify everyone on there that they have an incoming message on slack to read.

MLA Annual

Conni will ask FoLIG people if they will be at MLA and able to present for the MLA session paperwork.

General Trends in Workforce

- Increase in Artificial Intelligence
- Retirement age getting higher
- More about teamwork, less about individual contributors. Some places are hiring people as teams from day one.
- Women often have higher levels of education than men, we might see an increase in women being leaders
- People seeking work/life balance. Coming through in benefits. Compensation isn't the only factor for people accepting jobs - also the flexibility of the job
- Leadership redefined - role of the leader. Organizations are becoming flatter. Motivation, influence, drive passion - the role of the leader and middle manager

- Telecommuting more common
- Slack being used more
- Gig Economy

Trends at the Library

- Decline in reference questions and print circulation
- More self check out
- Some things are being outsourced in libraries (ie Collection Development)
- Role of librarians changing - closer to instructor/trainer, less reference
- Community oriented - hire more diverse staff
- Many people going cashless has affected skills in employees
- Some libraries are choosing to hire teachers specifically (not just retired teachers)

Assumptions/Implications/Questions

- These changes can also be very difficult for staff who would have to change much of what they've always done in order to accommodate these changes.
- Changing space to accommodate different staffing needs (less desk, more community space)
- Libraries move slowly on these changes because of our funding. We sometimes need to request moving funding around from the county, which is difficult
- Routine work will be automated
- We might shift to fewer, far better trained staff. We could see some job types eliminated altogether.
    o Vacancies could be opportunity for attrition
    o OR
    o Opportunity for recreating vacant jobs into something you wish you had
- In the meantime, we'll need to re-skill the people we have, hire for the skills we need
- Amazon Go style check out process?
- Will circulation positions be totally eliminated?
- Libraries should still maintain that personal interaction, which makes us such a successful and needed resource.

Main Topics of Interest

Automation

Telecommuting & Work/Life Balance

Retirement Age Higher

Flatter Organizations
• Changing to more empowerment, less control

How do we increase diversity?

Focus on preparing staff for promotions, etc.

Marketing the library as a place to work - many people don't realize it's even an option

Outreach can help with marketing ourselves to underserved groups