American Library Association Conference
Washington D.C.
June 24th-29th, 2010
By Heather Parisi, Dominican University

I was able to attend some interesting programs at ALA this year. As always, the exhibits provided me the opportunity to connect with our current vendors, as well as, demo new products. Being in Washington D.C. was inspiring in itself, as I was able to visit the Library of Congress and the National Archives. I also participated in the Library Advocacy Day rally. It was a great experience to exercise my democratic freedom in support of libraries just steps from the U.S. Captiol. The following is a brief report on the programs I attended.

Cloud Computing for library services LITA

This session defined cloud computing and discussed how libraries can use cloud computing resources to deliver innovative, cost-effective services. I attended the first half of the session, entitled "Cloud computing in libraries: Definitions, needs, and trends" The panel consisting of Marshall Breeding (Vanderbilt University), Karen Coombs (OCLC), Rosalyn Metz (Wheaton College) and Terry Reese (Oregon State University), provided an overview of what cloud computing is and how it is currently being used by libraries.

Washington Office Breakout Session II – E-Government Services and a new toolkit

This session discussed e-government services from the library and the government's point of view.   E-Government was defined as "*the use of technology, particularly the Internet, as a means to deliver government services and to facilitate the interaction of the public with government entities.*" The E-Gov toolkit was presented with tips and guidance to assist librarians in planning, managing, funding and promoting E-Government services.   While the focus was more on public libraries, I did find some information helpful and will bookmark the toolkit for future use.

Multiple Formats and multiple copies in a digital age: acceptance, tolerance, elimination

Roy Ziegler (Florida State University), Robert Kieft (Occidental College), and Doug Way (Grand Valley State University) discussed how we should deal with multiple formats and copies in a digital age. They provided some in-house examples on how they are addressing the issue and offered some helpful, best practices for eliminating multiple formats.

Cooperative collection development: we really mean it this time

This program focused on the innovative ways libraries are conducting successful cooperative collection development programs. What is driving radical collaboration, barriers to collaboration,

what it takes to succeed were discussed. The panelists, Ivy Anderson (California Digital Library), Kathy Tezla (Carleton College) and Mary Jean Jakubowski (Buffalo and Erie County Public Library) gave me much to think about. As a member of the CARLI Collections Working Group, I hope to utilize some of the information provided.

Cataloging and beyond: the year of cataloging research

Sara Shatford Layne (UCLA Library Cataloging and Metadata Center), Lynn Connaway (OCLC), Jane Greenberg (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and Amy Eklund (Georgia Perimeter College Libraries) shared research ideas for meeting the challenges of a new decade in cataloging. They discussed projects they are currently working on and discussed areas of interest where additional research is needed.

Open to change: open source and next generation ILS and ERMS

Galadriel Chilton (University of Wisconsin - La Crosse) showcased how she developed, along with her support staff, ERMes, an open source ERM. It is a Microsoft Access based ERM and is exactly what I have been searching for to help manage Dominican's electronic resources. Bill Erickson (Equinox Software) and Robert H. McDonald (Kuali OLE at Indiana University) discussed the latest developments in open source library applications and shed light on how next-generation technology and open source projects.

Boot camp for the 21st century metadata manager

The panel of Glen Wiley (Cornell University), Rebecca L. Lubas (University of New Mexico Libraries), Robert Bothmann (Minnesota State University), Elaine Westbrooks (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), and Bonnie Parks (University of Portland) offered practical advice, based on their own experience, for facing the challenges of organizing information today. They provided helpful tips, such as how to find the right mix for your catalog, how to cope with changes in standards, how to meet user needs and how to create collaborative cataloging workflows. This session provided useful tips on how to prepare and create metadata for a next generation OPAC.