

Mentoring: working in the West

My practice, my passion: Ann Ritchie, WA ALIA group mentoring program convenor

Key people in ALIA who have made significant contributions in different areas of the profession, were invited to speak about their practices and passions in a forum *Mentoring: what's in it for me?*

The evening was fairly informal; the main purpose was to give the mentorees a chance to hear and meet potential mentors.

Ann Ritchie, convenor of the Western Australian Mentoring Committee, spoke briefly on the concept of mentoring. The Mentoring Committee has facilitated an individual mentoring program in Western Australia for more than six years. The two group programs (one year programs for newly graduated librarians and library technicians) have been extremely successful in offering graduates a means of facilitating their transition into the profession and into the ALIA networks.

Due to the success of the peer mentoring and 'learning leader' model exemplified in the group programs, the Committee decided to extend this into a small group style of mentoring for any ALIA members who may be in transitional stages of their careers.

The mentorees turned up to the Subiaco City Council offices to hear the mentors speak on what they felt shaped their personal development and careers. Approximately 40 people attended. The mentors spoke passionately and with humour, describing various forces that had influenced their choices. They shared their personal motivations, hopes for themselves and the profession. One common thread was the quest for learning and self-improvement. Mentoring is seen as a natural progression of this process.



Vicki Williamson, Curtin University librarian, at a round-table discussion with Joanne Baines, Jeanette Kane, Pauline Hodson, Elfrida Rossi and Helen Perlman

The mentors who participated in this forum were Vicki Williamson, Librarian Curtin University and John Curtin Parliamentary Memorial Library, Cheryl Hamill, Fremantle Hospital Librarian, Judy Ballantyne, Parliamentary Librarian, Paul Genoni and Kerry Smith, Curtin University Department of Information Studies, Carol Newton-Smith, Business Librarian University of W.A., Evette House, Senior Library Technician Carine TAFE, Bernadette Waugh, Librarian CSIRO, Jan Kaye, Librarian Christchurch Grammar School, Jane Klobas, Graduate School of Management, University of W.A., Harris Allan, Presbyterian Ladies' College Librarian and Kay Poustie, Manager Libraries, Arts and Culture, the City of Stirling.

Mentorees then spent 15 minutes in round-table discussions with three mentors of their choice. They were encouraged to select an individual mentor or to participate in a small group whose members had similar objectives or learning needs. This provided an

unprecedented opportunity in Western Australia for mentorees to chat informally with members of the profession who have made significant contributions and who support mentoring.

Mentors are responsible for arranging the first meeting, and for providing leadership in the mentoring role. Together with the mentorees, the mentors will help establish goals for the partnerships and organise regular meeting times and activities for the following 12 months. Each participant in the program has a 'liaison person' from the Committee for ongoing support.

The ALIA Mentoring group is a dynamic and active body. A facilitated program of information, training and social activities is run through the year. If you would like to join the program or you are interested in obtaining more information, please contact the convenor, Ann Ritchie, librarian, Hollywood Private Hospital, Monash Ave, Nedlands WA 6009. Phone: 08 9346 6184; fax: 08 9389 8470, or e-mail RitchieA@ramsayhealth.com.au ■

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