



LAMS Letters

A Newsletter of NCLA's
Library Administration & Management (LAMS) Section

Inside this issue:

FROM the CHAIR	1
Featured Article	2
Featured Librarian	3
Book Review, pg 4	4-5
Call for Apps pg 5	

FROM the CHAIR: By Laurence Gavin



God, Country, and Family are three priorities we all share no matter where we choose to assign them on our lists. Prioritizing defines who we are and at what we will be successful in both our personal and professional lives. A tenet of developing career soft skills, the ability to prioritize comes from within ourselves and is a direct reflection of what we value. I would no more want to be late for a meeting at work than I would for a dinner date with my wife. The reason being is that it shows a lack of respect to those we have agreed to meet at a specific time. It sounds simple, but it isn't always. Below, Brandy Hamilton and Jason R. Rogers, leaders in Wake County Public Libraries, offer insight on how staying focused on our priorities helps to build partnerships in our communities and trust in those we lead.



Leading with Integrity by Brandy Hamilton

There is a plaque in my office that reads “Be Wise - Be Kind - Be True.” While simplistic, it serves as a daily reminder of how to treat the staff members that I have the honor of managing. And yes, I consider it both an honor and great responsibility to be a manager. While I still have much to learn, I feel that I have developed a strong foundation and I call it the three H's: honesty, humility, and humor. Regardless of what type of institution you work in, there are common leadership obstacles that managers face and I hope to address some of those here.

Honesty

It's not just a catchy Billy Joel song but also something to practice daily. Sounds easy but managers can tiptoe around uncomfortable issues. We make assumptions about potential outcomes that tend not to be true. We sometimes think if we use an honest and direct approach, bad things will happen. This not only exacerbates issues but also keeps people and projects from moving forward. You can still be kind and honest. If someone is not performing well or an idea is not viable, give him or her **reasons** behind your decisions and state them with compassion. Providing reasoning is the most important aspect of being honest.

Humility

Treat each employee with the utmost level of respect regardless of his or her role. We all have different roles to play and they are each important – from the volunteers and pages to library administration. Do not fall into the trap of self-importance. People respect humble managers. Do not be afraid to admit your mistakes. It does not make you a doormat. We all learn from mistakes, in fact I like to call them “learning opportunities” (taken from a great mentor of mine). Practice active listening. I mean *really*, listen to what a staff person is saying, and try to look for the underlying issue. What lies on the surface may not be the actual problem. Do not feel the need to respond immediately, interject, or solve the problem on the spot. This is important. One of the biggest lessons I have learned is that you **can** in fact get back with people. What is their emergency may not be your emergency. Politely collect the facts and tell the person you need time to think it over. This can be difficult for an impulsive personality but if you do not practice this, you may find you will have more learning opportunities than you desire.

Humor

It seems self-explanatory but let's face it, managers can get really serious. Yes, we have serious work to do but there are times to laugh with your staff members to lighten the load. Get to know a little about your people - this helps gauge how to use humor effectively.

Finally, I leave you with some procedural concepts from one of my favorite management resources - Roger Schwarz's *The Skilled Facilitator*. I have used Schwarz's tools when dealing with others on a daily basis for years and they have made a great impact on the outcomes in my library. I encourage you to check out this book, and use the concepts. Overall, your staff will be happier, and the environment positive and productive.

Brandy is currently a Regional Library Manager for Wake County Public Libraries. She holds over 12 years of library and management experience. In addition to her management role, she also assists the Senior Manager over Personnel with hiring and staff training.





Jason Rogers is the manager of the Holly Springs Public Library of Wake County Public Libraries. He has been a Public Librarian for 8 years. Jason has been actively involved in NCLA for the past 6 years serving as Chair of the Adult Services Section of PLS and the current vice-chair of the Public Library Section. He has been a North Carolina Master Trainer since 2007, a certified Media Coordinator, and a graduate of the 2012 Leadership Institute.

Jason says: Being promoted from a Reference Librarian, working on the front lines, answering reference questions, teaching computer classes, helping with computer issues, doing research, and checking out books, was quite an eye opening shift. I loved working with the public directly and really getting to know my patrons. Each day was challenging and rewarding; there was a sense of giving back to my community by helping the patrons find the information they needed or wanted. Yet there was a desire to take the next step in my career.

Once promoted to a branch manager within Wake County I realized that there was a completely different set of skills that I needed from those I utilized as a Reference Librarian. There were procedures to implement, staff to manage, schedules to write, and important people to meet within the county as well as across the state. All of these are big issues that were taught in library school but I had forgotten most of that information. I remember taking an entire class on Library Administration and Management at University of North Carolina Greensboro. During the following months on more than one occasion I went back to the text book to see if they had any pearls of wisdom. One of the skills that I could not seem to find in any Librarian training was public speaking and community outreach as a manager. In 2012 I was admitted into the NCLA Leadership Institute. This program helped me to grow as a person and to become more effective as a manager in the library system. Working with administration and going back to my Reference Librarian roots to do the research I was able to create training specifically on Community Outreach Programs and Public Speaking.

For many, public speaking is about as desirable as paying taxes or a root canal without anesthesia. I developed and presented training to other managers in the Wake County Public Library System to hopefully assuage some of those fears. We discussed the importance of going into the community, creating partnerships, introducing ourselves to non-profits, other governmental agencies, and businesses around each of our libraries. Then we pointed out partnerships we had already created and the benefits of those relationships. The main point that I learned from the project was to be myself and talk about the thing I'm most passionate and knowledgeable about: My Library. I know all about the hours, the people, the types of programs, the books that are being ordered, and some of the upcoming changes that the community will be excited about.

Suddenly talking to groups of people or other leaders in the community did not seem such a daunting task. I was still helping people find information about the library and the services we offered; only I was giving that information at the Rotary Club meeting or in the grocery line when I bumped into the director of Meals on Wheels. This led to other engagements with community groups and conversations in doctors' offices while waiting to get my teeth cleaned. My trepidation lessened when I fully realized that I already promoted the library through public speaking in everyday life. Now I was just doing it officially as the manager of a library branch. As the manager it is my job and responsibility to look at the big picture, see the positive effects it has on the community's everyday life, and then communicate that information with staff and the public. It's not always easy and sometimes you make mistakes. That is part of growing and improving as a person, a librarian, a manager. So get out there, meet someone new, and tell them all about your library.

DON'T MISS!!

NMRT/LAMS Marketing Yourself: Career Advancement at Any Stage

Friday, July 18th

**Cabarrus County Public Library
27 Union Street North
Concord, NC 28025**

Registration is \$20

For more information, please visit:

<http://researchguides.cpcc.edu/marketingyourself>

Book Review:

“Leadership is more important than systems or strategies or philosophy.” So says Rudolph W. Giuliani in his book, *Leadership*. This is one I like to read over and over again. He explains that communication with his staff at a daily morning meeting was his first priority and how it kept him from being overwhelmed by the job.

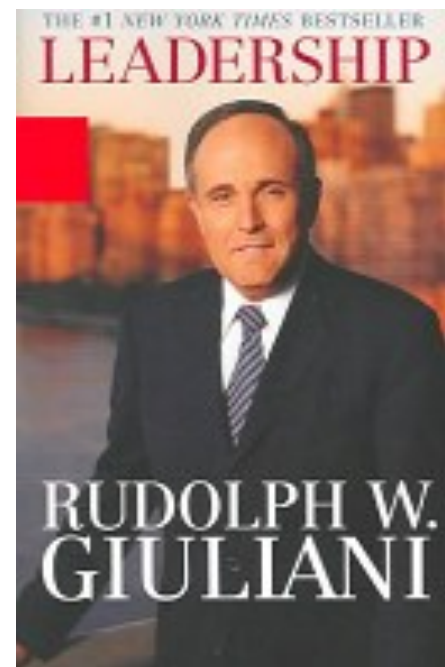
Rudy's account of his experiences, decisions and actions during his tenure as mayor of NYC is remarkable effort to portray the order of the day in life of city from all perspectives: social, political, cultural, economic and administration.

He renders informative insights into his philosophy(ies) followed, challenges faced and results expected vis-a-vis realized.

Rudy lends view on his reactions and thought process while presiding over the recovery from tragic 9/11 attacks on NYC, eliciting details of plans created on the feed and acted upon to ensure maximize relief operations as well as effectively control further damage.

Rudy's account is another way to look at complicated nature of job as Mayor of city like NYC. One only wonders, how much more this complication is amplifies at level of the President.

Indeed worth a read.



Giuliani, Rudolph W., and Ken Kurson. *Leadership*. New York: Hyperion, 2002. Print

Applications are due by 5 PM on Monday, July 7, 2014



Call for Applications:

The North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) and the State Library of North Carolina are pleased to issue a call for applications for the NCLA Leadership Institute, which will be held October 30 - Nov 2, 2014 at Caraway Conference Center near Asheboro.

The Institute is an intensive four-day residential event and subsequent to the Institute, the cohort of participants will participate in a one-day follow-up session held on April 17th, 2015 and will participate in some way at the 2015 NCLA Biennial Conference, October 19 - 23, 2015.

We look forward to this experience with a new group of future North Carolina library leaders. No more than thirty participants will be selected for the Institute through a competitive application process with consideration for duplication from each institution.

Mission—The mission of the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) Leadership Institute is to create opportunities for learning and skill building in leadership and mentoring. The Institute will cultivate an improved understanding of self and others, while inspiring participants to serve in leadership roles within the profession at local, state and national levels.

Eligibility—To participate in the NCLA Leadership Institute you must be (1) a member of NCLA and (2) currently employed by a North Carolina library. Preference will be given to those who have worked in a library for 15 years or less; however, all interested librarians and library staff are encouraged to apply.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.nclaonline.org/leadership-institute/leadership-institute-call-applications>