



The Link

Rentschler Library Faculty Newsletter. Spring 2011

engage | explore | inform | innovate | seek | discover | inspire | preserve | create | support | communicate | imagine | transform

“Reaching out to “At Risk” Students”—Helping Foster Alum Beat the Odds

As reported during the last senate session, MUH is a leader in advocating for Foster Care Alumni— defined as anyone that spent time in the foster care system before turning 18.

While over 70% of these students express a desire to attend college, less than 20% will actually enroll, and of that group (nationally) less than 2% will obtain a Bachelors Degree. This makes Foster Care Alumni one of our most at-risk student populations in terms of retention.

What can you do?

If a student discloses to you in class, via a journal writing, discussion, or email that they had foster parents or that they aged out/emancipated, please encourage them to touch base with Chris Klefeker. The only way to connect to these students is through their self-identification, so it is important that they are aware support exists. While it is always their choice if they want to self-identify, doing so can help them:

- identify state and national leadership opportunities & grant monies that are NOT automatically awarded to them with the FAFSA submission.
- receive additional support and advocacy, like emergency advising slots that are held for these students during peak busy times.

- connect with donor groups that provide care packages for the holidays or finals
- find community resources needed due to their (sometimes) unstable living situations & transportation needs

For more information, please contact Chris Klefeker at klefekc@muohio.edu, by phone at 785-3035, or go to <http://www.regionals.muohio.edu/fostercare/>.

Please note: Chris is primarily available Mondays & Wednesdays

More Ways to Help

Some students have been expressing concerns about not having enough money to buy food & talking about going to class hungry. In response, the Office of Academic Advising Retention Services now places a basket with healthy breakfast and snack food options for students out in their lobby on Mondays and Thursdays.

Donations of packaged, non-perishable foods (breakfast muffins, granola bars, fruit cups, peanut butter crackers, etc.) are appreciated & can be dropped off in the advising office at any time.



To learn more about the statewide foster outreach organization, Ohio Reach, please visit: <http://ohioreach.wikispaces.com/>

Huckleberry Finn “Rewriting Race” Panel Draws Community Discussion



On February 21st, local Hamilton residents joined the MUH Community in discussing the rewriting of Mark Twain’s classic, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. While most in the audience initially expressed displeasure with the “sanitization” of the novel, many were surprised to find their viewpoints swaying as the discussion progressed. As the conversation revolved between cultural connotations of the “n-word”, historical context & irony, authorial intent, & censorship concerns, the issue of “choice” seemed to have the greatest impact on the audience.

Rentschler Library would again like to thank the panel for their participation: Dr. Oleta Prinsloo, Dr. Katherine Kickel, Mrs. Karen Brentley, & moderator Kathleen Pickens-French. To read the newspaper article or to watch a video of the discussion online, please go to www.ham.muohio.edu/library/huck



Summer Reading!

Rentschler Library has books on gardening, hiking the Ohio trails, & a wide variety of popular fiction to fit your summer needs!

Spring Sprang and Sprung!

From the start of Spring semester until April 1st...

- 35,563 patrons used the library.
- There were 12,562 circulation transactions
- Textbooks on Reserves (TOR) were checked out over 325 times
- Librarians led 58 instruction classes, reaching over 1000 students
- The library's website had 9225 visits from 3498 Unique Visitors
- The blog was visited 24,367 times!
- 56 students received research help via IM

Compare some of those numbers to Spring 2010 when we "thought" we were busy! Last Spring, there were 39 instruction classes—making this year's number an impressive increase of 48.1%.

This March alone, the library had 12,622 visitors—almost doubling the number of visits during March 2010 (6413). And it's not that March was slow last year; in fact, last Spring was a 12% increase over the previous year!

Our online presence increased significantly as well. Website visits rose 184%, while the number of unique visitors rose 170%. Visits to our blog rose 57% over last year, as well.

Thank you to everyone for another exciting semester!

4th Annual Favorite Poem Project—Not too LATE to ParticipATE (ah hem)

Join us on Wednesday, April 20th at MUH Downtown from 7-9 pm for the opportunity to share your favorite published poem with a live & captivated audience! This popular event is always a hit with the local community & MUH participants.

If you can't make it, be sure to check out our online discussion board where you can post your favorite poem. While there, be sure to check everyone else's postings—you just may find a new favorite!

For video of past events & to join us online, go to www.ham.muohio.edu/library/2011poetry



Staff News: Presentations Galore

Krista McDonald presented:

- *Libraries Respond to Textbook Cost Inflation and Student Needs* at the Assoc. of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Conference
- *The Value of a Public-Academic Partnership: Creating Seamless Service to the Community* at the Ohio Library Council Southwest (OLC) Chapter Conference
- *Town & Gown: Academic & Public Libraries Collaborating to serve Distance Learners* at the Assoc. for University Regional Campuses of Ohio (AURCO).

Mark Shores:

- Co-facilitated the ACRL Conference round-table *How Academic Librarians Teach Credit Information Literacy Courses*
- Presented *Enhance Your Chances: How to Shine Brightly in a Tough Job Market* at the Kentucky Library Assoc. (KLA/SLA) Spring Conference.

Kathleen Pickens-French participated in the roundtable discussion *Using ECCO in the Undergraduate Classroom* at the British Women Writers Conference (BWWC) with Dr. Katherine Kickel of the MUH English Dept.

Library News

Say HELLO to Flip Cameras! Thanks to grant monies from the Academic Excellence Fund, the library now has five (5) Flip Cameras to help you & your students capture video easily. With 60 minutes of record time, they're the perfect tool for multimedia projects. Please note that Flip cameras check out for 24 hours & cannot be renewed or reserved in advance.