


Spring 2014

The Link, Spring 2014

University of Northern Iowa. Division of School Library Studies.

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THE LINK

UNI's School Library Studies Alumni Newsletter

Welcome to *The Link*!

We are happy to offer our spring issue of *The Link*! Our goal is to give you a bit of current news about the UNI School Library Studies Program. We send one issue per semester. If you have news that we should include in the Fall, 2014 issue, please send it to alisa.weeks@uni.edu.

New Vision for Teacher Librarians and School Libraries in Iowa

The Iowa Department of Education has published a [new vision for school libraries](#).

A statewide task force worked together to craft the vision statement. UNI alums and faculty on the task force included Christine Tomlinson, Apra Loomis Mainardi, and Jean Donham. The site includes videos intended to bring the vision to life. Videos came from schools across the state; UNI alums who produced videos were:

- **Jen Dovre (2013)** Ballard High School. "Teacher librarians maximize access to quality print and digital resources in secondary schools."
- **Carla Clanin** Linn-Mar Community School District: "Teacher librarians maximize access to quality print and digital resources in secondary schools."
- **Lisa Newgard (2011)** Cedar Falls. "Teacher librarians lead and embrace the integration of technology to enhance learning."
- **Joan De Prenger**, Iowa City Community School District: "Teacher librarians connect communities of learners in virtual and physical spaces in elementary schools."
- **Christine Tomlinson (2012)** Noth High School, Sioux City: "Teacher librarians connect communities of learners in virtual and physical spaces in elementary schools."
- **Apra Loomis Mainardi (2010)** Marion Community Schools: "Teacher librarians nurture curiosity to develop in students a passion for learning for life in secondary schools."

Meet Alisa Weeks

I started working as the secretary for the School Library Studies program in October. I previously worked in the provost's office at UNI and as a teacher in Washington State where I taught high school social studies and drama and middle school language arts. One of my favorite things about being a teacher was recommending books to kids and implement the reading workshop model. I love YA literature, especially historical fiction.



Currently, I am helping SLS by monitoring the admissions process, preparing for the program's upcoming office "downsize," and updating the website. Along the way, I have enjoyed learning about the teacher librarian profession. Teaching is always challenging work, but I'm especially impressed by the scope and complexity of a teacher librarian's job. They face so many pressures and puzzles in this world of constantly changing standards and technologies.

Going and Coming

Dr. Jean Donham, Professor, School Library Studies, will retire at the end of the 2013-14 academic year. Dr. Donham has been at UNI since 2008. Previously she worked as College Librarian at Cornell College for 8 years. From 1993 to 2000, Dr. Donham was on the faculty of the School of Library and Information Science, where she was tenured and promoted to Associate Professor in 1999. For 19 years, Dr. Donham worked in the Iowa City Community School District as an elementary school librarian and then as district coordinator of library and technology programs. Dr. Donham has published widely and presented regionally, nationally, and internationally. She will retire in Iowa City.



Dr. Joan Taylor will join the faculty of School Library Studies as Associate Professor coming from the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Iowa (2007-2014). She holds an MLIS and PhD in LIS as well as a M.Ed. in Secondary Education. While in GSLIS at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, she co-founded an initial licensure program for teacher librarians and served as Program Coordinator. Prior to becoming a librarian, she taught middle and high school Language Arts.

In Memoriam

Elizabeth Ann Martin, 82, of Cedar Falls, died March 9 at Western Home Communities Elizabeth E. Martin Health Center. Miss Martin taught Library Science

at UNI, retiring as head of the Library Science Department. Memorials may be directed to the Alzheimer's Association. Condolences may be expressed online at [Richardson Funeral Service](#).

Meet Jen Keltner, SLS Student

I currently teach eighth grade language arts at Tipton Middle School and previously taught at Adel Desoto Minburn Middle School. I recently accepted a position starting in Fall, 2014 as the teacher librarian at Muscatine High School, and I am very excited to join the library profession! Through my work as a classroom teacher, I have developed an excellent working relationship with the teacher librarian in both districts and am anxious to collaborate with classroom teachers at MHS to improve student learning.



This semester, my coursework at UNI includes completing my practicum at the Mid-Prairie School District as well as beginning work on my master's research paper. I have chosen to study the collaborative relationship between teacher librarians and public librarians. It has been fascinating to research the current best practices in Iowa as well as explore possibilities to improve support for young adult readers. Throughout the program, I have really enjoyed getting to know other teachers and teacher librarians -- I have an invaluable support system thanks to the connections I have made through UNI classes, SLK-12, and social media.

Meet Suzi Burris, SLS Alum (2011)

I taught 1st grade and 3rd grade in Des Moines way back in the 1990s and 1st grade in Indianola more recently. I am now the teacher librarian at Emerson Elementary School and Irving Elementary School in Indianola. This is my sixth year as a teacher librarian. I am a lead teacher and on the District Leadership Team (DLT) as well as the Emerson School Improvement Team (SIT). Currently, my 3rd graders just finished a research project and used the Web 2.0 tool called Little Bird Tales to share their new knowledge. The students love hearing their own voices and seeing their projects on the big screen in the library. My 4th and 5th graders are in the midst of a research project and finding out that the research process can be messy. One of my favorite parts of my job as an elementary teacher librarian is finding the book for the student that doesn't love to read that gets the student hooked. I like connecting with colleagues on Twitter and learning with them. I am thankful that UNI's Library Science program was conducive to my professional life as well as my personal life.



