Fall 2015

The Link, Fall 2015

University of Northern Iowa. Division of School Library Studies.
Telling the tale
To spread the word on teacher librarians, the School Library Studies program has developed a flyer on teacher librarians and the roles they play. The flyer focuses on how teacher librarians link technology and literacy and includes research on the impact of school libraries and teacher librarians in Iowa. Dr. Karla Krueger stated, "My goal was to clear up any misconceptions administrators may have about teacher librarians. The flyer gives them a clear description of what teacher librarians do. It also provides them with research to help them make the case for teacher librarian staffing in their schools." The flyer has been shared at conferences for school administrators and school board members and is available for teacher librarians to use as a catalyst for discussion with administrators. "Now that the ESSA has passed and there is finally federal funding for school librarians, it is a great time to advocate for libraries," noted Krueger.

Out and about
Sometimes it can be hard to find teacher librarian Rachel Burrow in the library. She is often in classrooms giving book talks, helping students create videos, and collaborating on research projects such as an eighth grade one-to-one project on the Star Spangled Banner. For her students at Norwalk Middle School, she provides a critical link to literacy and technology. Classroom teachers rely on Burrow for technology integration, inquiry instruction and individual reading support. She is currently helping seventh grade English teachers run a pilot project for more advanced readers, meeting one-on-one with the students to discuss their progress on their personal reading ladders. Students chose a challenging book as their ultimate goal and then selected a series of books to prepare them to reach that goal. A graduate of the School Library Studies MA program and a teacher
librarian for nine years, Burrow says she continues to see the profession grow and change. "We are truly collaborators especially at the secondary level," she said.

**Beyond Google**

Chelsey Kolpin, teacher librarian at Grinnell High School, provides critical library services in a one-to-one setting. When history teacher Dan Covino planned a Civil Rights Symposium, he asked Kolpin to model effective research strategies online. Covino noted, "Most students with little or no research experience don't know where to begin and often resort to Google searches for lack of alternatives." Kolpin selected high-quality websites with strong research and analysis and provided access to e-books and AEA databases. The students could use the Grinnell College library, but before they began, she explained how Boolean searches work and modeled effective database searching.

Within the library, Kolpin, a 2013 graduate of the UNI School Library Studies program, works to promote reading and hands-on creativity. She recently rearranged the fiction section by genres and is creating a Makerspace funded in part by grants from Grinnell College and the local education association. The Makerspace has a variety of tools and supplies, including lego robotics, circuits and art supplies, to promote creativity and STEM learning.

**Ask me!**

The new youth services librarian at UNI Katelyn Browne began working in libraries at age eight. After years of helping in her school and college libraries, she finally realized that becoming a librarian was the best way to use her wide range of interests, including math, history and computer science. She worked as a teacher librarian at a PK-12 school in Washington, D.C., before taking on her current role at UNI. Browne is impressed by the passion and dedication of Iowa teacher librarians and is amazed by those who work in multiple districts. "I think each of those librarians is secretly three people and uses a time machine," she quipped. Browne encourages teacher librarians to find a balance between being flexible and standing
up for critical programs and policies: "You need flexibility with philosophical integrity."

Her goal for the UNI Youth Collection is to provide "awesome stuff for awesome people" including UNI students and Iowa teachers and teacher librarians. She encourages teacher librarians to contact her with questions regarding collection development, intellectual freedom and other issues. "If there is something you want, ask me!" she said. "If there are things the previous UNI youth librarian was doing for you that you miss, please let me know."

If you'd like to find out about Browne's monthly booktalks, email her and ask to be put on her mailing list. Teachers can check out Youth Collection materials in person using a Rod Library visitor card or through their local library’s Interlibrary Loan exchange.

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**Teachers, scholars, moms and more**

Two School Library Studies graduate students have received scholarships for the 2015-2016 school year.

**Tricia Carty** was awarded the Rigmor Madsen Scholarship through the UNI Foundation and the Iowa Library Association scholarship. A secondary language arts teacher, Carty wanted to enter the School Library Studies program after frequently collaborating with her teacher librarian. She noted, "The profession is so dynamic and provides many opportunities for continual growth." She began the program in 2014 and started working as a teacher librarian at Grant Wood Elementary School in Iowa City this fall. She is loving her first year as a teacher librarian and said, "The perspectives, observations, and comments of elementary students never fail to surprise me!" A teacher, coach, graduate student, wife and mom, Carty said, "I am very appreciative of the scholarships as I work to fulfill each of those roles on a daily basis."
Jacqueline Seidl received the Mary Lou Kirk Scholarship through the UNI Foundation. She is currently a speech, writing and language arts teacher at Adel-DeSoto-Minburn High School. Her passion for reading and her joy in helping reluctant readers find books were her main motivations for pursuing a School Library Studies MA degree. Seidl will complete her research proposal this December and is looking forward to the pleasure of a "homework free weekend with my husband and kids." Later, she hopes to obtain a librarian position near her home. The scholarship came at a critical time for her family. "My husband and I just had a baby last April and I was worried about the added expense. [The scholarship] gave me the confidence to continue the program and graduate," she said.

The UNI Foundation scholarships are funded by the Rigmor Madsen endowment and Delta Kappa Gamma Tau. If you would like to contribute to UNI scholarships for teacher librarians, contact the UNI Foundation at (800) 782-9522 or pledge online. Your generosity transforms the lives of teachers and students. Thank you!

Expanding the pool
In 2016, there will be two opportunities for starting the School Library Studies program, with cohorts scheduled to begin in both summer and fall. "This fall, we have seen an increase in teachers interested in becoming teacher librarians," said Dr. Karla Krueger, program coordinator. "We are excited to offer two cohorts next year and hope to provide Iowa with many more qualified teacher librarians." For more information see the School Library Studies webpage. Both cohorts are tentative and subject to enrollment.

School Library Studies

The UNI School Library Studies MA program prepares teachers to become K-12 teacher librarians. The program is primarily delivered online. It also features a few on-campus sessions in which students work with their cohort group and develop a network of colleagues throughout Iowa.