SLIS Update

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By Elizabeth Haynes, Director

Welcome to this issue of *SLIS Connecting*. This publication continues to make its mark in number of article downloads and accessibility to our students, alums, and friends as well as interested scholars.

SLIS welcomes Dr. Matthew Griffis to the faculty. Dr. Griffis comes to us from Canada, where he obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Western Ontario, an ALA-accredited program. You can read more about him in the Faculty Spotlight.

This past summer we piloted two new courses – a mini-session course in graphic novels, manga, and anime, which had several exciting guest speakers, and an advanced reference course, something we have not had in a number of years. We continue to have great interest in our two graduate certificate programs: one in Archives and Special Collections and the other in Youth Services and Literature. This fall we are offering a special problems course in social media and libraries.

In July, I was named as Director of SLIS. Dr. Norton continues in her role as Interim Dean of Libraries for Southern Miss. She served as Director for ten years and moved SLIS forward in innumerable ways – most notably in reaffirming our regular ALA accreditation status and solidifying our online programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels. She has been an incredible support to me as I have started in the position as Director. We all owe her a huge debt of gratitude for her years of hard work as Director of the School.

SLIS will be hosting a focus group at the Mississippi Library Conference in Biloxi. The session is scheduled at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, October 16th, and we hope as many of you as possible will be able to attend. These focus groups are an important link between us and our constituents, and we value the feedback and suggestions that we receive.

There will also be an Alumni Breakfast on Thursday, October 17th at MLA. The time is 8:00 and you will need to reserve a ticket. We hope to see many of your there as well.

Plans are underway for the 2014 Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival. Christopher Paul Curtis will be our Medallion winner and he will be joined by other noted authors and illustrators in the line-up. A call for break-out session presenters has gone out as well as the call for our new poster sessions. Information can be found here: http://www.usm.edu/childrens-book-festival/call-workshop-and-poster-proposals

Dr. Rodney Bennett has started his first full academic year as President of Southern Miss. His enthusiasm and devotion to students and learning has brought a new excitement to campus and we look forward to his leadership this coming year.

Dr. Elizabeth Haynes received her MLS and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. She has been a school library media specialist and district library administrator for the El Paso (Texas) Public Schools. For three years, Dr. Haynes was a library media specialist for the Texas Education Agency. She joined the faculty of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg in 1998.

To support the Southern Miss School of Library and Information Science, donations are invited to the **Library Science Fund #0134;** donations may be in the form of an honorarium or memorial to someone. Tribute information is available at: http://www.usmfoundation.com