From the Chair



Importance of Mentoring

Suzanne Sears

I was asked last year what my agendbe where I am today without his guidance and friendship. would be as ALA GODORT Chair. My Working at a selective depository in Oklahoma also put me answer was centered on my feeling thatto contact with Steve Beleu, regional depository librarian for ALA GODORT members are uniquely Federal Government Information, Oklahoma Department of positioned to play a primary role in fos-Libraries. Steve's passion for training individuals on how to access

tering collaboration, cooperation, and leadership. All of these ernment resources is highly contagious. I was fortunate to be are keys to overcoming the challenges faced in the preservatilento work with him on a pilot project to integrate geographic and access of local, state, federal, and international governimentation system software into the government documents information resources. In my last column I discussed someonvices at TCCL many years ago. His outreach to small public the ways that government information librarians collaboration and tribal libraries even in neighboring states was a great with their communities to increase access to resources. Inintegration to me as I was developing my career. column, I would like to focus on something that I feel is essen- My good fortune continued to over ow when I accepted tial for maintaining strong leadership among our community to position of head government documents for the University government information specialists—mentoring.

Of North Texas (UNT). In my new position I was able to work

I believe if you ask any seasoned documents librarian, thesely with Melody Kelly and Cathy Hartman who had both would tell you how important at least one person was in helptingen in charge of the UNT documents collection before moving them to develop their passion and skills for government interpinto administration. Melody is a strong advocate for preservmation. I was very fortunate to have more than one. My rst dag no-fee permanent public access to government information working for the Tulsa City-County Library (TCCL) System, and still teaches the government document course for the UNT was introduced to Doris West eld, the Government Documentschool of Library and Information Science. She helped me tran-Librarian. As a member of the periodicals support sta, it veition to the academic library setting and continues to advise me my job to check in depository shipments at night while working my advocacy e orts.

the service desk. Doris instantly picked up on my interest for Cathy Hartman, associate dean UNT libraries, is my curgovernment information as I assisted her with the processing not supervisor and continues to push me to set higher goals for incoming shipments. She took me under her wing and taughtself. She is always willing to listen to me and provides me me everything I needed to know to manage a documents collected sound advice on how to continue to grow my career. Like tion, including how to answer di cult reference questions preehn, she helped me by introducing me to in uential individu-Internet. She inspired me to pursue a master's degree in libratory both the depository community and the federal govern-science. When she retired in 1997, she recommended me and the entire to the provides and helped me transition into my ret full-time jorbe, she always sends them my way. She also sets an example as a librarian.

me to follow through her dedication to her own career. Cathy

It was at Doris's retirement party that I was introduced **abso** advises me on how to be a better advocate for the library. John Phillips, professor and head Documents Departmental preservation of government information. Her support is Edmon Low Library, Oklahoma State University, whose in **in**valuable to my continued career. ence on me as a professional is second only to that of my father, wanted to share with you my personal story of mentors. Where Doris taught me how to focus my passion into a **job** illustrate how important mentorship has been in developing managing a small documents collection, John taught me to **fony**-career. It seems impossible to me that I am now counted nel that emotion into forging an entire career. He helped meatoong the more experienced librarians, but it gives me a chance expand my network of colleagues and added to my knowleddoge a mentor. At UNT I have had many opportunities to visit

of government information. He showed me, through his ownith new depository coordinators in the North Texas region actions, how to make a di erence in the lives of students and help them with the basics of managing their collections. I colleagues. He also became a treasured friend. When my factiver multiple opportunities to work with students and support passed away in 2003, John became the person I turned tester training them in reference services and encouraging them

not only career advice, but personal advice as well. I wouldtonptursue a degree in library science. It is extremely satisfying to

watch the careers ourish of librarians that I have had a chance to work with and advise.

ere are formal ways to be connected like the ALA GODORT "Buddy" Program that is conducted at both ALA Mid-Winter and Annual Conferences. e program is administered by the Membership Committee and pairs new and prospective GODORT members with active members for a single conference to provide a personal introduction to GODORT. Another way is to encourage up and coming librarians to get involved with GODORT. Helen Sheehy, chair-elect, will be looking for individuals to nominate to committees for 2014–2016. Suggest that they send an e-mail to Helen to communicate tgFocommunit (a T*for send that e-mail-y)6cou sefo

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GODORT Membership

Membership in ALA is a requisite for joining GODORT

Basic personal membership in ALA begins at \$50 for rst-year members, \$25 for student members, and \$35 for library support sta (for other categories see www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=Membership).

Personal and institutional members are invited to select membership in GODORT for additional fees of \$20 for regular members, \$10 for student members, and \$35 for corporate members.

For information about ALA membership contact ALA Membership Services, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5; e-mail: membership@ala.org.