



## Annual Report 2006 ARLIS/NA Student Affairs Discussion Group (ArLiSNAP)

Submitted by Co-Moderators

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The Student Affairs Discussion Group experienced numerous positive changes in 2006 and 2007. The development of the ArLiSNAP online community greatly facilitated communication. As a result, group participation and group-sponsored activities—in the discussion group as well as within the larger ARLIS/NA community—have substantially increased.

Student Affairs community members are responsible for three panels at the 2007 ARLIS/NA conference:

- *Backpack to Briefcase: Life after Library School*, an AskARLIS Discussion Session on topics of importance to students and new professionals
- *New Voices in the Profession*, which showcases five papers written by students and new professionals, including the Gerd Muehsam award winner.
- *Hot Topics for Librarians in Art Librarianship*, an AskARLIS Discussion Session on new topics in technology. ArLiSNAP blog member Rebecca Cooper coordinated this session with Rebecca Price of the Academic Libraries Division.

The ArLiSNAP online community offers a supportive environment for art library students and new professionals. Discussion group co-moderators Sarah Carter and Megan Macken surveyed Student Discussion group Listserv subscribers during the summer of 2006 and found large support for a blog project. The co-moderators subsequently submitted the ARLIS/NA special funding application with the object of receiving organizational support for a domain name, blog software and web space. After determining the timeline for this support, the co-moderators decided to release the blog in September 2006 to capture momentum of the new school year. The ArLiSNAP blog was and is hosted at <http://www.abcs.wordpress.com> (masked as <http://www.arlisnap.org>) and replaced the Student Affairs Discussion Group Listserv. Press releases were distributed to all ALA-accredited LIS schools in North America, as well as our student colleagues in ARLIS/UK. In December the co-moderators were informed that their Special Funding application was declined by the ARLIS/NA board, but that future technical support would be possible as the organization adapts to the members' need for a web content management system. While ArLiSNAP functions well on the free blog host, a closer affiliation, hosting or linking from the national organization website would provide the Student Discussion Group and ArLiSNAP with greater technical flexibility, greater visibility to the ARLIS/NA community, and increased credibility.

Between July 13th and October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the ArLiSNAP website received 6,224 hits. At that time, an average of eight users also read our blog daily through an RSS feed

without necessarily visiting the site, and eighteen unique members with author privileges had joined the blog. Additionally, many blog readers commented without officially joining. As of March 30, 2007, the blog boasts 30 registered members (authors) and over 17,000 hits since its initiation. The most popular as well as the largest percentage of blog content appear in "opportunities" categories. Opportunities include job postings, internships, meetings, conferences, scholarships, conference travel awards, and calls for papers and survey participation. The blog offers RSS feeds for all or one of these categories, a service neither ARLIS/NA nor VRA offers at this time. For example, job seekers can subscribe to the RSS feed for all jobs posted to the ArLiSNAP website (82 total jobs have been posted); this service allows for efficient job searching at a glance. At the time of this report, approximately 25 people are subscribed to the general ArLiSNAP RSS feed.

The most popular discussion on the blog, gauged by the greatest number of comments on a single post, was *ARLIS/NA and Recruitment to the Profession* (<http://abcs.wordpress.com/2006/11/10/arlisna-and-recruitment-to-the-profession/>). The discussion centered on making the ARLIS/NA Judith A. Hoffberg Student Award for Conference Attendance available to students not currently enrolled in a library school program. The underlying discussion evidenced the need for an incentive for a diverse body of students with few financial resources to become involved in the professional organization early in their preparation for the profession. The American Library Association's Student to Staff program was provided as a possible model for student conference participation at ARLIS/NA annual conferences. Fruitful discussion on this topic prompted resource pooling, both print and online, as well as "analog" or in-person communication between students and their mentors at their home institutions; Margaret Webster, ARLIS/NA past president, even provided insightful comments on the subject.

Other important topics of discussion among the ArLiSNAP online community include advice on networking, career strategies, corporate art and architecture librarianship, conference attendance, resumes, day-to-day activity of art information professionals, publication, professionalism, how to start a student group, and choosing an LIS program. The blog has also served as a news aggregator, for the latest information both within and outside of our organization. For example, an art librarianship student's research survey was recently featured on the website. Links to Atlanta conference registration and panels affiliated with the Student Affairs Discussion Group have also been prominently placed on the home page. Additionally, the website syndicates RSS feeds from art news sources such as ArtNewsBlog, RLG's Hanging Together, and the New York Times' Art and Design articles. ArLiSNAP continues to be an open and safe environment for discussion and trial of the latest Web 2.0 technologies, such as blogging, compilation of internet resources on del.icio.us, folksonomic tagging, and an interactive GIS map of member locations.

Student Affairs Community current and future goals include the following:

1. Utilize the ArLiSNAP online community to increase national conference participation among students and new professionals as attendees, volunteers, and panelists.
2. Increase involvement of ARLIS/NA senior members. Although the ArLiSNAP community exists for the newest generation of ARLIS/NA professionals, a relationship with tenured professionals is essential for mentorship, advice, support and networking.
3. Link the blog directly to the ARLIS/NA website. The Student Affairs Community would ultimately like to be able to host and administer ArLiSNAP from an ARLIS/NA server to provide the highest level of quality and greater visibility.

4. Improve the regular collection of statistics on group participation.
5. Publish resources (in print or online) in collaboration with ARLIS/NA that benefit the Student Affairs community. Projects of interest include:
  - a. the continued collection, dissemination, and annotation of internet links relevant to art information professionals
  - b. the digitization of Betty Jo Irvine's comprehensive bibliography of art librarianship;
  - c. a revision of the 1999 Addendum to *Library Schools in Canada and the United States: Educational Opportunities for Careers in Fine Arts and Visual Resources Librarianship*.
6. Sustain the growth of the group by electing one co-moderator each year for a two-year term. Overlapping terms will allow the two co-moderators to ensure the continued success of the discussion group and maintain the momentum of long-term projects.

In conclusion, with this great success and these ambitious, yet realistic goals for the future, the Student Affairs Community will continue to strengthen the connection between our members and ARLIS/NA. Members eagerly participate in the discussion of ARLIS/NA reorganization by the Assessment Task Force to define and establish the role of students and new professionals in the larger organization.