BACKGROUND: I attended the mentoring workshop at the Spring 2009 ARLIS/NA conference, and my two take ways were the importance of COFFEE and the list of possible topics that Maggie and I could discuss through-out the year. We decided to schedule monthly phone meetings at the beginning and, while we didn’t always keep to the original plan, we did manage to connect once a month.

Maggie was my second year-long mentee. My first was a library student who was trying to determine if art librarianship was for her. The answer, after our year long discussions, was that it was NOT. In retrospect, I don’t take this as a failure on my part. In fact, one could say the experience was a success, b/c my mentee was able to answer the question she had set out to learn.

Today, Maggie Portis and I (Kim Collins) want to share some advice and highlight some benefits about our year-long mentoring experience.

My three pieces of advice are:

1) **Have realistic expectations.** As evidenced in my first mentoring experience, success can be defined in several ways.

2) As the title of this session suggests, this is a **two way street.** We are all busy people, but you will need to make time to engage with the discussion topics. Our best conversations happened when Maggie had a specific work-related topic she wanted to discuss (outside of our plan), but having our prepared topic list (like what is the future for eBOOks) was handy to fall back upon.

3) **Listen first.** I have a tendency to try and solve problems, but in this situation it is much better to listen MORE. Your mentee probably knows the answer to what they want to do, but they need an
impartial ear to bounce off the pros and cons.
Three BENEFITS of my mentoring experience with Maggie were:

1) An opportunity really to think through issues in my field. When you know you need to discuss a topic, you tend to spend more time really thinking about it.

2) I traveled to NYC in September 2009 and Maggie gave me a tour of the NYSID library. It was so great to see everything we had talked about in person. We also shared a glass of wine in Central Park and enjoyed the beautiful fall weather.

3) Now, I have a friend to see at future ARLIS/NA conferences