

# CAS Information Services Newsletter

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## 1. SALIS Conference Follow-Up

At first, we thought the SALIS newsletter would be a small supplement with a few added articles, but we had a wonderful flood of replies from all of our colleagues and the [SALIS issue of the newsletter](#) grew to include 30 pages of content from several different authors. As a result, we thought the supplement should receive the entire spotlight. This issue dealt with all of the recent excitement. Once again thank you to everyone that made the conference and especially our special issue possible.

One new item of note that was not mentioned in that issue is the fact that as of April, Judit Ward and Bill Bejarano are both currently serving on the executive board of SALIS, Judit as Chair and Bill as newly elected Member-at-Large.

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## 2. New Little Free Library



This summer we have a new branch to the Center of Alcohol Studies Library, constructed this July through the combined effort of Judit, Bill, and Danny, although it is much smaller than you might imagine. CAS's new Little Free Library is a "take a book, return a book" location near the front office. Little Free Library (<http://littlefreelibrary.org/>) is an organization devoted to the most basic idea of any library: sharing knowledge. Many builds look more like birdhouses, but here we wanted to incorporate some history. We designed our new library to look like Greenberg's M4-Alcometer, a Center invention that acted as precursor to the modern Breathalyzer. Unfortunately, our replica is not operational as we focused on being resourceful and artistic, instead of functional. The skeleton of our Alcometer is a cardboard box wrapped in shiny duct tape, but that is only the beginning of the transformation:

rubber washers from Home Depot and scavenged tires from toy cars became knobs and buttons, clear thumb tacks became light bulbs, half a mini-CD case became the dryer, old notebook labels with red borders and a historic blurb replaced the Alcometer instructions, and a cut-up thank you note box stood in for the center scale. It rests on a table, generously donated by Jim Langenbucher, at the Smithers Hall entrance.

The library has been contemplating the design since November 2011, but it was always put on hold. This summer, our contact at Little Free Library was excited to finally hear that the project was completed. "Congratulations! You get my award for perseverance and creativity," he stated in a recent e-mail correspondence, adding, "we'll be glad to share the story and its implications for people who are affected by the issues you deal with every day." He continued, "We now have Libraries made of bee hives, canoe parts, cranberry crates, phone booth and a suggestion for one constructed out of a microwave, but the alcometer definitely wins the prize!" Now, the little library is listed on their site and many more readers will be able to find it. Most of the little free libraries are owned by public libraries or individual book lovers; creating a specialized one at an academic library is a new variation. Hopefully, we will see that the Center is setting a precedent and raising awareness of this recent trend. In the future, we hope more little libraries will pop up at academic institutions, not only to increase literacy, but also to help people with specific problems like addiction.



Please feel free to stop by and take a book or add a book to help our new branch's collection continuously change and grow.

- Daniel Geary

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### 3. Conference Globetrotting: CAS Information Services Division Presents at Multiple Conferences

#### a) Medical Library Association – Chicago, IL

From May 17<sup>th</sup> through May 20<sup>th</sup>, Judit Ward, Bill Bejarano, and Helen Castro traveled to Chicago to attend the Medical Library Association (MLA) conference, entitled *MLA '14: Building Our Information Future*. While attending last year's MLA conference in Boston, Helen and Judit noticed a rush of activity at the journal's exhibition booth as well as a keen interest in Judit's poster detailing the history of the interdisciplinary services at CAS library. That interest manifested into a newly created panel at this year's conference,

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entitled “Celebrating Our Information Future Using the Treasures of the Past”. Having been the inspiration for this new panel, it seemed only fitting that the CAS Library should be one of its presenters, so when the opportunity arose, we submitted an abstract detailing the efforts that our library has been making to access, preserve, and utilize our unique historical resources. And just to add a little more fuel to the fire, we decided to submit a poster proposal as well.

We were pleased to later receive a notification that both our poster proposal and presentation abstract had been accepted to be included as part of the conference! And just to round out the Center’s presence in Chicago, Helen would represent the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* on the exhibition floor throughout our time there.



We got to work right away on our two related but distinct projects. Our presentation had the title “Looking forward, looking back: Celebrating 75 years of Alcohol Studies”, and its focus was a further explanation and update of what Judit’s poster had introduced the year before—namely, the chronology and outcomes of the preservation and digitization of our Center’s historical collection, and the world of possibilities that it opened up. As we were slotted last on the panel, we decided the best way to wake the audience up would be for Judit and Bill to present alternating slides, so that they were not hearing one static voice throughout the presentation. The panel’s audio was recorded by MLA, and we have saved the .mp3 of our segment on our shared drive for posterity.

Our poster, entitled “Cabinets in the ALCVault: Your Secret is Safe Here”, depicted a visual representation of the various types of documents we are dealing with during our digitization efforts. We decided to show this by designing a Cartesian plane that shows two continua, one (the y-axis) going from fully public material to that which is exclusively in-house, and the other (the x-axis) showing material whose digitization process can be more automated versus that which needs more human processing. To turn our ideas into reality, we were lucky enough to have a graphic designer in tow, our part-time librarian Debbie Fanslow, who helped to lay out the poster’s design. She more than earned her spot as an author on the poster. And its interesting design paid off, as we received so many questions about our poster that our throats were getting dry from giving so many explanations!

It is important to note our continuing push of the Center as a whole above each of our individual efforts. Learning from the big boss, we sprinkled plenty of commercial messages throughout our presentation and poster sessions. And we even saw some tangible results. Upon returning to staff the booth shortly after we had presented, we were pleased to see a member of our audience who listened to our advice and showed up to the booth to talk more about the *Journal*, and even take a complimentary copy. All in all, the Center was well represented from many angles, and we did our best to make our presence known and market ourselves from both a historical and contemporary point of view.

### b) New Jersey Library Association – Atlantic City, NJ

**RUTGERS**  
Center of Alcohol Studies

**Our story: the pot of gold**  
This is how we used our unique resources to strategically position the library as an indispensable service to our community.

To increase viability and support, it is critical to align current and anticipated stakeholder needs with missions, goals, and resources. The Center of Alcohol Studies (CAS) library accomplished this by making critical connections that enabled us to make the most of opportunities when they presented themselves. We initiated several ambitious projects that succeeded in using the library's historical resources to promote the Center both locally and globally, which returned dividends many times over.

**Digging for gold**  
In 2011, a reference request from our Director to assist with a historical lecture on the birth of alcohol studies in the U.S. sparked a chain of events leading to:

- A large scale in-house search for historical materials
- Discovery of a wealth of information on the history of the alcohol studies movement and the central role of CAS
- A heightened awareness of the library's unique and rare collections, and the need to digitize these resources
- Creation of a digital archive (ALCVault) to provide access

**Cashing in**  
Feeling the unity of the Center through the material discovered made us realize the potential to reunify the Center divisions based on practices of the founders.

**Sitting on a Gold Mine: Becoming Indispensable to Your Organization**

**Historical Lecture**

**CAS Archive**

**JSAD Special Issue**

**SALIS Conference**

**CAS Conference Room Exhibit**

**JSAD 75th Anniversary Celebration**

**CAS Oral History Project**

**Summer School Crowdsourcing Project**

**Spreading our wealth**  
Instead of sitting on our gold mine, the library took the initiative one step further and linked our discoveries to upcoming promotional opportunities for the Center both nationally and internationally:

- The 75th Anniversary special issue of the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* (JSAD)
- Hosting the SALIS conference
- Curated exhibit in conference room
- Jellinek Corner in the library
- JSAD 75th Anniversary celebration
- Posters at VALE, SALIS, MLA, NJLA
- Presentations at SALIS and MLA
- Publication in journals and newsletters
- Educational materials for LIS course

**Forthcoming projects:**

- Special issue library newsletter
- Oral history project
- Summer School crowdsourcing project

**Reaping the rewards**

- Increased promotion both locally and globally through print and virtual means
- Positioned the Center as a custodian of unique cultural heritage
- Highlighted the achievements of CAS scholars and educators
- Improved collaboration with Center administration and divisions
- Close involvement with Center activities and decisions
- Increased appreciation for our services
- Expansion of graduate assistant participation in our digitization project
- Professional development assistance to attend and present at conferences
- Significant upgrades to the library's technology infrastructure
- Website system upgrade (Drupal)

JUDIT WARD, PHD, MLIS · WILLIAM BEJARANO, MA · DEBORAH FANSLAW, MLIS | CENTER OF ALCOHOL STUDIES | RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Judit, Bill, and Deborah Fanslow represented the CAS library at the NJLA Conference in Atlantic City. Our poster was entitled “Sitting on a Gold Mine: Becoming Indispensable to your Organization” and dealt with our recent focus on the library’s archival collection. We drummed up lots of interest in the many projects and initiatives that emerged from our findings, so much in fact that we were invited on the spot to present a similar poster at the following month’s VALE Assessment Fair.

### c) VALE Assessment Fair – New Brunswick, NJ

The VALE Assessment Fair took place on July 17th, and was held in the Scholarly Communications Center of Alexander Library. Along with the poster (entitled “The Art of Shameless Self-Promotion for Libraries”, co-authored by Judit Ward, Bill Bejarano, and Deborah Fanslow), Judit and Bill gave a brief ten-minute presentation discussing how our library’s assessment is uniquely qualitative, and cannot be boiled down to simple numbers. For further elaboration on the theory behind assessment, please see Tony Chu’s article (item #4, below).

### d) Hungarian Library Association – Sopron, Hungary

The Hungarian Library Association held its annual conference in Sopron, Hungary in July 17-19, 2014. The Center was represented by an invited paper entitled “Scholarly Selfies: Researcher Profiles on the Internet”, read in the social sciences section by Hungarian co-author, Anikó Dudás (Pázmány Péter University, Budapest). The presentation summarized our efforts to assist researchers to navigate in the maze of researcher profile platforms such as ResearchGate, academia.edu, Google Scholar, and Microsoft Academic Search, and also compared resources used by American scholars to options offered or mandated by the Hungarian government for their researchers. An article elaborating on this topic in more detail, also co-authored by Judit Ward, William Bejarano, and Anikó Dudás, has been accepted to be published in Hungarian in *Könyvtári Figyelő* (Library Journal), the major Hungarian library journal. The Library wishes to extend thanks to Marsha Bates and Helene White for their contribution with ideas and for the permission to use their data on the various researcher profiling sites. Stay tuned for our upcoming LIBRARY HOUR on this topic, where we wish to help CAS researchers to set up or optimize their researcher profiles.

*-Bill Bejarano and Judit Ward*

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## 4. The Role of Library in Assessing Institutional Success

Institutional assessment is a cyclical process that an institution or organization implements in order to measure its operational efficiency and degree of accomplishment based on its set mission statement.

In the transition from print to digital, and from the local network to the Internet, the forms of media that convey information and knowledge are undergoing a great transformation. The level of technological literacy has drastically increased among the common users in searching information as well as in producing digital content. The definition of a collection has gone far beyond geographical and physical limitations. As a result, the function of a library merely operating as a repository of a collection is insufficient. Providing services for the patrons to access the content beyond the physical boundaries of format and location appears to be more important than simply storing the content. Therefore, the understanding of how to assess the success of library operations has begun to change from counting items in a collection to evaluating how the services a library provides helps and satisfies its users.

The library operation involves various parties and stakeholders from whom different aspects and criteria can be adopted for an assessment. Traditionally, the library staff focuses on the efficiency of operation. For example, how sufficiently the library resources are used by the patrons is often adopted as a surrogate for assessing its efficiency. This is the so called “inputs-and-outputs” assessment approach (Dugan, Hernon, and Nitecki, 2009). The inputs include budget, staff members, operational hours, collection acquisition, etc. The outputs are the frequency and extension of use. This approach of assessment is obviously defined in terms of the library administration.

However, even as the aforementioned assessment criteria are quantitative and appear to be scientific, from the library patrons' perspective the criteria may not reflect their actual satisfaction. The satisfaction, although subjective by nature, can still be probed by collecting the patrons' feedback and opinions. There are several ways to assess this dimension. For library websites, database interfaces, floor plans, and signage, systematic usability tests, similar to conducting laboratory experiments, can be applied for assessment. For the other services, patrons' satisfaction can be assessed by implementing individual interviews, small group discussions (focus group), and/or surveys. The data collection and analysis can be conducted using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The existence of the library is socially contextual, meaning that library operations serve specific populations, communities, or parent institutions. This is particularly the case for the research and academic libraries whose purpose is to help the student and researcher populations at their universities. The mission of these libraries is supporting the parent institutions in fulfilling their educational purpose. The success of library operations, therefore, should also be assessed by measuring the support the library staff contributes.

Megan Oakleaf, in an article well received by academic librarians, indicates plausible benchmarks of measuring outcomes (Oakleaf, 2010). For example, libraries can record and assess the impact on student enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and student achievement (GPA and other test scores). The libraries can also document how their own operations help review the instruction researchers' curriculum and pedagogy for assuring and improving teaching quality. In addition, the libraries can measure the support they provide when helping the researchers with funding and grants. Searched across certain online databases at the Center of Alcohol Studies Library, the citation rate of the Health and Human Development Project is tracked. This can be considered as one of the assessment benchmarks which determine the productivity and the research effects of the Center as a whole. The weight of the support provided by the libraries should be measured in order to prove the indispensable role libraries play. In fact, the libraries should take the lead to conduct the outcome research for their parent institutions.

In sum, the major challenges of the institutional research mostly involve whether or not the institutions welcome the culture of assessment and how to establish the systems for collecting reliable and valid data for the use of assessment. The decision to adopt benchmarks depends on how libraries state their own missions and frame their own strategic plans to achieve those missions. The assessment helps libraries calibrate their own operations in order to guarantee success.

*-Tony Chu*

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### 5. Running the Library During a Conference

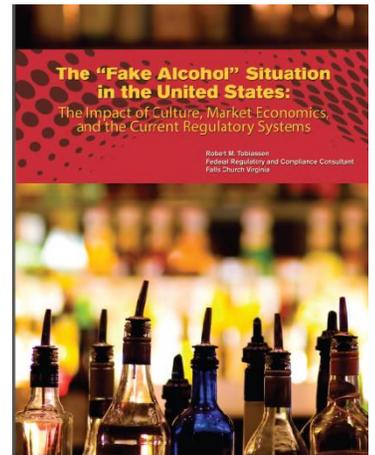
This May, the Center Library hosted the SALIS Conference for substance abuse librarians from around the world. The Center felt privileged to host the conference, but there was one problem. The library could not close for the whole week during the conference, especially not as finals approached and undergraduate staff dwindled. Despite all the planning the library staff had done for the event, there was still no way they could be in two places at once. Luckily, while the librarians tirelessly emceed the event, the graduate staff—Tony Chu, Debbie Fanslow, and Danny Geary—were able to step up and keep the library functioning.

Although there may have been some trouble finding the right key in the morning, “the graduate students did a great job”, said librarian Judit Ward after the conference. And their efforts did not go untested. Patrons continued to come into the library and some even needed help with reference. One traveling scholar had come all the way from Northern Virginia just to peruse our sources. Our staff did not disappoint, and the visitor wrote a thank you e-mail the following week:

“Last Thursday afternoon and Friday morning I used the resources of the CAS library for research on a project on fake alcohol, moonshine, and surrogate and counterfeit alcohol beverages that I am doing under a grant from the Center for Alcohol Policy, Alexandria, Virginia. I reside in Northern Virginia and worked for 34 years for the Treasury Department in the area of alcohol and tobacco tax and regulatory law ... I wanted to mention to you that the graduate students staffing the CAS library were exceptionally helpful. They took the initiative to find me relevant materials and work on getting copies sent from remote locations on articles I was seeking to read. They also helped by directing me to the LSM for additional materials. Their efforts are a great asset to the CAS library.”

The patron, former Chief Counsel for the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau Robert M. Tobiassen, even mentioned the library and graduate assistant, Danny Geary, in the acknowledgements for his paper, [The "Fake Alcohol" Situation in the United States: The Impact of Culture, Market Economics, and the Current Regulatory Systems](#). With all this in mind, the library staff knew the library would be in good hands in May, June, and July when they attended several more conferences [item #2, above]. Everyone’s combined effort makes it possible for the library to represent itself at conference while staying open to the public.

Great job grad students and thanks again for keeping everything functioning while SALIS was running.



-Daniel Geary

### 6. Where are they now?

Over the years, CAS has had the privilege to have many great graduate assistants, four of them returned to present at the SALIS conference in May. In this issue we would like to reflect on that and see where our past graduate students are now. Therefore, we sent out a call last month for information on what our old workers are up to.

**Karen Thomas**, class of 2013, writes that she is now an adjunct reference librarian at Raritan Valley Community College. There, she is responsible for teaching English I and English II literacy courses at the library, designing and coordinating library displays, running library events such as a summer reading program and the edible books festival, responding to reference questions, and managing collection development in foreign literature and popular fiction. She says working at CAS taught her that she was capable of answering reference questions in any field. Now, she does not flinch from answering questions in nursing, psychology, and medicine, because she knows that she can answer them without a background in the field. “Working at CAS was definitely the highlight of my grad school experience,” Karen told us. “Every day was different and interesting.” She even recalls how research was being done at the Center, which she called, “amazing.” And you will be happy to know she enjoyed working with, “the cool resources and people.” But, her fondest memories were the conferences: VALE, Rutgers State of the Libraries, and SALIS. To her, “being able to share with others the information we discovered in researching for the digital archive was really gratifying,” and she concluded, “it is nice to know that our work has helped others have a better understanding of the history of alcohol studies. “



**Update:** Since the time of her response, Karen had accepted a new position at the Delaware Valley College Library in Doylestown, PA.

Another alumnus from the class of 2013 is **Jonathan Torres**, now a reference and instruction librarian at Kean University. Jonathan told us he learned many skills during his time at the CAS Library including archiving, team collaborations, and referencing. In his position, he develops, implements, delivers, and assesses current and future bibliographic instruction needs of his university, while also co-instructing library sessions for undergraduate and MBA-level courses. He also added, “my graduate experience [at CAS] was phenomenal. Dr. Ward provided me with great hands-on experience as well as career guidance throughout my time.” But, he claims he will always remember the great working atmosphere the most, the interesting collaborative projects and our mission to always improve library services.

Finally, there is **Nicole Frisone**, a 2010 graduate, who is currently Records/Information Manager at the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. There, she works for the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), a mini federal agency. While some records managers get records materials at the end of their life cycle, they deal with them from cradle (created for Committee consideration) to grave (records disposition), and for her, that makes for really interesting work. She writes that, “fun areas we deal with include information security, complying with the Freedom of Information Act, and IT development.”

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When asked about her time at CAS, she added, “Judith serves as my role model for working with really specialized information. I also learned a lot from her and Pat about prioritizing work that’s definitely shaped how I interact with people now and work with the many requests we get from everyone from senior staff to interns and the public. So thank you both for that. Also, Judith turned me on to running! I loved it, it’s the job that started it all. I learned a lot professionally and made some really great friends as well. I actually advertised the CAS library to other MLIS students as a great place to work and gain experience and encouraged people to volunteer to work there. I still start sentences with: ‘Well, at the Alcohol Library...’” But her favorite part of CAS was working with Judith and Pat, her two favorite librarians. She is grateful that Judith was

willing to take a chance on someone with no experience working in a library. To Nicole, “Judith basically made all my subsequent employment possible.”

However, these are only a few of the alumni from the CAS Library; we hope that future issues will continue to tell tales of our grad troupe’s future. The updates and new grads are still coming in!

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### 7. New Faces



**Steven Del Corso** is a first year graduate student in the Masters of Library and Information Science program at Rutgers SCI, and is particularly interested in digital libraries and archives. He is also a PhD candidate in History at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, concentrating on Modern Eastern Europe and Comparative Nationalism. He spent the previous year in the Republic of Croatia, collecting materials for his dissertation at the National and University Library in Zagreb and in various archives around that country. Previously, he had graduated with a BA in History from Rutgers in

2007. He has recently started working as a graduate assistant at the CAS Library, where his current project is to catalog and digitize the library’s Alcohol History and Rare Books collection. In his spare time, he enjoys attending concerts, listening to (and occasionally performing) music, and reading books in subjects ranging from the Spanish Civil War to Tolkien’s Middle-earth.

**Jessica Maratea** is a graduate student in the Library and Information Science program at Rutgers. She has a degree in Literature/Creative Writing and a minor in Interdisciplinary Writing from The Richard Stockton College of NJ. Jessica currently works as the Teen/Tween Librarian at the Little Silver Public Library in Monmouth County. Jessica’s career focus will continue to be public librarianship upon graduating from Rutgers this December.



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*This issue of the newsletter was edited by Daniel Geary with contributions from Judith Ward, Bill Bejarano, Tony Chu, Karen Thomas, Jonathan Torres, Nicole Frisone, Steven Del Corso, and Jessica Maratea*