

New Generation Library Support Staff: Are You In or Out?

Staff utilization, role definition and articulation, task overlap, educational requirements, certification, and status are some of the issues within the library profession at today's digital age.

Library Support Staff constitute a vital, growing force within our libraries. They are assigned complex duties that a generation ago characterized the work of librarians. Today, they administer major functional areas of our libraries, are assigned reference and information desk duties, perform a variety of systems work, and catalog most of the books that are added to our collections.

We can expect support staff to function increasingly in both new and reconfigured roles. In addition, support staff assumes increased supervisory responsibility, including the hiring, training and evaluation of staff; complex support roles in computer technology and applications; and an ever greater responsibility for cataloging, acquisition, document delivery, and interlibrary loan. It is likely that eventually support staff will be given primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of our libraries.

With this in mind, PAARL is once again holding another major seminar on July 25 to 27, 2005, to focus on the new generation library staff, with the theme on "The Roadmap of the New Generation Library Support Staff: Join In or Be Out". To be held at Nawawalang Paraiso, Brgy. Camaysa, Tayabas, Quezon.

The seminar aims to familiarize the participants with the use of upcoming technologies and enable them to use, apply and appreciate these as they take more active roles in managing libraries and information centers, orient them with the various venues/opportunities that can be explored for their professional advancement and personal growth; and teach them on how to cope with stress and burnout brought about by their day to day struggle in the workplace and at home.

Topics include "Creating tech savvy library staff", "Empowering yourself with the Internet", "Cataloging made easy via the Internet", "Internet ethics and copyright issues", "Issues and concerns for user satisfaction", "Grants/fellowship to fuel educational advancement", and "Work/Life balance: common pressures and coping strategies".

Participants are expected to learn a lot from this seminar..... because today in libraries, staff are learning new skills, filling new assignments and changing the workplace for the better!