

The MidContinental Messenger

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Welcome Catherine Soehner



Catherine Soehner has been appointed as the Interim Executive Director of the Eccles Health Sciences Library and the Interim Director of the MidContinental Region & Training Office, National Network of Libraries of Medicine. She maintains 20% of her role as the Associate Dean for Research and User Services at the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library, a position she has held for the past seven years. She provides vision and leadership to a wide range of library services delivered onsite and virtually, including research and information services, library instruction and training for users, and support for faculty, graduate students and other advanced users in digital scholarship efforts. Prior to this, she served as the Director of the Science and Engineering Libraries at the University of Michigan, and Head of the Science and Engineering Library at the University of California Santa Cruz. She began her career at the National Library of Medicine in the Associate Program and then continued working for NLM on the development, testing, and troubleshooting of Grateful Med. Her book titled, *Effective Difficult Conversations*, was published in 2017 and other recent presentations and articles have focused on crisis communication, resistance to change, and new library services. She received her Master in Library Science from Indiana University and holds a B.S. in Nursing from Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Selected Recent Publications

Soehner, C., Godfrey, I., and Bigler, S. Crisis Communication in Libraries: Opportunity for new roles in public relations. **The Journal of Academic Librarianship**. 43(3), May 2017, 268–273.

Soehner, C. and Darling, A. *Effective Difficult Conversations: A step by step guide*. Chicago: American Library Association Editions. 2017.

Godfrey, I., Rutledge, L., Mowdood, A., Bigler, S., Reed, J., and Soehner, C. Supporting Student Retention and Success: Including family areas in an academic library. **Portal: Libraries and the Academy**, 17, 375-388. Available from https://pwb01mw.press.jhu.edu/journals/portal_libraries_and_the_academy/portal_pre_print/articles/17.2godfrey.pdf. 02/2017

Welcome Robyn Woods



Robyn Woods received her Bachelor of Sciences in Elementary Education from the University of Nevada Las Vegas in 2009 and her Master of Arts in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida in 2012, while working for the Osceola County School District. She is currently working towards her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from the College of Saint Mary in Omaha, Nebraska with an anticipated graduation date of 2021. In addition, Robyn is a current Nebraska K-8 licensed teacher and holds a Public Library Level V Certification from the Nebraska Library Commission. She is eager to begin her role as the new NNLM MCR Education Coordinator here at Creighton University!

Welcome Samantha Nunn



Samantha Nunn recently joined the NNLM MCR as the project coordinator for the All of Us Community Outreach Network program.

I earned an Associate Degree in Biology from Salt Lake Community College in 2017. I will be studying at the University of Utah in the fall working towards a Bachelors of Science Degree in Biology with an emphasis in cell and molecular biology.

From a young age, I have had a fascination with biology. Ranging from animals in their natural habitat, evolution and the genetic information found in every living thing to the small working cells in the human body.

My favorite subject in biology is immunology, the study of the immune system. I think it is extraordinary how the immune system's defense line works and the measures it takes to protect the human body from pathogens.

I will continue my education to earn a Masters Degree in Medical Laboratory Sciences at the University of Utah. I want to work in a lab as a biomedical researcher someday.

When I'm not working or studying from exams, I enjoy listening to music, reading novels, cross-stitching, learning how to bake and spending time with my friends and family.

Health Information for Public Librarians Symposium

Public librarians from the MidContinental Region joined colleagues from throughout the country in May to discuss a duty that they perform on a regular basis, providing reliable health information to their patrons.

The *Health Information for Public Librarians Symposium* held at the annual meeting of the Medical Library Association in Atlanta furnished librarians with a day and a half of presentations and discussions on health information.

Much of the discussion focused on the NLM *All of Us* Community Engagement Network, an effort that aims to deliver health information to communities, especially those underrepresented in biomedical research. The program is tied in with the *All of Us* Research Program, a 10-year effort to sign up a million or more people to provide their genetic information, health records, and other data in the interest of diversifying medical research.

We asked participants from the MidContinental Region to share their experiences at the symposium. Excerpts from what they wrote appear below:



Trish Hull

West Valley Library
Salt Lake County Library Services
Utah

The public librarian symposium at MLA in Atlanta was a wonderful opportunity for a public librarian, me, to gain a greater understanding of medical information and our opportunity and role in providing accurate health information to our communities. I learned a lot and made some goals in how to better serve my community and those who come to us seeking health information

One of the first learning objectives that I really benefited from was understanding the concept of precision medicine. This theory helped me gain a deeper appreciation for data-driven research and how it can help inform health care. The idea that many factors play into our health or lack of good health is a logical one and yet not always understood. The idea that everyone is not a one-size-fits-all is very important.

I hope my own doctors are taking into account my variations in genes, environment, and lifestyle when diagnosing and prescribing treatment. The knowledge of precision medicine can help me as a librarian, patient and community partner empower myself and those I interact with to make informed choices about our own healthcare. Hopefully, by understanding this, patients will seek more information about diseases, medicines and lifestyle changes. It also helps drive learning objective #2, and that is the *All of Us* Research Program.

All of Us is a national research program that is audacious in its scope – hoping to gain at least one million participants in a huge health information data-gathering effort. It especially targets populations who rarely participate in research studies and on whom we have very little data. It focuses on the entire

person and the intersection of biology, environment and lifestyle. I am excited about the possibilities and hope that *All of Us* will be coming to our community in the near future. I live and work in communities that I believe meet their target demographic and would be very excited to participate and hopefully (a long time down the road) see the results of the research benefit my community.

A third learning objective, and one I am going to explore more, is my relationship with NNLM and my local NNLM members and medical center librarians. We have a lot to offer each other and I want to use their knowledge, training, workshops, and expertise to help my very unhealthy community become healthier.



Brady Lund

Doctoral Student

Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management
Kansas

For me, there were two major takeaways for public library employees from the *Health Information for Public Librarians* symposium. The first takeaway from the symposium was the value of collaboration among librarians in several specialties. We often get put into these silos of the four traditional library types: school, academic, public, special. Not only are these silos often inaccurate, but they are detrimental to the efforts to globalize access to information and best serve the public. Medical librarians and public librarians can benefit from partnerships to provide health information to the public and assist with research efforts. This was the nature of the symposium. Assets benefit the most people when multiple stakeholders are given the opportunity to build off the work of one another.

The second takeaway pertains to the *All of Us* research effort headed by the National Institutes of Health in conjunction with a number of allies, including the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. This program will seek to acquire comprehensive health information from one million individuals with the purpose of improving precision medicine. The program will gather genetic information, health records, and geographic information to better predict and diagnose medical conditions and treatments based on a patient's history and characteristics. It is a national effort, with outcomes that will be available to researchers from across the globe. Public libraries (and really libraries in general) can lend support to this effort through advocacy and the provision of information about the project. Because public libraries welcome a diverse group of patrons, it could provide the ideal pool of participants in the *All of Us* project.



Kim Gile

Community Reference Manager
Kansas City Public Library
Missouri

Ninety percent of Americans have low health literacy. Those with poor health literacy are

1. more likely to skip preventative health measures
2. more likely to have chronic conditions and are less able to manage them
3. are hospitalized more frequently—often in emergency rooms

People with chronic conditions are less likely to have internet and less likely to have a cell phone. This lack of access and low digital literacy rate impedes their ability to find quality information. There is also a language barrier for many. Specialists often speak at a higher level than a patient understands at programs or office visits, if they are fortunate to be literate at all. The number one reason why medication doesn't work properly is because people don't take it properly. Lack of literacy is a contributing factor. ...

Common health issues for public libraries include obesity, mental health, homelessness, opioids, addiction, racism, and sexual health. Many of our patrons in public libraries would benefit from health literacy, especially when it is taught in creative ways and leverages partnerships:

- Cooking classes for people living with diabetes
- Facebook Live interviews with doctors where people can ask embarrassing questions anonymously
- Fitness classes
- Therapy dogs in your building
- Embed nurses or graduate assistants to provide direct service and referrals
- Use [MedLine Plus](#). It is available in multiple languages and is written at a 6th grade level.

How do you reach audiences that aren't internet savvy? Spend time on the phone. Mail information to patrons. Meet people where they are.

[More discussion on Kim Gile's [LinkedIn blog](#).]



Stacy Hisle-Chaudri

Assistant Manager-Parkville Branch
Mid-Continent Public Library
Missouri

Some of my favorite parts of the symposium were the opportunity to meet and network with fellow attendees during the opening keynote and the ideas presented as a part of the *Working Together to Promote Healthy Communities* session. During the speed-networking segment, I was able to meet several librarians from a variety of institutions and hear about many exciting ideas and programs. At the *Working Together* session, there was a lot of information and resource sharing along with some examples of successful health-and-wellness-focused public library programs.

Upon leaving the conference, I felt very motivated to return to my library and move forward with many of the ideas I developed for health programs. Additionally, after hearing about public library systems hiring health librarians, I feel that it is increasingly important to create a plan at my library that includes providing consumer health information to customers as well as providing staff training on consumer health.



Alison Griffith

Assistant Branch Manager
Middendorf-Kredell Branch
St. Charles City-County Library District
Missouri

During my two days in Atlanta, I was able to share ideas, learn, and network with nearly 150 other public librarians. Throughout the symposium, three themes stood out to me:

1. The Public Library's role as Direct Service Provider

The public library has always been a great equalizer, bringing information to those across the digital divide. I met librarians who were going one step further and bringing direct health *services* to their communities. This took shape in the form of public health nurses making “rounds” at the libraries in Pima County, Arizona, and the addition of permanent social workers to staff at many other systems.

2. Expanding Partnerships and Crossing Institutional Boundaries

Public libraries also remain conduits for connecting patrons to key health services. For example, Seattle Public Library embeds themselves directly in outreach efforts for homeless youth. Instant street cred!

The symposium also challenged me to rethink my definition of “partnership” and look beyond the “library + community organization” model. We as librarians can also forge partnerships *among ourselves*. I left the Symposium confident that I could reach out to any of our local medical schools or NNLM reps for expert help.

3. The Public Library's Role in Precision Medicine

My favorite part of the symposium was learning about the groundbreaking work being done in the area of precision medicine. I am excited to see the *All of Us* Research Program take shape. Public libraries are natural players in the effort to break down health disparities and significantly improve the well-being of our underserved populations.

What a treat to be able to sit alongside bioinformatics librarians, M.D.'s, and Ph.D.'s, all committed to removing health disparities and improving the lives of our most vulnerable populations. Thank you to the NNLM MCR for this amazing opportunity. Our future is bright!



Kathi Woodward

Reference Department Manager
The Library Center
Springfield-Greene County Library District
Missouri

The *Health Information for Public Librarians Symposium* was a great opportunity for me to learn more about providing consumer health information and to share ideas with other librarians. I have a personal interest in health and fitness and I was pleased to be able to learn more ways to assist

with staff training at my branch of the Springfield-Greene County Missouri library system. I had recently taken the *Stand Up for Health* class and received my CHIS [Consumer Health Information Specialization], so this conference was a valuable next step for me.

Several of the speakers brought up topics that are pertinent to my branch and system. Kelli Ham from the NNLM Pacific Southwest Region talked about the importance of featuring MedLine Plus on her library's website, the usefulness of the CHNA [Community Health Needs Assessment], and she recommended that we pursue funding through our regional NNLM office.

The panel members at the *Public Library Roles in the Health and Well-Being of Their Communities* session mentioned some useful ideas including the issue of non-English speakers who may be a fluent speaker of another language but not be literate in it.

Dr. Mylynda Massart's talk about the *All of Us* Research Program and precision medicine was very informative and gave me a lot to think about. When I attended *Providing Health Information to Patients: Development and Implementation of a Consumer Health Workshop for Librarians*, I was interested to hear the discussion of using our Community Health Assessment as a tool for evaluating our print reference collection. I'm going to see how well our consumer health reference material covers the areas of greatest need identified in our assessment.

It was also helpful to meet with George Strawley and the librarians from our region and to hear how others planned to implement changes at their locations. Listening to the discussion helped me see that our goal should be improved community health and health literacy, and that one way my reference department can contribute to this is to help our staff receive more training in providing consumer health information and possibly receiving CHIS certification.



Robin Newell
Library Director
Emporia Public Library
Kansas

I attended the Medical Library Association's *Health Information for Public Librarians Symposium* in Atlanta on May 22 -23, 2018. The main purpose for me to attend was to gather information about opportunities to incentivize library staff and work within the \$10,000 health and wellness grant that the library recently received through Healthier Lyon County.

The first speaker was Barbara Epstein, 2017-2018 MLA president; director, Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh, and director, Middle Atlantic Region of the NNLM. She spoke about the vision for the symposium and what the organization hoped the outcome of the symposium would be. The association is attempting to strengthen the relationships between medical librarians and public librarians. The next speaker was Scott Allen, deputy director, operations, from the Public Library Association in Chicago. Mr. Allen spoke about networking with MLA public librarians and how both organizations can work together to build healthy communities.

I attended three breakout sessions. The first was *Public Library Roles in the Health and Wellbeing of their Communities: Partnerships, Strategies, and Impact*. This was a town hall style session where librarians worked in small groups to develop a plan to enhance each community members' health literacy. The second breakout was *Overcoming Barriers and Challenges in Understanding the All of Us Research Program*, which introduced the *All of Us* program and how this new initiative by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine could help to advance precision medicine. ... The third breakout session was a panel presentation with each person having 10-15 minutes to share their message.

Electronic Resources and Libraries (ER&L) 2018

Erich Kessler

Assistant Director of Content and Access

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My experience at the Electronic Resources and Libraries (ER&L) 2018 conference was educational and enlightening. Prior to attending the conference, I had heard reports from various colleagues about how wonderful the ER&L conference experience has become. Electronic resources in libraries are constantly evolving and staying current is essential for providing access and assistance to users. The Electronic Resources & Libraries conference provides new visions for managing e-resources, collection development, assessment, strategies, and building relationships. The various tracks offered represented a diverse range of library focus areas. The conference did not disappoint and proved to be an informative experience. As a first-time attendee, I was astounded at the wealth of knowledge the conference offered.

The conference was well setup. All of the volunteers were exceptionally friendly and always willing to help with suggestions for making the most out of the conference. The conference was held in Austin, Texas on the campus of the University of Texas. This provided a great setting with many opportunities to explore the campus and city. Many thanks for those helping ER&L first timers, like myself, navigate the conference center.

One of the most beneficial sessions held at the conference centered on ways to measure academic library value. One of the trends we are seeing in the profession is the need to demonstrate the value of libraries to increase/stabilize funding. One of the highlights of the conference was putting together all of the different avenues of data that libraries collect today and realizing that we're in better shape today to help illustrate our value to stakeholders.

A key focus area in many sessions centered on user experience in the library. With increased data available for review, libraries can now focus in on patron behavior. Using this information, we are better positioned to adjust our services and resources to better serve our customers. Many libraries are reporting that data is becoming an integral component in their day-to-day operations; influencing acquisitions, collection development, student success, and library space decisions.

The conference provided an opportunity to bring back new ideas to create new workflows and to review with a new lens our current operations to ensure they are running efficiently as we prepare for system updates. ER&L helped widen my view of our upcoming initiatives not only related to our library but to our Information Resources group. ER&L 2018 was a fantastic opportunity and a conference I hope to attend again.

-Eric's attendance was funded by a Professional Development Award from the NNLM MidContinental Region.

Public Library Programming Raises Awareness of Health Information and Community Resources

From May 2017 to April 2018, the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, MidContinental Region (NNLM MCR) funded five very creative public library health information outreach projects. From crock pot cookery classes to learning how to navigate the adult world, these projects addressed relevant health issues in the service community and raised awareness of reliable health information resources from the National Library of Medicine and other authoritative organizations. Each project was provided funding up to \$1,500 and could easily be replicated and tweaked to meet the unique needs of your library community.

Tooele City Library: Adulting 101

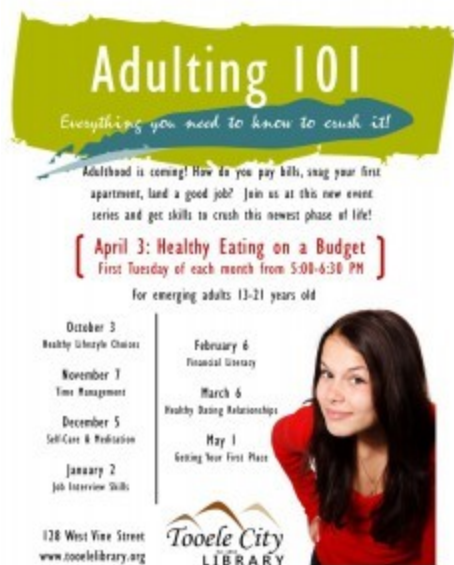


Figure 1 Adulting 101 events flyer. Credit: Tooele City Library

Project: Tackled basic skills training for ages 13-21 providing training and kits on personal hygiene, home hygiene, financial health, resume building, and organizational skills.

Teens and young adults in the community typically came from economically disadvantaged households, and often lacked knowledge of basic skills for physical, emotional, and financial health. The program's goal was to reach participants by offering a series of classes to give participants the skills to enter adulthood and maintain a healthy lifestyle. During the course of the project, eight classes were offered: healthy eating on a budget, healthy lifestyle choices, time management, self-care and meditation, job interviewing, financial literacy, healthy dating relationships, and renting your first place. The library put together kits for many of the classes so participants not only had increased skills, but also the physical tools to be successful. The hygiene kit contained items like toothpaste, deodorant, body wash, and a nail kit. The cleaning kit for the "Getting Your First Place" included a dust cloth and cleaning supplies. The

library partnered with an extension office, a local foundation, a local yoga studio, and community volunteers.

Project Impact: The project helped develop life skills in younger community members who lacked positive adult role models. One young participant eagerly shared what she learned with her friends, and thought more kids her age would benefit from taking the classes.

Project Budget: \$540.00

Library District #1 Doniphan County: Crockpot Freezer Meals for Low-Income Families and Seniors

Project: Helping community members learn about and practice healthy eating habits by providing crock pots, cooking classes, and supplies to low-income families and seniors.

Over half of the children in the library's service area qualify for free or reduced-price lunch programs, and many of the families earn below the national median household income. The community has a growing number of individuals living in poverty and a higher than average senior population. The goal of the project was to educate and provide hands-on practice making healthy, affordable meals for 40 families. Budget items for the program included crockpots, knife sets, cutting boards, freezer bags and a cookbook on how to make affordable meals at home. The library partnered with two local food pantries and the county extension office.

Project Impact: The classes provided a sense of community for the participants. Anecdotally, attendees shared that they loved the classes and learned a lot, but library staff had difficulty getting responses to the follow up survey.

Project Budget: \$1,091.00

Red Feather Lakes Community Library: Health in the Rockies



Figure 2 Learning to make pizza. Credit: Red Feather Lakes Community Library

Project: Cooking and nutritional health classes for economically at-risk community families.

The library is situated in an isolated Colorado mountain town with a population around 400. The community has limited access to affordable, healthy food and health care. Thirty-five to fifty percent of elementary school students qualify for free or reduced lunch, but the school does not have an adequate kitchen to offer the program. A high percentage of community members earn below the median income, with some relying solely on disability benefits. The program's goal was to reach all 35 elementary school students and up to 30 adults through cooking and nutritional health classes held onsite at the library. Seven cooking classes were offered by a local chef, with nearly 100 attendees in total. The food classes highlighted pickling, Spanish food, dressings and dips, healthy desserts, cooking with vegetables, pizza making for kids, and Asian food. Three other programs were offered by regional experts on inflammation, brain health, and genetics.

Project Impact: The project allowed participants to learn about food and its connection to healing chronic disease, living longer, and living better. The classes also created a sense of community for many of the retired participants.

Project Budget: \$1,500

Washington County Library System – St. George Branch Health Fair

Project: Reaching out to older adults and seniors to promote access to health information and services in the community with a health fair.

With 20% of Washington County residents in the senior age category, the library wanted to reach this growing population and those who care for them. A health fair was planned so attendees could learn about local resources and have hands-on health information training. While turnout fell short of expectations, there was great enthusiasm from those who did attend with many voicing they hoped the event would be offered again next year. The library had numerous partners including the public health department, several medical centers and clinics, a pharmacy, and a local non-profit serving those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Project Impact: One impact was providing first-time grant writing experience for library staff. The second was reaching the community's older adults and raising awareness of health information and local health resources.

Project Budget: \$1,500

Cedar City Library: Mental Health Awareness Resource and Family Movie Nights



Figure 3 Mental health awareness events flyer.
Credit: Cedar City Library

Project: Decreasing the stigma of mental health issues by hosting a series of films about mental health, and holding an art show featuring community members' creations around the theme "What does it mean to be resilient?"

A 2015 survey of students from the area school district found that of the 3,000 respondents 66% had experienced moderate to severe depression, 23% experienced bullying, 14% contemplated suicide, and 7% attempted suicide. The library's goal for this program was to help students and their families become more aware of community resources for mental health support, be better able to recognize the signs that someone might be struggling, and provide a positive atmosphere for families to bond and spend time together. The library offered four Family Movie nights, showing films containing inspiring or positive messages about maintaining mental health. They also published articles in the local weekly newspaper on mental

health topics, hosted an art gallery display with local artist submissions illustrating resiliency, and held a mental health resource fair. An area community-based organization addressing youth drug and alcohol use partnered with the library.

Project Impact: Each part of the project was met with a variety of participation and enthusiasm, but ultimately reached a population who either didn't understand or care about mental health issues. The programming increased participants understanding and compassion regarding mental health issues.

Project Budget: \$1,300

Program Planning Resources

[NNLM Past Funded Projects](#) – see what projects the NNLM has funded over the years across the country.

[Programming Librarian](#) – run by the American Library Association (ALA) Public Programs Office, it's a great place to find program ideas, resources, and professional development opportunities. You can search from program ideas based on your budget, your type of library, audience, age group, and more!

[Programs for School-Aged Kids](#) – from the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of ALA. Find book related activities, community service programs, craft programs, drama and performance programs, food programs, gaming programs, guests in the library, science programs, and tech programs.

Funding Resources

[Awards, Grants and Scholarships](#) – compiled by the ALA.

[NNLM Funding Opportunities](#) – see current funding opportunities from the NNLM.

-Dana Abbey, Colorado/Community Engagement Coordinator