OVGTSL 2018 Diversity Scholarship report by Ozlem Gumeci

It was a great experience attending the OVGTSL18 Conference as one of the Diversity Scholars at Notre Dame Campus last May where I met many colleagues and information professionals from different libraries and vendors. Personally, I think this conference was very well-organized and successful. I fully enjoyed the 3 day event with so many interesting sessions on various topics.

The biggest motivation for me to attend 2018 OVGTSL Annual Conference was to learn new trends that impact Technical Services Departments, now and in the near future. Change is inevitable and Technical Services Librarians’ work is becoming more sophisticated. I felt I was a little behind with the new trends and rules affecting my work. This conference provided me with an opportunity to expand my knowledge and enhance my understanding about the field of my specialization. I learned new solutions and best practice strategies that can be implemented in my organization.

Most of the sessions I attended were informative and insightful on their particular subjects. One of them was a panel discussion by Jennifer A. Liss, Thomas Whittaker, and Andrea M. Morrison from Indiana University Libraries. They talked about ethical concerns in cataloging and awareness of the biases that are built into the metadata standards we use. It was an interesting and intriguing session. I was not aware of the implicit bias in a linked data environment. One example would be that personal name authority records based on RDA are now permitting gender information to be recorded as attributes.

One another session I attended was about vendor neutral ebook records from OCLC Collection Manager presented by Sandy Sarber and Aaron Bales from University of Notre Dame Hesburgh Libraries. They shared the reasons for choosing OCLC Collection Manager and gave an overview of their progress. Important insights were given into ebook cataloging and maintenance. I found the presentation well organized and educational. My library may consider getting vendor neutral ebook records from the same platform in the future.

Automating authority work session was presented by Mike Monaco from the University of Akron Libraries. He shared his own experience for local authority work on SirsiDynix Symphony at his institution. He mentioned the problems encountered during the work and offered several workarounds. He also introduced several tools and software including RegEx which is a sequence of characters that define a search pattern that may be used for authority work purposes in libraries. I believe in today’s fast-paced world, it is necessary to discover innovative products and services to stay up-to-date in the field to find solutions to problems.

Get it Now, a document delivery service, was discussed by Stephanie J. Adams from Tennessee Technological University. She analyzed the usage statistics and spending patterns at her institution over the past five years. I found Get it Now as a valuable service for users as it provides immediate access to articles from non-subscribed journals. It was also mentioned during the session that OCLC had introduced the first cloud-based interlibrary loan management system, Tipasa, that automates routine borrowing and lending functions for individual libraries.
The last session I attended was about OmekaS which is a digital publishing platform for a Linked Open Data (LOD). Libby Hertenstein and Lindy Smith from Bowling Green State University shared their experiences working with OmekaS to enhance their digital collection access.

OVGTSL 18 provided a great opportunity to learn best practices and discuss latest trends and challenges in Technical Services area. I appreciate that the conference planning committee invited selected vendors for seven minutes Innovation Lightning Round talks. They informed conference attendees about their products and services. EBSCO, Credo, Casalini Libri, and BWB were just to name a few who spoke at the conference. It was amazing to find out that Better World Book have raised twenty-seven million dollars for literacy and community outreach programs. They partner with over 4,000 public and academic libraries and handle their discards and donations.

At the end of the conference I had a chance to attend Better World Book warehouse tour with other attendees and learned about the journey of a book, from arriving at their dock all the way through to being packaged up and sent out to a new home. I was amazed with the facility.

I believe libraries are committed to creating diverse workplaces so they may better serve their communities. As one of the Diversity Scholars, I would like to take the opportunity to thank The University of Notre Dame Hesburgh Libraries for promoting a spirit of diversity and inclusion through Diversity scholarships. I appreciate the generous support they gave me for attending this conference.

In conclusion, I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to the people who made this OVGTSL18 conference possible and those who shared their experiences during the conference at the beautiful Notre Dame campus. I have benefited very much from this successful event and look forward to attending many more OVGTSL conferences in the future.