



SUNY Brockport Hosts User2User Day

by Eileen O'Hara (Brockport)

Cover Story

This summer saw the completion of SUNYConnect's ExLibris ALEPH 500 migration project. After 5 years of work, all SUNY campuses now share a common library management system – ALEPH.

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On August 11, 2006 [Drake Memorial Library](#), SUNY Brockport hosted the first ever SUNY/ALEPH User2User Day (with SUNYAUG's endorsement). This unique get-together with Aleph end-users from SUNY campuses across the state was the brainchild of Eileen O'Hara at SUNY Brockport with support from Carey Hatch and OLIS. MaryJo Orzech, Acting Director of Drake Library gave her enthusiastic support and dubbed the meeting "User2User Day."

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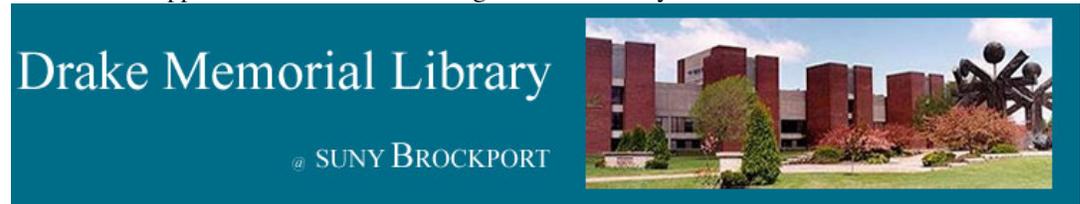
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The Brockport User2User planning group arranged "an informal day of user-2-user sharing with people who do the same thing you do every day at your library." Over 60 librarians and library staff attended from 15 SUNY campuses, comparing notes, questions, and insights. No formal presentations or workshops were developed; just informal sessions for acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, cataloging, systems, and public catalog groups. It was exciting to see large groups and small groups huddled at PCs, writing notes all over flipcharts, sharing papers and ideas around a conference table, and using an instructor's station.



At the end of the day, the attendees declared User2User a real success. Evaluations showed the attendees gained new ideas, solutions to problems, a renewed feeling of camaraderie (as well as a great user2user coffee mug). One attendee wrote, "I'm not alone in the ALEPH wilderness!" Another said, "We are not alone! There are many resources to pull from." A common theme mentioned in the evaluations was "informality." Attendees strongly noted the importance of keeping the event informal – let the conversations wander where they will. "It's funny. Talk drifted from ALEPH to general work [topics]. In some ways that was very good." This is truly a win-win situation, since it makes planning such an event less stressful and time-consuming.

When asked if they would attend another similar event, 33 of 34 said yes. As hoped, the idea appears to have taken root, with a similar session now planned for the Central New York region and discussion of making these annual events. The timing for the User2User was helpful – sandwiched between SUNYLA and the SUNYAUG Conferences.

A great planning group made the project a success. From SUNY Brockport: Jennifer Smathers, Sue Donk, Susanna Heins, Susan Perry, Debby Ames, Jennifer Little, Becky Livingston, Bob Cushman, Robin Glazer, Eileen O'Hara, MaryJo Orzech.



"Continue to have forums of this type!", exclaimed one attendee. "A great day of learning and sharing info! Thank you very much. It has been extremely helpful and I will look forward to future sessions."



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