

Meet Dr. Muya



Dr. Edward Muya is the 2012-2013 Visiting International Scholar at in the MLIS Program at Valdosta State University. Dr. Muya is a Senior Lecturer at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya. He graciously agreed to be interviewed for the newsletter by the SOLIS International Representative, Andrea Coston (Interview on p. 2). His remarks center upon his entry into the profession, the state of libraries in Kenya, and essential advice for future librarians.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Seeking a Fellowship	1&3
Meet Dr. Muya	1
Interview with Dr. Muya	2
Librarians and Social Media	3
BlazeVIEW Changes!!	4
Library Quotes and FB QR Code	4
Order a SOLIS T-Shirt!	5

Seeking a Fellowship

by Bethany Nash

So You Think You Want a Library Fellowship?

It's that time of year where academic libraries recruit a new cohort for their fellowship or residency programs. Maybe you've seen the advertisements and wondered exactly what you'd do in one of these positions or perhaps you want advice on applying. I'll provide you with some general information and resources to get you started, and I shall share my experience as a Research Library Fellow in Emory University's Woodruff Library.

Fellowship vs. Residency Librarian

First, you might wonder about the difference between a fellowship, like Emory's program, and a residency librarian position, like the one recently advertised by the University of Iowa. The Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Residency Interest Group defines a residency as "post-degree work experience designed as an entry level program for recent graduates of an MLS program" while a fellowship is "an experience designed to assist librarians, who already have some professional experience, in developing an area of expertise or managerial skills." In my experience, programs are often a blend of the two approaches.

Emory's program is one that takes a hybrid approach. It is geared toward new graduates, but fellows focus on a primary area of interest with one shorter term project in a secondary area. The Woodruff Library identifies specific areas for which they want to hire with each cohort, so a strong interest in one of the hiring areas and related experience are a plus. Make sure you include in your cover letter and resume/CV any related experience, why you want the position, and anything that differentiates you from other candidates.

If you're considering applying for a fellowship or residency librarian position, you might be curious about what a fellow actually does. I'll describe my fellowship to give you an idea. In less than a year's time, I have:

- Completed a certificate program in grant writing
- Worked in audio visual digitization
- Helped plan the implementation of quality control software for still image digitization
- Assisted the User Experience Librarian with usability testing of three websites
- Completed basic preservation training with the head of Emory's preservation lab
- Provided ongoing support for Emory's Electronic Thesis and Dissertation program, including instruction sessions, maintenance of the submission website, and student help requests
- Participated in a pilot project exploring Linked Open Data
- And served as editor or co-editor of several Libguides.

(cont'd p. 3)



Interview with Dr. Edward Muya

by Andrea Costen

AC: What interested you in the field of librarianship?

EM: As an undergraduate, I was a geography major. I always looked for geography materials in class “G” within the Library of Congress Classification Scheme. Late in the second year of my three-year program, I got so frustrated that I went to the University Librarian to complain about the lack of geography books. The librarian took me through the scheme pointing out the likely areas where I could find the books. They were spread out in six different class groups namely: A, G, H, Q, S and T. I found so much information that I wished I knew earlier. That incident triggered my interest in becoming a librarian.

AC: What is the state of libraries and information science programs in Kenya?

EM: Libraries in Kenya are under funded and as a result, offer limited resources and services. Relevant books are not available. In the public libraries for example, you find that most of the books available are donations from the USA and UK. That situation applies to children’s books as well. Academic and special libraries are better funded, but 99% of the collections are from the west. The libraries can only afford to buy a few books because they are expensive. The libraries marginalize the poor and disabled, but there are a few local initiatives.

AC: Can you explain some differences between libraries in Kenya and the United States?

EM: The differences between libraries in the USA and Kenya are due to the environment in which the profession is practiced. These are mainly social-cultural, economic and political differences. The librarian in Kenya practices “bare-foot librarianship.” This refers to the provision of library services in poor and needy circumstances where the librarian has to provide services with minimal support in finances, equipment, staffing and accommodation. It also refers to the users whose only hope of accessing resources is the library. The majority of the people cannot afford to buy any books at all. In addition, libraries in Kenya are poorly connected to their communities compared to the libraries in the United States.

AC: How are librarians viewed in Kenya?

EM: Librarians are not given the same status as doctors, engineers or lawyers. But they compare well with the teachers. Indeed there are many teachers who seek jobs as librarians.

AC: How do you see the future of libraries?

Future libraries will require librarians to think strategically. First it will be necessary to place the users at the centre of the service and secondly constantly review their dynamic information needs. This will probably be an on-going library activity. The services will then be developed around the identified user needs. This is critical; otherwise users will marginalize libraries. Future libraries will also need to be more innovative to meet the information needs of their users. They will probably be linkages to information materials held in their libraries and elsewhere.

AC: What are the skills necessary to be a successful librarian?

EM: Over the common courses being offered in library schools, a successful librarian needs to be: a self-driven person, a collaborator, passionate on multimedia resources and a stronger advocate for libraries than has been the case. To be a successful librarian you need other skills as well. I consider attitude to be the most important.

AC: Do you have any advice for MLIS students?

EM: [Dr. Muya responded with these three points.] 1) It is important to recognize that you have joined a people based profession. Develop the skills to serve them. 2) Information is power. Use it to make a difference in society. 3) Your ATTITUDE will determine your future.

Seeking a Fellowship

(continued from p. 1)

Sources for Finding a Fellowship

Residency Interest Group's website

<http://acr1.ala.org/residency/>

The website doesn't have every program listed, but it's a good starting point for your search.

Indeed.com's app.

If you don't already have this app on your phone, download it now. I have several keyword searches set up, and it is easy to see the latest job postings that match my search. I stumbled on Emory's program using it.

Final Advice

A fellowship or residency position is a wonderful opportunity for any new academic librarian. However, you need to consider that these positions are for a limited term. My fellowship with Emory is for two years. The short term nature of the job means that you need to be prepared to start your job search again not long after beginning your fellowship or residency, and it also affects your ability to plan for multi-year service on committees. Good luck and happy fellowship hunting, Valdosta MLISers!

Bethany Nash graduated from the MLIS Program at Valdosta State University in fall 2011. She was accepted into the Emory Fellowship program in fall 2012.

SOLIS

Student Organization of Library and Information Science

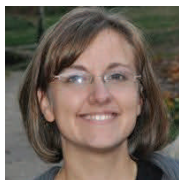
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Librarian Job Hunting and Social Media



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Social media is pervading the Internet. It is a treasure trove of information. Librarians are trained to make this information work for them. Here are but a few sources of information on finding a job in the new library landscape.

Recommended Blogs

<http://hiringlibrarians.com/>

Contains interviews and perspectives from those doing the hiring in various library environments.

<http://librarianwardrobe.com/>

A collection of pictures of Librarians in different types of libraries and what they wear to work.

<http://opencoverletters.com/>

Cover letters with distinguishing characteristics blacked out.

Tumblr

<http://librarianhirefashion.tumblr.com/>

Discussion of clothing choices for interviews.

<http://thelifeguardlibrarian.tumblr.com/>

Posts mostly library news, people ask her advice on job hunting.

LinkedIn Groups that discuss career development & opportunities:

INALJ- The I need a Library job Group – There is significantly more meaty discussion within their LinkedIn group than anywhere else on the web. Includes subjects such as cover letters, resumes, CVs, and more.

Librarianship Job Search and Careers SUBGROUP

A subgroup of American Library Association

VSU MLIS RSS feed:

<http://feeds.rapidfeeds.com/44950/>

A good source for jobs in the library science world.

For articles on job posting websites, writing resume's and CVs, and firsthand advice from MLIS alumni who landed their first jobs after graduation, see also these two issues of the SOLIS newsletter:

FEB-MAR 2012

<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/solis/documents/SOLISVolume3Issue1.pdf>

APR-MAY 2012

<http://ww2.valdosta.edu/mlis/solis/documents/SOLISVolume3Issue2.pdf>

BlazeVIEW Gets a Makover

As an online student at VSU, you are familiar with logging into an account to enter the website for each of your classes. For more than 10 years, the University System of Georgia contracted with WebCT-Blackboard to provide the courseware (the websites and tools in those websites) that hosted our class websites. Most of you have come to know these class sites as BlazeVIEW.

A new learning management system hosted by the company Desire2Learn will replace the WebCT-Blackboard system for all VSU courses starting with the approaching Maymester. This conversion to Desire2Learn (called D2L) means that you will need to acclimate yourself to the new format.

Georgia State University started using Desire2Learn early. If you want a preview of the login procedure, check out the guide created by GSU at <http://technology.gsu.edu/2012/12/18/getting-started-with-desire2learn-as-a-student/>.

You can see what a typical class site looks like by viewing the GSU tutorial at <http://technology.gsu.edu/technology-services/it-services/training-and-learning-resources/desire2learn/taking-courses-in-desire2learn-for-students/>.

D2L Tutorials for VSU Students

If you register early, you will be able to enter your class site one week prior to the first class. Inside the site, you will find links to videos created to introduce students to Desire2Learn. See the schedule on Summer-Fall Registration (to the right) for exact dates on access.

Library Quotes

“A good library will never be too neat, or too dusty, because somebody will always be in it, taking books off the shelves and staying up late reading them.” - Lemony Snicket

“Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.” -Walter Cronkite

“People can lose their lives in libraries. They ought to be warned.” -Saul Bellows

Summer-Fall Registration

Approval from your advisor is necessary before you register for classes. Your advisor sets the system so as to accept your registration.

Early Registration

- ◆ Advising Week starts March 25
- ◆ Early Registration opens April 1st
- ◆ Early Summer registration closes April 19th
- ◆ Early Fall registration closes April 26th

Registration Re-opens

- ◆ Maymester: May 8–May 9
- ◆ Summer II: June 5-June 6
- ◆ Fall Registration: July 8- July 15
- ◆ Fall Registration: Aug. 8– Aug. 12

Semester Dates

- ◆ Maymester: May 9 – May 31
- ◆ Summer II: June 5– July 26
- ◆ Fall begins: Aug. 12

Desire2Learn Access to Training Videos

- ◆ Early Maymester registrants: D2L opens May 1
- ◆ Early Summer II registrants: D2L opens May 29 (possibly earlier)

We're on Facebook



Use our QR for quick access . . .





SOLIS T-Shirt Campaign!

Support the Student Organization of Library and Information Science (SOLIS) by ordering your own T-shirt with the VSU and MLIS insignias!

The 2011-2012 year marks the 10th anniversary of the MLIS program, and the T-shirt shows our founding date of 2001 as an open entry. We hope to spend many more years educating librarians and information specialists! Sporting this T-shirt at public events is a great way to show your support for the program.

SOLIS T-Shirt Order Form

Yes, I want to support SOLIS! Please send me _____ (number) of shirts.

Please indicate the quantity for each size:

Small _____ Medium _____ Large _____ X-Large _____ XX-Large _____ XXX-Large _____

Order of one (1) shirt is \$20 (includes processing and shipping via USPS)

Order of 2 or more shirts is \$15 per shirt (processing and shipping included)

Total enclosed: _____

Check payment only.

Make check payable to MLIS Foundation and write **Account Number 10248** on the memo line.

Allow two to four weeks to receive your t-shirt(s).

Your shipping address:

Name: _____

Address: _____