

Maggie Shawcross  
REFORMA-CO Small Grant Report  
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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Margarita Shawcross and I wanted to thank REFORMA-CO for the very generous grant of \$150 which was used to pay for part of my registration to attend the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Conference held from April 13-16, 2021.

It was my first time attending this conference and it was highly recommended that I take part in this conference as an academic librarian. This suggestion proved to be true as this conference had many sessions that were of interest to me as a new academic librarian and a librarian of color.

The format this year has proven to be useful and engaging. There were a variety of sessions from open resources, to serving diverse students, to library instruction. All the sessions were recorded and available to me after the conference. I continue to go back and watch sessions I missed or watch those I found particularly interesting again.

A few of the sessions I found insightful included but were not limited to:

**Hidden Barriers: The Experiences of Academic Librarians and Archivists Living with Invisible Illness and Disability**

The presenters shared the findings of their national survey where over 250 MLIS-holding library employees work in academic institutions with invisible disabilities. We discussed ways to remove barriers and support colleagues with invisible disabilities.

**Taking the Temperature: Research in the Time of COVID-19**

This presentation included three research projects that focused on how academic libraries have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. I enjoyed learning how other academic libraries transitioned to fully virtual reference.

**Under Pressure: Rethinking How We Teach Plagiarism**

Another very interesting presentation: They spoke about how anti-plagiarism measures are punitive, harmful and widespread and brought up a good point: that many academic institutions take plagiarism more seriously than racism.

**Lightning Talks Group 2: Respecting Indigenous Expertise, Discover How to Better Assist Your Asexual Users, Latinx and Afro-Latinx Identities, Building a Program for First-Generation College Students, Search in Black**

This lightning session had lots of great information. My biggest takeaway was the information shared by the "Respecting Indigenous Expertise". The group talked about their experience in putting together a research guide in an attempt to be more inclusive of indigenous folks. The libguide failed in creating an inclusive resource as there were no indigenous folks as part of the

committee that put together this resource and lacked important works. They suggested that there be an indigenous person as part of the committee and to get a better list of resources of materials that would be of interest to indigenous folks.

### **Latinas in the Library and Information Science World: An Interactive Discussion on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

A panel of Latina librarians from across the United States shared their experiences and challenges as academic librarians.

### **From Slavery to College Loans**

Kynita Stringer-Stanback shared her family story in this presentation. Her great-great-great grandfather had been gifted to the first president of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She discussed how white supremacy is part of the history of many academic institutions.

### **Lightning Talks Group 6: Out of Line: Sexual Harassment in Chat Reference, Reference in COVID-19, Supporting Campus Communities through Improved Virtual Reference Services, Research Topic Formation in the time of COVID, Collaborative Consultations**

The presentation on sexual harassment in chat reference was interesting as I had dealt with harassment from patrons when I worked in a public library. Ways to mitigate online harassment were discussed and I was glad to hear that organizations were looking into how to protect their library workers from this type of harassment.

### **Past Perceptions, Present Usage: A Mixed Methods Study of Latinx Students and Academic Libraries**

Speakers Brittany Paloma Fielder and Niki Fullmer presented their study of Latinx students in Academic Libraries. Our University is hoping to become a Hispanic Serving Institute in the next two years. This presentation provided information on how to better serve Latinx students.

### **Closing Keynote Speaker: Mona Chalabi**

Mona Chalabi is a journalist who shows how important data is and how easily it could be used by others' agendas. She has made it her goal to make important data easy to read and understand through illustrations. The keynote speech was fun and informative as she walked us through her process and experiences in displaying information in ways that are accessible to most people.

There are many more presentations as well as posters that I look forward to watching and learning from. Thanks again REFORMA-CO for your scholarship and helping me be a better librarian with this grant.