
PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Outreach and Promotion to Distance and Online Learners

Lessons from a Pandemic

Elizabeth Young Miller, Information Literacy and Seminary Liaison Librarian, Moravian University and Moravian Theological Seminary

Jude Morrissey, Access Services Librarian, Yale Divinity School

Deanna Roberts, Access Services and Reference Librarian, New Brunswick Theological Seminary

Patsy Yang, Digital Services Librarian, Gateway Seminary

ABSTRACT The Public Services Interest Group (PSIG) sponsored this panel presentation on outreach and promotion to distance and online learners. Panelists shared their pandemic experiences at Yale Divinity Library (Jude Morrissey), the Burke Library at Columbia University (Deanna Roberts), the Gardner Sage Library at New Brunswick Seminary (Deanna Roberts), and Gateway Seminary (Patsy Yang). The moderator, Elizabeth Young Miller, posed eight questions to the panelists who took turns responding to the questions, filtering them through a pastoral care lens. Questions covered a range of topics, including creative approaches to online resources and services, building community, communication and publicity, student workers and reopening policies, and how to plan for the future.

INTRODUCTION

Panelists Jude Morrissey, Deanna Roberts, and Patsy Yang all represent different institutions. They shared some common best practices as well as unique perspectives.

Morrissey: In 2020, Jude Morrissey joined the Yale Divinity Library in New Haven, Connecticut, as the Access Services Librarian. Yale Divinity Library is a unique unit of Yale University Library. While we generally follow Yale University Library's policies and guidelines, there are times when exceptions are made to better serve our specific community of faculty, staff, students, and outside researchers, particularly as we are located inside the school itself and must follow their building access restrictions and regulations. Usually, we have 11 library staff – 6 full-time librarians, 3 full-time paraprofessional staff, and 2 part-time paraprofessional staff. We also have around 20 student staff during regular semesters. The school is comprised of Yale Divinity School, Andover Newton Seminary, and Berkeley Divinity, all on one campus, the Quad. We have 600,000 bound volumes in Yale Divinity Library's collection and access to approximately 2.4 million e-books through Yale University Library. Until March of 2020, Yale Divinity School did not have online classes or remote students, so it was a big shift for us to have all resources and services online. Personally, my favorite new service is e-book course reserves. Having multiple or unlimited "seats" means several students can access the reserve text at the same time. Non-rivalrous resources are the best!

Roberts: The Gardner A. Sage Library maintains its position as the hub of theological research in the New Brunswick, New Jersey area. With a full-time enrollment of 81, the New Brunswick Theological Seminary (NBTS) seeks to extend access to theological education to those historically left out. With one main physical plant in New Jersey and a satellite campus at St. John's University in Queens, New York, Sage Library supports students enrolled in certificate, master's degree, and doctor of ministry programs. The Sage Library has a staff of three full-time librarians and several part-time library assistants. Currently, Sage Library owns approximately 160,000 bound volumes on-site, has materials in two off-site storage facilities, and is expanding access to electronic resources.

As the Access Services and Reference Librarian at Sage Library, Deanna Roberts seeks to maintain equitable access to all users, re-

ardless of their zip code. Prior to beginning this role, Deanna served as the Circulation and Reserves Assistant at the Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York (UTS-NYC), one of 20 libraries within the larger Columbia University Libraries (CUL) system. As someone who was part of the “Great Resignation” of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Deanna draws on her experiences from both institutions. Her favorite new service is scan-and-send electronic document delivery.

Yang: Patsy Yang serves as the Digital Services Librarian at Gateway Seminary in Ontario, California. Our school has about 600 FTEs, but over 1,000 students. We have libraries at five campuses in four different states and all but one are staffed at least part-time. Our four full-time librarians are at the main campus in Ontario, along with two student workers. We had six full-time staff, four of which were librarians, before the pandemic started. However, we lost two to retirement and new jobs; they have not been replaced, so we’ve been short for the whole pandemic. Our system has about 144,000 print and 40,000+ e-books. My favorite new service at our seminary, which we started in Fall 2021, is our online appointment calendar!

How did your library employ creative solutions, balancing access with legality?

Yang: Whenever possible, use online resources and go to the limits for copyright permission. At Gateway Seminary, we used online resources whenever possible, including purchasing textbooks as e-books to provide more access. We advertised our online reference resources on Facebook, Twitter, and our school’s weekly newsletter.

Additionally, at Gateway Seminary, we emailed PDFs of chapters of books and articles in reference resources we only had available in print, making this service available to all students while our states were closed down. Now this service is available to students living more than 10 miles away from one of our campuses. When dealing with this issue, we use the full provision of copyright law that allows you to make copies (PDFs) for professors to use in class. A few times we contacted an author about access to a title when it wasn’t available as an e-book, and most of the time they were willing to give us permission to make copies. Think outside the box.

Roberts: Regarding access during the pandemic, the staff at Columbia University Libraries (CUL) also pushed copyright limits as far as pos-

sible and expanded the collections eligible for the internal document delivery system, Scan and Deliver. Prior to the pandemic, items held on course reserves and within the reference collections were ineligible for scan and deliver. Due to limited or no access to these items, staff at CUL updated policies around access and best practices to enable students and other users to access the materials they required. Before January 2022, Sage Library did not have a formal internal document delivery system, so one of the new services inspired by the pandemic has been the emergence of the scan-and-send service. One key learning from the pandemic, at both the Burke Library and at Sage Library, has been the importance of updating policies and equitably applying these policies to each demographic of user to ensure that every patron has the same level of opportunity. Developing equitable policies for the present and future is vital.

Morrissey: One of the guidelines implemented at Yale Divinity Library was to make choices that would work for the future, when at all possible, rather than just addressing the immediate need. For instance, purchasing e-book replacements for print texts was a necessary move when the amount copied to provide digital equivalence for course reserves would exceed copyright limitations and we could not access the whole text through other arrangements like HathiTrust. We were, however, willing to pay more for the e-book version if it had multiple or unlimited seats, since that would be more useful in the future. In fact, moving to e-book course reserves worked so well, particularly for access, that we made the decision permanent: whenever feasible, we will get multi-seat e-books rather than, or in addition to, print copies. We also installed self-check machines and procured a self-check app through Meescan. Patrons can install Meescan on their smartphones, and this app, along with the self-check machines, serve as contactless checkout methods, which will serve well in the future if the circ desk gets busy or a patron is uncomfortable with personal interactions for some reason. In addition, we began an extensive mail-to-address program; we intend to continue a version of that, since there may be several reasons a patron cannot make it to the library to pick up items.

How did your library employ creative solutions when offering online orientation sessions?

Morrissey: The pandemic has prompted us all to think creatively, not only about access to resources, but also to delivery methods for such things as orientation sessions. One thing that is possible with

on-site orientation sessions that is not with pre-recorded sessions is the ability for students to ask questions—an important aspect that needs replication. At Yale Divinity Library, we provided something close to that experience by expanding our Personal Librarian program to help. Before the pandemic, we usually worked with emails and personal visits; it was not too onerous to move into the Zoom environment and meet with students one-on-one or in small groups. Actually, Zoom sessions had other benefits—like screen sharing and better scheduling options (which, of course, meant no need to make a special trip to the library if you are not planning to be on campus). I now routinely offer to meet with students in person or by Zoom, whichever is more convenient for them.

Yang: Advertising services to students and faculty is essential too. Most of Gateway's campuses moved to a completely asynchronous online orientation during the pandemic, and that is ongoing. Student Affairs asked us for a page of important links and a short video of the library to include in that page. We continue to advertise our services in our school's weekly email and are embedded in online and some in-person courses that require a major research paper. When the pandemic started, all online and in-person courses were given a site in our learning management system (LMS) and that has continued after classes started meeting in person again. Utilizing the LMS makes it very easy to send an email out to everyone in a class in which we are embedded, and every email I send results in a 10–25% response from the students. We need to do more and are having discussions about that now.

Roberts: Having a library presence in the LMS and/or other required courses goes a long way with orienting students to the library's services and resources. Because Burke Library orientation sessions and the first-year library scavenger hunt were a required part of the first-year orientation experience at UTS-NYC prior to the pandemic, these sessions easily migrated to an entirely virtual format. Like many residential programs, UTS-NYC migrated from a fully in-person program to fully virtual. Faculty, students, and staff that once used to see each other in the halls and navigate an entire campus without needing to ever go outside suddenly were forced off campus overnight. Supporting faculty and students as they pivoted to new ways of learning and teaching became the most critical part of instruction—reorientating the community of users in ways to utilize the library without being able to physically set foot inside. Because

all course instruction, chapel worship opportunities, and community building were happening in the Zoom-sphere, it was essential to make sure to tailor library orientation sessions to the specific needs of various user communities, by including only the most relevant tools and skills necessary for academic success.

How did your library employ creative solutions in fostering a sense of community for distance users?

Yang: Customizing information and meeting people where they are pave the way for building community. Take time to share at the beginning of each webinar; this was a major concern I had at Gateway Seminary when the pandemic started. Using Zoom for webinars is a completely different experience than being in person. One question I ask at the beginning of each webinar is ‘how are you doing?’ If people reply “fine,” I say that I am not fine and take a minute to explain why. Then I ask the question again and take a few minutes to let people share their pandemic journey, the ups and downs, friends and family concerns and losses, what is stressing them and how that affects their work, school, and family. We close that part of the webinar with prayer and then move into the subject at hand. I find when I do this, that students are much more attentive and willing to ask questions during the content of the webinar itself. Taking that time together helps them see that I am hurting just as they are, which gives them the freedom to ask questions or say that they don’t understand something. Showing that we are not just the librarian, but a living, breathing, feeling human being gives them space to be honest and safe.

Morrissey: Many ways to connect with people online are available—including social media, email, and (a personal favorite of mine at Yale Divinity Library at the time) discussion boards in the learning management system—but they do not work if you post and go. If someone reacts on a social media post or writes something on a discussion board, you need to respond, even if it is just to “like” their comment, so they know someone is listening. Watch for late-coming questions on social media, too. It may be that someone sees and comments on a post from three weeks ago, for instance, but for that individual, it has just happened now and your response should be as quick as possible. The tone you take with answering online can make a difference, too. At Yale Divinity Library, I had more responses to personal librarian emails when we were off-site; I answered each one less formally than I would have if on-campus interactions were

possible, and I made sure to add something personal when I could. We also had more personal social media posts—such as books from our own collections at home—and posts bringing folks in virtually, when we could be in the building, but they could not. For instance, we showed them the mountain of mail we had received while the library building was inaccessible.

Roberts: As important as it was to maintain connections with our users, staff within the CUL environment created opportunities for staff within the libraries to get to know one another outside the context of being coworkers. Various library committees offered casual, virtual, social opportunities for people to get to know each other as whole persons. In Burke Library specifically, there were weekly full-staff check-ins on Zoom where the conversations had a little to do with library work—and updates to the ever-changing library landscape—and more to do with staff wellbeing. Similarly, outreach events to students at UTS-NYC and Columbia University would often have little or nothing to do with libraries. Due to travel restrictions in the Spring of 2021, CUL offered students an alternative Spring Break where staff hosted virtual escape rooms while others hosted opportunities to play Animal Crossing and Jackbox games.

How did/do you keep students and faculty “in the know” so that they are aware of how to get materials?

Morrissey: With all of these creative ideas and programs, how do you spread the word? First, you want to make sure all the necessary current information is in one central location—a single, bookmarkable page or site—and then disseminate from there. Announcements about updates and changes are extremely important, but they should always link back to that central document. Yale University Library has several units, and there might be different rules for each. For instance, there was a period of time when all Yale faculty, staff, and students were allowed into the various libraries except for Divinity and one or two others, which were locked off only to their respective schools’ faculty, staff, and students. Regardless of the rules and exceptions, they all need to be in one place, and any unit-specific announcements and changes should still link back to the one central document. This practice should apply to physical and digital signage too. QR codes and links are your friend. When there are frequent updates and changes, it will mean you do not need to print new signs every day, which is nice.

Yang: To echo Jude, keep your website and social media presence up to date. At Gateway Seminary, we added a COVID-19 webpage to our website and made changes in other policies, to make it easier for students and faculty to get the resources they needed. Then we advertised those changes on social media and the school's weekly e-letter. Every time a campus's COVID-19 guidelines changed (five campuses in four states), we updated the COVID-19 webpage and put the information out to the students at that campus and on social media, etc. Also, we emailed the students in the classes we were embedded in about how to get the books, chapters, and articles they needed.

Roberts: With the shuttering of doors came an importance to turn the library website into the virtual front door (see Christopher Cox, "Changed, Changed Utterly," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 21, 2022, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/06/05/academic-libraries-will-change-significant-ways-result-pandemic-opinion#.YrHhXeDmUoY.link>). Constant and frequent updating of the library's public online presence became even more important. CUL created a COVID-19 alerts page for the library website that had information regarding constantly changing library access and changes in services, as well as outside links to the Centers for Disease Control and Columbia's Irvine Medical Center. Also, there was an internal staff FAQ that was created so that all staff, in every department, across all parts of the libraries would have centralized access to the most up-to-date information.

One of the major learnings from the pandemic is that any barrier to access equals a lack of engagement with materials. Whether it be a broken link within a LibGuide, frustrations around passwords and database access, a single-user licensed e-book, financial strain around purchasing required course materials, or lack of clarity and transparency around current library access and policies, if there is a difficult path, the user will stop seeking out the material. Especially for adult learners with family and job responsibilities, in addition to academic requirements, who may only have a small window of time to work on class assignments, if it is too difficult and time-consuming to access materials in an electronic format, then they will not engage with that material and their academic success will suffer.

What are best practices for training/onboarding and supporting student workers during a pandemic?

Yang: Student workers can be invaluable to libraries and are often front-line workers, communicating important information.

Therefore, they deserve special care and attention too. Be aware of students' needs, personal and at work. The husband of one of our student workers at Gateway Seminary had to close down his café business during most of the pandemic because it was inside a mall, all of which were closed for at least a year in California. She was the sole provider for their family during this time and needed all the hours we could give her. Partly because of that and partly because our school does not allow part-time workers to work from home, she was at the library three to four days a week, all day. She was scanning and emailing PDFs, packing books to mail to students and preparing books for pickup, at the front door of the building for the first several months, and then at the library circulation desk. Thankfully, we were able to give her a lot of work hours! She had plenty to do since the librarians only came in one or two days a week, working from home the rest of the time. When I think about it now, I realize that we overused our student workers because they had to be in the library to get paid. Next time, we need to treat our student workers differently. Even though student workers will need to be in the library to get paid, we do not have to wear them out and break their spirits by leaving everything for them to do. They were as concerned about staying healthy as we were, yet they had no real choice about working. Be considerate of part-time and hourly staff during these times. Make sure they take their breaks, encourage them to refresh themselves, and be considerate of the people working with and for you who do not have the same workplace flexibility as you do.

Roberts: COVID-19 was and continues to be a moving target that has required constant policy updates and the restructuring of best practices. In all times, but especially during a traumatic global event such as a pandemic, it is important to get to know your student workers in an individualized and personal way. Managing student employees with a one-size-fits-all model and in a generalized way does a disservice to both the on-the-job learning of the student worker and the service workflows within the library. Because the changes to access policies and service best practices were constant at Burke, making sure to update your part-time student workforce in the unique ways that each individual person required became an essential part of being a manager. Some student workers responded better to in-person verbal instruction in a socially distanced environment, while some responded better to written instructions in either email or text-based formats.

Flexibility also became a central feature of working alongside student staff. At Burke prior to COVID-19, the sick policy for student workers was that they were expected to be at work unless they were vomiting or running a fever. During a global health crisis, this policy would not stand. It was necessary to re-evaluate this expectation and make sure that our student employees knew that their health was the most important thing.

Morrissey: Even before the pandemic locked us all out of the building at Yale Divinity Library, I was working on moving student staff training, management, and support into our learning management system. During the following months, it became a hub of communication for the scattered student staff, too. While they could not work on campus, I could assign student staff to help me with creating and evaluating that virtual space, which was essential for the finished product. The LMS “course” served a dual purpose in becoming a conversation space—the discussion boards were used for weekly announcements and check-ins to see how everyone was doing and to share with each other tips for handling stress or making Zoom classes work. While student staff were off-site, they could learn what they would need to know when on-site work became an option again, and they had a handy way to review that information when they were able to come into the library building again. We also used the time to review and revamp the student staff employment procedures—including position advertisements, the application process, and interview questions—to be more inclusive and student-focused. For instance, we began asking less about their job experience, which did not have any real impact on their employment with us, and more about their interests; in this way, we can make personal connections early and gather ideas for, as an example, displays stemming directly from student interests.

How can equity and justice be established with regard to staffing and reopening?

Morrissey: Student workers often need flexibility, as do other library employees. At Yale Divinity Library, I was a member of the task force responsible for creating guidelines for plans for reopening all the Yale University Library units. One important idea guiding us was particularization. Each unit had unique needs and circumstances that required creating general plans and policies that could be broken down and adapted into specific listed implementations and exceptions; the same was true for individual circumstances. You cannot

bring equity or justice by simply handing down one policy and not allowing for reasonable exceptions, nor by handling exceptions as they come up—someone will be left out or treated differently who should not be. Additionally, there are experts who can provide the metrics you need to start considering these exceptions and building equitable policies and procedures so you are not being arbitrary. The CDC guidelines, for instance, were useful for the process of creating policies governing quarantining and reopening. We also worked very closely with our Human Resources colleagues to detail how remote work would be handled for those who had underlying medical conditions or other legitimate reasons to not work on-site. While you will not catch every special case, you can try; and you can particularize how you will handle cases that do not get caught, too.

Yang: Sharing responsibilities is crucial. During a pandemic or other emergency, all library staff need to work together instead of focusing only on their own area of expertise—that means sharing responsibilities for areas that you normally do not deal with. When the librarians (three of us at Gateway Seminary) were in the library during the pandemic, we helped pull books, scan the PDFs, send PDF emails, mail books, and prepare and run downstairs with pickup bags. I could not even think about writing and responding to embedded librarian emails, meeting with students via Zoom or working on the website when on campus. One student worker and one staff member could barely keep up with all the requests coming in for PDFs, books to mail, and books to be picked up. Even after we reopened partially, we helped wipe down tables and computers that students had used. While we could not let the student workers work from home, at least we could share their heavy responsibilities, do prep work for them before they came in and make sure that they got their full lunch breaks. Spending some time checking in with the student workers each day we were on campus helped as well.

Roberts: No matter the size of the institution or the library, departmental silo-ing was the standard practice. This status quo way of operating proved to be hazardous to the ability of Columbia University Library staff to meet the expectations of our users during the pandemic. No matter the department or job description one had prior to COVID-19, when the libraries were finally able to re-open to staff and begin circulation services in July 2020, everyone was part of access services. The increase in the volume of scanning and the demand

for curbside pickup meant that everyone across all library departments needed to pitch in. The big takeaway: stop departmental siloing and create internal cross-departmental training for your staff. Just because a staff member works in an area of the library directly related to access, does not mean that these staff members should be the only ones required on-site. Requiring only those with access services jobs to be on-site and allowing those who have other job titles or descriptions the comfort of working from home is not equitable.

How do you get students back in the library?

Morrissey: Once staff are back on-site, considering how to get students back in the library seems like a logical next step. If students are already around, which ours are at Yale Divinity School, the question becomes: What do your students need to feel welcome in the library building? Every community will have different needs, and you need to figure out what specific needs your community has. I talked to students who were coming into the building to find out what they needed or heard that their classmates needed, and three trends became clear: connection, stress relief, and safety. I then went to work to address those needs. In order to create connection, I began by making connection outside the library—by leaving the library. I took Greek classes and started a Greek reading group. Also, I went where the students were going—chapel services and student lunches, for instance—and sat down with students I did not recognize to talk to them about their interests and let them know the library (and librarians) would love to help them. You can also go without going. Yale Divinity School made up gift bags to welcome back all students, new and returning. Yale Divinity Library contributed wallet clings; students could affix them to their smartphones to hold their IDs (which commonly get lost), and it served as a reminder that Yale Divinity Library was there. To help with stress relief, I began putting out fun, fidget-type things students could take home (like squishy mochis, pull-apart erasers, and stickers), as well as contemplative things (such as a tabletop labyrinth, prayer beads, and coloring bookmarks). In order to encourage a feeling of safety, we made supplies available, even when they were no longer required—hand sanitizing stations are still available, and masks can be found at the circulation desk.

Yang: Communicating and providing a safe space for students encourages students to return to the library building. Again, at Gateway Seminary, we put this out via all of our communication channels, updated

our COVID-19 webpage, and explained new processes. Students appreciated that we were providing a safe place to study—especially those who lived in student housing with young children! Explaining our reasoning for a sign-in and sign-out process, so we could sanitize study tables and computer peripherals when they were vacated, helped a lot. We also started providing ear plugs, as some students were attending a remote-access-only class in the library. Distributing ear plugs helped students who were there to study. Each time we opened up a new area, allowing people to browse the stacks and pull books for themselves, additional carrels in a different location, or personal study rooms, we publicized that information. Publicity worked for everything except our group study rooms, which we opened up mid-semester this spring. Our students were not ready to be in a relatively small room with someone else yet. Hopefully by the fall this will change.

Roberts: Having a cohort of students that were taught how to use the library and check out resources without physically being inside the library requires staff to rethink what “in the library” means. Your library website needs to be as friendly and welcoming as your physical front door.

For libraries that may have less of their “pre-pandemic” populations inside the library and have new folks entering the space, it might be time to lean into these new populations of users and resist the urge to see them as “the other,” or “not part of the community we are meant to serve.” Sage Library not only serves the faculty, staff, and students at NBTS but also serves the Rutgers University population, local clergy, and members of the public. Leaning into these new folks could very well create new pathways for people to enter your institution. Also, it might be time to disturb the “traditional” library image and create new outreach events that go against what a library usually looks like. At Sage Library, we will be starting a weekly Dance Breaks with Deanna stressbuster event in the fall and starting a library TikTok account to try and reach a potential new library user population.

How can you make contingency/what-if plans for the future?

Morrissey: Learning from the pandemic, in order to be proactive rather than reactive in the future is important. Prior experiences helped navigate the pandemic at Yale Divinity School. My entry into librarianship was through Project Recovery at Louisiana State University, which was created to assist with recovery from Hurricanes

Katrina and Rita. My exposure to response and recovery in that crisis helped me think about response and recovery to the pandemic at Yale Divinity Library. While I emphasized particularizing your policies previously, I would now emphasize that you can and should generalize your plans. Many kinds of crises exist, and the same types of responses work for many—long-term off-site response would be generally the same whether you are responding to a pandemic or a flood, for instance. You can more easily particularize to specific crises using a general plan as a backbone. Documenting everything you did is essential; noting both what works—so you know to do that again—but also your failures. If something did not work, you need to remember and consider why, so you do not repeat that measure.

Roberts: With a record number of people leaving former jobs and starting new ones (Deanna included), offboarding and onboarding are perhaps now more important than they were in the past. Creating robust internal practices to make sure that folks do not leave with all the institutional knowledge necessary to be successful in their role is critical. Offboarding and onboarding also serve the dual purpose of preparing the person taking over the tasks of the job during the hiring process that will enable services to continue.

Creating a granularized processing guide is never a bad thing. Processing guides can prepare people for success. The feeling of being dropped into the ocean without a flotation device is never enjoyable.

While services and practices are constantly evolving in libraries and librarianship, a solid foundation with documentation that is current and up to date can go a long way. As we all have learned from the pandemic, reality can shift on a dime, so do not delay in creating the necessary documentation to not only enable current staff to be successful in their roles, but to also ensure that anyone new can step in with confidence.

Yang: Be prepared because staffing changes and disasters will happen again. At Gateway Seminary, we lost two librarians just before the pandemic started. One retired and the other took a job at a different academic library. We assumed that we would hire new people within a few months, and then the pandemic hit, and everyone's budget was frozen. We still have not replaced those positions!

In January 2020, I started getting nervous about COVID-19 and finally asked our library director if we could meet as a team and develop some contingency plans in case we got closed down. Thank-

fully that gave us something to work with when California closed down a few days later.

Do not think that this is not going to happen again in your library! We do not know if it will be a pandemic, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, fire, or someone dying on the job, which happened to one of our faculty members at Gateway Seminary during the pandemic. One thing I learned from this pandemic is that we do not know what is going to happen tomorrow.

Take time to talk with your staff about what worked well and what did not during the pandemic. Rewrite how you would handle things if there was another pandemic or some other catastrophe.

Spend the next few months creating a broad contingency plan for unexpected events. Do not take a year to do it, because it may never get finished. Make it lean, mean, and gritty if you must, but do it. Gateway Seminary was blessed in that we already had an online program, so moving all classes to that interface was not overwhelming. For schools that were totally in-person with residential students, the pandemic was terrifying! Be prepared for the next disaster, even if it does not happen until after you retire or leave your current position. Do not let someone new to the library have to deal with a disaster with no contingency plans!

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 global pandemic has served as a learning experience for many librarians. While each panelist's experiences are unique, some common themes emerged. For example, some electronic resources and services are here to stay, such as e-books and legal scanning. Mailing materials to patrons will remain too. Embedded librarianship, genuine listening, and creating personal connections are important for outreach. Maintaining open channels of communication, as well as regularly updating websites and keeping links current, is vital, especially as policies change. Speaking of policies, it is crucial to have equitable policies both now and for the future. Flexibility and teamwork are key to the success of an organization. Creating safe and welcoming libraries will encourage patrons to return to the physical library. Last, but not least, disaster plans and documentation will help us weather the next storm, whatever that may be.