

**RBMS SCHOLARSHIPS COMMITTEE**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 18, 2019, 12:30PM-2:00PM ET**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**1. Introductions and selection of recorder**

Attendees: Committee co-chairs: Elspeth Healey, Katie Henningsen; committee members, Rebecca Baumann, Kim Bell, Jennifer Borderud, Lisa Conathan, Meghan Constantinou, Jason Dean, Melanie Griffin, Christopher Harter, Juli McLoone, Charlotte Priddle, Kimberly Tully; visitors, Tory Ondrla, Diane Dias De Fazio, Gina Nortonsmith, Sarah Allison

Recorder: Jennifer Borderud

**2. Feedback on RBMS 2019 and update on ideas for deepening engagement between scholarship recipients and RBMS**

Feedback following last year's conference revealed that some scholarship recipients felt welcomed at the beginning of the conference but did not feel as welcomed and involved as the conference went on. Several RBMS committees have discussed ways to make the conference as inclusive and welcoming as possible and have created a shared document for ideas moving forward.

Some of these ideas are already being worked on, such as scholarships for returning conference attendees, a conference session featuring new voices in the profession (Meghan is spearheading this from the Scholarships Committee), waiving or sponsoring new-comer mixer fees, etc.

Are there any additional ideas from the Scholarships Committee?

*Question: Do we encourage scholarship recipients to request a buddy?* This time only five scholarship recipients signed up, so we want to be sure to put that front and center as an option going forward. Also, the Buddy Program is now called the Conference Guide Program. We haven't told them about this program in the recipient notification email before (usually that email goes out before the Conference Guide sign-up opens). Perhaps former scholarship winners could serve as guides since they have had a similar experience.

*Question: Is there a reason we would not want to automatically sign up scholarship recipients for this program?* Since it has been voluntary, there are concerns that someone may not show up if they didn't choose to be involved.

*Question: Are there enough Conference Guides?* Last year they only received volunteers from the Membership and Professional Development committee, so they want to make sure everyone knows they can sign up as volunteers (they would like volunteers from

outside M&PD). Can we target (send personal invitations) to past scholarship recipients, maybe from 5 years out?

Additional ideas can be added to the Google Doc (see committee emails for the editing link). The co-chairs noted that they realize there are a lot of new initiatives already taking place, but they still want to get all ideas down for future years.

### **3. Returning scholarships update**

RBMS Exec has said we can move forward with offering scholarships to non-first-time attendees (for the first time in RBMS history). This year is a pilot. We will want feedback from the committee after this first year. A few things are changing: all first-time designations are being removed from the call for RBMS scholarships. Also, following ACRL and emphasizing inclusion, we will no longer require ACRL membership. The scholarships will also be open to those who are in volunteer positions. Some of these updates are late-breaking so the documents the co-chairs recently sent the committee will need to be updated and resent. Thanks to Melanie Griffin, who helped work on new documentation in late summer and early fall.

Because this is our first time offering non-first-time scholarships, our goal is still to have the majority of scholarships go to first-time attendees. A smaller number will be offered to repeat attendees.

Questions? *Question: How will this affect the number of scholarships given out? What if we get more applications for returning than first time attendees?* We have identified a percentage because money may change from year to year, so we want to make sure we continue to award the most scholarships to first-time attendees. 10-20% would go toward returning applicants. We may be overwhelmed with returning applicants, but we will be clear that the majority of the awards will go to first-time attendees. The plan in terms of reviewing applications is that some committee members would be assigned to review first timers, and some would review returning. The two pools would be evaluated separately. There are financial implications to some of these changes as the new applicants who are employed and who are not ACRL members will require larger registration fees.

### **4. Review of scholarships judging criteria, guidelines, process, and timeline**

Last year we did a trial run of grading scholarships. We are not going to have a trial run again this year for new committee members because participation last year was small. Are there immediate questions about judging criteria and guidelines?

*Question: How do you judge racial/ethnic group?* This is based on how applicants self-identify, and an extra half point is added for those who work at HBCUs, HSIs, Tribal Colleges, etc. The co-chairs review all applications and add the additional half or whole point as necessary. Financial need can be tricky because different people share different levels of information. For returning applicants, we are asking them what their institutional support is, not what their personal financial situation is. The proposed

wording for this question prompt is: “Supply a brief statement of financial need. For those who are employed, this means describing the conference/travel support provided to you by your institution. All applicants will be considered for both full and partial scholarships. (200 words max).” We will also ask returning applicants about their planned involvement in the conference and the section. Additionally, even though ACRL membership is no longer required, ACRL is still giving preference to those who have membership, so we are thinking about adding a quarter point for ACRL members.

*Question: For those who are unemployed, the membership fee is a stretch. How does that figure into institutional support?* The addition of the quarter point is to slightly privilege those who have already invested in ACRL. We will need to look at this as we implement this first year. It was suggested that we may also want to consider adding a quarter point for RBMS members. The co-chairs invited the committee to send any additional questions.

Timeline:

**Early November:** Committee conference call / virtual meeting to review scholarship criteria and discuss the selection process.

**December 2-8:** Application opens and publicity push by the committee.

**December (usually the 2nd or 3rd week):** Review of Rare Book School (RBS) /RBMS Scholarship applications (ranking of approximately 4 finalists as determined by RBS).

**January 10:** Scholarship applications due. Review of RBMS Scholarship applications begins shortly after this date.

**February 10:** Committee members submit their final rankings to committee chairs.

**February 15:** Chairs will compile and send out final rankings to committee members.

**February 18-21:** Committee conference call to finalize selection of scholarship winners. Chairs send final ranking to ACRL after this meeting.

**March 1:** ACRL notifies all applicants.

## 5. Discussion of promotional campaign for publicizing scholarships

Please sign up for a minimum of 20 places to email with the RBMS Scholarships Announcement using the RBMS Contact column.

Be prepared to send your email between December 2 and 8; the co-chairs will provide you with the text shortly before December 2.

Once you have sent your emails, please make sure to update the “sent date” on the spreadsheet. The co-chairs divide everything that doesn't have a date and send out a round of announcements the following week, so this will ensure we aren't sending multiple emails.

Following the meeting, Jason Dean agreed to Tweet the places that have Twitter handles to get the word out about scholarships on that platform.

[Additional comments and questions]: Please do not send the RBMS Scholarship Announcement as a mass email to your 20 contacts. Instead, personalize each email to

ensure that it is read, and the information is shared. The co-chairs will make sure the Scholarship Announcement is sent to the RBMS list. If there are other places not currently on the list that would be important to include, especially now that we are offering scholarships to returning attendees, please add them to the list.

## **6. Discussion of proposed “New Voices” RBMS 2020 conference session (Meghan Constantinou)**

Chairs of the Scholarship Committee and M&PD received approval for a “New Voices” in the profession session for RBMS 2020. This is being co-led by Meghan and Gina. They are planning a 90-minute session with 7-minute lightning presentations related to the conference theme followed by a Q&A.

Timeline: Calls for papers will go out at end of this month. The submission deadline will be at the end of January with notification by mid-February and a final lineup of speakers determined by the first week of March.

Meghan asked for advice on how the session organizers should craft their call for papers. Should they target those who are three years post-degree or five years post-degree? Is the point of this session to encourage past scholarship winners to come back or to get new people in the profession and students involved? Answer: the session idea came up in a couple of different places, and one of the purposes is to make scholarship recipients feel involved as contributors. However, since not everyone receives a scholarship, we may not want to limit participation just to scholarship recipients. It was asked if one of the criteria for participation is that you’ve never spoken at RBMS before (“New Voices”). The answer was that in some discussions of the session there was a desire for people who have not previously presented, but they want session organizers to feel free to take this any direction they want.

It was also mentioned that ARLIS has a recurring session titled “New Voices in the Profession” so we might not want to call ours the exact same thing. How about “The Power of New Voices”?

Thanks Meghan and Gina for taking this on. There is excitement that this session will be continued in the future. It was noted that as we move forward there could be a conflict if organizers of this session are also new to the profession but want to participate as presenters at the conference.

## **7. Committee Liaison Reports:**

### **a. Budget & Development (Kimberly Tully)**

- Nothing new to report
- Update from Tory Ondrla at ACRL: Conference profit share – Sections gets 50% of conference net, which has usually been around \$10,000. This can be used in any way the section wants but has

typically been used for scholarships and other initiatives. Last year's conference profit share was \$18,050!

- b. If you would be interested in being the liaison between Diversity and Scholarships, please let the co-chairs know. This can be as a formal member of both committee or informal in that you are only a member of one, but attend the meetings of the other (or provide an update to the other).
- c. Membership & Professional Development (M&PD) (Sara Powell, sent via email)
  - New Members' Mixer
    - After much member feedback, M & PD approached RBMS Exec, Budget and Development Chair Blynn Olivieri, and ACRL Conference Manager Tory Ondrla regarding options for the New Members' Mixer, a ticketed event held annually at the RBMS annual conference. A history of the event (from a sit-down meal to a catered reception) and a number of options were discussed at length, including costs of the Mixer (and what sponsorship does and doesn't cover); possible co-sponsorship of the Mixer to provide for complimentary tickets; inclusion and ticketing (specifically the ethics of providing free tickets for a selected group of individuals—this was agreed would create an atmosphere of inequity); applying RBMS budget to cover the ticket price (there are no funds to cover this and surplus funds were directed toward Scholarships exclusively this year); and finally ACRL Conference Manager Ondrla provided a compromise: the following will appear on the Registration form – [“I would like to attend the New Member Mixer but need financial assistance to do so, please enter me in the pool for a complimentary ticket.”](#) Conference Co-Chairs Robin Katz and Liz Call, and RBMS Chair Veronica Reyes-Escudero support this solution.
    - There will be a limited number of complimentary tickets, distributed via lottery.
    - As of today (November 12, 2019), M & PD was in talks with a potential donor to co-sponsor the Mixer. **Any leads on potential sponsors for social and networking events would be greatly appreciated, and should be forwarded to Tory Ondrla and RBMS Chair Reyes-Escudero.**
  - New Members' Lunch

- Planning for lunch is in the hands of volunteers William Modrow and Sarah Allison. If anyone has recommendations or would like to volunteer to assist them, you can reach out to Diane or Erika @ [membership@rbms.info](mailto:membership@rbms.info).
- Conference Guide Program
  - M & PD organizes the Conference Guide Program, at ALA Midwinter, RBMS, and ALA Annual Conferences. We strongly encourage RBMS members to volunteer to serve as Conference Guides. You do not have to be a member of the Membership & Professional Development Committee to be a Conference Guide.
  - Announcement about the Conference Guide program for ALA Midwinter 2020 will come soon and is coordinated by Beth De Bold. If you are interested, contact Beth De Bold, Erika, or Diane for more info.
- M & PD continues to produce its monthly Professional Development Digest. If anyone has opportunities that they would like to recommend for the Digest, please let the editors, Sara Trotta and Sophia Dahab, know by email at [rbmsprodev@gmail.com](mailto:rbmsprodev@gmail.com).
- We are also continuing updates on the M & PD pages of the RBMS website. If anyone has photos they would like to share, please contact Diane Dias De Fazio at [diane.diasdefazio@gmail.com](mailto:diane.diasdefazio@gmail.com). Photos can be of RBMS conferences, events at your institution, instruction, outreach, or collections material.
- M & PD is also always looking for volunteers to serve as Mentors! If you are interested in being a Mentor, or you would like to sign up for a Mentor, contact Sarah Allison, Mentoring Program Coordinator, at [rbmsmentor@gmail.com](mailto:rbmsmentor@gmail.com).

d. 2020 RBMS Conference Program Planning Committee (Rebecca Baumann)

- Conference planning is well underway. Subcommittees are reviewing proposals and the Local Arrangements Committee is finalizing venues and amenities.
- The Conference Program Planning Committee has nothing to ask of the Scholarships Committee at this time but is eager for a report on how we will address the need for sustained engagement with scholarship recipients both at the conference itself and beyond.

- Local Arrangements asks the Scholarships Committee to contact us ([rbaumann@indiana.edu](mailto:rbaumann@indiana.edu)) with suggestions for how we can address the needs of Scholarship recipients and/or any others suggestions.

## 8. Additional New Business

### a. Survey of recent scholarship recipients

The co-chairs are considering a quick survey (5 questions) to get anonymous feedback from scholarship recipients following the conference. They probably will not be able to add this to the committee's work before scholarship judging begins, but it is something they have been keeping in their minds.

### b. Scholarships fundraising

One fundraising approach used in the past was sending solicitations to former scholarship recipients. The co-chairs will look into whether Budget or Scholarships sent these solicitations in the past. ACRL can provide a list of past scholarship recipients. Tory suggested we might add to the solicitation that if they cannot support the scholarships financially right now perhaps they could volunteer as a Conference Guide. It was noted that given the expansion of the scholarships program, we have a great opportunity to engage with the section and encourage them to give even more with the expanded scope and inclusivity of the scholarships.

### c. Any additional questions?

A participant asked for clarification about conference profit share. Does all of that go to scholarships? There are two sources of scholarship funding: the ACRL Friends Fund, which can only be used for scholarships, and the RBMS conference profit share, which can be used on whatever the section deems most appropriate, in previous years it has primarily gone to scholarships.

There were also concerns mentioned about lunch meet ups at last year's conference. It was discussed that M&PD and Local Arrangements should get together to discuss this matter. It was also noted that lunches are open to all RBMS conference attendees and not just new members.

Meeting adjourned at 1:56 pm ET