The School of Library and Information Science at USF Awarded Prestigious IMLS Grant

Tampa, FL - The School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida was recently granted a $324,008 grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for its proposal "Education of Librarians to Serve the Underserved" (ELSUN). The School and its partners, Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN) and Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS) seek to assist in fulfilling the growing need for librarians able to serve underserved and minority communities in Florida.

As competition increases for qualified personnel, communities which have been historically underserved – minority communities, low income communities and immigrant populations – will suffer even greater disadvantages. Ongoing research shows that these communities are still affected disproportionately by lack of access to electronic sources of information. ELSUN seeks to address these national issues as they are reflected in the most populous areas of Florida, the southeast part of the state. The selection of southeast Florida is appropriate not only because of the density of the population but because of the diversity of the population which is over 20% African American in Broward and Miami-Dade counties and 57% Hispanic in Miami-Dade County. The recruiting of new library/information professionals in this part of the state is made more difficult due to the fact that there is no site-based library education program in southeast Florida although both Florida State and the University of South Florida offer statewide distance education programs.

ELSUN will recruit and offer an enhanced distance education program to twenty-eight students in the Master of Arts in Library and Information Science to fill the growing need for librarians able to serve underserved and minority communities in Florida. Upon completion of the program, ELSUN will also assist in placing the graduates in positions that offer them the opportunity to utilize the training they have acquired in the master’s program.

“The faculty of the USF School of Library and Information Science are excited about the opportunity to recruit twenty-eight new students into our Master’s program that may not have had the opportunity to attend without the financial assistance that will be offered through the support of IMLS,” said Vicki L. Gregory, Professor and Director of the School.

“This grant is a plus for our School and the program we offer. We want to be certain that each person in Florida has access to a public library staffed by a professional librarian who is a graduate of an American Library Association (ALA) accredited program and this grant will assist us in this effort,” said Cora P. Dunkley, Assistant Professor and Primary Investigator who will be assisted by Sonia Ramirez Wohlmuth, Lecturer.

IMLS received seventy-six applications requesting a total of $27,430,896. Twenty-seven awards were made in the amount of $9,898,338 with a total recipient match of $11,603,981.
THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

is pleased to announce the availability of 28 scholarships for students admitted to the ALA accredited master’s program beginning Summer 2004.

Scholarship recipients will receive full tuition for all courses required for completion of the master’s degree in the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida. This scholarship opportunity is available through a proposal “Education of Librarians to Serve the Underserved” (ELSUN) funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services Initiative Recruiting and Educating Librarians for the 21st Century Initiative and is under the direction of Dr. Cora P. Dunkley, Assistant Professor, School of Library and Information Science.

In addition to the information in this brochure, prospective applicants are invited to view the School’s web site at http://www.cas.usf.edu/lis for updates and additional information about the master’s program, admission requirements, courses, and distance education opportunities.

For inquiries regarding admission to the master’s program please contact

Mel Pace, Associate Director
School of Library and Information Science
Telephone: 813-974-7650
tpace@cas.usf.edu

For inquiries regarding the ELSUN scholarship application please contact

Sonia Ramírez Wohlmuth, Asst. Director
School of Library and Information Science
Telephone: 813-974-6837
swohlmut@cas.usf.edu

¡También nos puede escribir en español!
To apply for a scholarship through the ELSUN Program beginning Summer 2004 that will pay full tuition for required courses taken for completion of the master's degree program at the School of Library and Information Science, University of South Florida, prospective students must do the following:

1. Apply for admission to USF Graduate School. For more information see http://www.cas.usf.edu/lis/admissions.htm

   Additionally, the items listed below should be sent directly to Dr. Cora P. Dunkley, director of the ELSUN Program at the USF School of Library and Information Science.

   Dr. Cora P. Dunkley
   School of Library and Information Science
   University of South Florida
   4202 E. Fowler Avenue -- CIS 1040
   Tampa, Florida 33620-7800

2. Two letters of recommendation from employers or former university-level instructors who are able to attest to your academic qualifications; who have knowledge of your ability to prioritize work, work independently, communicate effectively with colleagues, interact with the public; and who are aware of your career goals.

3. Statement of purpose in which you indicate reasons for selecting a career in library/information science; show an awareness of the service mission and role of libraries in society; express a commitment to work with underserved communities such as the elderly, the poor, the disabled and home bound, recent immigrants, the non English speaking; demonstrate previous experience working with disadvantaged populations; and indicate an awareness and acceptance of diversity in society.


NOTE: Students who are awarded a scholarship through the IMLS/ELSUN program will be required to sign a service expectation agreement. A copy is attached.

Selection of scholarship recipients will be based on academic achievement and academic potential as well as projected success as a library/information professional with a commitment to serve the underserved as evidenced in the statement of purpose, résumé, and letters of recommendation.

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School of Library and Information Science  
University of South Florida  

APPLICATION  
For ELSUN Scholarship Funded by  
2003 IMLS Recruiting and Educating Librarians for the 21st Century Initiative

Name: ___________________________  
Last name  First name  Middle initial/name

Address:  
---------------------------------------------
Street  
---------------------------------------------
City  State  Zip Code

Social Security Number: ___________________________  Date of Birth: ___________________________  
MM/DD/YYYY

Gender: _____M _____F  Ethnicity:  
Asian/ Native Am  African Am  Hispanic  White  Pacific Islander

Country of Citizenship:  
(Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents)

If not a U.S. citizen, are you a permanent resident?  ____Yes  ____No

Educational Background: Please list below any post secondary degrees you hold.

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Estimated GPA for last two years of undergraduate work: ___________________________

Do you speak fluently any languages other than English? ___________________________  
(Please specify language.)

I understand that it is my responsibility to provide accurate information for this scholarship application. Failure to do so may disqualify me from any financial aid awarded.

_____________________________  ___________________________
Signature  Date

Please attach: (1) Two letters of recommendation, (2) Statement of purpose, (3) Current résumé
SERVICE EXPECTATION AGREEMENT

For Recipients of Scholarships Funded by 2003 IMLS Recruiting and Educating Librarians for the 21st Century Initiative

The undersigned scholarship designee acknowledges that acceptance of this award carries an expectation of service as a professional librarian in an institution whose missions and goals include a broad-based service mandate, including service to the underserved – rural populations, low income populations, the elderly, minority communities, recent immigrants, the disabled and home bound, and the non English speaking.

The participating partners in this program, Southeast Florida Library Information Network and Miami-Dade Public Library have agreed to provide mentors to scholarship students and will facilitate a job search upon successful completion of the program.

It is expected that students will respond to the receipt of financial aid and other forms of assistance by Florida educational institutions, libraries, and library networks by focusing their search for professional employment within the state of Florida and in libraries or information centers that serve one or more of the populations indicated above. There is also an expectation that grant recipients will remain with their Florida employer for a period of time corresponding to their educational funding, that is, two years.

I have read and understood the terms of this agreement and agree to abide by them.

_________________________________________  __________________________
Signature                                      Date

_________________________________________
Please print your name here.