



I Love My Librarian!
2011 Award

**NOMINATION FOR
Rebecca Traub**

Library Specialist
Temple University Harrisburg
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

NOMINATED BY

Claudia Dewane
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?

What sets Rebecca apart from other librarians? She was a middle-school Latin teacher for 25 years when her commitment to life-long learning culminated in her return to graduate school in “later years” to get her Masters in Library Science! She has combined her life experience and her education to become what we have nicknamed her as “T.B.L.I.T.L” - The Best Librarian in the Land! She consistently goes above and beyond in providing the highest quality service to faculty, staff and students. She is the best role model for non-traditional students in demonstrating life-long learning!

Rebecca is an organizational citizen of the highest caliber and actively collaborates on numerous faculty projects just because she has the expertise necessary to help complete the task. Whether it’s developing resources for new faculty, collaborating in the development of a writing tutorial, promoting the professions of education and social work, or creating the creative space necessary for higher education, Rebecca is a team player. I have never heard a single complaint about her. She truly loves her job and it shows! We are a better higher learning institution because of Rebecca’s professionalism and energy.

2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?

Rebecca provides editorial expertise to students and faculty whenever needed. Because we are a distant satellite campus of our university's main campus, our students don't have access to the campus Writing Center where they could get needed assistance with learning appropriate scholarly writing. Rebecca fills that void! She has become an ad hoc writing center, proofing student papers and distributing writing tips, made available in the library as hand-outs and online on her library site. Yes, Rebecca maintains a web page about her library: <http://www.temple.edu/harrisburg/Library-and-Research/> which is chock full of information. She arranged a part of the library where students can be provided writing assistance in a private setting.

She visits each classroom at the beginning of the semester and introduces students to the myriad of resources available to them in the library and through the multitude of databases and electronic resources. She gets to know students by name and several have used her as a confidante, sharing some of the stressful adjustments to graduate school they are experiencing.

Rebecca has helped me personally in innumerable ways. One of my duties is Adjunct Faculty Liaison where I recruit, oversee, and mentor our adjunct faculty. Rebecca has provided valuable resources and support to our adjunct faculty by helping develop and produce an Adjunct Faculty Desk Reference. She has made a library area specific for adjunct faculty, providing them a quiet workspace, ready resources and office supplies.

One day, when I came into work, she greeted me with an enthusiastic "I fixed all your problems except one!" It wasn't her job to assist with some of the technological difficulties I was having setting up my Blackboard (online) course, but she did! She has provided much needed referencing and editorial assistance to articles I have submitted for publication.

This year the national Social Work Month theme was: "Social Workers Change Futures". We applied that theme to our students, calling them the "future" of social work. Rebecca helped design a display and devise daily recognitions of the event. She was especially helpful in securing vintage and archival social work literature for display.

Rebecca is generous and kind. She routinely offers free surplus reading and reference materials to the student body. When she cleans out "old" books, she has a \$.50 book sale. She always has time to scan an article, look up some obscure

reference, or advise on APA. As one faculty member stated: “If it exists, Rebecca will find it.”

Rebecca is one of the most valuable resources at our campus and certainly THE most valuable to our students. She demonstrates an expertise and friendliness in the delivery of her work role that is infectious and almost unparalleled. Anytime I have a question about my own research or about one of my graduate student’s research topics, Rebecca has numerous leads and ideas to share immediately, then ALWAYS follows through with a communication (usually an e-mail) with several other resources and leads.

She is always a pleasure to see at work. I can’t remember ever seeing her have a “bad day” in four years. She is a dedicated professional who is inspiring to all.

3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?

Rebecca has expanded the library significantly during her tenure. She continuously solicits recommendations from faculty and students for relevant holdings that she should secure for the library. She has made course reserves, e-books and databases easily available to students and faculty alike. She has learned and tutored faculty and students on functionalities like RefWorks (a reference storage program), much of which none of us knew about!

She has established a private Writing Center in the library where she will provide individual tutoring and assistance to students. Rebecca promotes a contagious enthusiasm to students and faculty alike about investigating the knowledge bases available in the immense body of published literature.

Rebecca spearheads a Book Drive for our student government through Better World Books [www.betterworldbooks.com]. To date she has collected more than 25 boxes of books resulting in resources for the charity chosen by the student body and a financial return to the Student Alliance (student government).

Rebecca is always willing to help anyone and she does it with a smile, and usually a witty story. She even made a bulletin board highlighting all publications of faculty and students. She orders all the textbooks, since as a remote campus, we don’t have ready access to the bookstore. Rebecca is tenacious and resourceful in tracking down obscure sources or critical works for the advancement of academic projects, whether on behalf of faculty or students. One faculty member commented: “If ever there was an omnipotent person, it’s Rebecca. She knows how and where to find EVERYTHING, even anticipating your needs when you don’t ask!”

It is notable that Rebecca routinely takes initiative to explore information resources that address a topic of research and often informs the investigator of possibilities that may not have been contemplated at the outset. Rebecca shows uncanny ability to master topics across a wide range of disciplines and bring contributions of merit to the team of student and faculty investigators.

Rebecca is a team player, figuratively and literally. On dress-down days, Rebecca is sure to wear our university colors or something with our university insignia. Our university mascot is an Owl, so at holiday time, she decorates a tree in the library with all different owls!

Because of her touch, the library has a welcoming peaceful feel. It is an oasis on our campus. There are plants, lounge chairs, seating arrangements and interesting displays. She even has a sign as you enter, encouraging visitors to feel free to bring snacks and drinks with them. Many a day when I lack motivation, I bring work to the library and will magically recoup my energy.

4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?

Several significant contributions come to mind regarding her impact on the teaching and learning process and her impact on students and faculty. She helped develop and produce an Adjunct Faculty Desk Reference, a manual of sorts, for faculty who are hired part-time and historically have felt marginalized. Several adjuncts have commented positively about the usefulness of this reference in making their transition to the university much easier.

Assisting faculty doesn't stop with the Desk Reference however. We can count on her to routinely distribute articles of interest to faculty, such as monthly issues of The Teaching Professor. If a matter of particular concern arises about an academic issue, you can be sure we will see relevant research about it sent by Rebecca. We had a particularly controversial issue regarding plagiarism and fair use and Rebecca's contributions helped clarify and resolve the issue.

For students, she developed a writing seminar, which was offered at different times to accommodate the demanding schedules of our non-traditional students, and then converted the seminar into a webinar, so that students could access it at any time. This learning package has helped fill a previous void in providing much needed writing assistance to our students.

I asked co-workers to describe Rebecca in one or two sentences and following are some responses. (You will note they found it difficult to reduce their thoughts to one or two sentences):

“Rebecca has provided our research staff with guidance in learning about new sources of information and databases. Because we are an offsite campus, Rebecca has served as our connection with the Temple Philadelphia Library in securing hard and electronic copies of needed documents.”

“Rebecca's high level of commitment to student learning has been recognized by Temple University by the awarding of an EXCEL Bonus for her work. She provided numerous one-on-one sessions with students to assist them in their research, attended classes to provide extra library instruction and coordinated the local collection with main campus to maximize the access to resources by all students regardless of their location.”

“Rebecca's professional demeanor and enthusiasm for her work is infectious. She helps the beginning graduate researcher to become excited about their subject and for seasoned tenured faculty to become re-invigorated with new avenues and modes for research and exploration.”

“Who has heard of students getting up at graduation, and thanking the Librarian? That was the case at our campus when several students acknowledged Rebecca's personal role in helping them to get to the point of graduation. Numerous students tell me how much time she has spent helping them obtain resources, reading and critiquing their writing, challenging them to explore further the information they are seeking. On many occasions, she has gone out of her way to find additional articles on a subject. It is as though she reads minds, and then just as you are about to ask, she says, ‘I found something for you.’ Sure enough, it was just what you were about to request.

She facilitates the free flow of information, and does so with an excitement that is infectious... for both faculty and students. I know of one professor on the main campus who has requested assistance from Rebecca, and told me that she is so much more efficient and effective than the resources he might use, that when he is in a pinch, he uses her expertise. She is highly professional, yet warm and caring. She has developed a presentation that she has given numerous times on the use of APA formatting for papers, and another on how to use the library. Students find it quite helpful, and note that her presentation is more clear and concise than other resources they have used. Some folks come to work and do their job. Rebecca creates the job and then excels at it. My only fear is that someone on the main campus will discover the diamond we have here, and give her a promotion.”

“Rebecca is ALWAYS willing to help my students navigate the electronic resources and sacks to find appropriate peer reviewed social work references. She commiserates with them on their SPSS for research class. She does all this in a positive and supportive manner. She has helped me many times get the resources I need and informing me when the library gets new resources that are relevant to my teaching. I am grateful for all her help and expertise.”

“Need to know about how to make a college library relevant to students? There is only one person to ask at Temple University, Rebecca Traub. She understands the important role libraries play in an information-driven world. Finding reliable sources of information from the obscure to the commonplace is all in a day's work for Rebecca. She is never too busy to give you her full attention, and she always does more than asked. Rebecca is a true partner in the educational process. It is quite a testament when at our graduation ceremony, the students recognized Rebecca as one of the main reasons they were successful!”

5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?

Rebecca provides leadership not only in our campus, but also connecting our campus community to our other campuses and to the local community. In an effort to collaborate with the social work community, Rebecca has initiated a partnership with a local social work publisher and arranged to host a monthly Book Club. As a result of this partnership, she was able to secure surplus books from the publisher as a donation to the library!

Rebecca has been a valuable asset to the teaching of research methods. She developed and presents instructional sessions to students in the School of Social Work and College of Education during their research methods portion of the core curricula. She also provides excellent follow up to students and faculty in carrying out their research projects.

She organized our university's participation in a Literacy Day in which adults went into inner city schools and read to students and distributed books to them.

She has maintained a state-wide Social Work Archives. The Central Pennsylvania Social Work Archives was established in 2003 and is housed at Temple University Harrisburg. The Archives serves as a repository for organizational records, collections of personal manuscripts, and oral histories related to human services in Central Pennsylvania. Under her tutelage, a new collection of records has been included detailing the history of Temple University Harrisburg.

She spearheads a Book Drive, in conjunction with our Student Alliance (student government).

She helps edit a campus newsletter and makes updates on the campus website. She initiated and maintains a campus library website. She suggests innovative process improvements and mentors library assistants and interns.

Rebecca is the epitome of a “lifelong learner”, a highly valued employee and respected co-worker, a role-model and inspiration for both faculty and students. As one student remarked, “She is one classy lady.”