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## Introduction

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# Introduction



## About Ann-Marie

WINTER 2013 Ann-Marie Anderson has been working in public libraries for over ten years, after starting her career in law and university libraries. She received her MLS from Southern Connecticut State University and her BA in English from the University of Connecticut. She is an Adult Services Librarian at the Tigard Public Library in Oregon, where her job includes reference work, collection development, programming, and outreach to homebound seniors. In her off work time, she hikes with her dog and volunteers as website designer and administrator for a nonprofit organization involved in downtown revitalization in her adopted hometown of Dayton.

*The dynamism of any diverse community depends not only on the diversity itself but on promoting a sense of belonging among those who formerly would have been considered and felt themselves outsiders.*

— Sonia Sotomayor

This OLAQ issue's theme focuses attention on two vital aspects of library services: outreach and diversity. Guest editing this issue is a pleasure, because it's a topic close to my own heart. In my work at the Tigard Library, I visit senior facilities and connect homebound seniors with library services. I've observed first hand how library services enrich the lives of sometimes isolated seniors, whether the services include visits by library volunteers with large print books and a friendly smile, Books (and DVDs and magazines) by Mail, or digital audio books and the loan of a player from the wonderful folk at the state library's Talking Book and Braille Services. In a myriad of ways—visiting schools and assisted living facilities, reaching out to campus and community groups, exploring the utility of social media, holding workshops for small business owners and story times in Spanish or sign language, and more—we seek to make contact and foster relations with underserved and unreached community members. Our focus includes, but isn't limited to, "new and non-readers, people geographically isolated, people with disabilities, rural and urban poor people, and people generally discriminated against based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, language and social class", as described in the mission of the American Library Association's Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS).

Diversity can be defined in many ways, but organizations generally use a broad definition that encompasses race, gender, ethnicity and national origin, age, religion or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, and physical or mental capabilities. The demographics of Oregon are

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changing and our community's needs are changing as well. The 2008–2012 American Community Survey tells us that 14.7 percent of Oregonians speak a language other than English at home; 13.5 percent of our civilian non-institutionalized population has a disability. The 2010 Census revealed that there are now over 450,062 Hispanics or Latinos living in Oregon, 11.7 percent of the total population, which is an increase of 63.5 percent from the last census in 2000 (Population Research Center, 2010, p. 1–3). Some of my recent professional reading has included the draft Standards for Oregon Public Libraries from the OLA's Public Library Division, which address diversity and community engagement for public libraries in some thought-provoking ways. For example, at the enhanced library level, "if more than 5 percent of the library community speaks a language other than English at home, the library would ensure that its director and key staff are capable of speaking and culturally engaging with patrons" (OLA, 2013, p. 6). It's a thorough and interesting document—I encourage you to take a look at it, available on the OLA site at <http://tinyurl.com/le27pkj>; the PLD Board is looking for responses and feedback through February.

In this issue, our authors share stories that we hope will inspire you as you reflect on how your library, whether special, academic, or public, is reaching some of its diversity and community engagement goals. Martín Blasco, vice-chair of OLA's Outreach Round Table, shares his philosophy and principles of outreach to new immigrants. Maria Aguilar, Latino Outreach Coordinator at the Cornelius Public Library, offers an inspiring article about how her library's renewed focus on outreach efforts resulted in remarkable circulation growth and summer reading participation in their small town. Jennifer Keyser, a librarian working in the Davies Family Research Library at the Oregon Historical Society, details how her library used the microblogging platform Tumblr to highlight their unique collections and services for far flung patrons interested in Pacific Northwest history. Lindsay Slater shares her research about how best to serve deaf and Deaf populations in our communities. Trinity Minahan, Curriculum Specialist for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, describes how the Tribes partnered with the Willamina School District to provide a first of its kind in Oregon social studies curriculum and resource list based on Oregon tribes and drafted by Native American educators with an eye toward the learning styles of Native American students. Barbara Jenkins, Director of Instruction and Campus Partnerships at University of Oregon Libraries, describes how her library has been building campus partnerships.

I found their articles inspiring and educational, and I hope you enjoy them as well!

*Guest Editor*

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