Candidates for the CLA Board

Candidate for Vice President/President Elect
Lisa Karim, Simsbury Public Library

I began my career in libraries as a public library director 26 years ago and still truly believe there is no greater place to come to work every day. As a profession we share a common vision and hope for making a positive difference, and work tirelessly to make that vision a reality.

My family and I relocated to CT in 2013 when I became the director of the Simsbury Public Library. Over the past five years, I’ve been impressed and inspired by the high level of professionalism, forward thinking and creative work done by CT librarians.

I’m passionate about the role libraries play in the lives of our communities and society as a whole. Now more than ever, people of all ages need a place where everyone is welcome and has equal access to information, resources and opportunities. I enjoyed serving CLA

Candidate for Treasurer
Kristina Edwards, CCSU

I have been working in libraries since my work study job at the University of Hartford. At the time it never occurred to me that I would become a librarian let alone one in higher education, it is clear that I have found my home in academic libraries. I am currently the acquisitions librarian at Central Connecticut State University and work with my colleagues on issues surrounding our library budget and managing our physical collections. My personal ambition is to make sure that no matter how difficult the current fiscal climate that our library has everything that it needs to provide the best library services to our faculty, students, and staff.

I have been working with CLA since becoming a librarian in 2009. I most recently co-chaired the 2017 CLA conference. I have participated and worked with colleagues on both the College & University Libraries Section and the Technical Services Section over the past 8 years to help develop and provide programs for our library colleagues in academic libraries and technical services (across all library types). Currently, I work on the Connecticut Information Literacy Conference (CILC) planning committee to monitor the budget and find sponsorships for CILC each year. My hope, if elected, is that I can help ensure
We put a lot of trust in our browser extensions, but despite their many benefits, these helpful tools can be more insidious than they first appear. With the ability to view or change data on the websites you visit, browser extensions have considerable access to our personal information. As such, it’s crucial to carefully consider the extensions we choose. Today, we’ll delve into the logistics of browser extensions, both looking at the permissions we grant them and deciding which extensions we can trust.

The majority of commonly used browsers allow for extensions, including the three most common web browsers—Chrome, Firefox, and Internet Explorer. Alongside positive features, many extensions carry with them advertising or tracking. In a 2015 study, over 50,000 Chrome extensions were shown to inject ads into pages, altering content for the sake of ad revenue. Although Google has since addressed some of these vulnerabilities, many extensions still profit through ad revenue or by selling bulk user data. This was again demonstrated in 2016, when seemingly trustworthy offerings from anti-virus companies, as well as some highly-used privacy extensions, were shown to have significant issues with user data privacy.

Taking these affronts to privacy into consideration, it’s important to carefully assess the extensions you utilize on personal and public computers. Selecting quality open-source extensions, or ones produced by companies you thoroughly trust is a solid start. From there, browse some online reviews to see what other consumers are saying about the extension.

To start, consider adding a couple well-trusted free privacy extensions from the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). Available for Chrome, Firefox, and Opera, the HTTPS Everywhere extension “encrypts your communications with many major websites, making your browsing more secure.” Although many websites support browsing with HTTPS—an adaptation of HTTP that secures your online communication—they often default to using the insecure HTTP protocol. To remedy these issues, this open-source extension requires the websites you visit use secure HTTPS connections whenever supported.

In addition to HTTPS Everywhere, the EFF’s Privacy Badger browser extension is a terrific add-on for your privacy. Compatible with Chrome, Firefox, and Opera, Privacy Badger both blocks trackers and advertisements and helps notify you of third-party web content. As you browse the web, Privacy Badger monitors sites’ actions, determining whether any sections of the webpages you’re visiting come from a different domain than the one to which you navigated. Using a red, yellow, and green coloring system, Privacy Badger notifies you of its actions while you browse, letting you know both when it’s allowing and blocking third-party content. Unlike other extensions that unilaterally block third-party content, Privacy Badger determines whether the content is necessary for proper functionality of the site you’re visiting, then proceeds to block trackers and cookies. Operating as such, Privacy Badger simplifies safe web browsing while supporting user consent and the right to not be tracked. In light of the recent Facebook/Cambridge Analyt-

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In February, along with 8,000 others, I attended ALA’s mid-winter meeting in Denver, Colorado. While a national conference is always a great way to learn while having fun, attending as an ALA chapter president proved even more interesting. I was able to attend the day-long chapter leaders forum just before the official conference opening and meet with the presidents, executive directors, and councilors from chapters across the country. It was enlightening to see how different some chapters were in structure but also how similar many of our challenges are. I brought back a number of ideas to share with CLA’s board of directors that will hopefully make our organization stronger in the future.

The opening session was in many ways the highlight. Author and activist Patrisse Cullors, one of the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement was interviewed by 13 year old Marley Dias, whose internet campaign #1000BlackGirlBooks drew attention to the lack of diversity in much of children’s literature. Marley’s poise and intelligence was remarkable throughout the interview and it was exciting to hear two generations of activists both point to their local libraries as inspiration for much of their work.

Other literary celebrities figured prominently in the program. Dave Eggers talked about his children’s books Her Right Foot and the soon to be published What Can a Citizen Do? before explaining 826 National, his nationwide network of tutoring and creative writing centers for at risk youth. Paolo Bacigalupi, a favorite sci-fi author of mine, read from his newest novel at Simon & Schuster’s book buzz breakfast. Junot Diaz and Elizabeth Acevedo also spoke, although I did not make it to those events.

Of course there were great programs presented by librarians as well! PLA’s Legal Issues in Public Libraries Forum gave public librarians a chance to present their trickiest legal issues to a panel of librarian lawyers. As part of the Symposium on the Future of Libraries a group of academic librarians from SUNY Buffalo covered the future of “extended reality” (which encompasses human/machine interaction through virtual and augmented reality) in libraries and beyond.

The exhibits floor had over 450 vendors, with lots of great giveaways and featured multiple stages and pavilions for special events and showcases. Add to that the beautiful views and varied dining and cultural offerings that make Denver such a vibrant city, and it was a truly great conference.

Glenn Grube is the director of the Avon Free Public Library.
Movin’ On Up!

from the Career Development Committee

Q I am lucky enough to have been hired for an intermediate library position without a MLS degree and have been toying with the idea of going back to school. I believe in continuing education and I want to learn everything I can about the Library Science field but I am struggling with the idea of going back to school. The cost is just too large and I already have a fair amount of debt from earning my undergraduate degree. I would like to know how much the degree actually applies to the field; how much of what is learned in school translates into real life? How does having the degree help in the actual job? Does experience outweigh the degree?

A From Sunnie Scarpa, Head of Children’s Services, Wallingford Public Library

Congratulations! Your new employer obviously believes you already have the right qualifications to succeed in your position and it’s true that many people thrive in the library field without having a master’s degree. However, there are advantages to getting a MLS, including increased job and promotional opportunities. Ultimately, you are the only one who can truly calculate the cost/benefit ratio of going back to school, but I’m happy to share my experiences and give you a few more questions to explore before you make your decision.

My MLS degree is from a state university and I took the vast majority of my classes online. Due to the flexible schedule and

A From Laura Horn, Director of Operations, The Farmington Libraries

I think people in many professions struggle with these same issues when trying to decide whether or not to pursue an advanced degree in a specific field. First, let’s tackle the, “will it actually help me in my real life as a librarian?” piece. Like all academia, some classes are more directly applicable in the workplace than others. For the sake of brevity I will give you two examples of how my degree has prepared me for the responsibilities of my position. Since you already work in a library, you likely already know a lot of the basics regarding collection development, programming and reference and user services, but other skills, such as web design, are much more difficult to acquire on the job since they require a lot of uninterrupted time in front of a computer. The web design

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Do you have a question about your career that you would like to see answered in the next issue of CLA Today? Send it to: editor@ctlibraryassociation with “Movin on Up” in the subject line.
inexpensive tuition I was able to work full-time, finish in three years, and pay off my school debt quickly. In my experience, unless you are in academic librarianship, you don’t need to attend a prestigious school to reap the benefits of an advanced degree. There are many affordable online options these days, in addition to a plethora of grants and scholarships (more info at: http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/awards).

In my first library job after getting my MLS, the degree did help me succeed because it gave me research skills more specific to the profession than what I’d learned from my undergraduate degree. There were also presentation tools, audio editing skills, and the like, that I found helpful in that job, but that knowledge set becomes outdated quickly. The more lasting impact of my degree came when I was promoted to a management position.

There are axioms of librarianship I use on a regular basis that are straight from my “Foundations of Librarianship” class. My “Management of Library Services” class offered practical tips that I use every time I face a challenging staff situation. Additionally, my studies gave me an expansive way of looking at librarianship that influences my participation in our strategic planning process and management team meetings. It has also influenced how I lead our department’s annual goal setting and professional development planning. In fact, I use more of the principles I learned in graduate school now, x years later, than I did right after graduating.

There are a few other things you might want to consider. Are there promotional opportunities you might be interested in the future that will require a MLS degree? Is there a chance you may ever want/need to relocate? A MLS degree will make you qualified for a larger number of opportunities if you ever leave your current position. Whether or not the degree is worth the time and financial commitment is completely dependent on your specific situation and plans for the future. Whatever you choose, I wish you good luck in all your future endeavors!

I could go on and on about all of the skills that I gained in graduate school that have been helpful, but you get the point. Courses in graduate school can certainly be applicable on the job. Of course, there are other courses, the history of the book, for instance, that are maybe less relevant. However, courses like that are typically electives, so if it seems like a waste of time and money to you, don’t take it. Pursuing an MLS degree, like any other, will require you to take courses that focus on theory rather than practice sometimes, but those courses often provide you with a foundation of knowledge from which to draw throughout your career.

What it really comes down to is – can you afford the degree, and do you need it. I can’t answer the first question for you, but I can tell you that there are a lot of options out there for graduate school at various price points. I went to one of the more expensive programs and came out with a lot of student loan debt, but I knew that when I enrolled and I was comfortable with it. The program had what I was looking for academically, and was conveniently located, so it was worth every penny. Do you need it? As the person who oversees the hiring at my library, I can tell you that, while I do respect my profession and the professional degree, it is not the most important thing to me when I’m interviewing a candidate. I need to know the individual will fit well with my team, that they are eager to learn and try new things, and that they have excellent customer service skills. That being
The Amazing Castle in Avon

An Interview with Kari Ann St. Jean, Children’s Librarian at the Avon Free Public Library

Q: What is The Amazing Castle (tm)?
Created by the Minnesota Children’s Museum, The Amazing Castle TM is an interactive children’s play exhibit which travels the country. Families visiting the castle become inhabitants of a medieval village. The village consists of 3 workshops: the tailor, the carpenter, and the blacksmith. Inside the castle, children will find the Great Hall, where they are invited to don costumes and create a medieval feast. There is a castle keep with building blocks for young children, a garden plot with vegetables, a garden shed with chickens and eggs all of which can be gathered by children. There is also a puppet theater for imaginative stories and a musical Dragon Tower, featuring “Herald” a pop up roaring dragon!

Q: How did you hear about it? and what inspired you to bring it to AFPL?
I first experienced the joy of the castle when my young son and I lived in Las Vegas where it was once installed at the Discovery Children’s Museum. The Amazing Castle TM is mostly hosted by big city Children’s Museums. This is its first visit to the state of Connecticut and we are so proud to bring it to Avon. Our Friends of the Library group and Carmon Funeral Home made it possible through their generous sponsorship. We brought a memorable, exciting, and innovative experience to our families and we are witnessing the freedom of exuberant, imaginative play!

Q: What ages is it best for?
Ages 2 to 8, but really for all ages. It is thrilling to watch and listen as the younger children play and interact with the older children and their parents. The historical aspects of The Amazing Castle TM are suitable for elementary school children. Many of the areas contain artifacts which were used by medieval villagers. It is an educational, experiential and playful exhibit.

Q: What are the benefits to having it in a library space?
We are very lucky in Avon to have a large adaptable children’s space which, along with the separate teen room, occupies the second floor. Since our picture books reside in movable wheeled bins, we were able to move the entire collection to existing book shelves to make room for the 1500 square foot exhibit. The main benefit of having the exhibit on the children’s floor is the imaginative energy and creative atmosphere which comes

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The children’s, teen and circulation teams arrive each day dressed in medieval period clothing and we play medieval music to enhance the environment and set the mood.

Q: Have you tailored your programming around it?
We have hosted a variety of children’s programs around the medieval theme, including creative art, fairy tale reader’s theater, prince and princess tea parties, medieval movies, bookmaking, a scavenger hunt, and weaving. Visitors will also find a remarkable display featuring Barbie dolls adorned in Tudor-inspired fashions and accessories. Our room has been decorated with colorful paper banners and embellished shields. Recently, we attracted the attention of the Society for Creative Anachronism and members of this group visited the library on March 3rd and again on April 14th to showcase their craftsmanship. They brought armor and weaving and they churned butter and stamped leather ~ it was an amazing set of days and our community loved it.

Q: What has the reaction been? What do kids like most about it? Has it caused any problems?
Families are amazed by the castle! The exhibit itself is very attractive and blends so well with the colors of our department. We truly never want it to leave. Yet, as beautiful and amazing as this venture has been, most of our big challenges came during the installation: the exhibit arrived on a tractor trailer with 15+ large un-collapsible steel carts which individually weigh over 200 pounds. These carts would not fit into our library elevators. This meant that almost every component of the exhibit had to be hand carried up our back staircase. The heavy duty lifting was provided by the town of Avon public works department, without their support, and teamwork, the installation could never have happened.

Q: What else should our readers know about it?
The Amazing Castle TM will be at the Avon Library through May 2018. We are so grateful to our sponsors and to the town of Avon for helping make this happen. And lastly, as the leading member of our children’s and teen services team, I have watched our perspective, purpose, and vision of what is possible within a library environment be forever changed by this exhibit. To offer an extraordinary experience in an ordinary library is to plant seeds for future dreamers to dream. Anything is possible.
On March 14, the Connecticut State Library, in collaboration with the YA Section of CLA, presented a four part program entitled “Everyone Included: Talking About Diversity in Books for Children & Teens.” The full day program was held at the Wallingford Public Library and was free to participants.

Attendance was capped at 60 school and public librarians and all but one of the registrants were in attendance, despite the previous day snowstorm that shut down schools and libraries all over the state.

The morning began with Maine author, Anne Sibley O’Brien, a team member in Bates College’s Diverse Book Finder project. O’Brien talked about research and reasons why it is deeply important for children and teens to have access to books that represent all people. She introduced participants to the Diverse Book Finder, and discussed its creation and how to use the database.

Two panels, one of authors, a publisher, and an editor, and one of Connecticut librarians, followed, with a lunch break between panels. All panelists were asked to introduce themselves and to tell a personal story relating to the topic of the day, followed by questions that had been crowdsourced through our children’s librarians’ listserv, Goodnightmoon.

The publisher panel included two Connecticut teen book authors, Tochi Onyebuchi, author of Beasts Made of Night, and Cindy Rodriguez, author of When Reason Breaks, and blogger at the Latinxs in Kid Lit blog. Also on this panel were Melissa-Sue John, of Connecticut independent publisher, Lauren Simone Publishing House, and editor Julie Bliven of Charlesbridge.

The panel of Connecticut librarians included Gabrielle Barnes of Hartford Public Library, Luis Chavez-Brumell of New Haven Free Public Library, Samantha Lee of Enfield Public Library, and Kymberlee Powe of Weston Library.

Each panel discussion was 45 minutes long - too short to get to all the questions we had. Participants clearly felt that hearing the personal stories from all of the panelists was moving and enlightening and asked for more. We hope to have a follow up program in the fall.

Capping the day was a presentation by groundbreaking author of Heather has Two Mommies, Leslea Newman, on gender stereotypes in children’s books. Newman discussed and read from several books, new and older, that presented children who don’t fit neatly into preconceived notions of gender.

All participants who filled out evaluation surveys indicated that they learned a lot from the program and were moved by the personal stories. Watch for a follow up program in the fall! ♦
People in the News

Michelle McFarland will be taking on a new role at Hartford Public Library as outreach and program coordinator. She will be responsible for identifying and building relationships in the community, including key stakeholders and institutional partners, to strengthen the library’s connections within the community and to assist with coordinating, planning, promoting, and evaluating service impact and system-wide delivery of adult services, programs and events. Michelle has been a branch manager and project manager of the Owl Enrichment Center at Hartford Public High School.

Matt Earls is the new director of the Jonathan Trumbull Library in Lebanon.

Xia Feng, public services administrator at the New Haven Free Public Library, will receive Yale University’s coveted Seton Elm-Ivy Award later this month. Given out since 1980 to more than 425 individuals and organizations, these awards recognize individuals who provide exemplary service to further strengthen the relationships among the New Haven and Yale University communities.

At the Easton Public Library, children’s/teen librarian Elizabeth Portillo, has written the Children’s Bookshelf column for this month’s CT Parent Magazine. Also, programming assistant, Myla Perrelli, is a recipient of a FLAG Scholarship, to be awarded at the CLA conference later this month.

Kathy Jarombek, librarian at Perrot Library is the winner of the Kate McClelland Librarian's Award, one of three professional awards to be presented at the 37th annual Connecticut Storytelling Festival and Conference. Read the full article.

Michelle Lord, Southington Public Library assistant director, is retiring in May. Michelle started her career at Southington Library as a page and rose through the ranks to become a reference librarian, the head of the lending department and finally the library’s assistant director.

Sue Smayda, the executive director of the Southington Library and the Barnes Museum, is retiring in June. Sue started her career as a public librarian at Wallingford Public Library where she served first as a reference librarian and then the head of community services. Sue became director of the Southington Public Library in 2007.

Elizabeth McKay, senior youth services librarian at The Ferguson Library, has become supervisor of the youth services department. She replaces long-time department head Caroline Ward, who is retiring.

Margaret Borchers will be retiring in May after sixteen years as the library director at the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library in Monroe.

Linda Ricks is the Media Center Director of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School in Regional School District #17. She won a highly competitive Code.org and University of Rhode Island award for an all-expense paid Professional Learning Program in Computer Science, which includes a week long Phoenix Arizona intensive training and continuing education at the University of Rhode Island for one year. After completion, she will receive a certificate from the University of Rhode Island in teaching computer science. Linda Ricks has been a teacher-media specialist for more than 20 years and she just recently went before the curriculum council and Board of Education to win approval from her district to teach computer science this fall at HKMS in addition to her duties in the library/media center.

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Frances Rindfleisch passed away on April 5th. She worked at the Ridgefield Library for more than 20 years. Read the full obituary.
News from around the State

Connecticut Institute for Development Puerto Rican Parade Inc. is presenting Hartford Public Library with its 2018 María C. Sánchez Arts & Culture Award for its work in preserving the history of Hartford’s Puerto Rican community.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is awarding a three-year, $297,925 Innovation Grant to the Hartford Public Library. This new project will support two innovative strategies to narrow the digital divide in Hartford, with a focus on Hartford’s North end.

Danbury Library has been selected as one of 20 public libraries nationwide to receive a $10,000 American Dream Literacy Initiative grant from the American Library Association (ALA) and Dollar General Literacy Foundation. With the funding, Danbury Library will offer free, beginner-level English courses for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

The Passport to Connecticut Libraries Program is ongoing at participating libraries around the state through April 30th.

Look for a report in our next issue!

KARIM CONTINUED FROM P.1

as 2015 conference co-chair where I had the good fortune to meet and work closely with many knowledgeable, talented colleagues and the amazing CLC staff. Since 2015 I’ve been co-chair of the Customer Service Section, another rewarding position. I’m honored to have been nominated for Vice President/President Elect. It would be a privilege to serve in this role.

CLA is a testament to the power of collaboration, mentoring, and networking, and is an organization in which I believe strongly. Together we make a greater impact than we can alone. Personally, and as an organization, we are dedicated to the success of libraries across the state and those in the profession who follow us. I’m committed to promoting the value of CLA, increasing the visibility and recognition of the important role libraries play and advocating for adequate sustainable funding so our institutions may continue to successfully serve our users now and in the future. ♦

EDWARDS CONTINUED FROM P.1

that the CLA budget planning process and finances are managed and maintained so that CLA can continue to provide and enhance the valuable programming and services that CT librarians have come to rely on. ♦

CLA Today is the newsletter of the Connecticut Library Association. Published every other month, it is posted to the CLA website. Please send submissions for future issues to editor Jennifer Datum at editor@ctlibrarians.org.
More Candidate Statements

Candidate for ALA Rep
Erin Shea, Ferguson Library

I am running for CLA board because I am interested in representing the great state of Connecticut on ALA council. I was born and raised here in the Nutmeg State and have spent my library career here. Having recently completed a term on the Public and Cultural Programs committee for ALA, I saw firsthand how important clear communication is between ALA Council and its various committees. As state liaison I will work hard to advocate for Connecticut libraries on the national level and I will bring back knowledge gleaned from ALA to the state association.

I have served as branch supervisor at The Ferguson Library since 2014 and before that was head of adult programming at Darien Library. My favorite part of being a librarian is working with my talented and creative staff each day – they make coming to work a pleasure. If I am elected ALA representative, I look forward to sharing the wonderful things Connecticut libraries are up to with the rest of the country. I hope I have your vote for ALA representative. ♦

Candidate for Region 2 Rep
Susan Ray, Simsbury Library

It has been an honor for me to be your CLA Region 2 representative for the past two years. I have enjoyed sharing all the wonderful activities and events that libraries within the region are doing for their communities. Thank you for your confidence in me in electing me to be your representative to the CLA board. I look forward to another exciting two years. ♦

Candidate for Region 3 Rep
Amanda Brouwer, Douglas Library of Hebron

I started in my first library job at Tolland Public Library as a circulation assistant, right out of college with an English degree. I didn’t know at the time, that being a librarian would be my career and one of the things I am most proud and passionate about. During this first step into the library field, I learned about the ins and outs of circulation, book repair, and I watched as the card catalog became history. I enjoyed the interactions with all the patrons, answering their questions and working on projects with my co-workers. I continued on my career in Groton Public Library as a circulation supervisor, then on to North Scituate, Rhode Island as a weekend reference librarian when I began my MLS Program at SCSU. That reference desk was such a revelation, hunting down answers and finding the right materials for patrons was just about the best thing ever! As, I finished the program I became the reference department head at Otis Library in Norwich. Not only did I get to answer questions and do research I also got the purchase collection items and had input into the direction of the library. Which brings me to being the director of Douglas Library. It really is the best of all worlds; purchasing collection items, paving the path for the library with my staff and connecting patrons with their informational needs.

Over this time, I have realized that it is important to keep communications open with other librarians and one of the best ways is through serving on boards or committees. While at Otis Library I founded and co-chaired the Urban Libraries Roundtable as well co-chairing the Marketing Roundtable for a time. Currently, I am the chair of the Eastern Connecticut library director’s roundtable, and a member of the Bibliomation board of trustees.

Over the course of these 16 years in Connecticut libraries I have depended on the Connecticut Library Association for information and education for my staff’s and my own career. I hope by being chosen to represent Region 3 on this board it will continue my goal to bring Connecticut librarians and libraries together and to help keep information flowing. ♦

Voting will take place at the annual meeting on April 24th.
ica privacy debacle, having an anti-tracking extension like Privacy Badger is essential.

In conjunction with these two privacy extensions, slimming down your overall use of browser extensions is a great step for protecting your privacy. If you’re in need of an extension for a specific project, install it, use it, and then remove it. For example, I recently installed the QR Code Image Generator to create a link for some program signage. After creating a couple codes, I removed the extension. If I find myself in need of fresh QR codes again, I’ll simply reinstall.

Alongside trimming down your browser extensions, do not hesitate to use multiple browsers. Using a strictly privacy-focused browser, like Epic or Brave, can be a good way to separate sensitive online activity from general web browsing. We’ll delve further into these privacy-specific web browsers in a later edition of this column. Although web browsers and extensions appear harmless, it is important to remember that they are often designed to generate revenue rather than protect users. It is vital to keep a close eye on extensions to maximize the security of your data.

Andrew Boyles Petersen
Instruction and Outreach Librarian, The Loomis Chaffee School
Member, CLA Intellectual Freedom Committee

The CLA IFC will be overviewing a current privacy issue or tool for each CLA Today this year, discussing such topics as two-factor authentication, secure browsers, password managers, and anti-tracking extensions and applications. To build on this, we will discuss possibilities for implementing these tools in your libraries as well as techniques to aid patrons in safeguarding their online identities.

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said, without the degree, the salary and benefits offered would be less than if the person had their MLS. Also, if your professional goal is to someday be a department head or library director, chances are, you will need your MLS. Not all libraries have the same requirements, but in a field with limited financial resources, and therefore limited job opportunities, you want to give yourself every advantage when applying for a new position and having your degree will certainly help.

Investing your time and money into an advanced degree is a big decision to make, and ultimately, one that you have to make for yourself. I hope that my experiences and candor will be of some use to you in making your decision.

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