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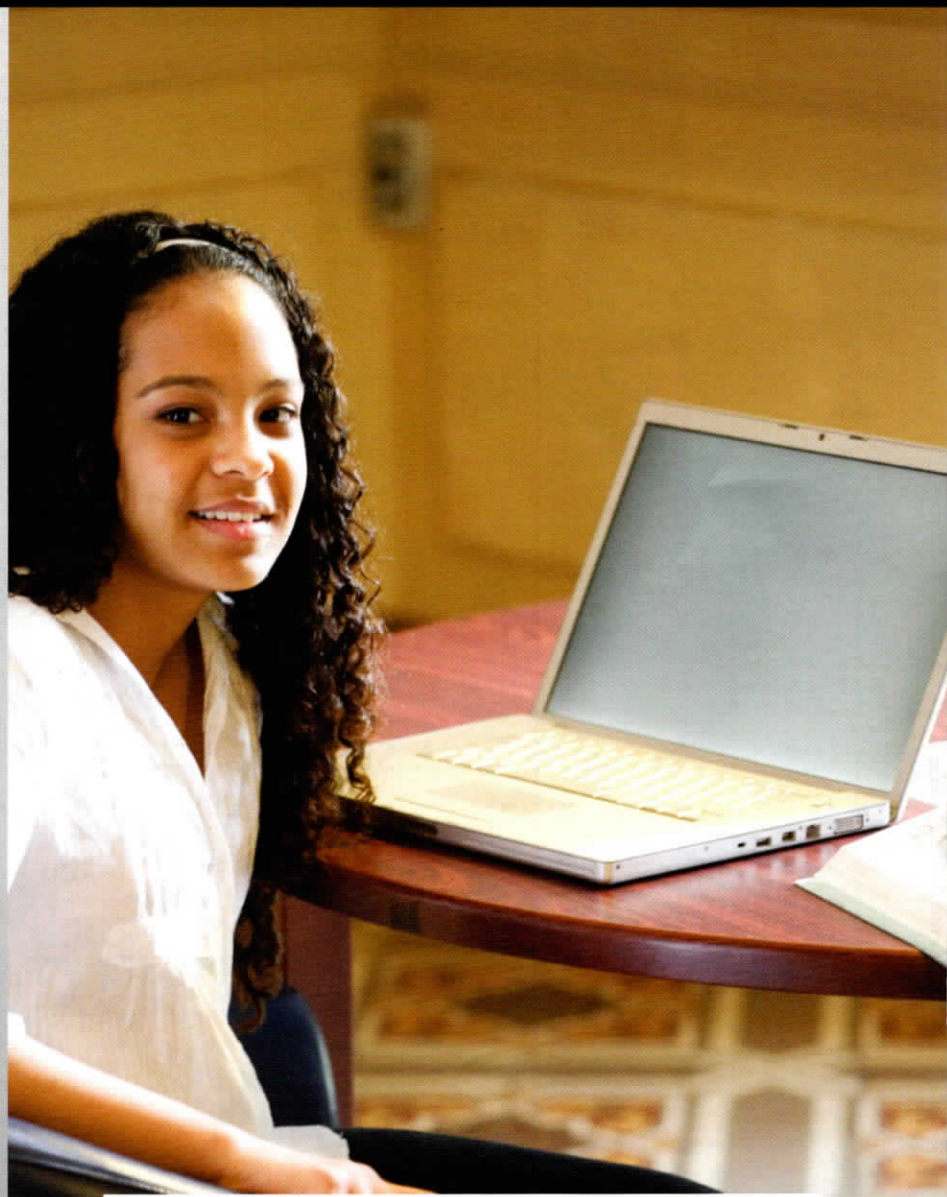
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FEATURES

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THE ENVIRONMENT AND TOOLS OF GREAT EDUCATIONAL MAKERSPACES: PART 2 OF MAKING AN EDUCATIONAL MAKERSPACE

In the first installment of this three-part series, R. Steven Kurti, Deborah Kurti, and Laura Fleming discussed the philosophy of educational makerspaces. In this second installment, they explore the look and feel of the environment and the selection of tools to inspire and equip makers to tinker, create, and invent. Innovation is fundamentally an inspired activity, and the right environment has the potential to inspire new thoughts and creative endeavors. Another must-read article for anyone interested in makerspaces.

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A FOOTPRINT FOR COLLABORATION

Kristine Woods offers an interesting and useful article on collaboration in which she examines the core ideas necessary for success in this area. Woods' own experience detailed here can be used as a model by others.

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ENABLE-ING SCHOOL LIBRARIANS TO EMPOWER STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Ruth V. Small, Ph.D., Kathryn A. Justus, and Jessica L. Regitano at the Center for Digital Literacy, Syracuse University, introduce Project ENABLE (Expanding Non-discriminatory Access By Librarians Everywhere), funded by IMLS to train librarians how to create accessible libraries and design and deliver inclusive library programs and services. The project has trained close to 200 librarians face-to-face and more than 800 registered online, to date. The article concludes with an update on Project ENABLE future plans and their benefits to librarians worldwide.

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iSTAFF: A JUDGMENT-FREE COMMUNITY

Sue Kowalski argues that a strong school library program can provide countless opportunities for students of all abilities and challenges to take on meaningful leadership jobs. At Pine Grove Middle School in East Syracuse, NY, the iStaff program exemplifies how students, including those with disabilities, are making an impact as leaders in and through this student volunteer program run by the school librarian and supported by the school community.

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CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Using her experience teaching online courses to librarians about providing services to patrons with disabilities, Kate Todd explores several ways to make patrons with disabilities feel welcome in the library. She covers communication etiquette people first language and alternative communication systems and she highlights the importance of distinguishing between visible and invisible disabilities, and recognizing both. She recommends ways to remove barriers that discourage patrons in the areas of physical space, staff responses, signage and collections, and addresses such topics as assistive technology and computer accessibility and the important role of the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) in schools – and ways that librarians can use the IEP educational goals to provide better service for students

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BETTING ON A LEARNING COMMONS IN LAS VEGAS

Nichole Bratsouleas-Urias describes the challenges and opportunities she faced upon her return to the Las Vegas school system after a long absence. Her embrace of the learning commons approach is an example others might want to follow.

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STANDING ON A CORNER: THE ACCESS GAP IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Mary Ann Harlan argues that, although data indicate a vast majority of US teens access the Internet on a daily basis, there is a significant gap in broadband penetration in rural communities. The geographical disparity in access impacts the capacity of teens to engage in participatory communities. School libraries have an opportunity to address this inequity by acknowledging the access gap and providing tools and opportunity for participation.

EVENTS

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Thinking Outside the Box, and the Comfort Zone

David V. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

Comfort zones are great things – each of us usually has at least one, sometimes at work, sometimes at home.

If your library is your comfort zone, don't be complacent; push its limits and yours – look at that "place" as a laboratory of great experiments and exciting innovations as it moves toward a learning commons.

This issue of *Teacher Librarian* is aimed at helping you do this. Not only does it present new and innovative ideas for your library learning commons, it also extends your reach for those ideas through global connections. Some ideas have long been an accepted part of the culture of school libraries, but even these need to be revisited. This issue gives them a new and unique twist to help them become more relevant and exciting in the place we call the library learning commons.

In the second of a three part series on Makerspaces, Kurti et al go from the why of an educational makerspace idea to the how of a makerspace world. They explore how to inspire student thought and investigation, and how to inspire students and teachers to invest in new and different creative endeavors.

Woods takes on the commonly understood collaboration theme and reminds us of the core ideas we need to create a successful collaboration. Her own successful experience is retold, providing guidance for others.

Then we have a trio of authors (Small, Justus, Regitano) who introduce readers to the idea of the Project ENABLE (Expanding Non-discriminatory Access by Librarians Everywhere), an IMLS grant program established to train teacher librarians in the art of true accessibility. The concepts of inclusivity are things everyone can try in their own "place." Kowalski continues this theme in her article on making the library judgment free and inclusive to all. Building the concepts of self-esteem with students helping other students and teachers is part of her plan. Todd also continues the concepts of inclusivity with her article and how to work effectively with patrons of the library learning commons that have disabilities, and how to make them feel welcome and

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is committed to collaborative partnerships for improved student learning through thought-provoking and challenging feature articles, strategies for effective advocacy, regular review columns, and critical analyses of management and programming issues.

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Not only does it present new and innovative ideas for your library learning commons, it also extends your reach for those ideas through global connections.

included.

Bratsouleas-Urias goes into how the teacher librarian can come from a past working situation into a new one and be able to adjust and create an exciting and innovative program that excites students and teachers of today.

Harlan addresses the issue of how to overcome the gap in Internet access in areas where broadband is unavailable or significantly diminished. She talks particularly about how to address this inequity among students and schools. In her column for this issue, Marcoux also looks at

how the gap in student use of technology can be bridged.

As in all issues of *Teacher Librarian*, Loertscher and Marcoux review recent professional publications you might find useful in your professional development or daily work.

Be sure to look at the various columns in this issue – they add a variety of ideas sure to spark a bit of thinking. Take note of the centerfold poster and accompanying article by Loertscher and Koechlin exploring the concept of the successful learner. Pull it out and have a conversa-

tion with students. Do they have any ideas for improving personal expertise, cooperative group work, and collaborative intelligence? Ask them how the learning commons could help them be more successful. Show the poster to a group of teachers and ask them the same questions.

Take note of the Brain Trust which features a wonderful teacher librarian in Australia who has a successful learning commons. Jennifer Boudrye, the new director of library programs for the District of Columbia Public Schools, is a guest columnist in this issue for the “Advocacy” column, normally done by Mark Ray. Boudrye offers an alternative approach to enhance the perception of teacher librarians.

So yes, this issue is full of ideas to help you push the limits of your library, yourself as a professional, the student use of the concepts you put forward. We invite you to explore these ideas and consider them for your “place.”

WRITE FOR *TEACHER LIBRARIAN*!

The editors of *Teacher Librarian* welcome original manuscripts on any aspect of library services for children and young adults that will contribute to excellence in programs and improved support for their delivery. We are committed to collaborative partnerships for improved student learning through thought-provoking and challenging feature articles, strategies for effective advocacy, and critical analysis of management and programming issues

We invite you to share your knowledge, expertise, or research with the *Teacher-Librarian* readership and the greater teacher librarian community. We encourage articles from both practitioners and library educators. Submissions will be considered for publication only if they have not been published previously and they are not under active consideration by another journal. Articles usually range in length from 2000 to 3500 words, but can be longer or shorter depending upon the needs of the topic.

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