

## Preparing for Your Next Career Move

By Gloria Jean Glasbrenner

**F**inding your first job out of library school—or an advancement opportunity, for the more experienced librarian—can be challenging in the best of times. In today's tough economy, it can seem almost impossible. Don't despair. You can be successful, but it will take a little more time, a great deal of planning, and patience.

Your planning should begin with creating your greatest tool for getting an interview—your resume and cover letter. You may want to start with AALL's Career Center and the AALL Placement Committee website for resume writing tips. The local bookstore or library can also be a great resource. A poorly written resume or cover letter can be a barrier to getting that interview call. Your resume is an employer's first impression of you. Here are a few tips to guide you through the resume and cover letter process:

**Detail:** Spend a few minutes researching who in the organization has the power to hire. Doing so will allow you to avoid the usual "Dear Sir or Madam" and instead address your cover letter to the individual. If you are instructed to send your resume to HR and you have discovered the name of the individual with the position opening, by all means, send your resume and cover letter to both.

**Resume Construction:** The heading should be simple but contain your name, address, e-mail address, and phone numbers where you can be reached. Your information should be organized in a logical fashion, keeping descriptions clear and to the point. Use standard margins and easy-to-read fonts. Resumes still look best and stand out if they are on watermarked stationery, especially if you send it by standard postal service. Keeping your resume to one or two pages is best in most circumstances. Most recruiters only take about seven to 10 seconds to scan a resume before moving on to the next.

**Follow Basic Rules:** Proofread for spelling, grammar, and tone. Be sure you have followed the employer's instructions.

**Sell Yourself:** What do you bring to the employer? Objectives are out these days. Employers are more interested in your qualifications and what you bring to their organization. You need to sell yourself, and the resume and cover letter is a tool to that end. Let the employer know what you can do for the organization and what your experience, talent, and skills bring to the table. Your resume and cover letter need to stand out from the other candidates.

**No Responses:** If you find you are not getting called for an interview, you will need to revisit your resume and make changes. You may also want to obtain professional help. The AALL Placement Committee website lists recruiters and information professionals at [www.aallnet.org/committee/placement/listings.htm](http://www.aallnet.org/committee/placement/listings.htm) who can help you locate a professional resume writer. Often a recruiter will also be willing to help with improving your resume.

Once you are confident you have a successful resume, it is time to begin your job search. The best place to begin is with your personal and professional network. Former bosses, professors, colleagues, friends, and family can be your greatest resources for finding your next job. Invite one of them to lunch to discuss your goal in changing jobs and discovering how they may be of help. Employers are more likely to interview someone referred to them or someone they know and respect than a complete unknown.

Reach out to recruiters and headhunters, and take advantage of online career boards. Be sure to check out AALL's Career Center at [www.aallnet.org/careers](http://www.aallnet.org/careers). In addition, AALL's Placement Committee website ([www.aallnet.org/committee/placement/index.htm](http://www.aallnet.org/committee/placement/index.htm)) offers many links where legal information jobs can be found. Both federal and state

## 21st Century Resources

**A** ALL is all about innovation and improvement. This month, we are highlighting two improved services for members: AALL2go and the AALL Career Center.

It's amusing to remember how jobs were advertised in the old days, before the Internet. In the last century, but still less than 20 years ago, AALL had a job hotline—an actual telephone hotline that wasn't even a toll-free call:

**Career Hotline/Job Database Service**  
For current listings, call the 24-hour Career Hotline, the index to the Job Database that is updated weekly by Friday noon. To request a printout of the complete listing of any or all jobs on the hotline, AALL members should call. Responses will be sent out within one working day of receipt of the request. You may subscribe to a monthly listing of the full database, mailed first class, on the first business day of each month. (24 *AALL Newsletter* 51, 1992-1993)

A couple of years later, AALLNET was launched. Remember instructions like these?

All listings are also available on AALLNET. To access, telnet to [acc.wuacc.edu](http://acc.wuacc.edu), enter *lawnet* at the login: prompt, and go to the official menu...listings are updated weekly on Friday.

Fast forward to 2009 and the launch of the AALL Career Center. The Career Center still has job listings, but there is much more information available, and it's always open when you need it.

Similarly, the Annual Meeting has been our primary educational effort for more than 100 years. AALL has tried a variety of ways to augment the meeting over the years—for example, when I first joined in 1990, AALL sponsored Winter Institutes. Other efforts have included moderated online discussions, online tutorials, satellite videoconferences, and regional workshops, none of which were entirely satisfactory.

Now we have AALL2go. The wonder of technology provides members with content when they need it. This searchable, on-demand archive of programs would have been unimaginable 20 years ago and is a great addition to the many career and education resources that AALL offers its members.

I hope you find value in these member services. Please let us know what you think.



Catherine Lemann  
AALL President, 2009-2010

government websites list openings for information professionals.

After careful planning and patience pays off and you get a job interview with a great organization, don't panic. Job interviews, like first dates, can be a nerve-wracking experience or a wonderful opportunity. The key to making the experience a wonderful opportunity is preparation.

#### **Make a great and lasting first**

**impression:** The key to this is to be well groomed and professionally dressed. Your suit, dress, and shoes should be clean, well pressed, and in a conservative solid color. Limit your use of jewelry, perfumes, and aftershave—less is better. Carry a portfolio or briefcase to add to your professional look. It will also serve as a place to hold additional copies of your resume, as well as contact information for your personal and professional references should you be asked to provide that information. Remember to contact your references to let them know they may be hearing from your prospective employer.

Greet the interviewer with a confident handshake and smile. The opening conversation should be engaging and enthusiastic to let them know you are pleased to be offered this opportunity.

#### **Interviewing techniques and skills:**

Research the organization and the job requirements so you can have an intelligent conversation about what you can bring to the employer. Your research will help you construct possible interview questions that may be asked on the day of the interview. Thinking ahead of time about your work experience, professional training, and other job-related activities will assist you in preparing for possible questions.

Know your weaknesses and strengths. Having the ability to detail your strengths and how they relate specifically to the position will impress the interviewer. Questions about your weaknesses can be tricky, so be prepared to demonstrate how you turned a weakness into a learning experience. It is even better if the learning experience relates to the interview position.

There are many books and websites that can aid you in developing your interview questions, techniques, and skills. Also, practicing your interview skills in front of a friend, relative, or mirror in a full dress rehearsal will help you to become better at interviews and boost your self confidence.

**Salary Discussions:** The rule of thumb is to never discuss salary in the interview

unless it is introduced by the interviewer. If the interviewer does bring it up, you can say something like "I really don't want to commit myself to a salary discussion at this time but would rather focus on the value I can bring to your organization." Hopefully, salary won't be discussed until an offer is made. This allows you to research the market and negotiate a salary and benefits that are acceptable to both you and the organization.

**Thank You Letter:** At some point in the interview, ask the interviewer for his or her business card. This will provide you with the contact information you need for a thank you letter, which should be written and sent no later than 24 hours after the interview. Don't ever fail to send a thank you, even if you decide you have no interest in the position, as someday there may be a position in that organization of greater interest to you.

With careful research and preparation, you will be ahead of most of the job-seeking competition. Good luck, and remember to take advantage of the AALL Career Center and Placement Committee. ■

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## **AALL2go: A Powerful Education Tool for AALL Members**

*By Celeste Smith*

### **History in the Making**

AALL's new online learning center, AALL2go, began in 2006 as an initiative by the Continuing Professional Education Special Committee to distribute quality programming to the wider membership. A new model of national, local, and regional programming emerged with funding from the AALL/BNA Continuing Education Grants Program, supported by a generous grant from BNA. Members who received grant awards furthered the effort by providing quality programming to be replicated and distributed to their colleagues.

These programs, freely available to AALL members, gave way to regularly scheduled webinars and new challenges, namely how to maintain a growing library of member-driven continuing

education content that members could access 24/7. The solution was AALL2go, a live online learning center that provides AALL members with expanded opportunities to access continuing professional education.

### **What Is AALL2go?**

AALL2go is AALL's new online learning center created in direct response to member demand for more continuing education and more flexible ways to access this information, AALL2go will help you expand your knowledge base and gain new skills to grow your career.

The new online learning center offers you ultimate flexibility and freedom to take continuing education programs from your desktop—whenever and wherever you need them.

### **What's Available on AALL2go?**

The online learning center provides diverse continuing education resources, including AALL Annual Meeting program recordings, archived webinars, audio recordings, and video recordings, along with accompanying program handouts.

### **Need It Fast and Want It 2go?**

AALL2go utilizes advanced search capabilities so you can focus on key areas of interest and quickly find materials. You can search by date, speaker, session ID, competency, or keyword, and can stream the content directly from the site for immediate access—or get it 2go by downloading an MP3 file.

## How Do You Get Access?

Access is easy. Go to the AALL2go My Account page located at [www.softconference.com/aall](http://www.softconference.com/aall) (or click on the AALL2go logo on the AALLNET home page). Log in using the e-mail you

have on file with AALL and your AALL member ID. If you forgot your log-in information, please contact Hannah Phelps at [hphelps@aall.org](mailto:hphelps@aall.org) or 312/205-8022.

AALL is committed to providing you

with the tools you need to take your education and career to the next level. ■

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## AALL's New and Improved Career Center

This year AALL launched a new and improved interactive job board, the AALL Career Center ([www.aallnet.org/careers](http://www.aallnet.org/careers)). Designed specifically for law libraries and legal information professionals, the AALL Career Center offers members and the profession at large a highly-targeted resource for online recruitment.

### Benefits for Job Seekers

#### Job Search and Online Application

Gives job seekers a way to search and apply for positions online and manage their search by "saving jobs" for review later.

Job seekers can also e-mail positions to themselves or to a friend, giving the AALL Career Center additional exposure through viral marketing.

#### Resume Posting

Job seekers can upload a resume and make it available for employers to review, confidentially if they choose, allowing passive job seekers to

make themselves available for new opportunities as they come up.

#### Document Manager

Job seekers can upload work samples, references, letters of recommendation or certification, cover letters, etc., and make them available for employers to view.

#### Job Agents

Job seekers can create and save a set of personalized job posting criteria and have results sent to their e-mail inbox on a regular basis.

### Specific to Employers

#### Online Job Postings

Online job posting submission streamlines job posting process and management.

Tracks applications, page view traffic, and reports statistics.

#### Resume Database

Employers gain access to the resume database at no additional charge whenever they post a job.

#### Resume Agents

Sends new resumes directly to a recruiter's inbox based on pre-determined criteria—the resume agent does the search work for you.

#### Featured Jobs

Highlight job postings in search results to make them stand out from the rest.

#### Featured Employer Profiles

Gives employers a way to promote their companies without having to have a posting listed.

#### Google Maps

Gives employers a way to plot the job location on a job posting to give candidates a better understanding of the geographic proximity of the job to their homes.

#### GoogleBase/Indeed/Simply Hired Job Distribution

When jobs are posted to the AALL Career Center, they are pushed out to job search engines on the internet, creating greater exposure for an employer's posting.

## Maximizing Continuing Legal Education—Get the Most Bang for Your Buck

By April Schwartz

In today's tight job market, continuing legal education resources are critically important to law librarians. To illustrate the financial crisis' effects on law libraries, the October 2009 AALL Economic Outlook Follow-up Survey of law library directors found that more than 160 law libraries have experienced staff reductions, about 140 have eliminated vacant positions, and nearly 450 have a hiring freeze in effect. About 60 percent of all respondents have experienced additional budget cuts since the first survey in April 2007. AALL members working in academic; private firm; corporate; and state, court, and county law libraries are scrambling to find new jobs or to take up the work of

those who have been laid off, furloughed, and frozen. Those looking for new jobs and those lucky enough to be secure in their current jobs all need to have access to resources that will help them keep up with changes in the field of law librarianship.

Law librarians join AALL for many reasons, but foremost among them is access to career resources and continuing education opportunities that lead to knowledge concerning best practices in the field. Expectations for what a law librarian should know are changing as quickly as the information environment. Through the AALL2go online learning center's provision of recorded educational programs from our Annual

Meetings, AALL monthly webinars, online audio and video recordings, as well as the calendar of educational events and the speaker's directory, the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Committee works with AALL staff to provide guidance on how to choose the right continuing education for each career stage. Those who are experiencing a limited ability to travel to face-to-face meetings because of budget woes need online access to educational programming, as do those who wish to supplement their continuing education in between face-to-face conferences. For all the reasons that AALL members need continuing education, AALL will strive to meet those needs.

## Resources Galore

**AALL2go**, our new one-stop shop for continuing education, uses the Competencies of Law Librarianship to organize online educational programming for AALL members. The site is searchable by keyword and type of event, including webinars, Annual Meeting programs from the past three years, and past recorded programs funded by BNA/AALL grants. There are also exciting future plans to expand AALL2go even further to meet the changing education needs of law librarians.

For those who wish to become leaders in law librarianship, the AALL Leadership Academy is designed to promote career advancement, and the **AALL Management Institutes** help to prepare new law library managers.

If you're looking to let fellow AALL members know about events and opportunities in law librarianship, the **Calendar of Events** ([www.aallnet.org/calendar](http://www.aallnet.org/calendar)) allows members to share program and event information inside and outside of AALL.

The **AALL/BNA Continuing Professional Education Grants Program** promotes sharing through participation by providing quality continuing education opportunities for all AALL members. The grants fund many programs whose speakers share their presentations through live recordings in various formats. The AALL/BNA grants program is open to AALL chapters, special interest sections (SISs), member institutions, caucuses, and individual AALL members. Start-up funds can be used for programs that use formats such as webinars and podcasts; for funding partnerships between SISs and chapters; for programming developed and

staged at the local, regional, or national level; or for other purposes.

Recent programs that have received grants include the New England Law Library Consortium program, "The Shared Electronic Resource Understanding (SERU): Can It Work in My Library?" and the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries' program "Supporting Historical Trials Research and Dramatization." The Membership Development Committee's program, "The Value of Mentoring," also received a grant, as did the Northern California Association of Law Libraries' podcast, "Using CI to Stay Ahead of the Curve."

BNA generously provides the grants to make this program possible. The timeline for 2009-2010 proposals is:

### **November 5, 2009**

Second-round proposals due to AALL Headquarters

### **December 7, 2009**

Announcement of funded grants

### **August 2010**

Deadline for expenditure of funds

### **February 25, 2010**

Third-round proposals due to AALL Headquarters

### **March 29, 2010**

Announcement of funded grants

### **November 2010**

Deadline for expenditure of funds

### **May 6, 2010**

Proposals due to AALL Headquarters

### **June 7, 2010**

Announcement of funded grants

### **February, 2011**

Deadline for expenditure of funds

## Competencies of Law Librarianship

The AALL Continuing Professional Education Committee uses the Competencies of Law Librarianship as a guide to classify programming. The areas covered by the competencies are: 1) core competencies; 2) library management; 3) reference, research, and client services; 4) information technology; 5) collection care and management; and 6) teaching, with additional subcategories falling under each area. The competencies represent a shorthand guide to skills needed by law librarians to do their jobs effectively.

This useful guide is now in need of revision. The CPE Committee is charged with revising the competencies by spring 2010. Revisions will be based upon feedback provided by law librarians and by the changes being made in similar guides used by public, academic, and special librarians. Whatever the revisions, the "core" of the competencies will continue to guide employers in searching for the skills and talents they look for in law librarians and by AALL members in their pursuit of excellence in law librarianship. Suggestions for revisions to the competencies are still welcome.

It can truly be said that AALL is all about continuing education, and there are many plans in the works for even more offerings. Through these resources, AALL will help its members weather the bad economic times and see the profession through this period of tremendous change in jobs, the job market, and access to continuing legal information. ■

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