Attending the annual meeting of the American Library Association in New Orleans at the end of June 2011 was a valuable learning experience for me, especially as a new director in a college library. I was able to attend a full day pre-conference on the basics of business reference, learn more about innovations in information literacy instruction, inquire more about applicable uses of an institutional repository, and have face-to-face meetings with vendors.

As a newcomer to the LDS Business College Library, one of my challenges has been getting up to speed on business reference sources. The Business Reference 101 pre-conference provided me with an extensive bibliography of print reference titles, overviews of important electronic databases, and definitions of specific finance, investment and industry classification terminology. From this session, I have determined that the LDSBC Library collection development policy needs to be revised to clearly state which areas of business we will collect, areas for which we will rely on partner institutions, and those areas that we will not collect. For example, we will focus on business management, creating business models, entrepreneurship and sales. We will not collect market research. Also, after this session, I don't believe that our students are utilizing the full capabilities of the electronic resources available to them. I would like to add a mini-class in 2012 to teach students, particularly entrepreneur students, how to harvest industry and company information from Hoovers, IBIS World, and Standard and Poors.

I attended two very beneficial classes on information literacy instruction. I am right in the midst of revising our information literacy curriculum, so these sessions were very timely. I was impressed with the range of innovative ideas for teaching information literacy and these ideas are going to help the LDS Business College Library expand and adapt information literacy instruction for students in career focused programs. Information literacy does not have to be tied to writing a paper. Students can apply research skills in the media creation process or the development and execution of a project. In order to create something, a student has to remember, understand, apply, analyze, and apply information. So the simplest way to teach all of these skills is to ask students to create. 21st Century information literacy should emphasize lateral thinking instead of linear thinking. So, we need to help students acquire the right skills and then give them opportunities to solve problems in creative ways. Specifically, as a result of these sessions, the LDS Business College Library will be encouraging faculty to have their students play BiblioBout to learn how to select and evaluate sources and offer to help design infographics assignments to teach information literacy.

I also attended a session on institutional repositories hosted by DigitalCommons that looked at undergraduate uses of their product. I found many of their ideas helpful, even if we choose to use different software. For example, most LDS Business College programs require students to create e-portfolios. I think something like BePress, which allows for the upload of text, PDFs, images, and video, would give students better tools for creating a web-based portfolio and would allow the college to
archive student work. The LDS Business College also hosts career workshops and seminars. An institutional repository would be an ideal place to archive proceedings. A few of the libraries that participated in this session sponsored undergraduate research awards. In addition to monetary awards, winner’s papers were included in the institutional repository. I would like the LDS Business College Library to be in a similar position to encourage good scholarship, although we may give awards for program specific and collaborative projects instead of research.

While walking through the exhibit hall, I was able to meet our reps from Alexander Street Press and Agati Furniture, both of which I would not have had the opportunity to meet if I had not been at the conference. I was learned about a music collection from Alexander Street Press that might help us eliminate the last of our video cassettes. Meeting with our reps from Agati Furniture also allowed me to take care of some warranty issues that were unresolved.

I was very grateful for this opportunity to attend the ALA annual conference. It was very beneficial in helping me to build new skills to lead the LDS Business College Library. I came back encouraged about the future of academic libraries and their contributions to their institutions. I also have a new list of ideas that I want to implement at the LDS Business College to improve our services and support of academic programs.