

## 1995 McKinley Scholarship Winning Essay

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*By Jason Binford*

**D**uring this semester in graduate school I have been fortunate to work in an internship under a librarian who is quite active in professional organizations. Partly through my contact with her, I've come to appreciate the importance of involvement in these societies, and have steadily become more active myself. Attending the ASIS Annual Meeting would be a valuable next step in my involvement.

I have three main aims in attending this annual meeting. First is to begin the long process of developing professional relationships with colleagues. The importance of these relationships is evident to me after observing my supervising librarian's daily work. Although she is the only professional in her small special library, she is in daily contact with colleagues across the country (via the Internet) and across town (via phone). When she is evaluating a new technology, for example, one of her first steps is to query colleagues who might be familiar with it. In turn, she freely shares her expertise with the information professionals who regularly contact her. Following her example, at this meeting I would hope to get to know better both LACASIS members who attend and other ASIS members outside this chapter. This would lay the foundation for the same mutually-beneficial collaboration in my career that I've witnessed in my mentor's.

A second aim is closely related to the first. In addition to actually meeting other professionals, I would like to improve my skills in interacting with them, both formally and informally. This spring I played a small part in organizing a well-attended continuing education seminar for librarians. I was struck by the range of personal interactions that the organizers and participants engaged in, ranging from formal presentations to quite informal meetings between colleagues. It was apparent to me that there were considerable differences in ability at these activities, and that the most effective communicators were often the ones with the most experience participating in similar events. I would hope to further develop my own skills through participation and observation at the annual meeting, as well as at similar events in the future.

Finally, it almost goes without saying that I expect to enhance my knowledge of information issues and technologies through attending the various keynote addresses, presentations, and other activities at the annual meeting. I'm particularly interested in the "Partnerships in Navigation" segment planned for the meeting, and would focus on that area. Since much of the material

presented will likely not have been published yet, some of it will be on the cutting edge, and provide a great chance to further my education.

The ASIS Annual Meeting is a unique opportunity for me to develop relationships, skills, and knowledge that will help launch me on my career. The McKinley Scholarship would give me the means to attend this meeting. In turn I would hope that my presence at the meeting would offer a modest contribution to the spirit of the event and lead to greater contributions from me in the future.

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