

Margaret McKinley Memorial Student Scholarship Essay

Mary Wickline

University of California, Los Angeles

What specific benefits do I expect to derive from attending the ASIST 2005 Annual Meeting?

The theme of this year's ASIST Annual Meeting interests me because I believe in research being used as a road to practice—a blueprint for success, if you will. I also believe it is the best, solid research that sparks action. I have been working with a charter school group that does exactly this—uses research to create a practice that will improve the education of African American children.

I would also benefit from attending the ASIST 2005 Annual Meeting by hearing the plenary speaker Pattie Maes. She was cited as a “Leader for Tomorrow” by the World Economic Forum, which is currently focused on Africa. I am additionally interested to learn what she means when she says she has an interest in collective intelligence. For me, collective intelligence is building knowledge through interdisciplinary collaboration, research, and practice.

The ultimate personal benefit of attending this conference would be finding an excellent web designer to help in the creation of an online version of another project of mine: an American Histories Library and Research Center.

How will I integrate these benefits into the start of my new career?

I would integrate attending the ASIST conference into my career goal of creating an American Histories library. This project can only come to fruition through the collaboration and collective intelligence of historians, librarians, and technical support people from varied and underserved backgrounds. I would like, in the next ten years, to create a library that gathers in one place American history from the perspective of those groups typically marginalized in the telling of U. S. History — specifically African Americans, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans. Currently, resources exist, but they are useful only to those who know where to find them. And they are typically buried in academic departments at universities and only available to a select few. I would like to make a library that is publicly accessible (like the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture) and gathers information cross-culturally in the same location.

At least initially, I expect this will be an electronic resource—a website—that gathers resources only in cyberspace, but it would represent an effective starting place for researchers seeking the best sources. The website would also serve as a tool to seek funding for the library. Eventually, the American

Histories library would include a physical location but still offer extensive electronic access to make these histories more accessible to anyone who wants to know them.

How might LACASIS or ASIST benefit from you receiving this scholarship?

I could write about my experience of the conference. Other members, who have an interest in my project and an expertise in building websites, might also benefit from collaboration with my working group. Since the conference schedule and seminars are not yet published, it is difficult to know more definitively who I might meet and how ASIST might benefit from my attendance.