**VALE Reference Services Committee**

**Annual Report 2012-2013**

**Part 1: Roster of members:**

Linda Beninghove, *Stevens Institut*e; Natalie Borisovets, *Rutgers University;* Denise Brush, *Rowan University;* Jody Caldwell, *Drew University;* Pat Dawson, *Rider University;* Joseph Deodato, *Rutgers University;* Maria Deptula (co-chair), *Berkeley College;* Guy Dobson, *Drew University;* Nicolas Jackson, *Bergen Community College;* Tony Joachim, *William Paterson University;* Katherine McGivern (co-chair), *Bergen Community College;* David McMillan, *Caldwell College;* Bruce Slutsky, *NJIT;* Madel Tisi, *Ramapo College of New Jersey;* Lawren Wilkins, *Hudson County College.*

**VALE liaison members:**

Jane Crocker, *Gloucester County College* (Executive Committee Liaison)

Yingting Zhang, *UMDNJ* (Website Committee Liaison)

**Part 2: Summary of achievements during the past year**

* During the past year the Committee recruited three new members from Hudson County College, Bergen Community College and Stevens Institute.
* Members of the Committee presented at two break-out sessions at the VALE Annual Conference.
* The Committee met four times, twice virtually (or semi-virtually) using Sametime and Adobe Connect web conferencing software.
* In April and June, the members of the Committee were able to access two webinars on reference data collections tools: RefTracker and LibAnswers in order to evaluate and recommend the products.
* The Reference Services Committee Subcommittee was charged with the task of evaluating potential candidates for a shared VALE discovery layer.

**Conferences and presentations:**

Deptula, M., Espinel, R., Wilkins, L.; (2013, January). Presence and vale of mobile apps in the NJ academic environment. *VALE/ACRL/NJLA Cus Users' Conference*. Piscataway, NJ.

This presentation included an overview of mobile apps and explored the NJ academic libraries' presence in the mobile environment. A variety of mobile reference tools as well as library vendors' mobile apps was introduced and discussed. The goal of this presentation was to assist academic librarians and encourage them to promote these valuable mobile tools in order to improve students’ abilities to conduct research.

26 people attended, 21 filled out the session evaluation form.

Deodato, J. (2013, January). VALID: Reference and resource sharing update: Evaluating library discovery layers. *VALE/ACRL/NJLA CUS Users' Conference*. Piscataway, NJ.

This presentation included the overview, methodology and recommendations of the Reference Services Committee Subcommittee’ tasked with evaluating potential candidates: VuFind and Blacklight and XS, for a shared VALE discovery layer.

24 people attended.

 **Committee meetings:**

June 12, 2012 - Pat Dawson announced she was stepping down from the co-chair’s position and Maria Deptula was recommended for the co-chair.

September 25, 2012- the Committee met at the Alexander library, Rutgers’ New Brunswick and discussed proposals for the Annual Conference presentations, and continued evaluation of reference collection tools including LibAnswers, ref Track and Gimlet.

 November 15, 2012- the Committee met virtually and in addition to confirming information about presentations at the Annual Conference, the attendees discussed the best reference practices from their respective colleges.

February 25, 2013 -The committee met virtually. Several members reported on their presentations at the Annual Conference. It was recommended at this meeting that the Committee should dedicate time to exploring the topic of vendors’ apps with their pros and cons. It was also proposed that the Committee explore and evaluate various virtual reference services.

**Part 4:**

**Recommended objectives for the next fiscal year**

1. Based on the feedback received from the break out session, the Committee will continue to investigate vendors’ mobile apps and prepare information (flyer, presentation???) for the VALE members.
2. The Committee will organize a panel presentation and discussion on virtual reference tools and best practices.
3. The Committee will search and evaluate additional software for screen sharing and online meeting.