

Transportation Librarians Roundtable
October 8, 2020
Transcript

I want to, it's top of the hour. I do want to welcome everyone who has joined us so far for today's transportation librarians Roundtable, we are going to give it another minute or so for a few other people to join us. So, stay tuned. But again, welcome, and thanks for being here.

I think we can go ahead and get underway here. There is an official welcome to everyone for today's Transportation Librarians Roundtable. On behalf of myself and the transportation library, we very much appreciate all of you taking the time from your busy schedule and everything else going on to be here with us. What promises to be a great next hour. Not to put any added pressure on our speakers, but I did want to say that as well. Before we get underway with the actual program for today's, I want to go ahead and hand the microphone over to Sam Strain and he will go over the ground rules for all of us to keep in mind for today's session. Go ahead.

Thank you everybody, for joining us. Before we get started, just a few technical pronouncements. Today is being recorded, including the discussion portion. The most reliable way to connect the audio is the code in the top left corner. When you're using your phone, meet your computer speakers by clicking the Adobe connect speaker icon. You want to change that icon from green to white. Also, please remember to press star six on your phone when you're not speaking. And if you need to step away or take another call, thank you. For anyone who may need a benefit from it, are also equipped with love captioning which should be visible in the captioning pot on the right or bottom hand of your screen. You can also use the chat pod in the bottom left at any points to type in comments, questions, or any technical problems you're having. We will be monitoring the chat throughout the presentation. Thank you, everybody for listening, and we can get our discussion going.

Thank you, Sam. Today is focused on the changing landscape of transportation libraries. It's indeed a very timely topic as I'm sure all of you agree. What's going to happen today is two speakers are Rachel Cole and Roberto Sarmiento from the transportation library from the University of Chicago. What's going to happen is Rachel will be starting off with her portion of the presentation, and then Roberta will be following her. So, that will be the format. What I would like to do now is go ahead and formally introduce both of our speakers and go through the bio of each one and get underway with the hesitation. So, to get started here, and I'm trying to get a little bit organized here. We also hope to have happen and then plan to have happen, each of our speakers have gone through the respective presentations, we are going to have the opportunity for an open discussion and all of us to talk about these issues. They are very important issues, of course. So, that will be the format here. But let me go ahead now and introduce our speakers. Rachel Cole is a public services librarian for Northwestern University's transportation library where she provides reference instruction, and resource support to students and faculty of the University of transportation center, as well as a global community of transportation researchers. Northwestern is unique in that it allows to combine her interest and cities, special collections in history as she works with technical research materials, along with special collections, and archives related to transportation in all modes. Rachel works to make connections between the current and historic collections, and to make libraries materials, interesting, relevant, and accessible to broad communities of researchers in the interest of public I would say that she has certainly not only met those goals, but achieved them over the years. Prior to work as a transportation librarian, Rachel worked with the research editor with Encyclopedia Britannica. With libraries including the Burnham librarians at the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Newberry Library. Outside of the work,

Rachel enjoys running, spending time with family, exploring the city by walking and travel. Her favorite trips usually involve some sort of transportation, appropriately enough. A definite highlight was a trip on the trans-Siberian railway to Beijing to St. Petersburg. It had stops in, you feel free to correct me on my pronunciation. The law and the Tartan Siberia, along the way. Quite exciting. I think you're the first person who's actually travel on that railway. And then the other thing that I should mention about Rachel, even though it was not included in the bio, here. I think everyone here knows this anyway is that Rachel was recently elected the, hopefully I have, I have it written down somewhere, but I can't find enough. But she was elected the chair elect of the transportation division of SLA, and she will also be in charge of our program for next year's virtual SLA conference. Hopefully by memory, jumpstarting care just fine for me. And hopefully I captured all that correctly. But in any case I want to congratulate Rachel. She deserves a round of applause for stepping up to those leadership roles. So, I did want to mention that before I stopped the introduction of her peers and moving on, introduce you to Roberto. It does not need an introduction because I think Roberto already did and has great initiative and accomplishments on behalf of our community throughout the years. I'm going to go ahead and still go through his life anyway, here. Roberto Sarmiento is the head of the Northwestern library. Previously, he worked as a director of the Panama for U.S. and Panamanian, Japanese government and transportation information. And as a geologist. Roberto has received several awards for his work on behalf of the transportation library. The library profession. Roberto is an SLA past president. From Dominican University and a BA in geology from St. Louis University. And I said quickly that I'm not surprised by geology because his present concern, Roberto is and always has been a rock star. So, with having stated that, I would now like to hand the microphone over to Rachel Cole and she will now give her presentation. All yours, Rachel. B McKay, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today. I know that a lot of people are suffering from fatigue right now. I think this is one of the few times since July that I want a full day without a single online meeting, but I really appreciate the TLR spring ringing the community together. And that's what I hope to do today. Bring the Transportation Librarians community together to talk about our role in landscape and how our job continues to change. We came up with the idea and the topic for this presentation way back in January. A month before covid really hit and started working from home, and what sometimes seems like years ago. At that time, no one could have anticipated what this year was going to bring. My initial ideas for my part of this talk were focused around the ways that my role has changed and evolved from what I always considered a librarian role. And how the creation of content and collection is essential to region introducing our users to our collection. I was planning to discuss the skills that I found valuable and how I see them translating to the more collaborative productive future for the transportation library and community. While things are changed since February, I will try to still work some of my initial thoughts and. But I'm going off a little bit in a different direction as our landscape has gone off in a different direction thanks to changing work, caregiving, and living arrangements during covid. There are a myriad of challenges. With a five-year-old, managing learning and working from home, I understand that about as well as anyone. And if there are any interruptions in today's visitation, please know that a five-year-old is on the zoom call as well and one never knows what could happen. But there are also a lot of opportunities in our current situation, and I hope we will be able to have a conversation about some of those today. Maybe also come about how to address some of the challenges that we, in our communities face, and how we can shape the landscape of our professions that are brighter and are more cooperative. First, an introduction to our library. If you don't already know us, Roberto and I worked together at Northwestern's transportation library. Where Roberto is library director in the public services librarian. Our collection has over 600,000 items and covers all modes of transportation. Airlines, planes, railroads, pedestrians. If it moves, we collected. This is to support the needs of the University's transportation center established in 1956. The students and faculty are working on current research and transportation. Much of this is focused on emerging technologies. So, things like automated, connected, electric abilities, and the majority of our

faculty are based in the Department of civil and environmental engineering. Affiliated faculty are found in departments across the University including journalism, history, economics, sociology, everything in the world around us, and our collections and our work. 99%, or maybe more of our collections are really just technical materials. The remaining 1% is a special collections made up of transportation, and historical materials, and these are collections that we've been shaping to help inform users understandings of the origins of our current print transportation landscape and technologies, which may seem new to us today would have a foundation in the past as well. For further context for today's presentation where a small staff, working with a large collection in a much larger organization. We, primarily Roberto Corday's the activity of our library with other units throughout Northwestern University libraries that include acquisitions, metadata, preservation, and digitization. We have a much larger staff throughout the library to support the work that our library is doing. The title of our presentation today is the current Transportation Librarian landscape and how it is changing and evolving. This is a layered and complex topic. With the landscape looks like with different roles in different agencies, universities and other contacts. I won't cover the entirety of this discussion today, I can't. There are so many good points to be made about changing skills, requirements, and adapting to and anticipating the changing information needs of our users and communities. We all understand this landscape differently. The discussion will be much richer across our community. And I know that Roberto will cover a lot of these important points in depth in his part of this presentation. I hope that we will be able to have a conversation about both of our presentations. So, as I talked today, I hope you will be thinking of ways in which your roles have changed and evolved. Was that your relationship is the transportation library and community has changed and evolved, and be willing in discussion following Roberto's presentation to share ways we can encourage our community to grow and support each other in research and development going forward. So, like I mentioned, I plan on focusing on ways that my job has evolved from what I consider the typical duties of a reference library since I started that Northwestern. And how some of these things are related to the future. I think that a lot of this has been focused integration of content with our collection, and creation of content and related services. Also, sharing this content out to our user base and the larger community as well. For us, this is included in things like exhibits, social media, newsletters, and other outreach where we work our collections in. It all boils down to the essential skills of all librarians of being able to connect our users with the information that they need. The only difference here, I think is that the format and attention are intended to get this information out in front of the user before the research question is even formatted or before the research idea has really come to the users mind. I was a research editor at Encyclopedia Britannica, which was a great place to hone writing skills. Including the essential skill of condensing a lot of information into a readable text, at which I think is essential in communicating such as blogging, social media, and exhibits. I also want to recognize Roberto's role in understanding the importance of these outreach methods and prioritizing them as a service in our library. Related to this, very basic-- Be met if everybody could mute their Mike.

[Indiscernible - overlapping speakers]

Okay, thank you. Very basic designs still. They are using complex products or much more basic programs like canvas, which is a free, online service. So, using the skills to present information in a professional format also helps to get our message across. I think that the abilities provide information to our users, sometimes before they know that they need it is essential. We can introduce new sources of information and the fire new research questions. And we, I think, as a community will make the most impact when we share those ideas and content with each other, with our communities.

In our current environment of coded and working and living arrangements, I thought to focus on things like skills and communication seems insufficient for a talk about the changing landscape of our profession. There are other points that I kept coming back to as I prepared this presentation. I think that we need to recognize that the changing landscape for librarians and for all workers will involve some flexibilities, and some focus on what we are able to look option what we are not. There might be aspects of our work to take the back burner during these times. For those of us were caregivers, whether it's young children who are learning from home during the pandemic, or of elderly parents or relatives, children with special needs, or older children who have social and academic lives that have been uprooted. It's not the same as when we are in the office. When our schools, daycares, senior care facilities, and other services are institutions that we depend on to be there to support a workweek are suddenly gone. Balancing our personal and professional lives, even before the pandemic might have been difficult and it has become even more challenging. I'm sure that others feel like it's impossible some days like I do. I want to take a minute to remind us all to put ourselves and coworkers to cut some slack and give ourselves a pat on the back for all the work we've been doing in this environment. Many universities are offering things like flexible work arrangements, but the extent to which this helps limit the librarians, you can't cut down to time paid to go with the half-time schedule. And child care assistance program, which include subsidized care, for example, at some universities for 10 days per year. They are all but useless. For many of us, it might come down to having a supervisor willing to work with us, and that is to say that my boss was extremely understanding about the fact that I have not been able to be at the computer during normal business hours. Sometimes I will email at 11:00 but I'm catching up for the day. At noon I am not picking my child up to the playground. I might not be able to respond to it until later. So, this has required a lot of flexibility on his part and adjustment to expectations on my part. And I know I'm not alone in this. During the discussion of the end of the hour, I will be curious to hear from the rest of the group about what has been working for you during these challenging times, and how you balance the duties of your job with caregiving, or other responsibilities that you have. Not everyone has the means to hire help and support for their family during the day. We might not all have control over a budget they can help facilitate the support network. But supporting and advocating for things like paid flexible work arrangements, child care, and eldercare support can help to narrow these gaps. And then, a little bit about the literal changing landscape of our work. Some of us have landscapes that have quite literally changed. Before the pandemic, he might have been used to working from an office with a place to go for a quiet work environment. I certainly appreciate that now. In the past, I would have daily check ins, informal chickens with Roberto and discuss our work, or have productive impromptu brainstorming sessions about the latest projects or new acquisitions. Running into coworkers in the hall, or getting coffee to chat about our work are great ways to keep up with what is going on in the library. Good ideas about new projects, or discuss ways to collaborate with coworkers. Suddenly, these opportunities were informal connections have disappeared. So, what I've been wondering about and thinking about is how we can re-create these informal interactions in a virtual workspace. How can we leverage the upside of working from home to make these interactions in our communities. We are able to come up with a solution to this issue, I think we can drive a changing landscape of our profession and in a positive way. The pandemic and our current work from home situation has created a moment where we can have a revolution of sorts around our workplace. Help save it with our vision for art community. And I can't think of anyone better to talk about developing a vision for our community than Roberto. So, that's all I have for you today, thank you, and I look forward to continuing our conversation at the end of the hour.

Thank you, Rachel. And Bob, thank you all for coming in and spending some of your time this afternoon with us. Yeah. So, now what, what do we do, and what can we do to move forward and in this environment, and I need to go back and you know, kind of look into how did we get here. Basically, we

were contacted to do a TLR. And it was like well, we had just gone through a great up in our group, and are bigger group. I think what we can do about the changing landscape of transportation like the library and still something to do. Kind of light. The pandemic striped, we went home, everybody went right away remote, and sheltering in place. You know, like everybody else, when we are spinning in our little hamster cages, we catch up to provide services and just about our existence. So, this was early in the pandemic, and then later on, things even changed further. Obviously, we lost a position. With our assistant taken away from us. Then, the library, the University libraries, it's serious for the members. In the library. Then, they started providing early retirement packages. A whole bunch of other people at the library. Also, went away. And then, even to make things worse, we were reorganized again in the transportation library from the special libraries, special collections unit to something that is, I got like engagement, which is really, really far away from a special librarians job. So, basically, we've been living in organized chaos for pretty much everybody. For the last six months, seven months now. Forget the previous topic. Let's talk about how we cope with this. And then resources we develop, and hopefully you know, come out of this in a better position. And that's basically what I want to talk to you about. What we have done to get to a better position. So, let's say quickly. You know, what have we gotten in the recent past? The pandemic and the quarantine has taken much longer than anybody thought, back in March. We were prepared for a few weeks. Now, you know, seven months. Originally working remotely and now working in a hybrid mode. Not having access to our collections, our physical collections like most of us. You know we have some digital collections which we can access anytime anywhere. Most of our stuff is physical. But not having document delivery affect us all. You know. The other issue is, our researchers, our faculty, our students perceiving the value of getting from our services. Reproducing is helping them. Are we doing a good job providing this research? Are we being forgotten by the administration? It was a very critical moment. We were attempting to provide services but we knew that we were not providing services as well as we did. Two months ago, or six months ago, whatever it may be. So, the information and resources we are thinking how are we translated? Physical world and services into a environment. And this, really helped us in the partnership and the network within hours to come up with new alternatives to innovate and partner with you with new groups and new teams. And utilize their resources, which we, as transportation library and did not have the launch or connection. So. The fear, or the anxiety of having provided access and services to remote researchers really would you know, on one hand fear, and the other hand really spur us to move forward. We have the issue of telework and technology. Talk about having you know we grow tired of them. We have to get more training. We have to get new training. We have to relearn things. The whole issue of virtual meeting challenges on my network here. Having a crisis moment there. And we will provide services. Are we connecting with our researchers you know? One thing provide face-to-face. And another from a remote location. You know, all this happened in environment where -- is the library going to be there when you come back? Are you going to have a job, am I going to die? Is it going to be okay? You know really serving our faculty and all the political issues and social issues. You know, and this curated, this affected our health, right? Pretty sure I'm not alone. Our health took a hit. The anxiety, the stress. And it's real. And we all need to keep an eye out on that. Because it will help. So, in the middle of all this crisis, in the middle of this chaos, I need to do something for the benefit of my library. I love magic libraries. I love planning. I was anxious, I was struggling with anxiety. I control thanks for the only thing I can control is my job. How I do my job, how I live with Rachel. How we put out services. Do we have to move forward. Now, I realize that what I done is nothing new. I'm pretty sure that's interesting. And that's what I want to share with you. I decided to become proactive rather than reactive. I started reading about libraries who worked in the environment, how they did, Todd, I'm sorry for what we can do when we start to figure out what we need to do. And my organization. That was key for us to figure out what is it that the University do. Why are they planning for it, to figure out how I can plan for the future of my library. Because I think one day, sooner or later, this code thing is going to die, and I want

to be prepared. I want to be prepared to face whatever the future is with answers that I have thought about them. You know, rather than coming up with an answer in an hour or 30 minutes. So, thinking about this. All right, about what the future's going to look like. And something that I came up with. Realizes what telework is not going away. I'm sure of the people would rather do telework and we are going to have to provide you know, a remote services, like really heavy remote services. Not like we did a year ago from now on. We are going to have to invest in the collections. Whether we do them ourselves, or you know. People require intimate access to information right away. You know, whatever. So we are going to have to do that. We are going to have to continue to become technology. I am fully aware. I truly believe that special librarians are masters, we are working ourselves into learning technologies every few years because is always acne technology coming up that we need to figure out how to use it to provide services. And more even, to the point that we need to become more invested within organizations to become a resource within our organizations, right? We all try to be physical and connect with our faculty. With our peers, our managers. But we were there. You know, we were in the building. We were talking to each other. Now, it really takes a much bigger effort. We need to invest ourselves more than we were before. And another issue, financial uncertainty was going to be key in the short-term and the long-term. I mean, our budgets. Most of us, our budgets were already in the downslope, and then we will continue to go that way. If not, we are plateauing. I very much doubt that we will be kissing our budget. So, without this in mind, and our anxieties and research and stuff like that, we are really thinking strategically and deep about how or what the position my operations support my team, my library, organization, researchers. And that sort of thing. And how also is a library going to fit within this environment? Because I have to rethink. I needed to rethink everything. I needed to review everything. And focus on this core for my library. I needed to make sure that what we do best, sissy with an organization. You know, the research world transportation. Any to identify that and grab a hold of it, and try to maintain as much of that as I could to provide better services. He keeps changing all the time because we are not out of it. Things are still going on. So far. And I needed to drop that, the stuff that we were doing because it was nice to have. We have an extra person, which we don't have anymore. We needed to identify all of this and put together and shake it. So I can answer the big question. How to remain relevant. What do we need to do for our library to remain relevant. For our jobs to remain relevant. Because, you know. If the library, we just have to make our library work. Both of our jobs, the scenario about this, we need our jobs. All right, so it's kind of a symbiotic relationship. So, I came up with some you know, we need to develop content and programs. And Rachel was talking about how you anticipate needs and put a stop on there. The other thing is you know, we decided to try to move everything. Everything that we used to do, and all of that. As much as we can. We also needed to create new sources for knowledge, position, distribution and access. In any way that we could. You know, whether we do video demonstrations, working on digital tours. Developing more, like more really super targeted light, attending every meeting. You know I would skip because we need to be there. You know, whatever. That went out the window. So, we needed to do that, and I went out and started working. Okay, why do I need to, what tools do I need in order to succeed in my plan to become, to stay relevant? I identified two tools that I want to talk to you about today. And one of ours that comes to the networks. And then, the toy develop for a future document. I will get to that in a minute. Now, let me see with is here. Okay. So, networks. Well. Basically, that's a document. This is not new. We all knew this. We are all working on this in this environment for a long time. Yeah. You have internal and external networks. In a time of crisis, we need to rely on our communities, and our networks for information, for ideas, for comfort, for innovation, for support, for guidance. We cannot face a crisis by ourselves, right? Operations, and working in a collaborative environment is, which we, I'm pretty sure we all did in the past. But now, we have to do it steroids, right? We just have to do this to the max. So. In one hand, we have our internal networks, are official networks, which is obviously, we need to become, if we have a resource again, we need to become a bigger resource, a better resource. We need to become relevant.

You know, if we were relevant before, we need to become even more relevant now. We need to be present, we need to share information with our network, and obviously in a positive way, not in a pesky way, sort of thing. But you know, we have to spend a lot of time cultivating these networks and making sure that it's a key player within the network are not only because the information. We are anticipating questions, we are providing resources for people to do their jobs also, because we need them to know that we provide our life. Literally, we sent a lot of our time working. You know. Partnering, we try to go over there. All of them, mostly in the environment that we have right now. Or if you can do it in person, even better. If you can do that right now. And we need to be political. I mean, we might have kind of like waited for people to walk by, or something. No, we have to go out there and say hey, you know, follow up and send an email with the conversation, please. So, this is where we need to shine. Right? And how do we shine best? And what of the answers is well, we shine best within our organizations if we rely on the networks of the transportation information networks that we already belong to. You know, some more networks than others. We have a whole half of the network of communities, T KN, the fund. CRL, the state libraries. You know, and this is where, sorry. And Northwestern's Transportation Library live of course. This is where we tingle out and gather information, and get new ideas, and share new ideas. Get information and then we can bring into our internal networks, and bring in those new ideas, and that new information to shine within the internal network. That's what is going to make us relevant, because we are bringing. We are not being -- we are bringing stuff into the network that we collected in our professional network, and our transportation information network. Directly, this all worked great, and one of the networks that we have, that we have had for a long time is very dear to me. It has been tram up, right? It's been in operations maybe 25 years or something. Perhaps more. But actually, that's not, it's being underutilized. She asked people to provide indoor and document delivery. Or, to answer a question, where really, that is not enough. So the network to really be useful to us, we need to share information with the network. We need to spend stuff in. You know, you put it in the network so that everybody can benefit from it, from your knowledge. From whatever we are doing so they can be generated will be brought back into the network. You know. We get stronger if we share. And that entry level is minimal. Don't sense yourself. If you find something since it out there. Members gain something from an email you sent. The whole community will be stronger and we will all be stronger. All right, so that is my little plug there. Now. What I developed what became really important to me, we have a future document to basically, this came out of my side, right? Why did I do this? Well. We should get control of my future and feel like I was going to be prepared. Once covid ended. I don't want to say that nobody asked me to do this to my management did not ask me to do this or just something that I thought well, you know. For me and Rachel to do a better job, we need to figure out where we are going, how we are going to operate within this changing environment. Originally, with an internal document, just for us to have ideas on how to move forward. Once I presented it to my boss, he said well. The position paper. Which I did. And that was to his bosses. And took over there. So, basically, it's putting all the research I had done. Everything that we needed to to get better to provide services, and what we needed to add. Possibilities and answers to questions that management has now asked, because management is managing at the top level. Nobody really, who else could be as knowledgeable to manage our libraries? We need to show that we are managing our own little piece of a puzzle over here. So, as I said, it's a plan, it's a document advocated were changes you know, hey. We need to do this if we want to do that. If you guys do this in that, it's to participate. And so, problems to answer management questions. Above all, it's a PR document. You know, we define the library as a team player. We are showing that the library can produce, we are showing that we as managers and information professionals, research librarians, whatever. You know, we are doing the best we can to place our library, and place our organization in a really good footing to face the issue, right? It's consuming our country. So, I came up with the structure. You know, within my library. And I went in deep. And I was saying you know, a deep box on what's going to happen in the staff in the budget. You know, the

advantages and disadvantages. The opportunity, and a very honest way. You know I tell management hey, this is what the future may look like. This structure, I think is very scalable. I mean, some of you may not deal with the stuff that I have to deal with, but it's something that I would say hey, you know, you start thinking about how to do your job in the future, and what do you think the future may be. And it gives you an idea. It gives you the, kind of like the authority. I imagine my library. You know, now the results. Not everything that I wrote and plan for the future is happening. I mean, I wrote originally the document and may. Not everything I thought was to happen happened. And that's okay. You know, we keep changing the plan in a way. Another results. My boss is in upper management we were really, truly surprised that I would do this, and that I was planning for the future. I was planning for a bigger future and a small future for my life. For Rachel and myself to go forward with a new environment for us to we had to move to a new location. I shared my document with our community, and this individual shared it with his management and EOT, the same D.O.T. There were like oh my God. This is pretty cool. Something like this. There all future document for the library you know. This was during the summer. So, the summer into early next year, which is pretty much what time a document goes into for fiscal year 22. I share it, interestingly enough, I shared with some of my peers at Northwestern. Other librarians. And they were really shocked. Why did you do this? Why did the library do that? That's not my job. I completely disagree with that. You know if we don't plan for our library, nobody else will really plan in detail for our libraries. So, you know the fact that I'm being proactive, give me a sense of satisfaction. The fact that this document is already -- we are already using it to answer questions that my administration is coming to me now. And I say hey, we already thought of that, here it is. The satisfaction, very little, two little bits of this document begin part of the main library and university, sort of a plan for imagining covid. Gives us great satisfaction as well. Because again, you know, I am managing our future, and we need to manage our future when we go forward. Now, this is not the place for me to share the whole document. We don't have time for that. However, if you send me an email off-line, I would be more than happy to share it and an edited version of this document. I can assure with everybody outside Northwestern. I would be more than happy to share and talk to you about that. I think you know, at the end of this, both are presentations, we really want to talk about hey, how as a community, we can do better to move forward and come out better that we came in in this environment. And thank you for your time. And that's all I got. So. Any questions?

Thank you, thank you very much, Roberto. Thank you, Rachel. Wonderful presentations, both of them. We have some time for comments and other insights that people might want to share with Rachel and Roberto about what they had to say. I did want to bring to your attention Roberto a couple of questions from Bob Sweet. He showing a future document different from his plans. And so, how is it different?

Yes, from my perspective, I might be wrong. It's more, kind of long future sort of thing. About more, in a way, more strategic in his orientation. Here, you know, my perception, I was thinking about, just for the next year I have two years. Because I needed to be ready for this being ended. I thought we were going to go back as well. No. We are in hybrid mode. And this plan, my future document went through a lot of details, name names, give account numbers. Specifically talk out loud. Very minor details. Very minute details. You know, originally this was a working document. This was just for Rachel to have an idea. Where are we going to put our money? What were you going to do. What we were not going to do. So, it was very narrow, very deep. And I think that might be the difference.

Thank you. Thank you, Bob for bringing that up. I see Roberto that Sheila has noted she will be contacting you. For both of you had to have to say during the course of your presentation, really struck a few chords with me, at least Rachel I did want to particularly say that you had as far as I was concerned with what you had to say. Just about those competing obligations and other things that have come

along with the covenant environment. Particularly with respect to the caregiver role, and also the stepping into the parental role. Not they take so much time or not, but for instance. You and I talked about Rachel. I have my oldest son. Involved in this community college program with special needs adults. So, they've gone online because of the pandemic. Situation. And so, it's been a baptism of fire for him, and also for me. For as far as just trying to get him into the world and other aspects of technology. I think that he has certainly gotten very high in the learning curve, it's easy as well. That's a key example during the work week when I'm in the next when you're trying to get my homework done. And also, the older generation to my father-in-law, who just turned 91 this past Sunday. It's been, he is doing fine now. But however, there has been to get into his medical plan and said everything during the course of the week. So, it's definitely, what I'm trying to say is that there is a balancing act to it, and it certainly has a great degree of flexibility, so I appreciate you saying that. It reinforces my own realization that I'm not alone in that regard for one of the things that I've done a whole lot. And how to deal with during this. But thank you for giving a voice to that. And, I did want to bring to your attention a question to both of you. Bob is asking how big is the staff in the TLR staff, how has their roles changed ?

I can start. Go ahead, Roberto. Totally fine.

I think there are two questions here, actually. You know, transportation library is online. And we've been reorganized. We went from eight staff to three, and now, there are only two. The real question is, Northwestern University libraries, we have 253 people. When the pandemic started. 53 people were furloughed. Some of them have come back, some have not come back. And we lost an additional 20 people with this early package. How our jobs have changed in the last period. In other words, for me, the head librarian has changed a lot in the sense that we will not have to do with it because we went to it. The areas to a whole new team of people. Different. Completely different than what we used to do. But a lot of ways also, if things have not changed. You know, we still are answering questions. We still need faculty and part of our community. Still managing a library some ways in the term library. You know, I don't even know what my library is anymore because in a sense you know, it's this desk in front of the bay window I have in my house, here. Part of my living room, which keeps expanding. So, you know, if this is one good thing about our library, we, for the most part moved into the digital world very quickly. You know, practically overnight, and we were somewhat successful and continued providing services. Behind us, there was this humongous group of people doing all kinds of things to provide access to databases, traditional resource, to expand our universe in order to keep providing. You know, doing our work. And for us, things never slacked out. Maybe in the summer as they normally do, but research kept coming every day. Questions, and you know, everything, except that we did not have to deal with the building anymore. And making moves, and clinic staff, and all that other stuff. That has been for me. How about you, Rachel?

I will totally echo everything that Roberto says. I don't think that there was any sort of a break, or let up in the need for information from our users. Like maybe a little bit of the summer was difficult. Other than that, our users are keeping up their usual research workload, and the questions over this period. They have definitely reflected that. I will say that this, working from home, working remotely has given me the opportunity to take on some new skills and learn some new skills. So, things like doing online teaching, music, film, how to interact best with students and that sort of thing. The library, the large University created a lot of resources for helping faculty and librarians learn how to do those things better. So, that was extremely useful to be able to learn some new skills that way. And one thing that Roberto and I both discussed as being useful was the creation of online videos to help introduce our collections to users where we might not be able to meet them in person to do that. Like usual. So, that was one new thing that we took on. I guess just a need to communicate with our users in this virtual

environment, where they can't just stop in to see us during the day, like as usual. So, being thoughtful about the ways that we can access information about things like policies and access to our collections. I guess, letting our users know that we are still there for them even though we are not physically there for them in the building. I think that that is also important for us.

You see from Roberto that his phone just died.

Yes.

We have about five more minutes left. I'm sorry, Roberto. I'm sorry the phone died on him. I appreciate his comments and everything. Particularly during this portion of the hour. But I'm glad you're still with us, Rachel.

Sure.

Did want to have a couple of things here that the first of all, Bob is responding to. What has been said concerning the staff you have there. These days, Rachel did say that they had made the assumption that I guess I had too that more people there, but it's the fact that it's two of you makes you and Bob's words super librarians. I think there's quite a few other people here that would agree with that. So, before you leave today, don't forget to pick up your cave.

Just want to make sure that we recognize that it enables all of this were to happen. Like acquisitions and processing materials, and everything that goes into library work, we would be able to make it work like we do. But I do appreciate the complement. So, thank you.

And, Marie from Kansas D.O.T. notes that she is lucky, I guess this is going back to the idea of being in the caregiver role in the parental role. She is lucky that her kids are older and both are at work during the afternoon. However, Marie also adds that she had to spend the first hour of today with one of her cats because it kept swatting her and insisting that she be pet. So, I'm sure the cat is grateful as only cats can be. So.

This was very nice.

Doesn't sound nice, actually. I think also, some of them with the cat and her household as well. The things we do for our loved ones, right?

True. Steve XO, and going down here, I see a comment about burning man. And, I wrote for us Roberto. There's a story that yeah. I guess the burning man was the explanation. Or the things that we have on this DOR. Right now, we are up against the last couple of nits here. This is definitely one of those where we are at this, I feel, that we could probably go on and on with the discussions. This has been really great. I'm enjoying the energy here. And then, the interaction, and also, in a sense, it kind of reflects a wonderful phrase that Rachel used her presentation. The informal interaction. So you know. In the context of our respective workplaces that's kind of been part of driving the discussion here this afternoon. And then, so. It's with some regret I have to say we need to wrap it up here very soon. And so, Roberto's phone died. You know, he is still with us the way of the chat. But Rachel, do you have any closing comments or anything you want to live with us for today?

I just want to thank everybody for the connection moment at the end of today's call. It's been really nice seeing everyone's comments and chatting with people. I really enjoyed it. So I hope we can continue this, continue this going forward.

Absolutely. Thank you to both of you. First of all, I had a couple of quick things. I will try to be very quick about it. I think it was pretty accurate. Rachel's new leadership roles. She was recently elected the chair elect that got both elects. For the transportation division, and she's also the conference chair for the 2021 SLA conference. So, a big congratulations there. Rachel. You are definitely moving steadily up the ladder. I think all of us will be better for it. So. I want to highlight that. I want to share how clear I was earlier. And right now, before we do rapid. I was reading this correctly. I think it might have something she wants to share with us. Some news?

She needs to get on the phone. She wants to type it. I don't know. If not, while we're waiting. Just let everyone know, Sam and I appreciate all of you taking the time to be here with us today for your own participation today at the TLR along with her presentations given to the speakers. The next TLR is scheduled for the second Thursday of next month, which I believe is Thursday, November 12. So, please stay tuned for further details about that. In the meantime, I hope that everyone is doing well, here. I'm getting my farewells when I try to see if there's something that you need. Here, here we go. Sabrina's message. She notes that her company is merging, really being bought out by Canadian companies. Sorry, the phone is upward and the Catskills at the moment. Don't know yet what will happen to my position. So, please keep us posted on that Sabrina, and I hope you enjoy the time. Please keep us close with what happens to respect. That is big news. In March, this coming March of next year, her company turns 100. Thank you for sharing than his. And again, let us know what happens. That will be interesting to see what happens along with Marie, and keeping my fingers crossed. Once again, everybody, thank you and have a good rest of the day and a good rest of the week. Take care, bye-bye.

[Event concluded]

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