



LibraryCo e-Newsletter

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funding was available for further study. The seed had been planted.

Being a mature student made the initial process challenging and then on top of that a whole new way of learning ... online. I was not always overly patient waiting for instructors to reply to my questions and dilemmas. I was so grateful that Judith Dale of the Hastings Law Association and I often took courses together. It seemed what one of us struggled with the other could decipher. We talked each other off the ledge more than once.

Giving you a run-down of each course and what I learned might be very boring, so if you'd like to see the list of mandatory and elective courses I invite you to check out Mohawk's online distance education website: <http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/continuing-education/library-information-technician-diploma.html>

SPOTLIGHT ON ... Library and Information Technician Program – Personal Experiences of a Recent Graduate

By Gabrielle Gignac, Library Technician, Victoria-Haliburton Law Association



It all started so innocently with LibraryCo offering a bursary for a *Law Libraries and Legal Research* course available through Mohawk College. This was the summer of 2003 and the course began that September. It was not my intention to pursue a Library & Information Technician (LIT)

diploma, but only to become more skilled in my job.

As the course proceeded we learned that this was one of the 30 or so courses required in the LIT diploma program. I don't remember if it was a conscious decision to continue in the quest for the diploma or if I was just interested in becoming more proficient. There were quite a few of us in OCLA who were enrolled in that legal research course and in the process of adapting to online learning. Discussions ensued as to whether continuing would be beneficial. LibraryCo had made it clear that

As previously mentioned, there are about thirty courses required to receive your LIT. In my opinion approximately 10 of these are money makers for the college. As unfortunate as that is, it's a fact of life. An estimated 40% of the courses have a written exam at the end. However, if you live further than 100 kilometers from Mohawk College you have the option of having your exam proctored locally. I had all of my exams proctored at Fleming College in Lindsay and they were fabulous to deal with throughout the program.

Some of the courses, such as *Library Financial Planning and Budgeting*, *Human Resources and Management* and *Client Services*, were a breeze. These courses would be invaluable to 18 year olds just out of high school, but for those of us who have been doing this job for a while they were second nature. My final course this past summer was supposed to be my 'bird course'. I wanted a no-pressure few months. Well, I wouldn't recommend the literature course "*Introduction to Children's Literature*". It sounds a little fuzzy and happy doesn't it? It fooled me too.

Naturally, when it came time to choose electives I steered towards the legal side of things: *Government Information*, *Special Libraries*, *Records and Information Management Fundamentals* and *Strategies for Instruction for Library Technicians*.



PLARing is a common term used in the post-secondary world. It is often used as a verb. Previous Learning and Recognition is a process whereby you can apply to the college to review transcripts of other post-secondary courses you have taken that can be used to replace necessary credits. This was a challenging, albeit worthwhile, effort as I was able to PLAR my two general courses, saving my time and LibraryCo's money. I had several from which to choose and I was surprised at the ones Mohawk would accept and ones they wouldn't. Mohawk ended up accepting *Piano Forte* from McGill University and a *Human Resource course* from Fleming College. I had more recent Ontario Institute of Law Clerk courses from Durham College, but for some reason they were unacceptable.

It is necessary to take two general education courses. There are at least fifty to choose from. The choices are pretty funny; everything from astronomy to sports to the history of music. There are two placements required for the LIT. I completed my first one at the local public library and the second one at a local elementary school. Although what I learned from each experience was fabulous, I did discover I could never work in an elementary school. Kids today!!!

I am happy that I'm on this side of it. I'm pleased with myself for finishing, even if it did seem to take forever. And, I'm grateful for the opportunity and support, both financial and emotional, from all concerned.

My advice to those considering this path of study:

- Field placements. If you have worked in a public library or a school library, Mohawk will not permit you to do your field placement in that type of library setting. I have not worked in any other type of library so I was not affected by this policy; however, I believe it could be a problem. On a positive note, Mohawk or more particularly Dolores Harms-Penner, the coordinator of the LIT program, has reviewed the unique situation of those of us already working in a courthouse library and has reduced the number of field placement hours from 105 (three full time weeks) to 35 hours per placement.
- Learn with a buddy whenever possible. Sometimes when the instructor is not readily available it takes two brains to figure some things out. Some teachers were great about prompt responses; and some . . . not so much.
- Pace your time if necessary. There is no point, and in all reality no award for weighing yourself down with too many courses at once. All that does is stress you and make it all the more possible that you'll feel overwhelmed and stop.
- Take ALL computer-type courses at the end of your journey. I found out the hard way that there is a time limit on what the college deems "current". When I was just about to graduate the

coordinator mailed me and explained that because my EXCEL course was three years old it was not considered current and I would have to repeat it. I fought this because nowhere could I find this gem of a policy, and I won. But I expect there is a policy in place now.

- There is a lot of reading with this program. I know, I know, funny, eh? Library programs = lots of reading. From time to time I had to remind myself that there are kids right out of high school taking about six of these courses per semester. There is absolutely no way we can read every link provided in every document we're given to study. You have to pace yourself and decide what material is going to be most useful and give you the most proficiency in your chosen field.

I am going to repeat three pieces of advice because even writing this I felt I needed to consult with Judith Dale for her thoughts. She wanted me to drive home the point that the buddy system is invaluable from both a sanity point of view and a second opinion point of view. You certainly don't want to get half way or further through a lengthy assignment to find out that you misinterpreted the instructor's information. And trust me when everything is done online it can be easy to misinterpret. And trust me when everything is done online it can be easy to misinterpret. Also, I'd like to instill in any potential student that they need to check with the college to see if they have any policies in place with respect to currency of courses upon graduation).

If you decide to further your education with a Library & Information Technician Diploma, you will not be sorry. And, good luck!

Reminder re Continuing Education Bursaries

The new year is the perfect time to start a continuing education program. LibraryCo has a generous bursary program for library assistants to earn their library technician diploma, and for library technicians and law librarians to further their education. In most cases LibraryCo pays the tuition and materials costs. For more information, go to our web page at <http://www.libraryco.ca/resources/law-library-bursaries/> and click on "Continuing Education Bursaries for Law Library Assistants" or "Continuing Education Bursaries for Library Technicians and Law Librarians".

Don't hesitate to contact us for further information. We look forward to hearing from you.



Toolkit of Legal Resources

Please remember that all lawyers have access to the Toolkit in all 48 county and district law libraries. Desktop delivery is available to lawyers who practice in the 28 local associations as well as Algoma, Kenora and Thunder Bay.

Lawyers who practice in one of the associations that are included in the Desktop Delivery Initiative should request a password by e-mailing libcosupport@lsuc.on.ca and include their name, date of birth, Law Society of Upper Canada member number and e-mail address. Christopher Stephenson, Library Systems Administrator at the Great Library, will create new accounts and e-mail the password information directly to the lawyer, often the same day.

Lawyers with passwords should go to www.libraryco.ca and click on the Toolkit icon. They will be taken to the Toolkit page where they will click on the icon and be prompted to enter their user name and password. At this point they will be at the search page and ready to begin their research.

Both the Toolkit of Legal Resources and the Desktop Delivery Initiative are available without charge. Please do not hesitate to contact LibraryCo for further information.



News from Great-West Life

New phone numbers for medical assistance while travelling

Plan members who find themselves in need of medical assistance while travelling will have new phone numbers to use beginning January 1, 2014. All phone numbers that are currently in place will also continue to work.

The new phone numbers are listed in the following table.

Call toll-free from:		
Canada, U.S.		1-855-222-4051
Mexico		0-1-800-522-0029
Dominican Republic		1-800-203-9530
Universal countries (<i>applies to all of the following countries</i>)		1-800-9006-7555
Argentina	Hungary	Norway

Australia	Ireland	Philippines
Austria	Israel	Portugal
Belgium	Italy	Singapore
China	Japan	South Africa
Costa Rica	Korea (South)	Spain
Denmark	Luxembourg	Sweden
Finland	Macao	Switzerland
France	Malaysia	Taiwan
Germany	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Hong Kong		New Zealand
Call direct from:		
Cuba	1-204-946-2946	
Call collect from:		
All other countries	1-204-946-2577	

Note: From some countries, 00 must be dialed, rather than 1, before the 11-digit international toll-free number. The list of universal countries, will be available on GroupNet™ for Plan Members and on our corporate site at http://www.greatwestlife.com/001/Client_Services/index.htm.

Existing phone numbers/GMA cards

Since all phone numbers that are currently in place will continue to work, there is no need to replace your existing Global Medical Assistance (GMA) cards. GMA cards will be updated to reflect the new phone numbers once the current stock of cards is depleted.

For more information

Please contact your Great-West group representative.

Law Society of Upper Canada CPD

For Your Information...

The **2nd Annual Human Rights Summit** was shipped to you by standing order on December 23, 2013. However, presenter Yola Grant has revised her paper, "Proving Discrimination through Circumstantial Evidence", which is contained in tab 6 (Major Case Law Update Panel Materials).



We will be shipping a printed replacement of the tab 6 paper for substitution in your materials with your January standing order. In the meantime, you can access the .pdf through the attached link:

<http://www.libraryco.ca/law-society-of-upper-canada-cpd/>

Interested in hosting **video replays** at your library? Contact Nicole Nightingale at nnightin@lsuc.on.ca for details.

For a listing of upcoming programs, descriptions and accreditation, please visit our [website](#). View our entire legal education resources library at <http://ecom.lsuc.on.ca/resources>

Roving Law Librarian - A Report from Marilyn Elkin

Happy New Year! This month, I will be meeting electronically with the other members of the collections team (Kelly Elliott, Vicki Westaway and Anne Bowers) to begin the process of revising the core and essential lists. Revisions evolve over several meetings and result in a final draft which is then submitted to LibraryCo at the end of March for Board approval. The approved lists are then posted to the LibraryCo web site for your reference.

Have you made a New Year's resolution to weed your overflowing collection? What about shelf reading to correct any catalogue anomalies? And are you thinking about changing your library space? I can help with all of these tasks and more! Just email me at melkin@lsuc.on.ca to set up a visit. No project is too large or too small!!

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Call for Submissions

Have you improved a process in your library or embraced new technology to improve your work? Have you found a new and better way to provide value-added service? We would love to hear from you!

Send your submissions to Beth Weisz at beweisz@libraryco.ca

