Us, Learning

Many of us are fortunate to work in environments that value learning. Oftentimes it is part of our service mandate, and increasingly it is part of our organizational culture, but what do we mean when we talk about learning, especially when it is about us learning? When we take a moment to think about ourselves and learning, do we think about formal classrooms with abstract assignments and grades, or is it leisure time learning such as yoga or photography? Perhaps we see ourselves as part of a growing group of engaged library employees who are thinking about what is next for our libraries and what is necessary to learn to be part of it.

James Martin, wrote in the recent Globe and Mail article, "Maria Montessori: guru for a new generation of business innovators":

When Google went public in 2004, Mr. Page [Google co-founder] told Barbara Walters that he credited his Montessori training "of not following rules and orders, and being self-motivated and questioning what's going on in the world" with his ability to do "things a little bit different." But what's good for the Googleplex (not to mention Amazon or Wikipedia – founders Jeff Bezos and Jimmy Wales are also Montessori grads) may be beneficial to any business looking to think creatively and drive innovation. (Martin)

We know that our libraries need us to think creatively and to drive innovation, so what, and how, do we need to learn for this to happen? While skill-based training, such as learning how to search a new database, may be a critical part of staff training for service delivery, it is not the type of learning that is going to move us and our organizations forward, and as it's a little too late for most of us to enrol in the local Montessori program, what can we do?

Recognized library leaders, Ken Roberts and Daphne Woods, wrote in their Feliciter column, "Thought Leadership" that "Every person who cares about libraries and their future should spend at least some portion of each week thinking about ideas and sharing them with colleagues." (156) In this issue, Kevin Stranack in "The Connected Librarian: Using Social Media for 'Do It Yourself' Professional Development" provides us with a practical process for searching, thinking, and sharing of ideas that develops a personalized learning strategy and community. As well, we are fortunate to have a compelling report from Lita Barrie and Rebecca Raven on the new executive leadership program sponsored by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council titled, "Building Our Future: The Public Library Leadership Fellows Program." I invite you to read these articles, think about your professional development and learning, and share your thoughts, plans, and future with your colleagues.

Enjoy!

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Works Cited
