

Welcome to the 2010 Library Assessment Conference

by Martha Kyrillidou, Association of Research Libraries

October 24, 2010

Baltimore, MD, USA

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the third Library Assessment Conference held this time in Baltimore – the vibrant city on the water with something to see in every corner! My name is Martha Kyrillidou and I am one of the three co-chairs of this Library Assessment Conference.

We have planned a distinct and, I hope, distinguished program with the goal of strengthening the Library Assessment community we have been serving for the last four years with these events ... and my gosh, what a gathering ... if there is strength in numbers, we are proud to welcome all 460+ of YOU here today. We are proud to join forces with you and actively look for better ways to make libraries stronger institutions through effective, sustainable and practical assessment or as we would like to revamp it – though Organizational Performance Assessment for Libraries!

To paraphrase Darwin's most famous passage from *On the Origin of Species* "I can hardly explain the reason, but there is to my mind much grandeur in the view of the"... Maryland rooms filled with the sea of professionals interested in library assessment.

We hope that each of you will not only enjoy the wonderful program but will take some time to enjoy the outer banks of Baltimore as well ... because it is a 'great city' and what we are told by Steven Johnson in *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation* is that there is "something about the environment of a big city that is making its residents significantly more innovative" ... so let's see if we can figure out whether this is true over the next three days!

With such a large number of attendees we have some old-timers and many new-timers – so let's make a commitment to each other to introduce ourselves and get to know three new people at least.

Conveniently we are hosting all the sessions on this hotel floor and the program guide includes a map of the floor with the rooms we will be using – all plenary/keynote speakers will be speaking to you from this very podium and for part of the day at least we will be splitting this Maryland room into two smaller segments so we will need your cooperation in making sure we are emptying the room sufficiently effectively so that we can sustain the program in a practical manner!

Of special note today is our poster session this afternoon which will follow a presentation by ARL Executive Director, Charles Lowry, and the recognition of Gordon Fretwell and Kendon Stubbs as our 2010 Library Assessment Career Achievement Awardees (our third awardee, Roswitha Poll from Germany, is not able to attend in person but sends heartfelt greetings and good wishes).

For those of you who are presenting posters, please see Selena Killick in the Baltimore rooms to make sure that your poster is set up properly by 3:30pm this afternoon if you have not done the set up already. We plan to host a poster judging session right after the 2010 Library Assessment

Career Achievement Awards are bestowed and we will need your cooperation in letting the judges and the poster presenters enjoy food and drinks first while you are meeting old friends and making new friends.

Last, but not least, I would not be here if it were not for the two gentlemen to my left – my co-conspirators in bringing us all together – Jim Self from the University of Virginia and Steve Hiller from the University of Washington. Without much ado, please welcome them!