

# THE COURIER



SLA Toronto  
Volume 55 / Number 4



## LEAH STRUDWICK

SLA Toronto President



Leah is a Research Consultant at Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP. Previously, she held positions as Reference & Outreach Librarian for the Toronto Lawyers Association, Legal Librarian with the City of Toronto, and Reference Librarian at the Bronfman Business Library at York University. Leah earned her Master of Information from the University of Toronto in 2015, after completing her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology at the University of Alberta. She has been on the SLA Toronto Executive Board since 2016, and is thrilled to serve SLA Toronto as President in 2018.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – SEPTEMBER 2018

### Leah Strudwick – SLA Toronto President

Hello, SLA Toronto! Since the last Courier in July, your Board took a summer break from events, while working diligently behind the scenes to plan for fall and winter. We have some excellent programs coming up for you over the next couple of months, and will cap off the year with our annual Joint Holiday Social presented in collaboration with THLA, FIAA, and OLA-SLC. Save December 11 in your calendar for that. More immediately, please join us for a 3 hour skills-intensive UX workshop led by Nicole Forsythe of Critical Mass this Saturday, September 22, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. See [here](#) for more information and to register.

We did have one party since my last message: on August 22, many members gathered at 3 Brewers Adelaide to (in my case, anyway) eat pizza, catch up with friends, and make new connections. It was so nice to see so many of you all in one place at the same time. My favorite part of association membership is the support and inspiration that I get from conversing (and sometimes commiserating) with my info pro colleagues. I look forward to meeting more of you at upcoming socials and education programs, a list of which you will find at the end of this newsletter.

Over the summer, the Board also worked hard on planning for succession, and I'm very excited to introduce you to a number of new Directors and Advisory Board members who are going to infuse our little organization with new energy and ideas. We will be having our Annual General Meeting in early November, date TBD, where you will hear a recap of 2018 and meet the new Board. So stay tuned for more information on that.

Enjoy cardigan season, SLA Toronto (a favorite for many info pros, I think) – take good care until next time.

## FOR THE PROSPECTIVE PROSPECT RESEARCHER

Megan Siu

*Adapted with permission from*

<https://www.megscellany.com/blog/2018/5/12/for-the-prospective-prospect-researcher>

The President of APRA Canada (Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement), Tracey Church, came to speak to one of my classes about prospect research as an alternative career in non-traditional librarianship. She spoke to us about ongoing education, mentorship, and other opportunities offered through APRA, as well as the basics of prospect research as the Senior Consultant of Research & Analytics for KCI (Ketchum Canada Inc.). Tracey encouraged us to engage in webinars, join APRA, get involved with not-for-profit organizations, and consider prospect research as a career option.

It reminded me of a blog post I created for the UWO SLA student group following a Skype Interview with Research Officer, Carmen Lee of the Toronto East Hospital Foundation. You can follow this link to the [original post](#) on the UWO SLA blog or read below to view it!

On Wednesday, March 12th, following our student group business, we were joined by Carmen Lee via Skype. We actually had the opportunity of meeting Carmen on our Toronto Trip at dinner during the reading break. I spoke casually with Carmen about the idea of possibly doing a Skype interview on prospect research, and it ended up happening!

In the interview, Carmen gave us some great insight into the world of prospect research - what "prospect research" actually means, what her role as a research officer entails, how prospect research fits into special librarianship, and pointers on finding employment in the field!

Carmen Lee is the Research Officer for the Toronto East General Hospital Foundation, as well as the Membership Director of the SLA Toronto Chapter. She graduated with a Master of Information degree from Toronto's iSchool, and took every single research course available in the program at the time. She also took a continuing education class called "Prospect Research for Information Professionals", which was incidentally taught by a graduate of the iSchool. Initially, in her job search, Carmen started out in an academic library setting, but had a chance to move around within the field during her practicum. She found her current position through Charity Village, a database of non-profit professional job postings in Canada, and by employing her Boolean searching skills looking for things such as "research job career", "research identification", and "research analyst". Before attending her interview, she reached out to a colleague in the field via LinkedIn to learn more about prospect research and prepare herself.

What does this tell us?

## MEGAN SIU



Megan is an early career professional with a passion for legal information accessibility and community engagement. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Western Ontario in 2014 and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Psychology from the University of Alberta in 2013. As the Community Development & Education Specialist for the Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta (CPLEA), she uses her background as a law librarian to maintain and uphold community partnerships, perform user needs assessments, develop resources, manage CPLEA's social media, evaluate the reception of CPLEA's resources and services, and act as an internal resource for CPLEA staff. You can follow her on Twitter at [@megscellany](#)

- We need to employ the skills we attain through the Library and Information Science program outside of situations simply involving assignments and papers. Abilities such as Boolean searching can be used immensely for the purpose of a job search!
- We need to prepare. When going in for an interview, don't wing it. Prepare in advance so that you can present yourself as professionally and suitably as possible! Make the employer believe that you are the best fit, and you are exactly who they are looking for!
- We need to network. They say that connections are how you get jobs, but that doesn't translate to "inheritance". Networking means reaching out and connecting with others - even better, with professionals. Harness the networking opportunities you get from talks, conferences, socials...basically any situation that puts you in touch with professionals. Start right now and connect with Carmen Lee on LinkedIn!
- We need to look at the non-profit sector. Because we are continually exposed to the distinct areas of public, academic, and special libraries, many of us don't stop to consider the fact that there are jobs out there with non-profit organizations.
  - Carmen has recommended taking a look at these three places to start:
    1. [Charity Village](#)
    2. [APRA \(the Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement\)](#)
    3. [AFP \(the Association of Fundraising Professionals\)](#)

***But, what is prospect research?***

- According to Carmen, prospect research is the act of gathering and analysing information, and presenting and interpreting the results. Prospect research can be divided into two main branches...
  1. *Active research*, which concerns things such as competitive intelligence.
  2. *Passive research*, which concerns more reference-oriented work.

***What are the responsibilities of a prospect researcher/research officer?***

- It is your job to connect the dots. Rather than simply stating things, prospect research entails strategically connecting what you find to meet your client's needs. Keeping in mind your clientele/audience, you need to mine the information and data that you collect, compile the information into a cohesive, presentable format, and as Carmen described it, "make your client look amazing"!

***Are there jobs for librarians in prospect research?***

- Yes! Majority of Carmen's colleagues are librarians and hold the MLIS degree we are currently in pursuit of!

***Who are the clients of a prospect researcher/research officer?***

- The clientele will vary depending on the organization. Carmen works for the Toronto East General Hospital Foundation, so most of her clients are from the foundation board members, as well as the hospital board members.

***What are the most important questions to consider when serving a client?***

- What are they using this for? For instance, if the client is meeting with someone important, what would they need to know about that person to help meet their initiatives?

- When do they need it by? If the time frame is shorter, the client would need key points. If there was more time to work with, more in-depth information could be useful.

***What resources does a prospect researcher/research officer use?***

- Free and open sources. The Toronto East General Hospital Foundation is a non-profit organization, so Carmen's research tends to employ the use of free databases and resources, much of which can be accessed through the Toronto Public Library.
- Direct data collection. In addition, Carmen finds other information through a more direct approach by consulting her colleagues.
- Mainly online material, with some offline. Carmen described her work as being very online-heavy and if she does conduct offline research, its purpose would be more for establishing a historical context.
- Social media and news. Carmen has a daily routine of looking through national news sources, and social media platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and RSS feeds.

***If I'm interested in finding a career in prospect research, where should I start?***

- Carmen suggested consulting Prospect Research for Fundraisers: The Essential Handbook by Jennifer J. Filla and Helen E. Brown as a worthwhile read that includes important terms and definitions, as well as databases. Luckily for you, this book can be found at most public libraries!

I hope that you have found this post helpful, and explore the possibility of a non-traditional library science career in prospect research!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Here's a preview of what's coming up for fall 2018. Please note that the events presented here are **SUBJECT TO CHANGE**. If you have any questions, please reach out!

Date	Event	Venue	Speakers/ Facilitators	Tentative Time
September 22	<a href="#">UX Design Workshop</a> – Last day to register is Friday, September 21!	iSchool, BL728	Nicole Forsythe; with code4libTO	9:30am – 12:30pm
October 25	TALL and SLA Toronto Social	Strathcona Hotel Pub	With TALL	5:30pm – 9pm
November 15	A Professional Development Plan: Your Tool for Success	TLA Board Room	Joan Rataic-Lang	6:30pm – 8pm
November	Annual General Meeting	Webinar	SLA Toronto Board	TBD
December 11	Joint Holiday Social	Arts & Letters Club	THLA, FIAA, OLA-SLC	5:30pm – 10pm

Want to know about our upcoming events?

- Check our website – [toronto.sla.org](http://toronto.sla.org)
- Like our [Facebook page](#)
- Follow us on Twitter [@slatoronto](#)
- Join the Toronto group on SLA Connect

## CROSSING BORDERS IN YOUR JOB SEARCH: CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Are you applying for jobs in a different country, province, or state and starting your research? Have you made a move like this before? We're looking for your contributions! We want to start a regular column that discusses tips, tricks, and lessons learned about moving to different areas of the world. We'd love to have two people per location sharing their experiences: one person who's moved there in the last five years for a job, and one person who's interested in this area.

If there's a location you'd like to write about, please email Sarah Morrison at [sarah@sarahamorrison.net](mailto:sarah@sarahamorrison.net). We hope to hear from you soon!

## TALL EXCHANGE 2K18: CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

TALL eXchange 2K18, on October 25, 2018 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, will be an opportunity for the law library community to learn from leading experts and each other at the conveniently located [Vantage Venues \(formerly the St. Andrew's Club\)](#) in downtown Toronto. Keynote speakers include Eric Wright, incoming CEO of Lexis Nexis Canada, and Dr. Khalid Al-Kofahi, Vice President of Research and Development at Thomson Reuters. **Registration is open here:** <https://talltoronto.ca/events/tall-exchange-2k18/>

Want to gain valuable volunteer and networking experience with the TALL community at an exiting full-day event? The TALL Conference Planning Committee is seeking approximately 6-7 volunteers to help with staffing the venue on the day of the conference between 8 AM and 5 PM. Details are still developing, but they will need assistance with greeting guests, providing directions, minding the help desk, and more. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. In addition, there will be a pub night afterwards! If you are interested in helping, or know someone who is, please contact Jonathan Leroux at [jonleroux00@gmail.com](mailto:jonleroux00@gmail.com) to learn more.

## ABOUT US

SLA Toronto was founded in 1940 and represents the interests of information professionals in Toronto and most of the province of Ontario, west of Kingston.

The Toronto Chapter is a dynamic and active organization with over 400 members and is part of [SLA](#), an international organization headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. We provide an opportunity for information professionals in our area to learn and network at [events](#) as well as engage on [social media](#) sites.

The chapter is volunteer led by an [Executive Board](#), consisting of a President, Past-President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, Technology & Communications Director, Membership Director, First Five Years Director, Programming Director, and a Partner Relations Director. The chapter is also guided and supported by an [Advisory Board](#).

## WANT TO WRITE FOR THE COURIER?

We want to hear from you! Email the editor, Sarah Morrison, at [sarah@sarahamorrison.net](mailto:sarah@sarahamorrison.net) with your idea.