

which differ from the worldviews of people of other races and ethnic backgrounds. In the same way, the complexities of information policy that help negotiate barriers to access touch on issues of the Digital Divide. For example, rural public libraries that do provide access to the Internet continue to struggle with poor broadband infrastructure, outdated equipment, old Carnegie buildings, elimination of federated library systems and inadequate local funding structures (Thiele, 2013).

In spite of ongoing access limitations, many sources of information are increasingly available online only. This could present challenges for older (50+) adults who may have limited technological skills. More public library technological programming and services aimed specifically at this age group need to be provided (Bennett-Kapusniak, 2013). Policy decisions may also impact intellectual freedom. Public libraries and library boards make decisions about their collections that balance LIS principles and community interests that impact intellectual freedom and access to information (Zimmer & McCleer, 2014). These are issues that have been investigated by the B2A Fellows.

An extensive promotion and recruitment effort was undertaken in 2010 after notification of receipt of the grant in the summer of 2010. Six qualified applicants were extended admission. All were non-traditional students, and all but one had received a graduate degree at least two years earlier and had been working in the field or in allied areas prior to entering the doctoral program. Because recruitment efforts began after admissions had already been made for Fall 2010, most of the B2A Fellows were admitted for the 2011–12 academic year. Once admitted, Fellows followed the same curriculum as all SOIS doctoral students, but with added expectations and opportunities.

Funding through the B2A grant provided Fellows with additional financial support for stipends, education-related supplies and expenses, computing equip-

ment, and travel support for conference attendance. Fellows undertook coursework at a full-time rate of nine credits per semester during their first two years in the doctoral program. All doctoral students at this time were expected to complete a minimum of 12 credits of coursework in their major area (information organization, information policy, information retrieval), 9 credits in a minor area (any relevant topical area from within the school or elsewhere on campus) and 12 credits in research methods, with an expectation of completed coursework in both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Fellows were paired each semester with one or more faculty members to engage in research activities during this time. Products arising from collaborations with faculty members or self-initiated research efforts began to appear in the second year of the program. To stimulate a dialogue related to research issues relevant to the B2A program themes, B2A Brown Bag presentations were organized for the 2011–12 academic year. Six presentations were made by SOIS faculty addressing research topics related to information access barriers. During the following academic year, the Fellows provided the B2A Brown Bag presentations by highlighting the relevant research projects they had been conducting. The Fellows were encouraged to submit their work for presentation to relevant professional and research meetings. In addition to the Fellows' own presentations of their work, two panel sessions were organized at selected conferences to highlight the B2A program and the Fellows' research on information access barriers. The first panel was presented at the 2012 Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC), with the second panel presented at the 2015 ALISE conference.

The third year of the program was used to prepare for and complete preparatory essays. These were a required part of the doctoral program and were equivalent to preliminary examinations. The preparatory essays required doctoral students