

## President's Corner

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### Profile of NASIG President, Courtney McAllister

by Christian Burris, Profiles Editor

Courtney McAllister is the current President of NASIG. Her NASIG experience also includes serving as Conference Proceedings Editor, a John Riddick Student Grant recipient, and a Member-at-Large on NASIG's Executive Board.

She currently is a Library Services Engineer for Northeast US and Canada for EBSCO Information Services. I completed my interview with Courtney on March 15, 2024.



*Photo courtesy of Courtney McAllister*

### When did you decide to become a librarian?

It was a gradual realization, to be honest! My very first job was shelving books in a public library as a teenager. After getting an MA in interdisciplinary humanities, I

found my way back to libraries and ended up working as a “paraprofessional” in public and academic libraries for a decade. As I got more involved with library systems and technology, I realized I’d need to have an MLIS to advance. So I went to library school and became a librarian!

### How did you start working with serials and electronic resources?

As part of my first academic library job, I worked with Interlibrary Loan and consortial resource sharing. While fulfilling lending requests, I started noticing e-resource problems, like broken links or EZproxy configuration problems. That led me to getting more involved with e-resource management. Then I started approaching some of our ILL services as a variation of patron-driven acquisitions, which created more collaboration between e-resources, acquisitions, and ILL. I also found myself contributing more to discussions around our discovery layer’s settings and maintenance tasks. After I earned my library degree, I became an e-resources librarian.

### What is your current position?

I’m a Senior Solution Architect at Atypon! I liaise with our publisher partners to identify their content management and web experience needs, and then map those needs to the Literatum platform’s functionality. I get to work with really interesting publishers and collaborate with Atypon engineers from all over the globe.

### **What has been your greatest reward as a librarian?**

To me, the most rewarding aspect of library work is learning new things that improve problem solving and enhance information access. In Scholarly Communication, nothing is static, and I find it very gratifying to perpetually learn and explore issues from ever-evolving points of view. You never know how something you learn helping one person will guide a solution further down the line.

### **What is the most valuable lesson of librarianship that you didn't learn in library school?**

The importance of trust in everything we do. Whether you're working at a reference desk, teaching an information literacy course, or implementing a new system behind-the-scenes, trust is essential. Without it, our community connections falter and ambitious changes can quickly revert to the status quo.

### **What have you been reading lately?**

I have very eclectic reading tastes! Lately, I've been gravitating towards non-fiction. I just finished *Upstream* by Mary Oliver, and I'm re-reading *How to Make Sense of Any Mess: Information Architecture for Everybody* by Abby Covert. I always have more than one book going at a time, so I'm also working my way through *The Other Side of Prospect: A Story of Violence, Injustice, and the American City* by Nicholas Dawidoff.

### **Who or what drew you to NASIG initially?**

When I was working towards my MLIS, I'd already spent years working in a library, but I didn't know much beyond the circulation and ILL world. As a "paraprofessional," my development opportunities had been a bit limited, and I wasn't sure where to start finding my way into a practitioner community and broader technical services conversations. I was also hoping to learn from others about managing the transition to a librarian role, post-MLIS. NASIG seemed like a perfect fit, and the free memberships for MLIS students made it very accessible. NASIG definitely

surpassed my expectations, and I've been an active member ever since!

### **How has NASIG changed/evolved during the time that you've been involved?**

I think this has been a change-intensive time for many organizations related to libraries and publishing. Our community's generosity and dedication have remained constant, but there have been many shifts and developments during the past few years that dramatically impact libraries, publishers, and vendors. As a member-led and driven organization, NASIG has been busy responding to these needs and priorities: Proceedings were moved to Open Access, we've organized virtual conference experiences, and we've incorporated essential values, such as Equity & Inclusion, into the [Strategic Plan](#).

### **What have been your priorities/goals as the president of NASIG this year?**

This year, my priorities have been focused on sustainability. NASIG is an incredibly important organization, and I want us to grow and flourish so that future generations of practitioners can find ample opportunities to learn, job craft, and connect with a community that supports them throughout their careers. Some of this work means trying new things, such as organizing a standalone virtual conference (NASIG Autumn), while exercising careful stewardship of NASIG's resources. Growth also entails engaging in outreach to bolster our visibility, continuing to offer practical and timely learning experiences, and resuscitating some of our communication channels (like the Newsletter!).

### **Would you like to share anything else with us?**

I feel so honored to be part of the NASIG community! There is so much creativity, expertise, and kindness here, which can feel especially rare and precious in our current zeitgeist. I'm truly grateful for every member's contribution to NASIG's impact and values. See you in Spokane!