Continued

Continuing Education News Digest from Amigos Library Services

Updates & News

Amigos Live Online Courses Are Now Free for Members
During the recent Annual Membership Meeting, Amigos Library Services announced one of its largest investments in member benefits. Beginning this month, Live Online sessions are added to the list of continuing education offerings provided as a free benefit of membership. This addition encompasses all single- and multi-part sessions focused on various practical and specialized skills. As a result, all staff at Amigos member libraries will be able to attend the Amigos Know & Go sessions, Online Conferences, Community Conversations, and Live Online courses at no cost.

In addition to the new free Live Online sessions, a new registration option is also available. Members can now register to attend the online session or register solely for recording access. Regardless of the option selected, participants will have access to the course recording for 90 days following the conclusion of the live session. This allows those who may not be able to attend the live session to still benefit from the content.

Amigos recognizes that many libraries are examining their budgets and managing increasing workloads. Expanding access to free continuing education will help ease some of the pressure library staff face. Send questions, recommendations for course topics, or interest in serving as an adjunct instructor to learning@amigos.org.

Announcing The Hive Educational Series
A new quarterly educational series, called The Hive, is launching at Amigos Library Services in September. The 60-minute sessions offer multiple speakers the opportunity to share their ideas, concepts, and best practices on a proposed topic. Hive panelists will speak for 8 minutes each, followed by Q&A for the individual panelists. The Hive is designed to feature speakers from across the Amigos membership who want to share their best tips and tricks on the selected topic.

Call for panelists – The Hive: Tips and Tricks for Using Generative AI
Amigos Library Services invites proposals for panelists for the inaugural Hive: Tips and Tricks for Using Generative AI on Monday, September 22nd, from 1:30-2:30 pm CT. Panelists will present the tips and tricks they have found to harness the transformative power of generative AI. Possible topics include:

- Sharing a key AI tool and its benefits to libraries
- Leveraging AI for practical uses to enhance library functions and services
- Navigating AI challenges and misinformation
- Exploring tips for writing effective AI prompts
- Imparting lessons learned and challenges with using generative AI

Each panelist will have eight minutes to speak, followed by questions and discussion for the remainder of the time. Due to time constraints, only one panelist is allowed for each presentation in the Hive. Amigos staff will assist Hive panelists with preparation before the session, and technical support will be available during the event to ensure a smooth experience for both panelists and attendees.

Proposals can be submitted through the online form and must be received by July 11, 2025.

Please contact Chris Pryor and Naomi Gonzales at learning@amigos.org with any questions about the Hive.

Website Accessibility for Everyone
Creating an accessible library website doesn't have to be an intimidating or impossible process. Register today and join us on August 14, 2025, to become familiar with the fundamentals of web accessibility and the regulations, laws, and standards that may impact your library's online content. Learn ways to improve online access for patrons of all abilities and create best practices to help library staff meet federal compliance guidelines. All levels of knowledge and experience are welcome.

Enhance Metadata Management Skills This Summer
Summer is an ideal time for library staff to sharpen their skills and explore tools. Through Amigos Library Services, staff can spend time learning about tools designed to clean up messy data, how to do more with MARC records, or pick up some basic programming language.

Enhance metadata management skills all summer long with this cataloging and metadata course line up:

- June 17 (1-3 pm CT): Introduction to OpenRefine
- July 23 (10 am-12 pm CT): Introduction to MarcEdit
- August 21 (1-3 pm CT): Introduction to Programming with Python and PyMARC

These courses, along with all Amigos sessions on the Continuing Education Services schedule, are free for members.

Trainer Spotlight

Amigos Adjunct Trainer Spotlight: Dawn Behrend
We spoke with Dawn Behrend about what inspires her to work as a speaker,

trainer, and educator on mental health and neurodiversity in libraries, as well as self-care for librarians and library leaders.

Dawn is the Dean of University Libraries at Lenoir-Rhyne University and a second-career librarian who transitioned into academic librarianship following a long and successful career in mental health.

When asked about her teaching inspiration, Dawn responded that she ispassionate about advancing the topics of mental health, neurodiversity, and self-care within libraries—areas that have deeply shaped both her professional journey and personal values. She went on to say, "As a second-career librarian with a background in clinical psychology, I've seen firsthand how critical these issues are to creating inclusive, sustainable, and supportive environments for both library users and staff. Teaching and presenting outside of my daily role as Dean of University Libraries at Lenoir-Rhyne University allows me to share that passion more broadly, connect with colleagues across the profession, and contribute to a growing conversation about wellness and equity in librarianship. I became involved with Amigos Library Services after serving on the ACRL Membership Committee with an Amigos staff member. Through this work, I'm not only able to support others in building awareness and practical skills, but I also continue to learn and grow myself—something I believe is essential to our profession."

Dawn is currently focused on deepening her understanding of how libraries can better support neurodiverse users and employees through inclusive services, programming, and workplace practices. She contributes to this area through ongoing writing and upcoming publications that explore neuroaffirming strategies in academic libraries. Dawn went on to explain her growth this way, "I'm also continually engaging with professional development opportunities, including facilitating and attending courses and webinars related to mental health, accessibility, and leadership in libraries. To stay current in the field, I regularly review emerging tools and technologies in library services, particularly those that enhance user experience and support digital equity. I also remain actively involved in professional organizations, such as ACRL and NCLA, where I collaborate with colleagues on issues affecting libraries both regionally and nationally. These engagements not only keep me informed about trends and innovations but also fuel my passion for continuous learning and meaningful contributions to the profession."

Check out Dawn's upcoming courses, [Understanding the Needs of Library Users with a Personality Disorder](#) on July 16 from 1:00-3:00 pm, and [Serving the Neurodiverse Library User](#) on September 17 from 1:00-3:00 pm.
If you are interested in serving as an adjunct instructor for Amigos, contact learning@amigos.org to learn more.

Conferences & Special Events

Navigating the Research Data Management Conundrum, an Amigos Community Conversation

As the volume and complexity of research data output continues to increase, so do the intricacies of managing, sharing, and securing this data. Libraries can play a central role in research support, but their efforts can feel especially challenging when facing significant budgetary and capacity constraints. Join experienced professionals from across the data management landscape for a collaborative discussion on balancing data accessibility and privacy, handling technical demands, ensuring compliance, and discussing innovative strategies and solutions.

Register today and join us on July 24, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 pm CT.

Amigos Annual Member Conference Recap
On May 14, 2025, Amigos hosted "Our Present. Our Futures. The Amigos Member Conference 2025," bringing together library professionals and several students from across the region for a day of learning, inspiration, and connection. The conference opened with a powerful keynote by Julie Mosbo Ballestro, University Librarian and Assistant Provost at Texas A&M University Libraries. Her session, "Transforming Libraries: Embracing Change for the Future," highlighted how libraries can remain resilient while building a future-focused team.

The Annual Member Business Meeting and a diverse selection of concurrent sessions followed, offering practical insights and thought-provoking perspectives. In addition to celebrating the strength and creativity of our member libraries, the event served as the perfect opportunity to announce Amigos' new Board of Directors and a new benefit of membership. As of June 1st, Amigos now offers all scheduled continuing education events as a free benefit of membership. Live Online classes now join Amigos Know & Go sessions, Online Conferences, the Essentials Series, and Community Conversations as no-cost education resources for member libraries. This investment reaffirms Amigos' commitment to helping members build staff capacity and expand services, even during tight budgets.

Concurrent session presenters explored emerging and critical issues in the library environment on timely topics, including AI Instruction in the library, community storytelling strategies, the evolving role of libraries as hosts in the digital era, and member experiences with digital tools for engagement and streamlined operations. Presenters from across the Amigos membership shared their experiences, tips, and visions for what's next, sparking valuable dialogue and possible cross-library collaboration.

The day concluded with an "Interview with an Innovator" closing keynote with Tracy Byerly, Chief Programs Officer at Amigos, speaking with Lisa Wells, Executive Director of Pioneer Library System, about her experiences and how they show the challenges and the creative breakthroughs shaping library leadership today. The Amigos Member Conference 2025 was not just a reflection on where we've been; it was also a celebration of where we're going, together. And with expanded access to free continuing education, Amigos helps ensure our members are equipped for every step of that journey.

In addition to our speakers, attendees, and staff, Amigos also thanks all our event sponsors. Sponsorship support comes from four Amigos vendor partners: LexisNexis is the official Conference Sponsor, Oxford University Press and Project

MUSE (The Johns Hopkins University Press) are Gold Sponsors, and BoardDocs is a Silver Sponsor.

Easy Access to Online Conference Recordings

Amigos' online conferences provide convenient and meaningful learning opportunities, bringing together insightful keynote speakers with practical concurrent sessions from leaders across Amigos member libraries and experts from across the profession.

Register today for access to recent conference recordings:

- [Our Present. Our Futures. The Amigos Member Conference 2025](#)
- [Collections Reflect Communities](#)
- [The People-Powered Library](#)
- [Examining the Library User Experience](#)
- [Leading. Partnering. Connecting. The Amigos Member Conference 2024](#)

Please Note: Attendees registered for the live event already have access to the past conference recordings. To view the recordings, login with the credentials provided for attending the live conference.

Amigos Continuing Education Offerings

All courses on the [Continuing Education Services schedule](#) are free for members.

Cataloging
- [Introduction to OpenRefine](#) (June 17)
- [Introduction to MarcEdit](#) (July 23)
- [Introduction to Programming with Python and PyMARC](#) (August 21)

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- [Know & Go: Writing Effective Alternative Text](#) (June 16)
- [Know & Go: Welcoming Adult Learners to Your Library with Bilingual Programming](#) (August 18)
- [Serving the Neurodiverse Library User](#) (September 17)

Learning & Instruction
- [Information Literacy in the AI Era: Navigating Digital Information with Critical Thought](#) (July 9)
- [Know & Go: Unlocking the Benefits of Membership in Amigos Library Services](#) (July 21)
- [Know & Go: Slide Decks for Non-Designers](#) (July 28)

Management & Leadership
- [Know & Go: Effective Committee and Board Service](#) (June 23)
- [Parliamentary Procedure 101](#) (June 25)
- [Navigating the Research Data Management Conundrum - An Amigos Community Conversation](#) (July 24)
- [The Essentials: Customer Service](#) (August 27)
- [Know & Go: Tips for Cover Letters, Resumes, and Interviews](#) (September 15)

- [Know & Go: Identifying When Interactions Cross the Line](#) (September 29)

Programming & Services
- [Soft Skills for Library Staff](#) (June 18)
- [Understanding the Needs of Library Users with a Personality Disorder](#) (July 16)

Technology
- [Discover Hyku: Empowering Libraries with Open-Source Repository Solutions](#) (July 14)
- [Discover Hyku: Empowering Libraries with Open-Source Repository Solutions](#) (September 8)

User Experience
- [Website Accessibility for Everyone](#) (August 14)
- [Building a Practice of Plain Language in Your Library](#) (September 25)

Interested in More?
Amigos will provide by-request training sessions designed specifically to meet your library's needs. By-request training can be an effective way to meet specific and specialized training needs. Contact learning@amigos.org for more information.

Amigos Library Services | www.amigos.org

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