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# Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship: Exploring Professional Engagement as an Acting Librarian

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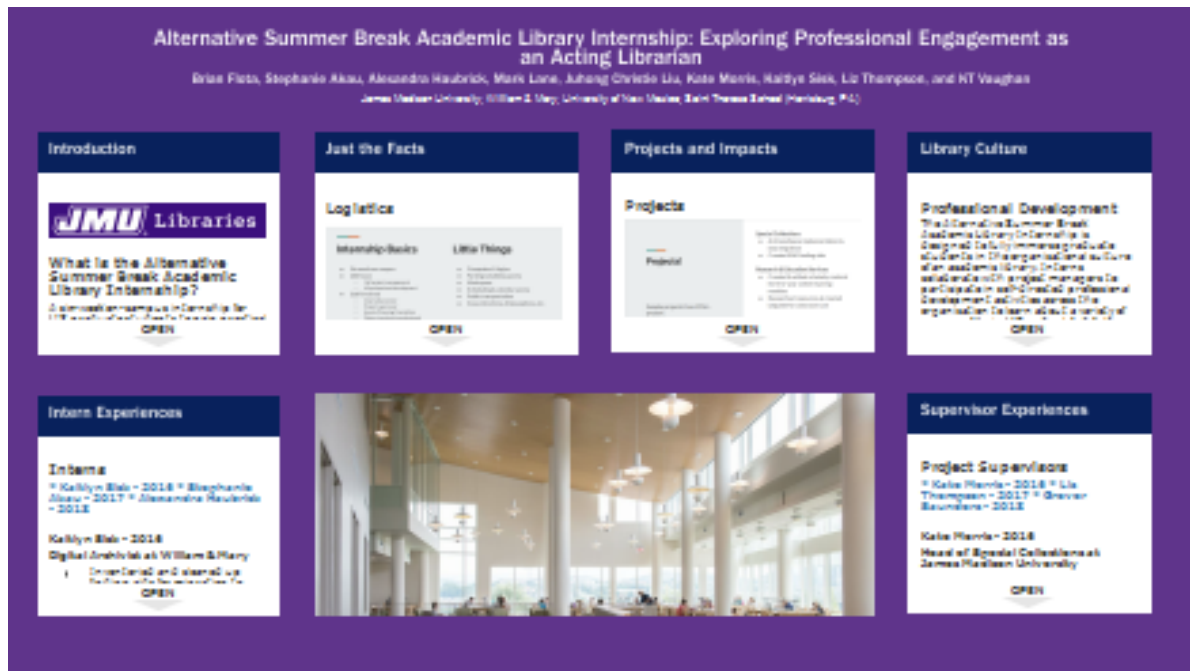
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Brian Flota, Stephanie Akau, Alexandra Haubrick, Mark Lane, Juhong Christie Liu, Kate Morris, Kaitlyn Sisk, Liz Thompson, and KT Vaughan

James Madison University; William & Mary; University of New Mexico; Saint Theresa School (Harrisburg, PA)

PRESENTED AT:



## INTRODUCTION



### **What is the Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship?**

A six-week on-campus internship for LIS graduate students to gain practical experience working on meaningful projects within a vibrant academic library setting.

### **What is its mission?**

- To provide opportunities for graduate students to experience professional engagement in an academic library and university setting.
- To provide opportunities for librarians at the beginning of their careers to contribute to large-scale projects.
- To provide mentorship opportunities for library faculty and staff participating in the program.

### **How did the internship begin?**

- Co-created by Brian Flota, Genya O'Gara, and KT Vaughan in 2014.
- Started life as an "Innovation Initiative Grant," an internal grant program administered within JMU Libraries; and used available one-time grant money.
- The first attempt to recruit an intern in 2015 failed due to poor timing and insufficient planning.
- Learning from our mistakes, the second attempt to recruit an intern (in 2016) was a success.
- After grant funding ran out, money was allocated in the annual budget for one six-week internship per year.

# JUST THE FACTS

## Logistics



### Internship Basics

- Six weeks on campus
- 200 hours
  - 160 project management
  - 40 professional development
- Staff involved
  - Internship mentor
  - Project supervisor
  - Search/Planning Committee
  - Others involved in professional development
  - University Housing
  - HR & Admin staff involved in hiring & onboarding processes

### Little Things

- Computers & logins
- Parking & building access
- Workspace
- Scheduling & calendar access
- Public transportation
- Area attractions, dining options, etc.



### Cost

- \$2,000 stipend
- \$2,000 housing
- Job advertisement
- Staff time

## Job Description


<b>Duties and Responsibilities</b>	<p>The intern will work a total of 200 hours during the six-week period from June 3rd to July 12th, 2019. 160 hours will be devoted to completing one or more projects in one of the Libraries' three main units: Academic Engagement, Innovation Services, or Scholarly Resources and Technology. The remaining 40 hours will be spent in activities that orient the intern to JMU Libraries' professional work culture. This will include meetings with various faculty and staff and attendance at department meetings.</p> <p>The intern will work approximately 35 hours per week during the six-week program and receive a stipend of \$2,000 as well as on-campus housing.</p>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>For applicants to be eligible, they should meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Be enrolled (in good standing) or have graduated within the last 12 months from an accredited Master's degree program in Library and/or Information Science;</li><li>2) Commit to spending six weeks on-site, from June 3 – July 12, 2019.</li></ol>

## **JMU Libraries Values**

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Diversity
- Learning
- Strategic Innovation
- User-Oriented Focus

## PROJECTS AND IMPACTS

### Projects



## Projects!

Sample projects from 2016 - present

#### Special Collections

- ArchivesSpace implementation & data migration
- Created EAD finding aids


#### Research & Education Services

- Created & edited scholarly content for first-year online learning modules
- Researched resources & created Libguide for classroom use

#### Innovation Services

- Created user policy and informational guides for MakerSpaces

### Impacts



## Impact: Interns

- Apply theory to practice
- Project experience in an academic library
- CV deliverable
- Career path exploration

## Impact: Libraries

- Learn about current LIS curriculum & theory
- Mentorship & supervision experience
- Project momentum
- Contributing to the profession

### Perspectives



## Intern's Perspective: Background

- University of Michigan
- Required to earn portion of course credits through practical internship
  - Reflections
  - Mentor
- Interest in JMU because of the practical approach and focus on professional development



## Intern's Perspective: The Work

- Data cleanup for ArchivesSpace migration
- Apply concepts learned in class
- Marketable skills for job search
- Experiment on mini-project of interest to me



## Intern's Perspective: The Other Benefits

- Most valuable: meetings with other staff
- Sitting in on a job presentation
- Growing network as a new professional
- Explore Virginia



# LIBRARY CULTURE

## Professional Development

The Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship is designed to fully immerse graduate students in the organizational culture of an academic library. Interns collaborate with project managers to participate in self-directed professional development activities across the organization to learn about a variety of career paths in LIS and related fields. These activities take into consideration the intern's career goals, giving them agency to shape the internship to be the most beneficial for them and their professional aspirations. Librarian faculty and staff also gain leadership experience while providing mentorship and supervision throughout the process.

### Recent Professional Development activities:

- Informational interviews with library faculty and staff
- Librarian faculty candidate presentations
- Departmental & Committee meetings
- Public Services unit retreat
- Makerspace & VR tours
- 3D Scanning Sandbox
- Intern presentation to Libraries

### Professional Development outcomes:

- Networking & relationship building
- Expanded knowledge of LIS career paths & opportunities
- Expanded knowledge of the academic library's role within the university
- Investment in the broader concerns of the library profession

# INTERN EXPERIENCES

## Interns

\* Kaitlyn Sisk - 2016 \* Stephanie Akau - 2017 \* Alexandra Haubrick - 2018

### Kaitlyn Sisk - 2016

#### Digital Archivist at William & Mary

- Inventoried and cleaned up finding aids for migration to ArchivesSpace.
- Learned about the bigger picture and day-to-day activities of JMU Libraries rather than just my project.
- Informational interviews and meetings with other JMU librarians taught me about different roles in an academic library and about leadership and mentorship, which guided my coursework and career path.
- Experience prepared me to work in another academic library in Virginia.

*What project did you work on during your internship?*

I assisted Special Collections as they transitioned to ArchivesSpace. I inventoried and updated over 100 finding aids in three different formats (HTML, Word, and EAD) to ensure that all finding aids contained up-to-date and accurate information. Using Oxygen and an Excel spreadsheet created by Yale University, I cleaned up the collections' EADs for migration into ArchivesSpace and updated collections within ArchivesSpace when necessary. I also experimented with using Python scripts from the Bentley Historical Society to normalize dates and created documentation so that other staff members could work on the project when I left. Since there is always more work to do during a database migration than an internship can encompass, I created an ArchivesSpace manual that documented my process for reference after my internship.

*What is something you learned during your internship that you were not expecting to?*

I did not expect to learn so much about the day-to-day operations at the JMU libraries as I learned. Because I was able to meet with many different librarians in different areas of the library, I got to know more about the roles and responsibilities of areas outside of where I was working. I also got to attend some staff meetings, including an all-staff meeting where we discussed the results of a work-life satisfaction survey conducted in the library. It was interesting to see how both different areas of the library and the whole library were working to improve services and improve their work. After my internship, I felt like I better understood the bigger picture rather than just the area I was working in and the project I was doing.

*What was the most valuable thing you got out of the internship?*

The most valuable part of my internship was meeting with other librarians at JMU and learning more about what they do and how they got to where they are. During my internship, I spent approximately 40 hours total doing this kind of professional development. Leaders in the library shared tips on how to be an effective leader, and I learned about the traits of a good supervisor from heads of departments. I also got to sit in on a job presentation, which was extremely valuable when I started applying and being asked to prepare presentations for interviews during my job search. The meetings I had and the lessons I learned through this professional development helped me choose courses during my last year of graduate school and led me to apply to jobs in academic library settings.

*Did the internship experience prepare you for a career in librarianship or the job market?*

The internship absolutely prepared me for my career and my job search. My experience using ArchivesSpace was an incredibly valuable one to have on my resume, and I use that experience in my current job as we are migrating from Archon to ArchivesSpace. The connections I made at JMU also helped me as a new professional. I have seen my supervisor, Kate Morris, at a number of workshops and conferences and it is reassuring to have a familiar face in a new space.

**Stephanie Akau - 2017****Library Information Specialist at the University of New Mexico**

- **Why?** I was willing to travel for this internship because similar opportunities are not available where I live and I have a strong interest in working in academic libraries.
- **Main project:** A one-shot information literacy session about health trends and authoritative information for an undergraduate Personal Wellness class under the supervision of the Instruction and Educational Resources Coordinator.
- **Other projects:** A Camtasia video about the DOI for JMU's Canvas Commons, a LibGuide contribution, research about gamification in libraries, and a final presentation.
- **Takeaways:** Deliverables, résumé experience, and invaluable connections.
- **Etc.:** The fact that the internship is paid and housing is provided demonstrated that the JMU librarians valued my time and experience by removing some of the barriers that prevent students from taking internships. Please pay your interns!

I was an intern at JMU during Summer 2017. My main project was a one-shot information literacy session, called a Passport Session, for an undergraduate Personal Wellness class. Personal Wellness is one of two options undergraduates have to fulfill their General Education Wellness requirement. One of the class objectives is being able to find and use authoritative health information. Students are required to attend four passport sessions during the semester, offered by the library and other campus institutions (including the gym and cafeteria). I designed a Passport Session in which students examine the concept of "fake news" within the context of online health information. Students explore and discuss where they get their health information and the trustworthiness of these sources. Throughout the session they learn how to evaluate information sources for the author's credentials, personal bias, and supporting links. The content consists of a PowerPoint and LibGuide. JMU librarians still teach the Passport Session once a semester.

I also completed some small projects, including a Camtasia video about the DOI that covers what a DOI is, where to locate it in catalog records or online, and how to use it in citations. The video is on JMU's Canvas Commons site, where instructors select relevant content to add to their course sites. I contributed materials to a LibGuide for an Integrated Science and Technology class, completed informational interviews with librarians and administrators from different areas of the library, and participated in professional development related to the library's strategic plan. At the end of the internship, I presented my projects to library faculty and staff in a format similar to the presentation component of a job interview.

I was most surprised (and pleased!) to learn that JMU has a mandated information literacy requirement for all undergraduate students that most universities do not. The test consists of online modules designed by the libraries and administered by the university's testing center.

Every experience from my internship has proved useful. I am enrolled in an online MLIS program and paid internship opportunities are harder to come by where I live, which is why I was willing to travel across the country to take advantage of it. I left with experience for my résumé and deliverables I used for my Master's portfolio to fulfill the final requirements for my degree. The information literacy session I designed demonstrates my capabilities to pivot from my background in music education instruction into information literacy instruction. Before the internship, I had no previous experience working in academic libraries. After the internship at JMU, I understood how an academic library functions and the types of positions I was interested in applying for in the near future.

The connections I made with the JMU librarians are the most valuable outcome of my internship. They are more than willing to serve as references on my job applications and chat whenever we find ourselves in the same area or at the same conferences. As a new librarian, having a strong support network gives me confidence moving forward as I start the job hunt.

**Alexandra Haubrick - 2018****Librarian at the Saint Theresa School (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania)**

- Internship experience in makerspace involved 3D design, scanning and printing, AR and VR, hand tools, audio and video

editing, Arduino controllers.

- Invited to attend and contribute to faculty meetings, including planning sessions for programming and departmental focus for academic year 2018-2019.
- Learned and used new tech while also contributing to department through developing an extended LibGuide.
- Makerspaces contribute to overall knowledge building by creating a space and support for students to pursue individual, motivating projects.

The academic library internship at James Madison University proved to be a capstone experience of my library school education. The Masters in Library Science degree program is, at its core, versatile and flexible, with many offerings being online and asynchronous. Many of us couldn't complete it otherwise. We are simultaneously limited by that same flexibility. Many grad students complete the program at home, exposed to the same libraries with which they are likely familiar. The internship at JMU required a physical move to complete and, in turn, I gained exposure to a new university library system in a new state.

During my internship the Summer of 2018, the resident intern worked under the Innovation Services unit, largely responsible for the two library makerspaces on campus. The experience was unique, especially in that most of the unit team considered themselves more "tech" than library. Bringing my Librarian talents to a tech-focused team, the projects were ironed out as a mix of developing my current strengths (like writing and access) while working towards building new skills in 3D design, makerspace learning, and the variety of other activities and tech that come under the maker umbrella. I edited and developed the unit's LibGuides page, expanding it to include their current and complete offerings using open source and public domain images and resources. I also took (and was granted) the liberty of learning, experimenting and playing with the tech, as a student would. I designed and printed a teacup and saucer in Tinkercad. I scripted a flower vase design in Openscad. I experienced (and panicked) through an underwater VR experience. I also researched and compiled ideas for continued programming and education for their makerspaces. Some of these have made their way into JMU's makerspace programming. More than anything, I was given a meaningful experience that blended the dual role most library students enact. We are simultaneously students and professionals. I was respected as a visiting faculty member, with my ideas and input valued, while also being given the latitude of a learner, to play and experience spaces and ideas.

Currently, I'm a Librarian for a private elementary school in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I started the internship fiercely devoted to attaining a tenure track academic librarian position immediately after graduating in August 2018. Through my time serving students at JMU, I was really reminded of the reasons I initially pursued librarianship--access. With access as a cornerstone in my mind, I loosened my grip on my postgrad notions and have happily been serving littler patrons for the academic year. I've been able to bring the skills and the open mind I gained at JMU to my current position. Makerspaces can center on 3D printers costing \$10K or more, with state-of-the-art augmented reality equipment and the like. But, truly, it can and should center around capitalizing on and providing a space for individualized, intrinsic motivation, experimental thinking, and self-guided projects and planning.

Makerspaces remind the student that they will fail, and that the possibility to make gains from failure exists and is supported by faculty, mentors, and staff serving the student and public population.













# SUPERVISOR EXPERIENCES

## Project Supervisors

\* **Kate Morris - 2016** \* **Liz Thompson - 2017** \* **Grover Saunders - 2018**

### **Kate Morris - 2016**

#### **Head of Special Collections at James Madison University**

*What project did you supervise and what was its scope?*

EAD Cleanup and ArchivesSpace Implementation Project

- Complete a comparison of finding aids for all manuscript collections in Special Collections to assess where the most complete/up-to-date record exists. (word doc/EAD record/html web version)
- Prepare records for ingest into ArchivesSpace: create EAD records for all finding aids (Necessary format for ingest)
  - Use a variety of tools to encode container lists
- Ingest all records into ArchivesSpace
  - Assess data clean-up needs

*How did you train or mentor the intern you worked with?*

Kaitlyn and I met on weekly basis, with periodic check-ins as needed throughout the project. Because the ArchivesSpace implementation and migration project involved working through significant legacy practices, files, and systems, the largest amount of training time was spent at the start of the project. This involved orienting Kaitlyn to file locations and explaining some of the documentation she would be working with, as well as introducing her to the EAD tools previously used to manage and work with the data. Because Kaitlyn was already familiar with all of the systems and tools, the training was an introduction to local practice, and our check-ins throughout the project were opportunities to clarify project direction and provide context for the legacy aspects of the work.

*How did the experience improve your skills as a supervisor?*

My biggest take away from this experience was the importance of fostering an environment that encourages exploration and creative problem solving while providing adequate structure and support. Throughout the project, Kaitlyn made discoveries and investigated implementation strategies that I had not anticipated. She also furthered her own knowledge and skills in ways that enriched her experience and that also benefitted the project outcome. Creating trust and thus the space for experimentation allows for these possibilities, and supervising this project gave me a successful framework to apply to large project supervision.

*Did the intern help you accomplish the goals you set out for the project?*

Kaitlyn accomplished the goals originally set for this project, and exceeded them. Additionally, Kaitlyn created detailed documentation outlining her work, next steps, useful resources gathered from her research into the practices of other institutions, and lingering questions. Not only did her work enable us to move forward with our ArchivesSpace implementation, Kaitlyn's documentation gave us a means to seamlessly continue the work. Often, large technical projects lose momentum when ownership shifts, but Kaitlyn's work prepared us to move forward with the next phase.

### **Liz Thompson - 2017**

**Instructional and Educational Resources Coordinator at James Madison University**

- 2017 ASB Internship Summer project: Develop instruction and instructional design skills by creating a lesson plan for general education students.
- Meet weekly for project updates.
- Build supervisory experiences.
- Revive a lapsed general education instruction program.

*What project did you supervise and what was its scope?*

For the Summer 2017 ASB internship, the project options varied quite a bit within the outreach and instruction realm. The following was the description in the ASB posting:

*You'll have an opportunity to collaborate on library instruction and scholarly communication projects with projects ranging from designing library instruction for first-year students to improving communication of scholarly communication initiatives through LibGuides and infographics. These projects are ideal if you want to develop instructional design skills, practice designing learning objects and communication pieces, and contribute back to the professional community.*

Stephanie Akau, our 2017 ASB intern, chose the library instruction route. Stephanie designed a full lesson plan for a Health (HTH) 100 "Passport" event [see Stephanie Akau's narrative in the "Intern Experiences" box for a description of the Passport events] and created a video tutorial about DOIs. Before Stephanie even started designing the HTH 100 Passport lesson plan, she learned about the JMU Libraries approach to library instruction and information literacy and JMU's General Education program. With that in mind, I asked Stephanie to choose the topic for the Passport session.

*How did you train or mentor the intern you worked with?*

During the six weeks Stephanie was at JMU, we met twice a week with a few exceptions. This gave Stephanie a good chance to share her progress and ask questions and gave me an opportunity to address her questions. I also tried to anticipate areas that might be helpful to her successfully completing the instructional design work. I provided introductory materials to backward design and universal design principles. During the process, we talked about the pros and cons of specific design choices. We also discussed the ACRL Information Literacy Frameworks and JMU Libraries' (at that time) draft student learning outcomes, which Stephanie used to build post-session assessment questions.

*How did the experience improve your skills as a supervisor?*

As Stephanie's project supervisor, I tried to balance the "learning new" with "not overwhelming." Stephanie came to the ASB program with instruction experience, but not with experience from the library perspective. I spent time understanding what skills she brought to JMU and what her goals were for growth. These two ideas are important to me as a supervisee, so I thought a lot about how I could meet Stephanie where she was and help her get to the next level. As a fairly inexperienced supervisor, my approach to supervising evolved over a short period of time based on feedback from Stephanie about her preferences and goals.

*Did the intern help you accomplish the goals you set out for the project?*

The Libraries' Passport sessions had been on hiatus for three semesters prior to Stephanie's ASB internship, and much of the prior Passport session content was outdated. Stephanie's lesson plan helped us revive the Libraries' Passport offerings. Since she created the session, several people have used Stephanie's health trends lesson plan – throughout three semesters JMU Libraries has offered the session four times to 59 students. The lesson plan has evolved over time, which is not unusual considering multiple facilitators have led this session and health trends continue to change. Despite the changes, we still use many of the slides and resources Stephanie originally compiled.

## AUTHOR INFORMATION

**Brian Flota** (MS in Library and Information Science from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; PhD in English from The George Washington University) is a Humanities Librarian (Assistant Professor) at James Madison University (JMU) and serves as the library liaison to the English, Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, and Theatre and Dance Departments. He co-created the Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship at JMU Libraries in 2014. He is the author of *A Survey of Multicultural San Francisco Bay Literature, 1955-1979* (2009, Edwin Mellen), the co-editor of *The Politics of Post-9/11 Music* (2011, Ashgate), and the author of several academic articles. **ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2868-2942> (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2868-2942>)

**Stephanie Akau**, D.M.A., is a Library Information Specialist at the University of New Mexico, where she serves on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force Steering Committee and the Library Staff Organization Council. She was the JMU Libraries ASB intern in 2017 and a Library of Congress Junior Fellow in 2018. She will be completing her MLIS degree from San Jose State University in May 2019.

**Alexandra Haubrick**, MSLS, is a Librarian for Saint Theresa's School in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. There, she uses her academic library experience to scale down instruction sessions on library skills, research and beginning bibliography. Her current professional interest is in copyright issues of transient, digital art forms. She presented on and published a digital library collection on local, Central Pennsylvania art in 2018 @ <https://artanthologyhbg.omeka.net/> (<https://artanthologyhbg.omeka.net/>). She was the JMU Libraries Alternative Summer Break (ASB) Intern during the Summer of 2018.

**Mark Lane** is a Digital Preservation Librarian and Assistant Professor at James Madison University. Mark works with the Digital Collections team to preserve unique materials held by JMU Libraries and to ensure optimal patron access to digital collections. Mark has worked with electronic resources and discovery in various capacities since 2010, and has extensive knowledge of library systems and electronic resource management. Mark has co-coordinated the ASB Internship program since 2015. **ORCID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0806-0732> (<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0806-0732>)

**Juhong Christie Liu**, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor and Senior Instructional Designer at James Madison University. Dr. Liu teaches and researches in instructional design, educational technology, and educational research and evaluation. She is currently a co-PI of a NSF-funded collaborative OER in STEM project (NSF #1611798 & NSF #1611917) and PI of a Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA) Open and Affordable Course Content Grant Program. (<https://vivalib.org/c.php?g=836990&p=6638954>) Among her scholarly activities, she led the authorship of peer-reviewed articles on faculty perception of digital literacy and was the editor of peer-reviewed EITT2017 (<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/mostRecentIssue.jsp?punumber=8307923>) and ICIME2018 (<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/mostRecentIssue.jsp?punumber=8607138>) proceedings published through IEEE. She has been part of the core team of the JMU Libraries Alternative Summer Break (ASB) Intern program since 2018. **ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3384-4379> (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3384-4379>)

**Kate Morris**, MSIS, is an assistant professor and Head of Special Collections at James Madison University (JMU) Libraries. She leads collection development efforts to document the history of the central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and the institutional history of JMU. Kate's research interests include the ethics of archival description and the invisibility of archival labor. Kate supervised the first Alternative Summer Break (ASB) intern project at JMU Libraries in 2016. **ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8665-0984> (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8665-0984>)

**Kaitlyn Sisk**, MSI, is the Digital Archivist at William & Mary. Kaitlyn works in the Special Collections Research Center to acquire, process, preserve, and provide access to born-digital materials in the collection. She was the JMU Libraries Alternative Summer Break Intern in Special Collections during the summer of 2016.

**Liz Thompson**, Instruction and Educational Resources Coordinator, is an Assistant Professor at James Madison University and holds a Master's degree in Library and Information Science. She promotes information literacy, open educational resources, and open access, and collaborates within JMU Libraries and across campus in support of these efforts.

She has been an Open Educational Resources Research Fellow and is co-Principle Investigator on an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant, Supporting OA Collections in the Open: community requirements and principles (LG-73-18-0226-18). **ORCID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4382-5136> (<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4382-5136>)

**KT Vaughan**, MSLS, is an associate professor and Associate Dean of the James Madison University (JMU) Libraries. Her research interests focus on asking questions about - and driving change in - the future of libraries. She co-created the ASB/ALI with Dr Flota and Genya O’Gara in 2014. She is currently focused on building inclusive and equitable library environments for people with disabilities, scholarly and digital communication in resource-constrained contexts, and the career advancement and professionalism of library staff and faculty. **ORCID:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7193-2441> (<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7193-2441>)

## ABSTRACT

### **Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship: Exploring Professional Engagement as an Acting Librarian**

This poster session visualizes an innovative Alternative Summer Break Academic Library Internship program for current or recently graduated library and information science (LIS) students. Currently in its fourth year, the program provides opportunities for graduate students to experience professional engagement in a real academic library. Logistics, planning, recruitment, management, and lessons learned will be shared, which will provide valuable insights for libraries wishing to build similar programs. Prospective interns will learn about the structure of the program, expectations and outcomes, and how to apply.