Michigan Authors Win portal Award for Best Journal Article

Six colleagues from the University of Michigan and Alma College have won the 2014 Johns Hopkins University Press Award for the best article in the most recent volume of the journal portal: Libraries and the Academy.

The Journals Division of the Press and portal’s Editorial Board Awards Committee selected the article “Using Undergraduate Researchers' Personal Essays to Shape Instruction and Services,” which appeared in Volume 13, Number 1, January 2013. The authors were Alma College’s Jeffery Cordell along with Jennifer L. Bonnet, Sigrid Anderson Cordell, Gabriel J. Duque, Pamela J. MacKintosh, and Amanda Peters from the University of Michigan.

“The authors produced an in-depth discussion of the learning and research experience of undergraduates, offering both confirmation and refutation of many of the assumptions we make about library instruction,” says Sarah M. Pritchard, the Dean of Libraries and the Charles Deering McCormick University Librarian at Northwestern University. She recently stepped down as editor of portal.

The research for the article examined personal essays students submitted for the inaugural undergraduate research award at the University of Michigan library. These essays chronicled students' intellectual growth and development throughout the research process. Drawing on observations about the unique needs of these students, the authors analyze the implications for library instruction and services.

Bonnet (Librarian for French Language and Literature, French History, and Religious Studies) and Sigrid Anderson Cordell (Librarian for History, American Literature, and American Culture) work at the University of Michigan’s Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library. Duque (Learning Librarian, MacKintosh (Economics Librarian and Coordinator, Undergraduate Library Reference Services)and Peters (University Learning Communities Librarian) work at Michigan’s Shapiro Library. Jeffrey Cordell worked as an Assistant Professor of English and Director of the Writing Center at Alma College.

The winning article is judged on the quality of research methodology, on how well it places library issues in a broader academic or higher education context, whether it makes a significant contribution to the professional literature, its timeliness, and the quality of its writing.

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