

I Love My Librarian!

Award

Naomi Bishop
Health Science Librarian
University of Arizona, Phoenix Biomedical Campus, Health Sciences Library
Phoenix, Arizona

Nominated by: Victoria Caine, Kathy Gonzales, Dr. Hartmark-Hill, Dr. Touch-Mercer, Dr. Niggeman, Dr. Heise, and Kelley Howard

Naomi Bishop is a librarian who goes above and beyond in her role as an Academic Health Sciences Librarian for the University of Arizona at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus. She has exceptionally provided for the campus community through her service to students, faculty, and staff. Naomi has been influential in policy changes within the local community during the COVID-19 crisis. Even during this challenging time, she continues to be innovative and move forward with new ideas despite restrictions from the pandemic. Her experiences as an Indigenous individual help to elevate BIPOC voices in librarianship and in medicine. Naomi works to ensure that the library, university, and healthcare fields are equitable places for all. I am nominating Naomi for the "I Love my Librarian Award" for her outstanding work as a librarian who continues to make the campus and local community a better place, works for social justice, and raises up leaders among the next generation of librarians.

Helping Students, Faculty, and Staff

Since Naomi has started in her role as an Academic Health Sciences Librarian, she has created innovative programs and projects for the campus library. Naomi has been influential in working with the Narrative Medicine program to bring Graphic Medicine into the library's current collection. Graphic medicine is the use of graphic novels to share patient and healthcare worker narratives. Naomi led the staff in creating a display, student outreach materials, and a space for an interactive zine making station where students could create their own graphic medicine narratives. Students responded in an extremely positive way to this program. Many health science students spend their time studying textbooks, but graphic medicine novels were a different way for them to engage with understanding patient and doctor relationships. This outreach project took our print collection to a new level, and greatly increased library engagement with students.

Dr. Hartmark-Hill, director of the Phoenix Biomedical Campus Narrative Medicine Program, made these comments about Naomi:

"I have had the privilege of working with Ms. Bishop for the past two and a half years since she was hired as a Health Sciences Librarian at the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix. During this

time, I have been continuously impressed with Ms. Bishop's collegiality and student-centric, servant leadership. She is hands down one of the best librarians I have ever worked with in my academic medicine career with regard to collaboration on education, research and grant proposal projects."

"In addition to national leadership and services, Ms. Bishop remains wonderfully invested in local community advocacy and volunteerism. She actively role models these qualities to colleagues and students on campus, and is always proactive in thinking about ways that on campus programming can be more inclusive. We have worked together on many community-facing events, such as film and medicine series, narrative and diversity book events and graphic medicine workshops. She is highly skilled in identifying exceptional resources (such as those from the National Library of Medicine) and translating them into information that promotes health literacy and social justice."

Naomi has also created resources for the families of those who are a part of the university, as well as families within the community who are not connected to the college. The Phoenix Biomedical Campus annually has a Connect 2 STEM event in January for families in the community to come and experience different STEM activities from the various departments of the campus. Naomi headed the library's outreach table by sharing health information, and the kids were not disappointed. In addition to anatomical models, Naomi provided engaging books and activities for kids to learn about the human body. She also provided MedlinePlus information for parents to continue the learning at home. Within the community, Naomi and her intern participated in a STEAM event, where they provided health resources to families within the Salt River School District.

Naomi is an expert at collaboration and connecting people to what they need. Dr. Touch-Mercer, from the University of Arizona College of Medicine, had the following to say about Naomi: "As a librarian and as a person, Ms. Naomi Bishop embodies cultural humility, collaboration, and support. She is the resource who finds resources, and the key to the acquisition and sharing of knowledge among our faculty, staff, and students. Ms. Bishop takes time to learn about who we are and what we need, and she continuously explores the literature to locate resources that not only expand our knowledge, but build our community. She creates resource guides that help develop our students into excellent clinicians and sensitive professionals, and offers space, time, and technology to highlight issues of highest concern for patient care, self-care, and health. I often wonder how she chose this field, but I realize that Ms. Bishop is a connector -- of ideas, knowledge, and people. I am so honored to be her colleague and grateful that she chose our university and our library."

Naomi is always available to help ensure that the library meets the needs of students and faculty. She works hard to make sure that the library has print textbooks, electronic resources, and any other items that students might need to be successful. She works with faculty to make sure that she can provide for students based on their different coursework. Naomi also provides faculty with resources that they can use within their class. Dr. Elaine Niggemen, who is a faculty member in the Instruction Design department writes, "My interaction with Naomi has been wonderful. Whether it's providing information for students to access Block/Course resources or helping me figure out access to Faculty Resources,

Naomi is always patient, efficient, and professional. So glad she is part of UA College of Medicine – Phoenix.”

Covid-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Naomi’s reference and resource skills helped to create a safer community. Naomi received questions from physicians and community members that directly influenced policy within Maricopa county. When asked for information, she immediately went to work finding the best and most current research to answer their questions regarding safe procedures during the pandemic. Days after she submitted her information, local policymakers enacted different mandates that corresponded with the latest research that she had provided for them.

Additionally, Naomi had to shift her services for the campus during the pandemic. This included ensuring medical e-textbooks were available for students and faculty to access easily. Not only did she provide academic workshops and resources online, but she made sure to take time to build community among students in the library through providing a virtual game night and other community building events. Naomi also headed up virtual summer storytimes for staff and their families during quarantine, which usually falls outside of the role of an Academic Health Sciences Librarian. Through these events, she was able to extend community building from just the students to all of those connected with the university. Although the pandemic has caused many things to shut down, Naomi still remains available to students, faculty, and staff. She has been very active in creating workshops for students, and helping students research for their scholarly projects. Kathy Gonzales, the MD/PhD coordinator at the college writes, “Naomi is always available for all our students on campus. She assists our PhD and MD/PhD students with their research searches; is willing to meet with students individually or in a meeting; she has developed workshops for students to assist them in the research pursuits.” Naomi is intentional in getting to know students on campus and she continually lets them know that she is available for them.

Social Justice

Not only is Naomi passionate about her role as a Health Sciences Librarian, but she also works to promote Indigenous authors and children’s books. She is a member of the American Indian Youth Literature awards committee for Indigenous authors and illustrators. She works to publicize these works so that the general public will see the important work of Indigenous authors. There is a great need in literature for more Indigenous authors and Indigenous representation. Naomi is helping to fill that need by encouraging and promoting these works.

Naomi is also passionate about combating racism in medicine. Over the summer, she co-created a LibGuide about racism in medicine that educated students, faculty, and staff. Naomi has been able to educate faculty on different elements in the program that were unintentionally racist. This ultimately led in a positive change in curriculum. Dr. Craig Heise wrote the following about Naomi’s work in this area: “Ms. Bishop has supported and influenced the educational goals of the College of Medicine in a way that I’ve never seen from a librarian before. Recently, she brought to the attention of some key decision makers an article which was published in the medical education literature. This article specifically examined how medical school curricula have intentionally and unintentionally been racist. As

a result of her influence and leadership, this article was presented at our research in the medical education journal club and then before various curriculum committees. This has resulted in concrete changes in our current curriculum and will continue to influence the curriculum in the future. In particular, this will change the way in which we present and discuss genetics, ancestry and race. At every step in the process, she was intricately involved and assisted in the preparation of educational materials and revised curriculum sessions.”

Commitment to Mentorship

Not only has Naomi positively impacted the academic community, but she has made a big difference in my life as someone who is working on their MLIS and trying to figure out a career path in librarianship. Naomi is a leader who involves others. When I first started working at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus Health Sciences Library, she gave me different projects and helped me to feel like my work mattered at the library. She would continually talk with me about her experiences and what she has seen as best practices in entering the career field. I initially wanted to go into archives when I started my MLIS program, and she would often share her experiences working at the Smithsonian with Indigenous collections. I learned so much from her about archiving, sacred items and working with Indigenous communities. Halfway through my program, I realized that I wanted to go more towards the field of public libraries and serving youth and children. Naomi provided me with resources for diverse books, and then when the pandemic hit, she asked me if I wanted to be a part of virtual storytimes for the campus community. I felt very underqualified and nervous to do it, but Naomi spent the extra time to coach me and help me in the program. When I was trying to find a community of online MLIS students in the Phoenix area who are in my program, Naomi encouraged me to create my own. We collaborated in making a Facebook group and she acted as a sponsor for the group. Naomi happily offers her expertise, and makes herself available to MLIS students in the group. She is always available for students to help them with projects, look over resumes, and post job opportunities. Without Naomi’s encouragement to try these different things, I do not think that I would have been able to complete them.

Another way that Naomi makes herself available to students is through internships. One of Naomi’s interns, Kelley Howard, had several comments about her experience working with Naomi: “She[Naomi] made it clear that she was available to provide exposure to things I wanted to learn/experience to enhance my degree program and to prepare me for a career in LIS. As an internship supervisor, she allowed me the independence to plan and execute projects of interest to me, while providing the necessary support and tools to help me complete my internship successfully. She was incredibly flexible but also very focused on our goals when the pandemic disrupted our internship plans. [Naomi] served as a role model for me in building professional relationships and networking, as she helped me facilitate projects where I could have exposure to other departments across the wider University Libraries system.”

Conclusion

Naomi is doing outstanding work within the library field, and deserves to be recognized for that work. She continues to make the campus and local community a better place by collaborating and providing resources, combating social justice, and working with future library professionals. Naomi Bishop is an

excellent candidate for this award because of her commitment to the campus community, local community, and future LIS professionals, which is evident throughout her work.