

# I Love My Librarian!

2010 Award

## **Nominations for Jeff Dowdy**

Bainbridge College Library  
Bainbridge College, Georgia

### **Nominator:**

Ridge Harper

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Jeff Dowdy's goal for the Bainbridge College library is to offer wide variation in resources in an attempt to fulfill the many different educational requirements of our students. He is quickly establishing the Bainbridge College library as a paradigm of innovation and customer service for small libraries during tough economic times and financial cutbacks. The many virtual resources instituted at the library in the recent past have cost Bainbridge College little to nothing in financial terms.

### **2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?**

The best method of relating Mr. Dowdy's professionalism and competence is through personal accounts collected from Bainbridge College's students, staff, and faculty. The following are personal accounts collected during the fall and summer semesters of 2010.

"Mr. Dowdy helped me learn how to navigate Galileo and Illuminate (Blackboard), basically all the tools I need to succeed in my classes."- Shelita Thompson, Bainbridge College student since 2007, currently seeking her Bachelor's degree at Albany State University

"Mr. Dowdy has helped me with computer problems, research methods, finding books, and how to access GaView (Blackboard), Banner Web (student information system), and digital resources."-Barbara Cherry, Bainbridge College student since 2009, matriculated after unemployment and began her classes with very little recent academic or technological experience

"Mr. Dowdy always helps me with computer issues, finding books, research, Banner Web (student information system) and anything else I have needed for school!"- Linda Lindsey, non-traditional Bainbridge College student since 2009

"Jeff Dowdy is an invaluable asset to Bainbridge College. He is courteous, friendly, and always willing to help students and faculty in their research projects. Specifically, he assisted me in researching available articles and books for a personal research project I undertook in order to satisfy the requirements of a class I was taking. In addition, he seeks to learn of research needs for the various classes I teach and is always on the lookout for materials in support of these projects. As well, he maintains a research site in support of the Foundations for Success project and continues to update it with relative material. This site has proven to be beneficial in engaging students in accessing information online."- Melissa S. Harrell, Instructor of Criminal Justice at Bainbridge College

"As a new faculty member, my first weeks at Bainbridge College could have seemed disastrous without Jeff Dowdy's thoughtful assistance. On the first day of classes, I learned that the textbook I had ordered for 3 sections was out of print. I was desperate for a way to get the reading to my students while making other arrangements for the textbook order. I came to Jeff, and he obligingly scanned and PDF'd several essays for me so that I could upload them easily to Georgia View that very same day. – Dr. Emily Dowd, Assistant Professor of English at Bainbridge College

"I would like to support Mr. Jeff Dowdy from the Bainbridge College Library in Bainbridge, Georgia for the American Library Association's, 2010 I Love My Librarian Award.

Even though Mr. Dowdy is relatively new to Bainbridge College, I feel that the college has already benefited greatly due to his dedicated service to its students, faculty, and staff. Personally, Mr. Dowdy has helped me in my research projects that have been required in pursuit of my master's degree. Mr. Dowdy has taken quality time to introduce me to the research tools that are available through the Georgia Library System. Mr. Dowdy has also given quantity time by providing me educational assistance in the use of the college's audio-visual equipment which I needed to create on-line presentations.

I believe that Bainbridge College has received success from Mr. Dowdy's educational expertise and desire to provide exceptional service to his customers. Mr. Dowdy has helped to bring our library up-to-date technologically by introducing the "On-line Librarian Help Desk", and many other technological help tools. His educational back-ground, love for the library system, and desire to provide exceptional customer service will continue to grow the library into a tool which exceeds the needs of its customers.

Please accept my recommendation for Mr. Dowdy toward your award. I believe that he is a librarian who the American Library Association will be proud to have represent them as one of the 2010 award winners. I am certainly proud that he represents Bainbridge College."- Richard Messersmith, Client Support Officer at Bainbridge College and currently seeking his Masters in Business Administration at Georgia State University  
Bainbridge College is an open access state institution with an extremely diverse student population pursuing many different educational goals. Mr. Dowdy assists our students with every resource available in the Bainbridge College library. At any given time, the ratio of students to available library employees can be as high as 33 to 1. During the most trying times, Mr. Dowdy extends each student the same thoughtful and professional care. I currently direct the Testing Center at Bainbridge College, which is located in the library and is part of the Office of Admissions. I am fortunate to witness the interactions between Mr. Dowdy and students on a daily basis. I have personally

witnessed Mr. Dowdy sitting down with many students, dedicating as much time as necessary to their concerns and continued success.

### **3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?**

There are currently many initiatives being pursued at Bainbridge College concerning accreditation, student success, and student retention. Mr. Dowdy has facilitated and assisted in each of these projects.

Bainbridge College is currently under review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools regarding the continuation of accreditation as a two year college. Mr. Dowdy coordinated many contributory efforts in support of our re-accreditation goal. In the short time he has been at Bainbridge College, he has written a twenty-one page marketing research report for the library, created and analyzed a student survey, implemented a WIKI file of library and tutoring procedures, and assisted in the composition of re-accreditation documentation. These resources and Mr. Dowdy's efforts have been integrated into our Quality Enhancement Plan initiative as well.

Our QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) initiative is being completed and reviewed for implementation by the end of the calendar year. Our QEP is designed to enhance student learning in online courses here at Bainbridge College. Mr. Dowdy attended all sessions of this committee and contributed to the creation and editing of many QEP related documents. In addition to these efforts, Jeff also used the aforementioned research report and student survey to gauge student success as it relates to the library. These innovative studies were initiated by Mr. Dowdy and will be continuously used as reference by the library to improve student learning and resource access. The following is an account given by Dr. Patrick Smith, the Chair of our QEP Committee:

“One of the things Jeff did is to focus some ideas. During lengthy editing and brainstorming sessions, Jeff was instrumental in creating the final draft. Jeff's involvement in QEP is long term and will contribute heavily to our re-accreditation efforts. He has also assisted in pedagogical studies in order to analyze current online teaching methods. The library is one of the keystone access points for online student learning and Jeff's efforts are certain to increase student success. My student's research skills have significantly increased due to his Wikis and LibGuides research guides as well!”- Dr. Patrick Smith, Associate Professor of English at Bainbridge College and Chair of Quality Enhancement Plan Committee

Mr. Dowdy has assisted many library users with research projects and educational resources. He has created and coordinates a digital resource called LibGuides (<http://guides.bainbridge.edu>). Mr. Dowdy is typically available to help and moderate through a chat feature as well. In a manner of speaking, Mr. Dowdy assists all members of the Bainbridge College community with this research tool.

Jeff Dowdy is dedicated to helping students that have little experience with technology and post-secondary education. These students face many challenges and are often the first students to leave us without completing their studies. Mr. Dowdy goes to extraordinary lengths to all students with their issues in a respectful manner. This in itself is the primary method that should be used to improve student retention. It goes hand in hand with the State of Georgia's Governor's Customer Service Improvement Initiative as it pertains to the University System of Georgia. If all members of faculty and staff at

Bainbridge College observe the same customer service standards as Jeff, our student retention rates will increase exponentially.

#### **4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?**

I believe that the best indication of the impact a librarian has had on an institution is proportional to the response that is received from a call for support. Through little effort, many accounts were received. The following accounts from faculty and staff not only illustrate the professional value that Jeff represents as an Assistant Librarian but also the personal impact Jeff has on others.

“It is my great pleasure to write in support of Jeff Dowdy for the Carnegie My Librarian award. I have known Mr. Dowdy for almost two years while he worked full time in the Assistant Librarian position at the Bainbridge College and completed his Masters degree in Library Science at Florida State University. As a hard-working professional, he is highly skilled and motivated. Mr. Dowdy has been influential on campus as well as active in off- campus organizations. I am grateful to work with him.

I have been consistently impressed by his considerable technology skills, dedication to research, and leadership ability. In the library, Mr. Dowdy graciously helps our community college students adjust to the pressures of their campus studies; he is always busy assisting students, but his innovative LibGuides aimed at students writing research essays in my English 1101 and 1102 courses have been amazingly effective. Students have been overwhelming responsive to his online library sources. The Libguides specifically designed for students researching on international topics or literature link to everything—scholarly and generally informative--needed to write essays, without having to leave the Libguide site. It was originally Mr. Dowdy’s idea to create the Libguides for my online students because many of them live in rural areas, work full time with families, and cannot take library tours to familiarize themselves with the books and resources or access the library during regular operating hours. Students have made incredible progress writing and researching through his tireless efforts, moreover, students now feel comfortable and rely on the useful Libguides online instant messaging capacity to connect with a live librarian. The excellent results are predictable.

For these reasons, I unreservedly recommend Mr. Dowdy for the Carnegie Corporation My Librarian Award. He is a reliable leader, an incisive thinker, a sedulous worker, and a thoroughly charming person with a strong desire to assist others achieve academic success. His knowledge base is rich and diverse, and he brings a maturity and willingness to share ideas with others that is exemplary. I have not met many librarians with his innovative ideas, determination, and integrity.”- Dr. Betty LaFace, Associate Professor of English at Bainbridge College

“Jeff Dowdy's willingness to serve our college community is apparent in every interaction with students, faculty, and staff. He is knowledgeable about every aspect of the library that I have had reason to inquire about, and always conveys information in a respectful and kind manner. Specifically, Jeff was an integral part of the Fall 2010 new faculty/staff library orientation. He demonstrated how to use specific features of the library website and answered any questions, both at that point and as we were wrapping up a tour of the library. I was very impressed with the research guides he has created and made available through the library website. What a valuable resource for students! Jeff is the coordinator for the college's Facebook page. When I wanted to post videos of

chemistry demonstrations on the page, he worked with me to make it happen. Overall, I'm impressed with Jeff's abilities and heart of service. I know that if I have a question, he is always available either at the library or via email, and will get back to me in a timely manner." - Colette Galivan, Instructional Resources Coordinator-Science Labs at Bainbridge College

"I am the new Physics professor at Bainbridge College. During the 1st week of the semester, I attended the Bainbridge College library orientation for new faculty. During the orientation I spent nearly an hour with Jeff Dowdy as he showed me all the important aspects of the library that would be important for new faculty. Among the things Jeff showed me were the library's collection of Physics DVDs, the online catalog system, how to search for and request journal articles, and how to reserve a study room in the library for my independent study course. As a new faculty member, the time and information provided to me by Jeff was most helpful and greatly appreciated."- Dr. Juan Gomez, Assistant Professor of Physics at Bainbridge College

It has been difficult to review and choose from the many accounts that I have received regarding Mr. Dowdy. In a very short time, Jeff has proven his dedication to student, staff, and faculty success at Bainbridge College. As Assistant Librarian at Bainbridge College, Mr. Jeff Dowdy has invested deeply in the overall educational goals of this institution.

#### **5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?**

Leadership is intrinsic in Jeff Dowdy's position as Assistant Librarian. He oversees a staff of four individuals as they conduct their duties. Mr. Dowdy encourages those in his charge to approach students with an open and positive outlook. It is rare to find Mr. Dowdy in his office or on the library floor without an ongoing task or pursuit. He has an innovative mind focused on making library access and usage easier for patrons through knowledge of physical and virtual resources. Jeff is an excellent example to his colleagues.

He has lead many initiatives in procuring new materials that are relatable for students, including graphic novels and online literary journals. Jeff Dowdy sees himself as more than merely an information provider. He realizes he is part of a larger college mission to provide a solid education for our students and community. And in that mode, Jeff thinks and acts like an educator. He wants to truly inspire and push our students to read (digitally and textually) more frequently and effectively. One aspect to admire about Jeff is his ability to think outside of the pedagogical (and bibliographical) box. His leading efforts in this area are encouraging students to spend time in the library pursuing interests above and beyond their typical school work.

Evidence regarding Jeff Dowdy's efforts with our current First Year Student Experience can be found at the following link:  
<http://guides.bainbridge.edu/content.php?mode=preview&pid=116020&sid=1001055>

This resource was initially intended as a minimal resource for our Foundations of Success course for first year students. Mr. Dowdy followed his initiative and created a research guide for this course that is currently being used in the curriculum. This effort is typical of Jeff's innovative approach to leading a library. He is constantly forming and researching new ideas in concert with the students, staff, and faculty of our Bainbridge College library.

The most remarkable thing about Jeff Dowdy is that he has only been with Bainbridge College for approximately fourteen months. During this short time he has focused on increasing the technological and educational viability of the library. He has extensive leadership as a former campus organizer during many years abroad. The fact that he has learned to adapt to different cultural and educational environments through his previous experiences will benefit Jeff greatly as he continuously moves forward as a campus leader.

**Nominator:**

*Name withheld by request of nominator*

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

There comes a time when we all need someone to help us when it seems as though we are just not going to make it. That was me, and as time passed many more just like me walked onto the Bainbridge campus, but to my own and so many others good fortune there was Jeff waiting for each of us to lend his skill and his confidence when mine waned so desperately. He is like a secret friend that never lets you down.

**2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?**

College was not going to be easy, I was already aware of that. Technologies were different from what I was expecting or prepared for. The staff of the Bainbridge college library responded like the coast guard, trained at saving helpless victims, many times they were there even before any S.O.S. went out. We here at Bainbridge college have a team of truly committed people to guide us in troubling waters and this team is led by Jeff Dowdy. He is not arrogant or proud and yet his skills are depended upon by many who are. Sure, he has helped me to attain a level of proficiency I had never set for myself, but it is how he did it that will help me long after we part ways. I know this is his job but it's hard to tell because I don't know anyone off of this campus that so quietly and humbly loves his job the way Jeff does and I am not going to settle for any less as I live out my own life and make my choices as to how I will expend my own time trying to give to society in my own way. In direct response to the question I would have to say that Jeff has made not only the library experience a better one but has added to that a positive outlook to a frustrating time to seek out ones niche in these times.

**3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?**

Here at the community college level we know our opportunities will still rest a great deal on our own fortitude as we bear the views of many who underrate the value of this institution, someone like Jeff, with his skills, knowledge and expertise, empowers us to the truth that each of us are what we make of ourselves. Jeff's professional demeanor and shared level of expertise has given me, as I am sure it has for others, the knowledge that here we are receiving the level of learning and experience equal to any. Jeff enables me and any student with a complete compliment of resources including our own library, which is interconnected to a vast resource of libraries, to the resources available via computer technology, all done with a masterful conception as to their manipulation and usage.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?**

Knowledge is power, the only power most of us will ever have the opportunity to achieve and hopefully grasp onto for its wisdoms and the power that lay within. Jeff works from what appears to be the confines of our fair library and his small office to help us appreciate what is ours, he offers his services to students, coworkers, faculty, staff, another words, everyone here. Jeff allows each to strive towards our own goals and fields of expertise quietly supporting us with his own skills which moves each of us forward with that which would take years of training and experience otherwise. I was

never impressed with a librarian until I met a truly trained and dedicated one. So around here we just have to ask Jeff, the rest is up to us and he makes that the best part.

**5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?**

Leadership is sometimes misunderstood and as so far as a librarian, someone might not expect a question of leadership. Here at this college, asked to respond to the question, "is Jeff Dowdy a leader?" I would have to say that if your goal is to learn, my advice would be to speak to Jeff Dowdy and to follow his lead. His demeanor, character and professionalism lead by their own right while his persona leads as a friend.

**Nominator:**

*Name withheld by request of nominator*

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

I think Jeff should win the award because he always goes above and beyond to help each student or faculty member he comes in contact with.

**2. Please discuss how the nominee has helped you and/or others and made your experience of the library a more positive one. For instance, did the nominee assist you in a research project or enhance your students' learning experience?**

Jeff has defiantly made my library experience a more positive one and more so during the last year. I am employed as a tutor for Bainbridge College and last year we were relocated to the Library. Jeff took us tutors under his wings. He always made sure that we had what we needed to get our jobs accomplished. From coming up with a way to keep track of each tutors individual schedules to even creating a picture directory of us so that our clients could know what we look like, Jeff went above and beyond to do what he didn't have to do. Nowhere in his job description does it say that he had to do any of that yet Jeff did. If it wasn't for Jeff I'm not sure that we tutors would have made it through the previous year.

**3. How does the nominee make the college, community college, or university a better place?**

Jeff makes our college a better place in so many ways, but the most important way is his demeanor. Jeff is one of the friendliest persons you will ever meet. I don't know about you, but when I'm having a bad day sometimes a friendly person is all it takes to make my day a little bit better. Jeff is also approachable. When you contrast Jeff to some of the other The Library and in particular Jeff, has had a tremendous impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process. The main was that this has been accomplished has been with them housing the tutors when the tutors had no other place to go. By allowing us to tutor in the library, I believe that more and more students have received academic help than ever before. A lot of people do homework in the library everyday and a great deal of them wind up needing help. Before the tutors were located in the library the librarians themselves would try to help the students the best way that they knew how. I have entered the library countless times and found Jeff and the other librarian trying to help students with difficult work that is way outside of their field of expertise. By allowing the tutors to tutor in the library, they provided an outlet of help that most of the students might not even have known existed. employed in our library you will immediately notice a big difference. Jeff is there to help and his attitude displays that perfectly. Just having a person like Jeff employed in your library makes all the difference in not only just your library, but also your entire school.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee in particular, had an impact on students and faculty and the teaching and learning process?**

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knew how. I have entered the library countless times and found Jeff and the other librarian trying to help students with difficult work that is way outside of their field of expertise. By allowing the tutors to tutor in the library, they provided an outlet of help that most of the students might not even have known existed.

**5. How has the individual demonstrated leadership in the campus community?**

Jeff is the definition of leadership in our campus community. An important part of being a leader, in my own opinion is to lead and be there when needed. Every time I have always had a problem with anything in the library all I would have to do is find Jeff. He would fix the problem if he could and if he couldn't then he find a solution and then get back with me with the answer. To me that is the most important part of being a leader.