

are available the workshops will be held in locations in the Southeast and the Midwest. *C&RL News* will report on the status of the NEH/ACRL program as details become available. ■■

## VIRGO CHALLENGES THE CALIFORNIA GRASSROOTS

On February 11, Julie Carroll Virgo, executive director of ACRL, completed a four-day whistle stop tour of California. The successful six-city tour, sponsored by the California Academic and Research Librarians (CARL), was itself an historical occasion which introduced librarians in metropolitan areas in the northern and southern parts of this large state, as well as librarians nationwide through tapes of her talks, to the provocative and well-articulated ideas of this energetic academic library leader and educator.

Virgo tied her talks together with two important and timely themes: 1) the challenge to the profession from the proposed reclassification of the federal librarian positions by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and, 2) the value of the new article by Allen Veaner, "Continuity or Discontinuity: A Persistent Personnel Issue in Academic Librarianship," *Advances in Library Administration and Organization* 1 (1982): 1, where he "incisively delineates the role of the librarian and the role of the support staff in the academic environment."

In San Diego and Berkeley, Virgo addressed "The Role of the Librarian as Manager." With this topic she explored "the larger role of the librarian in the academic or research community, the educational preparation necessary to build that role, how the environment impacts on that role, and how we reconcile the array of roles that would be placed upon us: librarian, manager, educator, faculty member, scholar, researcher."

She supported her premise that librarians' "primary responsibilities are as practitioners of our profession" as she discussed faculty status and the implications of technological change in relation to the proposed revised federal standards and Veaner's article.

In "Certification," the topic of her talks in both Whittier and Sacramento, Virgo addressed the problem of credibility and the role of the library schools in the education process.

She summarized the complexities of developing a certification program, basing her talk on her experiences as director of education for the Medical Library Association where she was instrumental in the development of a competency-based certification program. Her answer to the question, "Is the possession of a set of stated competencies a viable alternative for an MLS in academic libraries?" was yes and no. "Yes," she

said, "if we have resources to develop excellent competency-based examinations, but the answer is no at the moment because I don't think that we have that capability."

Northridge and Stanford hosted presentations on "Current Issues in Higher Education and Academic Librarianship." Seven current issues in higher education: financing, demographics, curriculum, faculty, societal and political changes, technology, and economics, were woven into Virgo's fifteen suggested solutions. Her well-reasoned and substantial text discussed why librarians have to respond to these issues and what actions libraries could take to soften the impact, and to survive these nationwide trends.

Several of her many suggestions were to "increase productivity of library staffs, be prepared to terminate employment of the less productive, look for ways to cut personnel costs through appropriate technology, challenge assumptions on the extent to which collections and services are used, conduct fund raising, and be consumer-oriented, not product-oriented." The value of bright, strong, knowledgeable library leaders was implicit in her tough and practical suggestions.

The state-wide tour was the first of this magnitude attempted by the CARL librarians. Her published stops were complemented by a series of coffees, wine receptions, lunches, and dinners where she had the opportunity to informally meet the California librarians and gather their concerns. These grassroots, or local, concerns, factored into her own thinking, she said, provided her with greater insight as she represented us on the ACRL Board, a function she feels is vital to her role as an academic library leader.

The tour was noteworthy also as it set a precedent for academic library cooperation and for participation in professional activities at the local level, one of ACRL's goals for the state chapters. Too, it allowed timely and consistent information to be personally delivered to the California librarians by a nationally respected figure in academic librarianship.

Tapes of Virgo's three presentations are being offered by CARL as a fund raising effort. With this offer librarians can add Virgo's speeches to their library's collection and concurrently help support this large ACRL state chapter.

"Certification," "The Role of the Librarian as Manager," and "Current Issues in Higher Education and Academic Librarianship" are each approximately one hour long and consist of Virgo's speech and her answers to questions following it.

Tapes are available for \$10 each. Please indicate the titles you wish, make your check out to CARL, and send both by August 1 to Julie Virgo Tapes, CSULB Library, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90840, Attn: Wendy Culotta. Please allow 30 days for delivery.—Wendy Culotta, *Science-Technology Librarian, California State University, Long Beach.* ■■



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