

The President's Program

O'Donnell and Wheatley—dynamic speakers you shouldn't miss

by Maureen Sullivan and Mary Beth Clack

The President's Program Discussion Group at the ALA Midwinter meeting in Philadelphia will be led by James J. O'Donnell, professor of Classical Studies and vice provost for Information Systems and Computing at the University of Pennsylvania. O'Donnell is also the author of the recently published *Avatars of the Word: From Papyrus to Cyberspace*. The Discussion Group will meet on February 1, 1999, from 9:30–11:30 a.m., and all ACRL members are encouraged to attend what promises to be a lively and provocative discussion.

An energetic and committed classics scholar who founded the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, O'Donnell has a deep understanding of teaching, learning, and the challenges of integrating technology in campus environments.

This promises to be a lively discussion of the variegated issues involved in how leadership and learning influence the processes of strategy formulation, decision-making, assessing user needs, and navigating the complexity of the electronic marketplace. It also will give us an opportunity to explore how librarians and our business partners can contribute to the collective thinking that shapes these processes. We hope that our members from both the academic and business sectors will join us at this thought-provoking discussion.

The President's Program Committee has also signed Margaret J. Wheatley as the keynote speaker for the ACRL President's Program at the 1999 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans. Author of *Leadership and the New Sci-*

ence and co-author with Myron-Kellner Rogers of *A Simpler Way*, Wheatley is president and co-founder of the Berkana Institute, a principal in KRW, Inc., and a former professor of management at Brigham Young University.

Several members of the President's Program Committee had the opportunity to hear Wheatley deliver a keynote speech at the University of Arizona's Living the Future II Conferences last April and found her to be a compelling speaker who is as eloquent in person as she is in her writing.

Many of her comments on organizational change, learning, and collaboration were very relevant to the experience of academic librarians. Wheatley's exploration of new science principles and metaphors as they relate to leadership and management offer her audiences a new lens through which to view organizational life and development. Not yet widely known to library audiences, Wheatley will offer us fresh insights into how we understand, design, lead, and manage change in our organizations. Her wholistic view of organizational and societal change will help us grapple with the paradoxes of autonomy and control, order amidst change, and adaptation and structure and flexibility.

We hope that you will encourage your colleagues to attend this final President's Program and that it will provide a foundation for renewed conversations in your library about how to create the most supportive culture for constructive leadership in the future. ■

About the authors

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