11:27:40 And I''m going to start recording.

11:27:50 Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Tara Wink, I am the historical collections library and archivist at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

11:27:59 And today I'm co presenting with Christina Baker on our spring 2021 internships at the HSHSL on campus. Now I'm going to hand it over to Christina to introduce yourself.

11:28:11 Hi, my name is Christina Baker, I've been on the UMB campus for about four and a half years now, and I am the former HR specialist for the library.

11:28:22 Right before we get started I do want to share a little bit of information about our campus.

11:28:29 The University of Maryland, Baltimore is located in downtown Baltimore on the west side of the city.

11:28:35 We are the home of seven professional schools. They are the School of Medicine School of Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Social work, Jaw, and a Graduate school.

11:28:52 The campus, again, is an urban environment and we do cater to graduate level and professional level students though there are a few undergraduate students on our campus.

11:29:01 The Health Sciences and Human Services Library at the University of Maryland, Baltimore is at the heart of campus.

11:29:08 We serve six of the seven professional schools, the law school does have its own library across across campus.

11:29:16 So we do serve 6 other schools, though the law school can use our services as well.

11:29:23 It was founded in 1813. It is believed to be the first Medical Library associated with a School of Medicine in the country.

11:29:31 So a little bit more about the historical collections in the HSHSL. We are located on the fifth floor of the library, and we do house the original collection that started our library in the reading room.

11:29:45 The bottom picture in the slide does show our reading room, and that original collection from John Crawford.

11:29:52 And we also house book collections and archival materials from the other six schools that we serve. Our main focus is to present the history of our campus and the history of our schools.

11:30:05 So now that you know a little bit more about us I'm going to hand it over to Christina to talk about planning the internships.

11:30:15 So for us, we, we started with our big question and centered everything around that. And it's how do we help the interns build skills that will be beneficial for careers in academic Health Sciences Library.

11:30:29 So definitely wanted to point that out as we go into how we came up with the idea and what our planning looks like.

11:30:40 Now at the HSHSL we already had an internship program in existence, usually hosting one intern, per year though. Ideally, we'd make it up to three with one intern each semester, spring, summer, and fall.

11:30:51 Every year that we brought someone in, we would make changes to our internship program, making sure that our interns met with our division heads who lead the different areas in the library tailoring the experience to their interests, and also towards

11:31:05 the skills needed to prepare for careers in academic libraries. So we're always looking to make our internship program better. Typically our interns were hosted in resources in partnership with Tara in historical collections.

11:31:20 And then we add other options based on our interns interest. We started planning early last year for 2020 opportunity, but obviously COVID happened and we had to put that on hold. The virtual idea came after I attended the GLAM virtual career fair in the

11:31:39 fall. I signed up to assist with CV review, and I met a local student who expressed an interest in collections. I was very much aware of Tara's passion and interest in mentorship so I reached out to her, asked about piloting something like this, and the

11:31:56 virtual internship idea was born. We started out with some basic research, we had originally done research on how to transition library workers to a virtual environment.

11:32:07 What kind of projects they could do, what kind of tasks we could have for them and we used that list to kind of get us started. And then we moved into some research on how virtual internships were being created, reviewing best practices, and tips and things

11:32:21 like that.

11:32:23 So one thing that we looked into as we created this idea was trying to hit as many of these internships sections, if you will, as possible. So having a goal which is again, helping them build skills, the skills and knowledge themselves, mentoring. Have

11:32:41 someone that they could talk to, people they get to meet, practice professional development opportunities and training to.

11:32:50 So that leads us into the planning phase, and again we had our guiding questions of how to make this beneficial and how we can get them the skills needed to enter the workforce.

11:33:02 We created and developed elements of our internship, so recognizing that as important as the actual project part of it is we did want to provide a full experience or as much as we could, in a virtual environment.

11:33:16 So the idea was not only to have the experience be a CV builder with hard skills, but also be a chance to learn about and participate in what happens in the library.

11:33:26 So after some research we considered what would be valuable for the interns and created a few main components. Now, those were meeting with the division heads and other maybe managers or librarians as interested for the interns, and we had each of them

11:33:41 explain to the interns what their divisions did and give a full picture of the HSHSL.

11:33:47 We had them.

11:33:50 Attend library wide meetings we wanted to provide more exposure to more employees in the library, allow them to learn more about what's going on, how these meetings are run, what gets discussed that these types of meetings, and then also conference attendance

11:34:05 that would be paid for by the library. We knew that many conferences would still be virtual. And so as a result at a lower cost than in the past. And that's definitely a CV builder and an opportunity for professional development for the interns.

11:34:21 We wanted to include a CV review session with one of our managers and this would provide them with exposure to a hiring manager, someone who could provide tips and tricks about what they look for in candidates, and ideally help them with how to best

11:34:35 present their skills and their interest on paper.

11:34:39 Finally, we hoped to include a presentation aspect to the program. Now that could be leading a workshop in the library or just presenting to the library staff, itself, it can either be at the department level or the entire library.

11:34:55 We know that presentations are such a large part of academic librarianship that this would be something that would be helpful for them and experience on their CD, and ideally help them prepare for internships or sorry interviews, as they entered the workforce.

11:35:11 One important aspect in the planning phase is to consider timing and scheduling. The earlier the better. There were a lot of components that we wanted to include, and this meant the schedule needed to be determined before the internship began.

11:35:25 And what we did was we sketched it out by week instead of specific dates, so that we could use that schedule as a template for future semesters.

11:35:34 So that would mean, we'd say, this is something we'd like to have in a week, to this week eight is when mission happened week 13 etc. and event. An example would be a CV session that could occur in the last three weeks of the internship, when they're

11:35:48 near completing their project or they've at least made substantial progress, and they have more skills to add to their CV.

11:35:57 Now after that, we would want to build the case.

11:36:03 So we were prepared to make a pitch to our library director so that we could get some buy in from her. Our director is MJ Tooey.

11:36:13 And what we did was we created a proposal. And that overall proposal should include the project, the cost and the time commitments. And based on some basic research we started with $100 per intern.

11:36:26 Like I said, we knew that any conference attendance would be not as much as it is when we have in-person events, and so we thought that if we had $100 committed per intern we could probably you know do a couple of things with that.

11:36:40 And we always knew that our library director was supportive of internship opportunities and mentoring, but we wanted to make sure that we had a clear plan and idea ready because we knew we wanted the funds to support it, and it's something that we

11:36:54 wanted to make sure that she knew we were passionate about and committed to.

11:37:06 Hi.

11:37:06 Okay, Christina has talked a lot about the planning of the internship. And now I just want to take a time to talk a little bit about the components of our internships, our virtual internships.

11:37:16 So I'm going to be talking mostly about one through three here.

11:37:20 Christina already mentioned a little bit of how we look to get exposure to the HSHSL through meetings with division heads and other managers, and also she talked about opportunities for professional development and making sure that we added those

11:37:34 into the internship. My, my time here I do you want to spend time to talk a little bit about creating projects that had professional level library work in them.

11:37:46 The main purpose of this is to make sure that a student comes out of an intern with something to put on their CV, experience to get that next job, to get their first job.

11:37:59 And just to augment their class experience.

11:38:03 So that was an important part when we were planning the internship. I actually like to have the three pronged approach to any kind of project or any kind of internship in the, in the historical collections.

11:38:19 And what I mean by this is choosing three different aspects of archival work or special collections work or library work that the students can do while they're an intern.

11:38:30 So these are some examples of areas of our library work the students could do. And I like I said I like to have a three pronged approach meaning I choose three of these instead of all of them, there could be more than three, but I want at least three.

11:38:46 So what these are archival processing and description is integral in Special Collections and Archival work. This is where a student will take a collection and describe it, organize it, make it available for a researcher to use down the line, and

11:39:03 make it accessible for researchers. The marketing and outreach component is very important at the HSHSL right now. I've been there for roughly three years, over three years at this point.

11:39:17 And when I came, not many people knew that we had historical collections so I wanted to change that. And I wanted to make it clear to interns that that's an important part of being an archivist or being in historical collections, making people aware that

11:39:31 these collections exist and are getting used. So that was another integral part of project planning for these interns and actually both of them had to do something in marketing and outreach for me. They both wrote a blog post about something that they

11:39:47 found interesting while working as an intern.

11:39:50 Another component is exhibits. This time around we didn't have our digital exhibit platform ready for students to actually do any kind of exhibit work.

11:40:00 So unfortunately, this wasn't an option for the virtual interns but when they're on campus, it is an option. And that can include curating an exhibit, picking materials that could be valuable, doing actual, putting the exhibit together and actually installing

11:40:15 it, doing the research or doing the write ups for the labels and things like that. So that's another option for a student to do.

11:40:24 Historical Research and reference help. This is, if I get a reference question that I think an intern couldn answer I do sometimes provide them with that opportunity, or the historical research for an exhibit, or the historical research for a blog post.

11:40:39 Historical research is really important for an archivist or a special collections librarian, because a lot of what we do involves trying to figure out why we have a collection, why we have a piece, why we have a book, and just putting context into history

11:40:54 for our collections, digitization, and other data work.

11:41:02 This time around, students, again couldn't do digitization because we weren't on site. So they, but they did have the opportunity to do metadata assignment because there were things that were already digitized that needed to be uploaded.

11:41:15 So in the past, had students actually do the digitization, but this time around it was more metadata work and assigning things, and describing things that were digital already.

11:41:28 The "other" component there's always that "other" component. You know the "other duties as assigned" as I like to call it, as we all like to call it.

11:41:36 This time around, it was transcription work or translation. It could also be just if something comes up that the student expresses interest in. This time we had a special edition of our Connective Issues, which is our newsletter and a student actually was

11:41:54 an artist, so she had the opportunity to use her art experience to do some work there, and I will show you what our students did this time around. Stop sharing this but I'll share the projects.

11:42:10 So,

11:42:14 here is a little bit about what our students did this time around. I had two interns in the spring, one worked with the College of Medicine faculty minutes, which are handwritten minutes from 1812 to 1839.

11:42:29 These were not... These were digitized a long time ago but people couldn't really use them because most of them are handwritten and you can't OCR handwriting.

11:42:39 So she actually worked to transcribe these minutes so they can be searched. And here's what the final document looks like. And they've already come in handy for me. I'm... I've already been using them and searching across our digital archive and coming up

11:42:54 with results in these minutes for faculty, for students that are listed in these minutes. And these are one of our earliest documents in our collection so it's very valuable for the history of our institution.

11:43:07 This intern also had the opportunity to process a collection. That was a physical collection, but we had digitized the work so that she could actually read the letters and create a finding aid for it.

11:43:19 It was the John J Greenwood papers. We weren't actually sure why we had this collection, but she was able to at least transcribe the letters and create a finding aid and kind of get a get a feel for what were in the, in the content so that we now can

11:43:36 reach researchers and researchers now know we own these materials.

11:43:40 My other intern had an opportunity to work on our dissertations. We have early school of medicine dissertations from the 19th century.

11:43:48 These dissertations again are handwritten.

11:44:10 They are original research by early students, and they just, they sometimes use medical terms that we don't use today so what she did is create a finding in the form of an Excel spreadsheet for these dissertations and there are multiple volumes so she

11:44:04 only got through a few, but at least this has been started and another intern can come along and take the work and make it their own and do some more work on it.

11:44:15 But for her, she was able to assign metadata and describe these works in a 21st century term. So this particular one is an inaugural dissertation on dyspepsia, which is indigestion, we wouldn't use that [dyspepsia] term.

11:44:35 Now we have a Excel spreadsheet that describes it as indigenous indigenous instead of the early 19th century term that we wouldn''t have used and wouldn''t have understood.

11:44:44 So this is extremely helpful for people who want to use this collection, moving forward to have a better feel for what's actually in it.

11:44:52 She also worked on a Wikidata project with our Resources Division. So she was parttime with me and parttime with them. This project involves cataloging the different authors that we have at the University of Maryland and describing their work, making

11:45:07 it better.

11:45:10 discoverable through Wikidata and Google.

11:45:15 And I do want to show the cartoon that my, the first intern created for our Collective Issues edition.

11:45:22 This is handdrawn and is just fascinating I love this piece it's now actually in our archive, she donated it to us, but it does, it was just a fun little thing that she had the opportunity to do because she had art experience.

11:45:39 So back to the PowerPoint,

11:45:45 a little bit more about the projects. I do want to make sure that the interns are interested in the work so I have a running list of projects that interns can work on.

11:45:55 When I first met with our interns, I did show them this list and ask them to choose what they'd be interested in, so that they could, they could be inspired by the work and interested in the work and do a better job because of it.

11:46:07 The mentorship component we had weekly meetings where we would talk about things that they were working on, things that they might have been learning in their coursework, they could ask me any kind of question I was happy to sit down and answer them and,

11:46:19 you know, tell them my thoughts on the theory that they were experiencing in class. And they did take the opportunity to do that.

11:46:28 I also assigned some readings and some theory, because while the one was very interested in archival work the other one had no experience in archives.

11:46:36 So it did provide some foundational reading for her so that she could understand what an archive's goal was and what the purpose of my job and what the purpose of an archivist is.

11:46:47 And we did discuss those readings and they were done early on. I also assigned additional readings throughout the semester as interesting news pieces came up about ethical conundrums and the archival world.

11:46:58 And, you know, the returning of artifacts by museums, so we could have some more theoretical discussion and you know make it applicable to today's world.

11:47:08 And as I said, Christina has already discussed the exposure to the HSHSL as well as the opportunities for professional development that we integrated.

11:47:18 So these are some of the benefits that we found from our virtual internship, these, some of these things are directly from my interns, they are comments that they actually provided. They appreciated having more flexibility of time, they could work at 8pm

11:47:32 at night on a Friday and didn't have to come to campus. They had more ability to kind of create their own schedule. As long as they got the work done I didn't care when they were doing this.

11:47:46 It... virtual internships do offer up more institutional options, it's not just always location based like where you [the intern] are located. Both of ours happened to be in Maryland, but in the future

11:47:56 maybe that's not always going to be necessary.

11:47:59 They also had my undivided attention in zoom meetings, each week. They were given an hour of my time and they could talk to me however they needed or whatever they needed for that week and many times those meetings went on for longer than an hour, and

11:48:12 they were also able to participate in departmental and general library meetings which an intern, typically probably wouldn't have the ability to do, but because of Zoom [it is possible]. There is some of the challenges...

11:48:26 We didn't have the lack of... we didn't have accidental learning opportunities that you would in a physical environment. I couldn't teach them how to do some conservation work like you would with physical objects, which they didn't get to work, they didn't

11:48:40 get to work with the physical collection, which is especially problematic in archives because that is part of the learning experience.

11:48:48 And there's no direct connection with myself or other library workers so there was less opportunity for networking for getting a feel for the actual culture of the library.

11:48:59 And here's direct quotes on how the internship helped their LIS program, and they both got exposure to academic and Special Collections work in a hands on environment, and they were able to apply theory, learned in school.

11:49:13 And they also had the opportunity to work in an archival environment that they didn't have the opportunity to take coursework in in their LIS program.

11:49:23 So now we're going to talk a little bit about things that we learned, the things that we would change, and that kind of thing so go ahead Christina and talk a little bit about what we didn't get to do.

11:49:36 So for us, as I mentioned, this was basically a pilot program. So if we try this, how does it work? Is it worth trying again?

11:49:46 And I think the answer to that is yes.

11:49:51 So, I mean, obviously, there were some challenges, things that didn't get done.

11:49:55 Some of those would be that you know we had the best laid plans and intentions, but there were some elements that we really, really wanted to do that we just weren't able to include.

11:50:06 I can admit that part of that is because I left my position in the library about two months before the internship was scheduled to start. So we weren't able to prioritize it as much as we would have with me leaving and having to juggle a few other things.

11:50:21 So we didn't get to plan the CV review.

11:50:26 And I think one person presented to their department but I'm, I don't think that both of them were able to do that.

11:50:33 And so in the future. We like to make sure both of those things are included, even adding in like a mock or practice interview. Some of those are even.

11:50:44 I think we wanted to do an early career librarian meeting too, so that they could get the point of view of somebody who hadn't been there for long. But we knew that it'd be really tough to fit in all of these things the first time around, which is why we

11:50:56 originally brought our list down a bit. You'll notice earlier we didn't mention the mock interview or meeting with the early career librarian and we just knew we wouldn't be able to in the time that we had, and that that could be something incorporated later.

11:51:10 And then our pie in the sky dream for both Tara and I, would be to have a donor-funded, paid internship or just some sort of larger amount of funding.

11:51:23 So we know that we need more funding if we want to continue supporting the conference attendance, specifically, now back in the in person world those travel costs would need to be included.

11:51:36 The cost of the conference itself will probably go back up. And though the library might not be able to pay for them completely, there's the opportunity to subsidize it for the intern and make it less of a hardship for them to have that experience.

11:51:51 Agreed, and some of the other things and some of the takeaways that we had through this are both of the interns really did enjoy the experience. They both got a lot out of it, it really did help their LIS course coursework.

11:52:09 Some of the things that we did learn is, it's important to make sure that the projects are things that can be put on the CV. It shouldn't be busy work it shouldn't be something that's just going to benefit the library, [it] needs to benefit both parties.

11:52:26 So that was something that we definitely emphasized in our planning.

11:52:29 We were constantly thinking of what can the interns do that's tangible, that they can show that I know how to do this and I've done this before. And then again the guiding question just starting with the intern as the main beneficiary and then building

11:52:44 everything from there.

11:52:46 Great.

11:52:47 And for me it's important to just have that running list of projects that you can always pull to because you never know when you're going to have the opportunity to have an intern.

11:52:56 Neither of these... we we we didn't advertise these interns at all. They came to us and they came to us with a set skill and it was nice to have a lot of options for them to work from.

11:53:07 So I would just recommend always having a list of different projects that an intern could do.

11:53:12 Other than that, make sure that you are focused on mentoring, your job as the supervisor is to be the mentor to show them the way if you will. To give them advice, to give them some feedback on their skills, but also to give them a real world environment

11:53:30 and what it's really like to be a librarian or an archivist in this world. And make sure that they're reaching out to other organizations if they have an interest in being involved with them, being involved in professional organizations, and not sitting

11:53:43 back and just actively waiting for something to come to them because that's not the world that we live in today.

11:53:50 And finally, collaborating with other library departments, the one intern was strictly historical collections, but she did have the opportunity to work in other departments through the the Connective Issues newsletter, she had to meet with other library

11:54:03 departments. The other intern was a complete collaboration. She actually almost had two distinctly different archives... or different internship experiences, because she was working with me in archives, and historical collections, but also working with

11:54:17 the Resources Division which deals with cataloging and metadata and things like that so that collaboration is ongoing. We've had other opportunities to do that and that's just really important to make sure that the intern is getting this well rounded collaborative,

11:54:32 Yeah, and then I guess it kind of ties into that is just to make sure that you welcome her in turns into your library, treat them, you know the way that you would treat a new hire let people know that they''re coming ahead of time.

11:54:40 understanding that that's what the library world is like.

11:54:52 And if you have, you know, library swag or something that you give your new hires maybe give it to your interns to have. It doesn't have to be something elaborate, it could be an agency to sell we have these a thermos that we give our new hires.

11:55:08 So that could be something that you give them if you've got pens, highlighters, post-its, just something that's printed and it helps for them to have a connection to your institution.

11:55:20 Right.

11:55:27 Here is our contact information. If you have any questions feel free to contact us.

11:55:31 Thank you. Have a good afternoon.