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Attend Programs to Stay on Top

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One of the challenges that information professionals face is keeping abreast of the latest developments in the legal profession, legal publishing and technology. A very efficient way to stay on top of the trends and the changes taking place is to attend programs sponsored by local and national professional organizations.

How Our Organizations Benefit

Each program has unique benefits. Last month the Northern California Association of Law Libraries held its annual Institute, "A Lot Can Happen in 20 Years!" Several programs provided practical knowledge which could be applied immediately in your own setting. Specifically, Lisa Seiden, Reference Librarian at Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison, gave a presentation on BrobeckNet, the firm's intranet, and offered tips on how to get users to use the Intranet, and how the Brobeck library team uses it for knowledge management.

Librarians often pick up information relevant to other firm departments. At LegalWorks 2000, held last month, a program on recruiting demonstrated how the internet has changed recruiting efforts and offered some websites recruiting professionals would find useful.

Programs teach us new skills which are critical to meeting the needs of the users and accomplishing the objectives of our firms. Skills learned at an HTML workshop, sponsored by BayNet, allowed a librarian to begin designing web pages for the research page of the firm's intranet.

As in almost any other field, the internet is changing the way we do our jobs. It has opened up new avenues to provide information. Most programs, especially those on a specific subject, will suggest websites which we can bring back to the firm and use to obtain information for our practice groups and link from our intranet practice pages.

On Friday, April 28, the annual Practising Law Institute program, Managing the Law Library 2000, will be held at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. Those attending will get to hear first-hand from a panel of experts. Blane R. Prescott from Altman Weil, Inc. will give a presentation on law firm trends -- the six most significant in the legal profession as well as practice area trends. The much-debated issue of multi-disciplinary practice (MDP) will be presented by Joanne M. Garvey from Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe. These programs acquaint us with the big picture and help us better understand the legal profession and immediate work environment. Indirectly they can help us make better decisions in library operations and service. Another program will demonstrate ways in which the library can team up with the marketing department in providing information from internet and commercial sites.

More often than not, there is something to be gained, learned and shared by attending programs. The investment in time to hear about the trends, acquire new skills and learn

about the latest research tools pays off. These activities offer the opportunity to stay on top of our profession so that we can provide the high level of service expected.

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