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## **Why I'm Thankful to Be a Law Librarian**

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Autumn is traditionally the time of year that we take stock of things for which we are thankful. Oftentimes, we concentrate on the good things or positive occurrences in our personal lives or even in a greater, global sense. But rarely do we stop and think about how thankful we are to be a part of our chosen profession. This year I decided to put some thought into why I'm thankful to be a law librarian, and I came up with a list of five reasons.

### **#5 Technology**

Sometimes change can be viewed as a negative, but when it comes to technology, we librarians have embraced the change. Contrary to the "doomsayers," technology didn't leave us behind; it only made us and the principles of librarianship more relevant. To a large degree, technology empowers us!

Some of our colleagues are now playing central roles in their organizations' IT departments or are working closely with their chief information officers (many have even made the transition to a CIO or CKO position). By embracing technology, and all the changes that followed, librarians have become technology leaders. We are on the cutting-edge, and are relied upon as such.

### **#4 New Faces**

Over the past few years many new faces have joined the ranks of law librarianship. Many of these people come from other parts of our profession, mainly corporate librarianship. These new faces have generated new thoughts about the role of the librarian in the law firm and the way we present ourselves to the legal community. I am thankful for these new faces in our profession and for the new perspectives that they bring.

### **#3 Expanding Horizons**

The opportunities within law librarianship have expanded over the last few years. No longer are law librarians confined to the library. Many of our colleagues perform research full-time and bill for their time as "experts." Many are in charge of multiple departments such as records and docketing.

To me, this is a great selling point for encouraging those who might be interested in joining our profession. These days, our jobs are what we make them; there are no boundaries.

### **#2 Respect**

As law librarians, we are making new and important contributions to our organizations. I am always amazed and astonished at the innovations that my peers have developed. Their

dedication and creativity seems boundless. This has naturally led to a well-deserved increased level of respect from our clients and our peers.

## #1 Community

The number one reason that I am thankful to be a law librarian is that I am a member of the greatest community of professionals; and I can say that without hesitation. Our community supports its members, both personally and professionally, in ways that can't be measured. Librarianship has always been a profession of sharing, but with the advent of email and list-servs, this sharing has taken on a dramatic new dimension.

A personal example that I am happy to share is from my time as a law firm librarian in Sacramento. I was looking for an out-of-print book for an attorney. After exhausting my local resources, I sent a request to a national list-serv. A reply came immediately, from a librarian across the country. She offered to overnight the book, and send me the bill. The book arrived the next day as promised. When I brought the book to the attorney, he was thrilled. "Where did you get this?" he asked. "Check out the stamp in the front of the book," I replied. "West Virginia?" he asked incredulously, "I just asked for this yesterday." He was astounded that a librarian, whom I didn't know, would take the time to pack and ship a book the same day and overnight it to me. We all know that this is not a rare occurrence. This world of ours could stand to learn a lot from its librarians!

I hope that my list has generated some thoughts about why you're thankful to be a law librarian. It is a blessing to be part of your profession, a job that fulfills you, sustains you, and brings you so much satisfaction. If you think about it, I am sure that you too are thankful to be a law librarian – not just in the fall, but all year round.

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