Two Drexel CCI Faculty Members Awarded Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grants

*Funding Will Directly Support Projects to Increase Resources for Metadata/Cataloging Professionals, and Investigate Library Services Access in Underserved Communities*

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. – Two faculty members from the College of Computing & Informatics (CCI)—associate professor Jung-ran Park, PhD, and assistant professor Deborah Turner, PhD—are the recipients of over $793,300 in funding as part of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian (LB21) Program from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Their awards were matched by an additional $337,597, bringing the funding total to over $1.1 million.

This year, IMLS awarded 23 LB21 grants totaling $7,437,595. Recipients are matching these awards with $3,614,714 in non-federal funds. IMLS received 82 applications for the program this year.

"Librarians and staff from all types of libraries, from school media centers to rare book collections to archives, need to be prepared to meet the changing informational and educational needs of their customers and constituents," said IMLS Director Susan H. Hildreth. "The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program helps them meet those needs with projects for continuing education, training, professional development, and early career research."

Park’s project (with co-PIs CCI associate professor Christopher Yang, PhD, and cataloging/metadata librarian Yuji Tosaka, PhD, at The College of New Jersey) will develop a new approach to providing access to continuing education resources and opportunities for all levels of cataloging and metadata professionals nationwide. The ultimate goal of the project is to enhance the skills and knowledge of cataloging and metadata professionals essential for building a workforce for 21st century global information access. The grant award supports the project’s building of a self-sustaining digital repository for professionals to access continuing education resources for self-directed lifelong learning on emerging metadata standards and technologies; a collaborative virtual platform for professionals to communicate, mentor, and share library projects, applications, and best practices; and the creation of an open-source webinar series with sequential learning modules to enhance professionals’ in-depth knowledge and skills.

Park’s teaching and research interests lie in knowledge organization and representation, computer-mediated communication, cross-cultural communication and multilingual information access. Prior to joining Drexel in 2004, Park served as a cataloging librarian at the Cunningham Memorial Library at Indiana State University. She holds a PhD in linguistics from the University of Hawaii, a master’s degree in library
and information science from the University of Hawaii, and a master’s degree in Korean Linguistics from Sogang University (South Korea).

Turner’s three-year Early Career research project will investigate ways to meet the information needs of people who are underserved, namely the urban poor who face issues unaddressed in the delivery of many digitized library services. Her project will specifically help library and informal science professionals and researchers gain an understanding of how oral information services may be designed, organized, and managed. The project will also fund a doctoral student research assistant who will work with community and library staff in urban public libraries to investigate the needs of patrons who are poor, design library services to meet those needs, and evaluate the services with the goal of improving service models. Research sites for Turner’s project include the Cleveland Public Library, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and The Seattle Public Library system.

Turner’s major teaching and research interests include the management of information institutions and human information behavior, including with oral information. Before coming to Drexel, she facilitated workshops to international and national audiences as a part of the Association of Research Libraries and assisted with research for the Urban Libraries Council and focused on the small schools movement and libraries. Turner also worked in special libraries, manuscript collections, reference departments at various institutions including several years as a librarian and manager at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She holds a PhD from the Information School of the University of Washington, a master’s degree in library and information science from the University of Michigan, and a bachelor’s degree in English (emphasis on Native American studies) from the University of California, Berkeley.

The array of projects funded this year includes grants for many different library constituencies across the country. Click here to read the official press release from IMLS and learn more about this year’s awarded projects.