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A Tribute to Judy Morgan, Law Library Director

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TRIBUTE TO JUDY MORGAN, LAW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Darla W. Jackson*

Current academic law library directors have advised aspiring law library directors that “managing library operations, managing law school involvement, and managing yourself” are three essential skills that must be “mastered” to be a successful law library director.¹ If indeed these are the criteria for success, then Judy Morgan is a resounding success. Having completed twenty years of service to the OCU Law Library in 2006,² this success has been noted in *Oklahoma City University School of Law: A History*: “The Morgan years have witnessed great improvement in the quantity and quality of the holdings, physical facilities . . . and the credentials of the staff.”³ While I have only been at OCU for five of the many years Judy Morgan has served, I know that it has been her guiding hand that has been directly responsible for the increased quality of the collection and, I believe, the staff.

MANAGING LIBRARY OPERATIONS

Two components of managing library operations are personnel and money management.⁴ Judy Morgan has done both exceedingly well.

I know that Judy has devoted significant time to managing the staff

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1. Barbara A. Bintliff et al., *Rebuilding the Profession: Recommendations for Librarians Interested in Becoming Academic Law Library Directors*, 99 LAW LIBR. J. 101, 104 (2007).

2. VON RUSSELL CREEL & BOB BURKE, OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW: A HISTORY 168 (2008).

3. *Id.*

4. Bintliff et al., *supra* note 1, at 104.

of the Law Library. Perhaps managing me has been one of her most challenging tasks. I came to OCU with a military background. Needless to say, the military has a very different culture than the Law Library. Judy's husband, Pat, had also served in the military. As a result, Judy had a unique understanding of the manner in which I approach issues. She has mentored me through the adjustment to the new environment.

Judy was patient while I adjusted to the new environment, yet she maintained high expectations. I appreciated her high expectations because I knew the expectations evidenced the confidence she had in my abilities and because I knew her high expectations would motivate me to exert my best efforts. At the same time, she was not overly harsh when my efforts did not result in what she would classify as ideal outcomes. Instead, on such occasions, Judy would often share her experiences. Many of the shared experiences had a striking resemblance to the situation I was facing and had lessons from which I could benefit. Using this technique, she gently guided me through the minefields that one might not expect to find in a sometimes quiet law library.

In addition to sharing her own experiences with me, Judy Morgan encouraged my professional development. When I arrived at OCU, Judy was the only law librarian who was also a faculty member. Yet Judy never hesitated to involve the reference staff in the teaching of the Advanced Legal Research courses for which she was the responsible faculty member. Indeed, she hired me knowing of my interest in teaching, and she encouraged me to pursue that interest both at OCU and in other environments.

Judy also supported my involvement in professional associations and activities. When I was approached about serving as an officer in the Mid-America Association of Law Libraries ("MAALL"), a regional chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries, Judy wisely advised me about the benefits of becoming involved in the organization, but also cautioned me regarding the substantial commitment that would be expected. Judy knew firsthand about this commitment because she had previously served as the president of MAALL,⁵ the Treasurer of the Mid-America Law School Libraries Consortium, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Law Library Microform Consortium.⁶

5. *Mid-America Association of Law Libraries: A History of Growth*, MID-AM. ASS'N OF LAW LIBRARIES, <http://www.aallnet.org/chapter/maall/history.htm> (last updated July 2, 2010).

6. *Judith A. Morgan*, OKLA. CITY UNIV. SCH. L., <http://web.archive.org/web/>

In addition to managing and mentoring the staff, Judy has done remarkable work in managing the budget. When we needed to hire personnel, Judy knew just what accounts should be used. She maintained her own set of records to ensure that the automated system correctly reflected expenditures. Whenever an action was being considered, she asked for a projected budget. She guided the staff to consider that time must also be considered as a budgetary consideration.

One of the things I admired about Judy was her ability to understand and clearly communicate budgetary constraints to vendors. Vendors were impressed that the Law Library Director would take time to meet with them to get information about a particular product. Judy clearly communicated to vendors the demand for a particular product and the amount that would be available to purchase the material or product. Vendor representatives quickly became aware that if they could not provide the material for the budgeted amount, OCU would not likely be purchasing the title or product.

MANAGING LAW SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

Judy Morgan has always demonstrated an understanding that the library must operate as a component of not only the law school, but the OCU community and the Oklahoma legal community as well. When possible, she managed the professional development budget to allow me to attend the Oklahoma Bar Association Annual Meeting. She encouraged me to attend OCU Faculty Senate meetings with her, providing me with the opportunity to meet and learn about the activities of the non-law faculty. She invited the reference librarians to meetings she arranged with students as part of the Faculty Mentor Program. And later, on her recommendation, the reference librarians were invited to serve as mentors in the program.

It was only with Judy Morgan's gentle guidance that I learned the importance of building and maintaining a collection that reflected the content of the courses that our faculty were teaching as well as reflecting the budgetary realities under which we work. As a new librarian, I recommended acquiring international titles on topics of interest to me, but Judy Morgan coached me to review the collection with an eye to updating standard works required by the faculty as well as adding, in

various formats, materials on developing areas of law.

MANAGING YOURSELF

Learn good work habits that will give you a shot at a healthy, balanced life. You will never be a truly successful library director without having a life!

....
Keep it all in perspective. A sense of humor really helps here! Have one and share it! Always remember that what you do is important work, but your library isn't the emergency room
....⁷

Judy's family is large. Growing up in a large family with eleven siblings, she knows the importance of family. She takes great pride in her family, and each summer her grandchildren come to visit. Even in June, in the midst of the end of the fiscal-year concerns, Judy always makes time to spend with her grandchildren. She cares for her family as well as the many horses and dogs raised and trained at her home. Judy and I have laughed on several occasions about the fact that the animals sometimes get more attention than the people at our houses.

Recognizing the importance of family and a balanced life, Judy not only made time for her own family, but she continually reminded me that I needed to do the same. As Director, she reminded me that I needed to take my days off and pace my effort to account for the busy and lower activity times of the year. She also helped me keep difficulties in perspective. Often after sharing her experiences, she would add a bit of wit and encourage me to find humor in the situation.

Judy Morgan has made significant contributions to OCU, the Law School, the Law Library, and the Oklahoma legal community. I will try to remember all of the lessons she attempted to teach me by her example of service. But my fondest memories of the "Morgan years" at the Law Library will be of Judy's wit, her graciousness, and her genuine caring for her family and staff. These characteristics are what, in my humble opinion, made Judy a truly successful Director of the Law Library. We will greatly miss her!

7. Bintliff et al., *supra* note 1, at 106.

