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Open House in the Ivory Tower: Public Programming at an Academic Library

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Abstract

Public programming, a frequently used outreach tool for public libraries, is far less common in academic libraries. This article examines the University of Idaho Library's efforts to attract both university and community members with public programming, delving into detail for three specific grant-funded discussion series: one on Jewish literature, one on graphic novels, and one on jazz. Strategies for location selection, advertising, scheduling and funding are all discussed with commentary on what worked well, what didn't, and how public programming fits into the mission of an academic library.

Introduction

Public programming is a crucial service provided by public libraries to their communities. Readings, lectures, discussions, displays and exhibits are among the events employed by public libraries to promote their collections and services, and to encourage an appreciation for exploration and learning in the communities they serve. But in academic libraries, while not unheard of, public programming has not been featured nearly as often. Books and articles about public programming—variously known as “cultural programming” and “humanities programming”—began appearing in the professional literature in the wake of new National Endowment for the Humanities initiatives begun in the 1970s (Perrault 1993). Caroline Taylor (1988) and Elizabeth Baer (1988) were among the first to document the potential for public

programming at libraries and other venues. Perrault (1993) traced the history of humanities programming and viewed it as a logical extension of readers' advisory services. Rubin (1997) brought together the accumulated wisdom of programming into a one-stop "how-to-do-it" manual for librarians, to enable librarians to develop programs at their local libraries. Robertson (2005) documented the nuts and bolts of cultural programming for libraries, covering everything from planning the program to building participation to funding and marketing.

But most of these pieces, like Watkins (2002), focus on public libraries and library systems; far fewer discuss programming in academic libraries. Brinkman and Yates (2008) are a notable exception, with their discussion of a Japanese cultural festival held in the libraries of Miami University (Ohio). Their frank itemizing of the importance of cultural events to an academic library is prescient, as "outreach and engagement" becomes an ever more important phrase in the language of strategic planning for universities.

Background

The University of Idaho (UI), a land grant institution in Moscow, Idaho, places particular emphasis on outreach and engagement in its Strategic Plan. In addition to the traditional forms of outreach for academic libraries, such as providing lending and reference services to library users throughout the state, the University of Idaho Library has been exploring less traditional forms of outreach in an attempt to find new ways to engage campus and community members. Three discussion series hosted by the UI Library in recent years, two involving print literature and one involving documentary films, illustrate some of our recent efforts at cultural programming, and provide insights into the challenges and rewards of reaching beyond the boundaries of the campus to draw in the community.

The UI Library has been a supporter of this type of programming since the 1970s, when a collaboration between the library and the Department of English produced the University of Idaho [Ezra] Pound Lecture in the Humanities. Some of the speakers for this annual event included James Dickey, Marshall McLuhan, R. Buckminster Fuller and Wendell Berry. In the 1980s the UI Library, in cooperation with the libraries of neighboring Washington State University, co-sponsored a lecture series featuring Herb White, Paul Metz, and other prominent names in the world of libraries and information science. More recently the UI Library has organized programs on Isaac Bashevis Singer and on nineteenth century writer and photographer E. Jane Gay. With this history of supporting cultural programming, the UI Library was more than ready to take on a new challenge when the American Library Association (ALA) announced a grant competition featuring book discussions relating to Jewish Literature.

Discussing Jewish Literature

In March of 2004, ALA sent out an email announcing “Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature - Identity and Imagination,” a new grant initiative aimed at public and academic libraries across the country. The “Let's Talk About It” series had been around since the 1980s: Durrance and Rubin discussed the original series of LTAI programs in a 1989 article, and Wallace and Van Fleet in 1992 described their “Silver Editions” humanities programming for older adults, based in part on the “Let's Talk About It” programming format. ALA and Nextbook, a non-profit organization which sponsors public lectures, readings, and performances around the country, were the sponsoring organizations for this latest program, and would award successful applicants \$1500 and provide promotional materials and training for a five-part series of book discussions focusing on Jewish literature. These discussions, led by a local scholar, would be free and open to the public.

This initiative came at an opportune time for the UI Library, as we were seeking new ways to interact with both campus and community. We applied in June 2004 for a first-round LTAI: Jewish Literature grant, and in August received notification that we had been successful. We chose “Your Heart's Desire: Sex and Love in Jewish Literature” as our theme, and would be discussing *Portnoy's Complaint* by Philip Roth, *The Little Disturbances of Man* by Grace Paley, *A Simple Story* by S.Y. Agnon, *The Lover* by A.B. Yehoshua, and *The Mind-Body Problem* by Rebecca Goldstein. One of the grant requirements was that the project director, the person responsible for the planning and coordination of the series, attend a two-day training workshop in Chicago. This workshop provided opportunities to meet other program directors and scholars, participate in reading discussions, and learn about marketing and session facilitation. More than half of the grant's funds ultimately went to travel.

The scholar for our series had been selected early in the proposal process. Grant guidelines required a scholar who possessed “appropriate academic qualifications to speak on themes” and had “teaching or other experience relevant to selected titles” (Nextbook, 2004). Solid academic credentials on the part of the scholar were stressed by the series sponsors as much as was outreach to the community, a clear indication of ALA and Nextbook's priorities in bringing real academic rigor to a community event. The UI Library invited a well-known and widely-published professor from the university's Department of English, an author of poetry and literary criticism who had had previous experience with similar reading and discussion programs hosted by the Idaho State Library (now Idaho Commission on Libraries).

With theme and scholar in place we began to tackle the details of planning the five programs in the series. We addressed location first. The grant guidelines had tasked academic libraries with drawing in members of the general public as well as

university students, faculty and staff. We suspected that our success in attracting these audiences would lie partly in scheduling the programs in a venue readily accessible to the overall population of Moscow. We initially considered using the library's conference room, which was comfortable and available, but concerns over the library's distance from most of the town's residences and from public parking lots led us to choose the 1912 Center, a newly renovated community space often used for dances, fundraisers and other events.

Promoting the series was the next task. ALA and Nextbook provided templates for much of the promotional material, including posters, bookmarks and brochures, and a wide range of communication media were used to get the word out. Moscow's local newspaper was approached about publishing a feature article on the series, and to include notices in its local events calendar for the series' duration. UI's student newspaper, the Argonaut, also ran a feature article after the second of the five programs. The Latah County Public Library and Moscow's major arts organization posted information about the programs on their respective websites, as did UI library and university websites. The public library also helped by loaning UI Library copies of the LTAI novels to their patrons through a special circulation arrangement. BookPeople, a prominent locally owned bookstore and community hub, ran an ongoing display about the series, and offered a discount on copies of the LTAI titles. The Jewish Community of the Palouse, a local organization, announced the event continuously for three months prior to the start, as well as through the weeks of the programming.

The series began in mid-January, with a program every three weeks. Our scholar's experience in leading adult book discussions was apparent throughout the programming. He began each evening with background information about the author which provided crucial context, and then skillfully guided the discussion of each book.

The venue worked well in that it was centrally located and therefore accessible to all community members. Unfortunately, the space was intended to accommodate as many as 75 people, and over the course of the five book discussions, attendance ranged from a high of fourteen to a low of seven, for the third program. Since attendance was modest, the room was a bit large for our needs. Still, attendance was sufficient to enable good discussions. Fourteen proved a good number for lively, engaging conversation; seven bordered on being too few, as participants appeared somewhat self-conscious about contributing to the discussion.

When we distributed evaluation forms after the final program, based on survey questions provided by the ALA/LTAI program office, participants responded positively and with enthusiasm for the series. But while evaluations speak volumes

about participant satisfaction, perhaps a more telling result came about later, when a number of the regular attendees, along with the program scholar and his wife, formed a book club which met regularly for more than a year after the series ended.

Discussing Graphic Novels

In 2006, ALA and Nextbook offered another round of Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature grants, and UI Library decided to apply again. We felt positive about the outcomes of the first LTAI series, and wanted to keep the outreach momentum going. Our interest was also piqued by a new theme centering on graphic novels dealing with the Jewish experience, which seemed an intriguing way to spark discussion among different groups in the community, pulling in not only people drawn to in Jewish themes in literature, but also those with a more general interest in graphic novels and visual storytelling. In addition, the award for this new round of grants was increased to \$2500. Because expenses connected with the first series had exceeded the amount of the grant, the revised award amount was an important factor in our decision to apply for a second series. In February 2007, we received our second LTAI grant award.

The novels LTAI chose for the graphic novels series were *A Contract with God* by Will Eisner, *The Complete Maus* by Art Spiegelman, *Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer* by Ben Katchor, Harvey Pekar's *The Quitter* and *The Rabbi's Cat* by Joann Sfar. The program scholar chosen for this second series, also a UI English professor, had an extensive background in Jewish literature but no previous experience with graphic novels. But his enthusiasm about graphic novels' potential to bring in not only a larger but a more diverse group made him a wholehearted participant.

As with our previous LTAI grant, the majority of funds—about \$2200—were spent transporting the project director and program scholar to a mandatory training workshop for LTAI grant participants; a valuable and useful experience, but one which meant that the library had to provide supplementary funding for promotion and other expenses.

In the wake of the training workshop we reexamined the question of location for the series. The modest attendance for the 2005 LTAI sessions at the 1912 Center led us to rethink the benefits of holding the series off-campus. We ultimately decided on the UI Library's instruction room, a space with a capacity of approximately 50, since this option simplified scheduling and the space was available to us for free. The five programs were scheduled for the fall semester of 2007, with the first at the beginning of September and the remaining four scheduled every three weeks thereafter.

The new LTAI grant guidelines echoed those of 2004 in strongly encouraging academic participants to partner with community organizations in promoting the series beyond the university. For this grant we were again fortunate to work with the Jewish Community of the Palouse. Through postings on their website, word of mouth and email announcements, they ensured that their membership, which numbers around sixty, was aware of our event. They also helped with selecting program dates so as to avoid conflicts with Jewish holidays, several of which fall in the early autumn.

Knowing that graphic novels can be particularly appealing to young people, we worked hard to generate interest in the series at the local high schools. The program director made contact with high school English teachers, who then helped by informing students, hanging promotional posters in their classrooms, and offering extra credit to students who attended. As with the first LTAI series, the public library pitched in by distributing flyers at their circulation desk, advertising the program on their website, and adding multiple copies of the novels under discussion to their collections.

Our community partnerships appeared to be the most effective way to attract participants. However, additional advertising was also pursued. Community and campus newspaper and online event calendars provided a straightforward way to highlight each session. A press release crafted from a template provided by the granting agencies was distributed to local media outlets, and featured on the “New in the Library” page of the UI Library’s website. Posters were also distributed around the university and the community. Templates for posters were again provided by ALA and Nextbook, but we decided that their format did not suit our needs and designed and printed our own posters on glossy, tabloid-sized cardstock, which emphasized the inherent visual appeal of graphic novels. Because of the posters’ cost, we took care to place them in high traffic areas where they would be seen by the maximum number of people. We received many comments from individuals in the community about these eye-catching posters, but only one attendee specifically mentioned them as his primary reason for attending. In his case, he misinterpreted the term “graphic novel” on the posters as meaning that the books were in some way sexually explicit or violent. To his credit, he did attend more than one session, even after being disabused as to the terminology.

Overall attendance for the programs was variable, ranging from nine to 30 people, with an average of sixteen, close to our goals, but still relatively low. As with the 2005 series, attendance was affected by competing programming elsewhere on campus, weather, and other circumstances beyond our control. However, the book being discussed seemed to have the most substantial effect on our attendance numbers. Our largest group turned out for Art Spiegelman’s well-known *The*

Complete Maus, and our smallest for *Julius Knipl, Real Estate Agent*, a book of short, esoteric vignettes that some found captivating, but that others struggled to get into.

As we had hoped, our sessions attracted a diverse group of individuals. For every session we had at least one attendee from the university, from Moscow's non-university community, and from a local high school. Discussions typically covered a wide range of topics, including artistic styles, narrative structure, character development, Jewish culture, religion, and symbolism. The added pictorial dimension of graphic novels lent itself to opportunities for discussions of aesthetics, visual settings, color choices and inking styles. At its best, the conversation ranged well beyond the confines of the literary, as some participants shared personal experiences such as growing up in a Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn. These experiences immeasurably deepened and enriched the tenor of the conversations, in a way that represents the best of what humanities programs can encourage.

In terms of promoting the Jewish literature and graphic novels, the series was quite successful and has had some long-lasting repercussions. Our success in promoting the University of Idaho and the library to an entirely new audience was limited. However, we were able to bring in a diverse group of people, and discussions were always lively. Many of the attendees were familiar with Jewish literature but not graphic novels, and some had read graphic novels but not much Jewish literature. A few had no experience with either genre. Our scholar, himself a newcomer to graphic novels, became fascinated by the genre and decided to create a new course on graphic novels. The library in this case gained through its cultural programming an unusual and powerful opportunity to affect the university's curriculum.

Discussing Films about Jazz

In addition to the LTAI graphic novel program, 2007 also saw the UI Library hosting a six-part series under the heading "Looking At: Jazz, America's Art Form." The series, a national initiative that provided DVDs of documentary films to each participating institution, as well as \$1000 toward travel and programming costs, was designed to offer participants the opportunity to view award-winning documentary films and engage in dialogue about the cultural and social history of jazz as an American art form. The UI Library was one of fifty libraries and other nonprofit organizations nationwide that participated in the pilot program, having applied for and secured the grant from ALA and National Video Resources (now Re:New Media), a not-for-profit organization working to increase public awareness of independently produced film, video and other media technologies, in the spring of 2006. Moscow, a community which hosts a renowned annual jazz festival every February, seemed an ideal locale for a film series on jazz, and we felt that the smaller size of the grant

award would be offset by greater administrative support, since jazz falls in line so directly with larger library and university concerns.

The particulars of the grant structure, such as training workshops, were familiar from our experiences with LTAI. The program director, along with a jazz expert who would serve as one of our program scholars, attended a two-day training workshop in Chicago in preparation, which involved sessions on planning and implementing the series and discussions of the effective use of film in public programming.

Promotion of the series echoed that of LTAI in involving local newspapers, libraries, bookstores, event websites, as well as a community-supported radio station. As for the graphic novel series, posters were created and hung on campus, in high schools, public libraries, cafes, the local food co-op, wine stores, restaurants, record and musical instrument stores, and local art galleries. Music teachers at the local high schools and at the university were contacted directly.

The documentary lineup included sections of *Ken Burns Jazz*, as well as *Harlem Renaissance: The Music and Rhythms That Started a Cultural Revolution*, *Benny Goodman: Adventures in the Kingdom of Swing*, *Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker*, *Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday*, and *A Night in Havana: Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba*. The series itself, which like the LTAI events was free and intended specifically to involve the entire community, consisted of introductory remarks by the program scholar providing context for that session's subject, presentation of the film, and a group discussion facilitated by the scholar. Because of scheduling concerns we had three scholars over the course of the series, all UI professors: an expert on music education and on early through swing era jazz in the spring, and two professors of jazz performance in the fall. Each evening included refreshments from a local bakery, homemade gumbo in the case of the first program on New Orleans, and bibliographies of recommended reading. The library worked with the International Jazz Collections, one of the university's major archives, to provide sound recordings and other supplementary materials for the programs.

We chose as a venue the university's law school auditorium, which seats 220. This space was chosen partly because it was one of the only university spaces that was free on our dates and also housed projection equipment, and partly because it is easy to find and there is ample parking nearby, a plus especially for older attendees in cold weather. We had considered using an off campus site, such as a small theater downtown, but experience with the first LTAI series had led us to suspect that such a choice would discourage students from attending, while not necessarily attracting more community members. Still, as was the case at the 2005 LTAI series, it was discouraging in such a large space to have a small audience: five, eight, and seven attendees for each of the spring programs.

Building renovations at the law school meant that their auditorium was unavailable in the fall, and we decided to move the three fall programs to the same library instruction room that was used for the graphic novel series. We had an audience of five for September's film on Charlie Parker, but the audience swelled to 52 and 47 for the last two films, when undergraduates from the university's Core General Studies program's Feel the Groove class attended with their instructor. This instructor had heard about the series via email—the project director had sent a message promoting the series to the entire faculty of the UI's School of Music—and had decided to require his students to attend. It was quite a surprise for the event organizers to walk into a packed room where there had only been a handful of people the month before. Happily, we were able to get extra refreshments.

The first four programs in the series, despite their small audiences, provided a fine opportunity for roundtable discussion after the screening. Participants brought up questions about segregation, race dynamics, the effects of oppression on creativity, dance styles, colorism and intra-racial bias, and the visual presentation of filmed musical performance. Because the final two audiences were large and also predominantly young, attendees were a bit more hesitant to speak out. While this was unfortunate, it gave our jazz scholars a chance to talk at greater length after the films and to bring up interesting details of jazz history that might have gone unremarked in a roundtable discussion. The attendance for the last two sessions upped the energy of the series and made for a strong end. Since the grant's guidelines had emphasized attracting as diverse an audience as possible, we had tried to think of ways to bring in students as well as the wider community. We had originally advertised the option for UI students to receive one interdisciplinary credit for attending the series, but received no response. The attendance of this class was therefore heartening. The students were exposed to jazz and to documentary filmmaking that was new to many of them; they particularly enjoyed Dizzy Gillespie's musical virtuosity and irreverent humor in the final film.

For several of our participants who were already jazz enthusiasts, the program provided a valuable opportunity to connect with others in the community who care about jazz and American music history. One participant in particular, an older man with an extensive knowledge of jazz and jazz documentary film, enjoyed the entire series but particularly *Celebrating Bird*, and reveled in the chance to have in-depth discussion after with the scholar and with other attendees. Two young classical music students also attended the first two programs, and had interesting questions about the theory and structure behind classic jazz and blues. They too welcomed the chance to meet new people with similar interests; both were a little shy, and having a concrete subject to discuss in which they were somewhat knowledgeable made for a pleasant social encounter.

Overall, Looking At: Jazz, like the two LTAI series, gave the UI Library valuable opportunities to promote our collections and services. For example, although we are a university library anyone in the community can get a library card here for free and borrow books, but this benefit is not always clear to people not affiliated with the university. These events, and especially the ones held in-house, allowed us to highlight such services, and raised our profile as a welcoming space to an audience beyond the university community proper.

Lessons Learned

These three efforts at multi-week humanities cultural programming left us with some valuable insights regarding location, scheduling, advertising, and other strategies for presenting programs in the future.

Location

In an effort to reach out to community members who might not otherwise attend, we held our first LTAI series in a community building more centrally situated than the UI Library. We had hoped to attract attendees from beyond the university with this central and easy-to-access location, and to some extent, we did. Some were retirees with connections to UI, and others, we were glad to see, were community members with no direct relationship to the university. But the net result of holding the program apart from campus appeared to be lower attendance, albeit more community members in attendance. Holding the second and third events on campus helped increase our attendance by members of the university, but may have added an additional barrier to larger community involvement. So while simply holding an event in an off-campus location may not be enough to attract members of the general public, it could still be a positive first step in that direction. This is a complicated issue that warrants further investigation and experimentation as we plan future public programming series.

Scheduling

Scheduling brought up additional challenges, as we strove to work within both intramural and larger restraints. We presented the first LTAI series during the spring semester. In addition to planning around Jewish holidays, we needed to avoid national holidays, spring break, mid-term and finals weeks, and complete the program before mid-May, when university towns like Moscow empty for the summer. Students are also more apt to participate in programming later rather than earlier in the week, when they are more focused on coursework. However, as it turned out, location seemed to be the overriding concern and despite our scheduling efforts we managed to attract only one full-fledged university student for this series. The second LTAI series, held

on campus in the fall, was bound by many of the same scheduling constraints but seemed on the whole to have good success in terms of scheduling.

In hindsight, scheduling the Looking At: Jazz programs closer together might have been better, one every two weeks for example rather than one per month, so that the entire series would have been completed within one semester. Spreading the series over two semesters, and spanning the summer, meant that we lost some momentum. It also made advertising the series twice as much work, since we had two sets of posters made and had to send out two sets of press releases and make two separate sets of contacts with radio stations, online event calendar coordinators, and others.

Advertising

Broad-spectrum advertising via posters and bookmarks took a sizeable portion of the grant money, and sending announcements to local radio stations, newspapers and events websites took up staff time, but the return on these advertising investments was minimal. As noted earlier, only one participant in the second LTAI series stated that this was the reason for his attendance. The rest of our participants had been made aware of the series through focused advertising to small groups such as high school students, public library patrons and members of Moscow's Jewish community organization. In addition to being far more effective, this focused advertising was less costly in terms of both money and work hours. Targeted advertising via organizations and university classes, as with the jazz series, may generate the best response to these public programs.

At the same time, not all of the groups we singled out responded. One notable example was comic book fans. Despite the clear tie-in to their interests, and despite our advertising specifically to them through the local comic book store, no one from this community attended any of our workshops. It is unclear why this was, but it emphasizes that in order for even focused advertising to be effective, many groups with a potential interest must be identified and targeted.

Funding

Funding was another major consideration. The amounts of the grant awards for all three program series proved to be less than needed for required travel to workshops, publicity, room rental and refreshments. The UI library subsidized the events to some extent, providing supplementary funding to cover poster making and refreshments. But since the library does not have a specific programming budget, additional funding was very limited. With small grants, the need for extra funds is always a distinct possibility and the library's financial personnel should be consulted in advance.

The situation regarding honoraria at UI also changed over the course of the three series. An honorarium had been provided to the scholar for the first LTAI series, but by 2007 the university had eliminated any opportunity for internal faculty to receive honoraria. The inability to give honoraria to faculty may affect the quality of our programming in the future. Other financial issues for the first two series concerned the acquisition of reading materials for potential participants. Copies of the books for the LTAI series were bought using both grant funds and the UI library materials' budget. Books purchased on grant funds were shelved at the local public library for circulation there, and books bought on our materials' budget circulated through the UI Library.

Choosing a Scholar

Choice of a scholar, unsurprisingly, proved crucial to the satisfaction of series participants. While all program scholars effectively engaged their audiences, each scholar approached the task differently. The first LTAI program scholar gave a brief introduction to each book and its author, then opened the book to discussion by asking questions of the participants. The second LTAI scholar gave a fun-and-fact-filled presentation, generally lasting 45 minutes, before opening the program to further discussion. The jazz scholars had quite different styles, one more flamboyant and another more quietly professorial, but they were also working with audiences of radically different sizes: the last two groups of around 50 were large enough that informal chat would have been difficult. In the end, all of their wide-ranging methods and styles were successful in getting the audiences to participate and share their thoughts.

Participants

A stated goal of all our series was to attract a diverse group of participants from both the university and the larger community of Moscow. In some ways we were very successful in meeting this goal, attracting university and community members from a wide demographic range. But implicit in this goal was attracting new library users by bringing people to the library and the university who would not normally make use of our facility and services. By this measure we fell short. While many community members attended over the course of the three series, almost all of them had a concrete link to the university such as being a spouse, parent or co-worker of a university employee. In a community like Moscow, a large percentage of the population is affiliated with the university. But there are many community members outside the extended university community and we failed on the whole to attract these potential participants. It should be noted, however, that the micropolitan nature of Moscow, Idaho, a relatively isolated rural community of under 25,000, allows for a greater town-gown relationship than might be enjoyed by larger universities in much larger urban areas. So many Moscow residents are connected with UI in one way or

another that it perhaps should not be read as a notable failure that we have had trouble reaching outside this circle so far.

Conclusions

The fall 2007 half of the jazz series coincided with the graphic novel series, giving us a good opportunity to compare the two types of program in terms of attendance, audience makeup, and participation. On the whole, the graphic novel series seemed to attract more participants (if the Core students who were required to attend the jazz programs are factored out) and both LTAI series showed a higher rate of retention of participants over the course of the programs. This came as a surprise, given the University of Idaho's annual jazz festival. But UI is also located far from any historical center of jazz development, unlike libraries in Chicago, New Orleans and other venues that participated in the Looking At: Jazz grant initiative, and it may be that fewer members of the general community are interested in jazz than festival attendance would seem to predict. The program director for the graphic novel series has also theorized that the commitment to read a novel in advance of attending a program, far from being a disincentive to attendance, actually forms a commitment in the mind of a potential participant that makes him or her more likely to actually attend. The jazz series, on the other hand, which only required that people show up on the day itself, may have been easier to let slip by as other evening commitments intervened.

Brandehoff (1997) recognized the importance of cultural programs in all types of libraries "that encourage adults and young adults to think and talk about ethics, other cultures, history, art, literature, music and the creative process" and further stated that these programs are "an important component of the library's mission to serve community information needs." As the university places renewed emphasis on our outreach efforts and our relationship with the public, the library's cultural programming enables us to demonstrate our commitment to serving students, faculty and staff, and the public at large. Engaging in these sponsored programs gave University of Idaho Library faculty the opportunity to learn about public programming under the guidance of large organizations accustomed to programming issues and problems. A number of UI librarians have gained a better understanding for cultural programming and are now excited about tackling programming possibilities on a more local level. For the first time in the library's history, for example, in 2008 we organized a week-long National Library Week (NLW) celebration featuring university-affiliated authors reading from their work, on local history, Native American folklore, and other topics. Programs were planned by a library committee which arranged every detail, from publicity to refreshments to scheduling readers and space for the five-day festivities. Without the previous experience of the novel and jazz film series, this event would likely not have

happened. The success of the NLW celebration was due in no small part to lessons learned from the LTAI and Looking At: Jazz programs.

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