The Academic Library as IT Partner: Supporting Sponsored Research at Auburn University

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CNI Fall 2019 Membership Meeting December 10, 2019
Goal 2: Transformative Research

Elevate research and scholarly impact to address society’s critical issues and promote economic development in Alabama and beyond.
Military REACH: Our Team
1. Bridge the gap between military family research & practice.

It takes ___ years, on average across disciplines, for professionals to have access to “current” research implications (Munro, 2016).
1. Bridge the gap between military family research & practice.

It takes **17 years**, on average across disciplines, for professionals to have access to “current” research implications (Munro, 2016).
Military REACH

Part of the DoD-USDA Partnership for Military Families

USDA/NIFA Award No. 2017-48710-27339 (PI: Mallory Lucier-Greer)

1. Bridge the gap between military family research & practice.

2. Make research practical and accessible.
Military REACH: What We Do and How We Do It

1. IDENTIFY current research on military families.
2. EVALUATE the credibility and contribution of identified research.
3. TRANSLATE relevant research into useful, practical, and high-quality resources.
4. ARCHIVE research and resources in the Military REACH online library.
5. DISTRIBUTE research and resources to military families, helping professionals, and policy makers.

www.MilitaryREACH.org  /MilitaryREACH  @MilitaryREACH  Military REACH
Military REACH: How We Got Here

Call For Proposals Released by USDA/NIFA

- Posted: 8/2/2017
- Due: 9/5/2017

Deliverables

1. Timely, quality research reports at the request of the DoD
2. Online library of current research related to the well-being of military families.
3. Professional development opportunities, tools, and resources for helping professionals
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Military REACH/AU Libraries

Auburn University Libraries

College of Human sciences
• Matchmaker = Associate Dean for Research in College of Human Sciences
• First conversation between PI and Library: conceptualization and proposal development
• Crafted compelling proposal together = got funded!
• Project on-boarding and project design
• Published fully functional Web site and database in the first year of the project
How the partnership works

• Close ongoing collaboration between Military REACH and AUL IT teams
• Daily or weekly communication, monthly in-person meetings,
• Webinars and in-person meetings with federal contractors and program officers
• Strategic planning, including collaborative funding opportunities and expanded services
The IT Support Gap

• Auburn University = Distributed IT Model
• Office of Information Technology and CIO
• IT offices and IT coordinators in 13 colleges and administrative units across campus
• Uneven IT support: some units strong, others thin
• College of Human Sciences IT = 1.0 FTE
• AU Libraries IT = 7.0 FTE, with expertise in relevant areas

= Opportunity to step in and support this project
• Virtual servers
• Network security
• Military REACH DSpace instance
• Database design and metadata expertise
• Web development and accessibility
• Pipeline for website application builds
• Ansible playbook for the deployment of website application builds
• Troubleshooting assistance
• GitHub Organization
• Google Analytics
• Ongoing IT consultation
IT lessons learned

• Ensure that all stakeholders use a shared platform to promote transparency
• Clearly define project expectations for all stakeholders
• Designate a technical lead (with authority)
• Be realistic about time commitments for IT staff, and negotiate changes
Spin-offs and future projects

- Data management/data visualization
- Testbed for AI/ML/NLP tools
- Testbed for open-source library services platforms (e.g. FOLIO)
- Collaborative funding proposals (to NSF, DoD, etc.)
- Publicity—on campus and beyond
Main takeaways

• For the researcher:
  • Identify resources that are “next door”
  • Cultivate partnerships that allow you to focus on your science

• For the Libraries:
  • New model for library services—one that is more in line with the university’s research mission (and that plays to the library’s comparative advantage in IT)
Contacts

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