

2009 NDLTD ETD Awards Acceptance Speech – John H. Hagen

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

It seems as if it was only yesterday that we planted the seeds not only for electronic theses and dissertations, but also for the larger open access movement. I am very proud of having participated in creating this legacy. Over a decade ago, we dreamed that we could change the world by creating a networked digital library of theses and dissertations. Now, when we step back, we can truly say that we have - and continue to make a difference - and give control of scholarly communications back to the scholars who authored the material and to provide access to the deserving public. It has indeed been a great honor and privilege to serve this noble cause. And yet, we have so far to go.

Receiving the NDLTD ETD Leadership award is truly a humbling experience. It represents for me a tribute not so much to my contribution to the movement, but the importance of the open access movement itself. There is no other place I would rather be than in the University Libraries setting. I have had the unique opportunity to work with many graduate students, faculty and staff over the years, and I have honestly loved every minute of it (well almost every minute) – though there have been days when I wondered “what was I thinking?”

There are so many individuals who I would like to acknowledge, but given the constraints of time, I'll just mention a few here tonight.

Those who have been most influential and who have served as mentors – my grandfather Jack Herrlich, my parents Earl and Margo Hagen, my best friend of 25 years, Dr. Daniel Ferreras, my musical posse Dr. Dan, Dr. Victor Mucino and Mr. Matt Marble; my dear friend Miss Sohinee Roy; Virginia Tech colleagues Dr. John Eaton, Dr. Edward Fox and Gail McMillan; University of Pittsburgh Library Director Dr. Rush Miller and Library Systems Head Mr. Tim Deliyannides; West Virginia University past and present administration Dr. Gerald Lang, Dr. Ruth Jackson, Ms. Ruth Nellis, Dr. Robert Stitzel, Associate Vice President Dr. Jonathan Cumming, Library Dean Ms. Frances O'Brien, Library Acquisitions Head Ms. Allyson Mckee; and many others far too numerous to acknowledge here. Were it not for their trust, support and guidance, I would not be in the place I am today.

I would also like to dedicate this evening to the memory of Dr. Todd Stoops who passed away 2 weeks ago here in Pittsburgh at the tender age of 35 years. He was a gentle soul, who suffered much his life because of a genetic disorder, but in spite of it all, he always remained brave and stoic throughout, and he took the time to help and care for others regardless of his own needs. He was a real trooper and a hero, and he touched the hearts of many along the way.

I have been very privileged and blessed to have had the opportunities to meet and learn from many colleagues in the field who come from every corner of the world, including many of you here tonight. It has been a wonderful journey, and I look forward to the continued adventure of my passions. And so it is with great honor that I accept this award tonight. Thank you NDLTD, the Awards Committee and everyone. Thank you so very much.