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2023-2024
OCUFA Academic Librarianship Award

Citation for Heather MacDonald

It is with great pleasure that the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee presents the 2023-2024 OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship award to Heather MacDonald. Heather is the Health and Biosciences Librarian in Research Support Services at Carleton University's MacOdrum Library in Ottawa.

Heather's contributions as a librarian extend beyond the library to the University, the entire community that she serves, as well as to the profession. The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) writes: "Heather has consistently demonstrated remarkable support for academic programs and research, helped ensure the effective use of library resources and services, as well as supported the librarian profession through publications and conference presentations."

Heather developed a scaffolded information literacy program for the Health Sciences, Biology, Neuroscience, and Environmental Science departments based on the curriculum mapping of each faculty's program. The Head of Library Research Support Services notes that "While she was a Subject Area Coordinator for Science, Engineering & Design, she was instrumental in making connections with faculty members and working with her team to design and deliver an information literacy program targeted to first-year students. One of Heather's notable strengths is her active participation in curriculum development, course design, and assessment. Her contributions extend beyond the classroom as she has played a pivotal role in developing program-specific training materials for specific courses in the health sciences."

Her development of the Carleton University Evidence Synthesis Service is consistently praised by researchers as a singular help in undertaking systematic reviews. The Director of the Institute of Biochemistry writes: "As a Librarian, Heather has had a tremendous impact on the scientific community at Carleton. She has united researchers and educators through a common interest in scientific and information literacy." A PhD candidate remarked that "Her ability to seamlessly integrate with research teams, coupled with her unwavering commitment to the success of students, is truly commendable."

In speaking of her research prowess, the University Librarian writes that "Heather has the strongest record of research and scholarship of a librarian that I have seen in my 20+ year career. In her 14 years working as a librarian, Heather has had two funded grants (SSHRC and WSIB), published 30 articles, 11 evidence summaries and 13 posters, and has given six conference presentations." Heather is an engaged researcher, serving as Associate Editor (Evidence Summaries) for the journal Evidence Based Library and Information Practice and as a member of the Campbell Collaboration Information Retrieval Methods Group. This group develops methodology and documentation to ensure the high quality and reproducibility of searches for Campbell Collaboration reviews.

Heather is the epitome of the scholar-librarian who brings theory and practice together in her work as researcher and educator. She is an innovative and supportive colleague in research, classroom, and library communities. For these reasons, the Teaching and Academic Librarianship Award Committee delights in presenting the 2024 OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Award to Heather MacDonald.

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Every year since 1973, the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship awards have honoured the exceptional achievements made by Ontario university teachers and academic librarians.

At OCUFA, we believe that the quality of education at our universities depends on the professors and academic librarians whose teaching and work touches the life of every student who embarks on a journey of higher learning.

Professors and academic librarians play a vital role in our universities, preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow, while pursuing the new ideas and knowledge that enrich all of our lives and chart a path to a brighter future.