Suzette P. Giles

The OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee is honoured to present the 2006 Academic Librarianship Award to Suzette Giles.

Ms. Giles' career as a Librarian at Ryerson University has been stellar in building and promoting the specialized social science and geospatial data collections at the Ryerson University Library, and educating students, staff and faculty in the effective use of these collections. Her tireless efforts have led to establishing the innovative Geospatial, Map and Data Centre in the Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons in the Ryerson University Library.

Ms. Giles is roundly praised and respected by colleagues, faculty, and students for her commitment to service and education. Her work has directly assisted faculty in acquiring research grants; she has mentored numerous student geographers; she has advised and supported her library colleagues; and she has collaborated with faculty in teaching the discovery and interpretation of data in the classroom. In short, as one faculty colleague in the School of Urban and Regional Planning writes, "Ms. Giles has played a pivotal role in actively and enthusiastically supporting the teaching, learning, and research functions that are the essence of our School."

Ms. Giles' passion for teaching about data use extends well beyond the Ryerson community. She is a respected speaker at many library and data conferences and holds executive positions with the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology, and The Canadian Association of Public Data Users. A colleague from another university library observes that "Suzette has a profound concern that people not only 'get it' but that they 'get it right.' She wants to help people find the information they seek, but also wants to ensure they 'understand' what they are getting. Her passion for 'literacy' of all stripes, is clear."

Ms. Giles' passion for teaching about data has had an impact within the library profession, at her home university, and also her home. Upon hearing her mother was to receive this award, Ms. Giles' daughter, Audrey, shared the following with the Committee:

"My mother conveyed her deep belief in the benefits of reading, strong research skills, and the ability to interpret maps and data to all three of her daughters. Though we were at times embarrassed by her "data liberation army" sweatshirt and we read maps incorrectly more often than we might care to admit, it is no coincidence that she raised three children who read voraciously and all went on to work with data on a meaningful level."

We warmly congratulate Suzette Giles for her outstanding contributions and dedication to service and education in the field of data, map, and GIS librarianship.

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