

Leading Questions-MLS Leadership II Class

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way." That popular bit of advice has become the mantra of leaders since it was first written by Thomas Paine over 200 years ago. (Followers and get-out-of-the-ways must say other things, but darned if I know what they are. "Stop pushing" and "No thanks, but I'll be right here when you get back" maybe.)

But we are concerned here with the leaders, and especially those six recent graduates of Leadership MLS II—employment manager **Roy Ballou**, DN librarian **Rondia Banks**, VI manager **LaVetta Dent**, cataloger **Jana Hausburg**, DN librarian **Buddy Johnson**, and community information coordinator **Kelley Riha**.

"I am grateful," Kelley said, "for this valuable opportunity to take a snapshot peek into the workings of the Metropolitan Library System from the top down, bottom up and side-to-side."

Rondia echoed that sentiment and added, "Our class had some great discussions with each other, with Ad Team members, and with a few managers. We had the opportunity to visit different departments and attend system meetings. An added benefit was the strong bond that developed

between our class members."

LaVetta enjoyed many of the same aspects of the experience. "I enjoyed getting to know my leadership co-workers and having individuals to discuss practical issues and best practices in leadership with, and getting the varied opinions of others that were different from my own.

"The activities gave us the opportunity to travel around the system and sit down and visit with all the managers and have interviews with the MLS AdTeam, which was very interesting and fun. It was nice to get to know some of them and see them in a different light through these visits."

"My favorite part of the leadership experience," Jana said, "aside from getting to know the group and learning more about how the system operates as a whole, was our second meeting. Six leaders thrown into a room, each gauging the others and wondering, 'Should I take charge?' Luckily, there was no power struggle. Instead, we divided up the assignments and took control in six different ways. The benefit of throwing a bunch of leaders together is that we each brought to the mix our own



From left to right front row: LaVetta Decnt and Kelley Riha. Back Row: Jana Hausburg, Buddy Johnson, Roy Ballou and Rondia Banks.

particular strengths and experiences. We all had something to contribute."

"I highly recommend this class to anyone who is interested in and wants to become apart of the inner workings of our library system," Rondia said. LaVetta agreed, and added, "I would especially recommend this for anyone who is fairly new to the system and is interested in moving beyond their current position in the future."

ShelfLife congratulates all of the Leadership MLS grads and encourages anyone interested to enroll in the course.