

## **Letter of Commendation for Laura Melton**

Laura Melton worked for me at the King County Library System for six months in 2003, until I left the library system for another position. Laura has continued to work for KCLS, under a new supervisor, Kathy Agnew, and will be there until at least June 2004.

Laura worked as an intern in the Information Technology Services department, assisting with the library's automation/catalog system. During the period of time that Laura and I worked together, she demonstrated great talent for grasping quickly the solution to a task, be it responding to staff members' questions or troubleshooting technical problems. From the beginning, Laura saw places where we needed to improve our services and rushed to fill the gaps. Her daily tasks included responding to patron questions about our online catalog, iPac, and pulling statistical data from the integrated library system, Dynix. Laura went out of her way to answer each patron question politely and thoroughly, demonstrating exactly the type of high quality customer service that KCLS believes is important. She also worked closely with staff to determine exactly what kinds of statistical reports were needed for various purposes. She quickly learned the query language (called Recall, an SQL-like language) needed to pull data from Dynix – in fact, she surpassed me in knowledge of Recall in just a few months. Laura also developed a sophisticated tool for automating the pull of new titles at KCLS, which is mailed on a bi-weekly basis to thousands of patrons. Her work has saved the staff of the ITS department many hours that were previously spent manually pulling that data.

But, above and beyond her commitment to excellent customer service and her sharp technical skills, Laura was able to understand the needs and fears of the staff and patrons she worked with and was able to translate – in a way that was one of the best I have ever seen – technical data for the end users in understandable and human ways. Repeatedly, she would take highly technical information and give her end users easy-to-understand explanations, which I think is the hallmark of a good librarian and technical worker. Originally, Laura's internship was to last until the end of December 2003, but when I left in October 2003, Laura was an indispensable bridge between me and my replacement. Laura's patience and clarity in explaining to Kathy about the Dynix system and helping provide stop-gap assistance during a transitional period was amazing, and many people, including Kathy and her supervisor, Jed Moffitt, took note. Laura's internship was extended to at least June 2004, and she will provide an integral role in bringing up KCLS's new integrated library system by Innovative Interfaces.

Throughout Laura's time at KCLS, she has grown and evolved both as a technical worker and as a librarian. She has provided services above and beyond what she was originally hired to do, and I believe that she will go far in library and/or computer-related fields.

-Meg Rheingold Westbury.