

# Collaborative Conversations Outside the Library

Anna Ercoli Schnitzer

Merle Rosenzweig

Taubman Health Sciences Library University of  
Michigan, Ann Arbor



## Methods of Collaboration

- ◆ Solo librarian interacting with single group
- ◆ Long-term relationship between several librarians and a departmental unit
- ◆ Working together on project with a community group

# Examples of Collaborations:

- Women's Health and Fitness
- Asian-American Health Fair
- Give Kids a Smile
- Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living
- Pride Network (LGBT)
- Office of UM Medical School
- Partners for Excellence (Ann Arbor Public Schools)
- Paws with a Cause
- Ann Arbor District Library

# Collaborative Efforts (continued)

- UM Council for Disability Concerns
- Art Therapy—Traumatic Brain Injury
- Lions Club/Michigan Eye Bank
- Gift of Life
- Serve (Sponsor-a-Family)
- Harvest Gathering (Food Gatherers)
- DeLonis Homeless Shelter
- Recycle Write (UM Environmental Program)
- Washtenaw Literacy

# Establishing Collaborations

- Networking and making contacts at meetings
- Working through a colleague as a reference
- Scouring the news for leads and possibilities
- Seeking out compatible and receptive organizations
- Filling a vacuum with library expertise
- Instilling trust through consistent responsiveness
- Looking for reciprocal or complementary needs
- Maintaining warm personal relationships

# Necessary and/or Nice to Have

- Support from administration to step out of usual role
- Funding from grants; e.g. GMR/MLA
- Creativity, friendliness, and perseverance
- Marketing mechanisms such as social or news media
- Team spirit in stepping in/helping as needed
- Space in library for exhibits

# Close-up View of a Typical Case

- Asian-American Health Fair
- Sponsored annually by UM group of medical students
- Takes place in building right next to Library
- Librarian noticed flyer about Fair five years ago
- Every year since then, Library has had a table at Fair
- Library members (several speak Chinese) staff table
- MedlinePlus in various languages shown on laptop
- Informational flyers and handouts are distributed