

Memories from EAHIL AHILA Scholarship recipient



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As the 2019 recipient of the EAHIL/AHILA scholarship, I definitely had a memorable experience at the EAHIL 2019 held in Basel, Switzerland. I wish to thank the EAHIL and AHILA Board members for awarding me with the scholarship.

It was my first time to attend the EAHIL conference and it was certainly an unequalled professional development opportunity for me. The workshop sessions I attended all equipped me with either a new insight, ability or skill. The most memorable session I attended being 'Open access as an opportunity for health information professionals'.

My EAHIL 2019 experiences will be given in a depiction of the words in the workshop motto "Learn, Share, Act, Bridge Borders".

I had a positive learning experience with immense rewards for me as I gained valuable knowledge on the transforming role of the modern day librarian. The presentation that I feel presented a great learning opportunity for me and will have an impact in my work was on the different facilitation techniques and methods. I am now confident that as I return home and get back to work, I have become a better facilitator and will be able to impart skills of knowledge brokering to other African health librarians I will be assigned to work with.

I enjoyed the opportunity I had to interact with the librarians (both the session presenters and the session attendees) during the workshop sessions and it was good to have them share strategies on how to cope with the challenges we face as librarians. It was interesting to learn that the challenges shared by the librarians I interacted with are no different from the challenges faced by African librarians. The social interactions during the breaks also allowed me to share my experiences in the numerous conversations I had with some European and American librarians. This sharing and exchange of experiences has been beneficial in that I have gained new colleagues in the field of librarianship.

Through the insightful workshop sessions, I have identified the areas in which I feel I can act and make meaningful contributions to my library. I was inspired by the aspects of research data management depicted in the presentations and posters. I have decided that I will work on research data management and share the concept with some of my work colleagues to enable us embark on practicing it in our academic library. The interactions with the other librarians have helped me gain useful contacts that I intend to consult with thereby bridging the distant borders between Africa and Europe. This bridging of borders may present opportunities for collaboration between an African library and a European library.

I would like to end by extending my gratitude to the past EAHIL president and the chairperson of the local organizing committee of the EAHIL 2019 for going out of their way in ensuring smooth preparation for my trip to Basel.