



To: Director, B&T Development and Cataloging Services and hiring team

From: Jessi Barrientos

Although I dearly love my current job, I experienced a zing of excitement in my gut when I noticed the job post for the Manager Library Applications position on the Baker & Taylor website. It offers an opportunity to combine my love of technical service functions and my passion to support and enrich libraries across the country. The unique skills I have developed over 14 years of library work would be well utilized in support of Baker & Taylor's mission.

When others see a hot mess of a problem and sidestep, I'm more likely to yell "Challenge accepted!" and run into the fray. This is precisely how I landed in my current role. In 2015, the Westminster Public Library centralized collection development from partial responsibility of nine public service staff members into a single position under the umbrella of technical services. I applied for the new position and suddenly I had responsibility for an entire physical collection completely lacking in any kind of diversity, a collection budget that had been flat for over a decade and is half the size that's needed for our community, several very experienced staff members upset about losing the favorite portion of their work, and nine different and highly inefficient processes. I spent the first year utilizing every bit of my executive function and vision to streamline our vendors (with B&T as our primary!) and ordering procedures, opening communication between public services and technical services, and developing basic collection maintenance expectations and trainings.

Over the following three years, I tackled deeper problems. Many parts of our community were under-served by our collection, which was exclusive instead of inclusive. There was no trust between technical services and public services teams and wildly different approaches to weeding. And we did not utilize any kind of strategy or data to drive decision making in the technical services team. I spent significant time developing community profiles, refining acquisitions, processes, and building trust between colleagues.

When the position to lead the Technical Services team opened, I had a true vision for what this team could become and I stepped into a new role just as everything I thought I knew shifted. I inherited a fractured team and an inefficient system. Although we were suddenly thrust into remote work, I helped to heal and rebuild a team of 7 amazing people. I coached each through utilizing new technologies and communication methods and through re-imagining ways to accomplish their work. I created a more efficient and supportive team despite years of service interruptions and unusual demands on our time. Together, we fearlessly innovated and expanded the impact of the team. We chose a new department name that better represents our contribution to the community - Collection Management. And we added a fully new service and new FTE. I built a community archive from the ground up.

The work I accomplished in Westminster Collection Management encompasses all of my passions as a librarian and a leader - opening doors for under-served communities, empowering staff, creating a common vision to break down barriers between departments, making connections to unique resources, and advocating for libraries with administrations. I now lead a highly efficient and well-respected team who are fearless in innovating and improving.

As I seek new challenges, I hope to bring compassionate and effective leadership to a team that serves the larger library community with innovative strategies like those I see coming from BTCat. Thank you for considering my application and I hope for a chance to share more about myself and hear more about this position.

Happy Reading,
Jessi Barrientos