

Leveraging the Federal Depository Library (FDL) Conference to provide pathways for exploring government resources and expanding professional presentation skills.

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Abstract

When is a conference more than just a conference? Can the FDL Conference be a platform for more than connecting with colleagues and researching government documents? Librarians from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Acquisitions and Collection Development and Special Collections and Archives explore how the FDL conference might serve as a gateway to promoting government resources and building communication and presentation skills.

Our goal is to think beyond the traditional approaches to conference participation as a space to connect, and showcase knowledge, and to consider how the conference might serve as a unique platform for library paraprofessional staff to contribute, an opportunity to establish new partnerships with faculty and students, leverage engagement with other community members, and develop alternative ways to promote government resources.

Reimagining the Conference Platform

Federal Depository Library Program libraries can offer much more than the traditional conference experience. With many libraries having limited personnel, promoting government resources or even attending the FDL conference might be something typically overlooked or a second thought that never materializes for many. If you are not typically involved with government documents or have minimal involvement, there are significant gains to be made.

By reimagining the conference platform, government resources receive greater promotion, and staff contributions—whether small (like adding links to libguides or creating posters) or large (such as organizing events and programming)—are recognized. New and innovative ways to collaborate with staff, faculty, and the community, can be explored and brought to life.

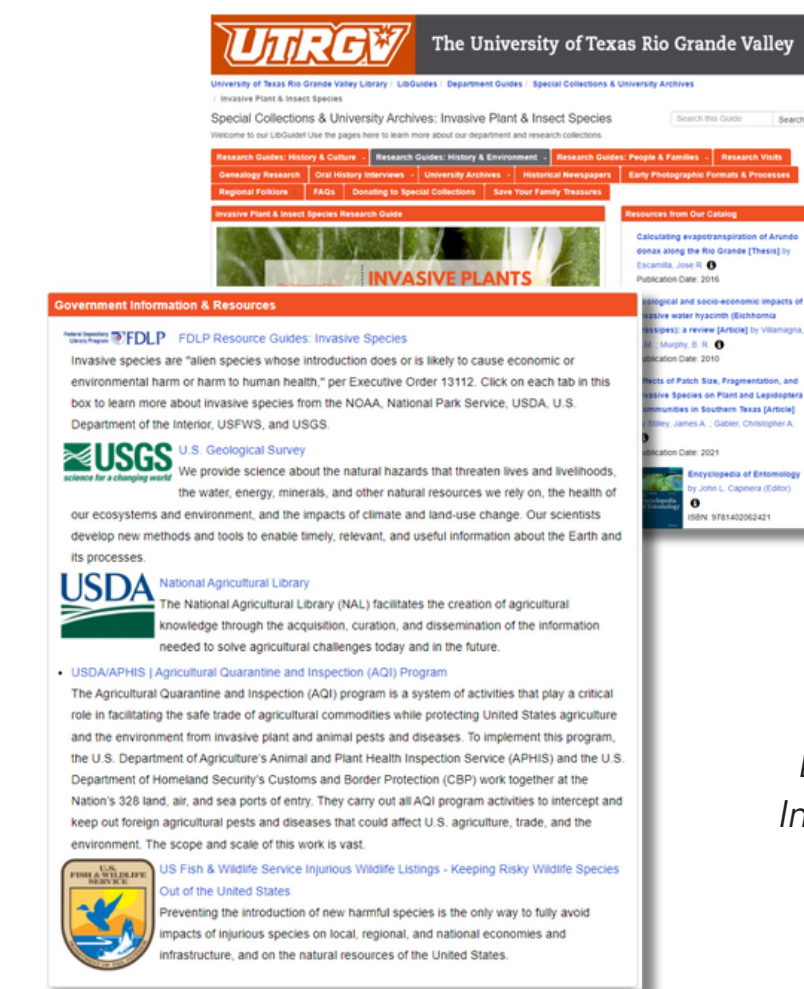
Expanding Opportunities for Library Paraprofessionals

- Presenting opportunities and recognition. Offers a way to recognize staff efforts and accomplishments while boosting employee morale and motivation.
- Professional development and learning opportunities. Enhance employee public speaking and presentation skills to boost confidence and communication skills.
- Creativity and collaboration. Library staff are exposed to new ideas and emerging trends that can inspire their work.
- No cost, no travel. The FDL Conference is a fantastic option for libraries with limited budgets and resources.

Government Information & Resources Content Selection

- Identify government resources relevant to existing research guides or planned projects.
- Include direct links to government websites, publications, and databases.
- Showcase the diversity of resources available. Select the best way to present the information.

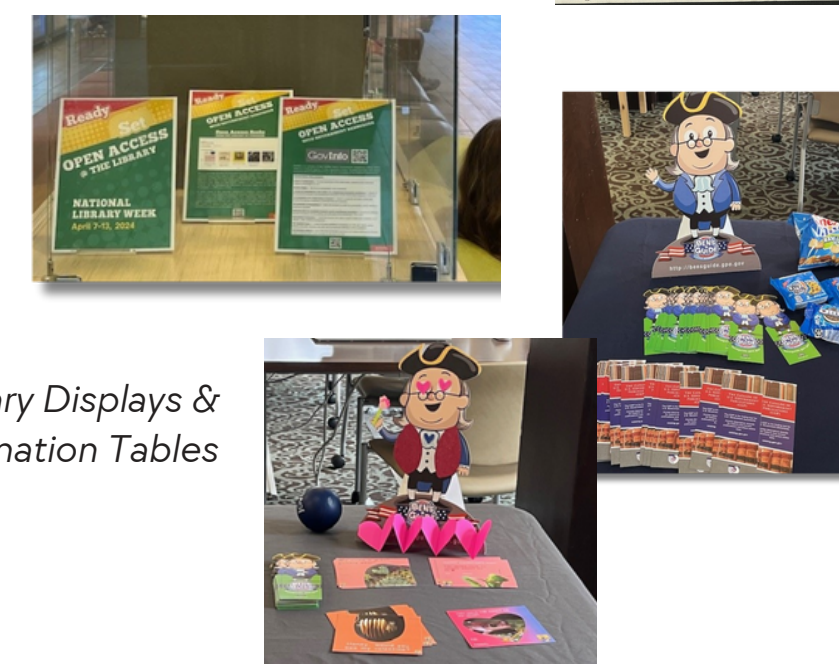
Research Guides



Poster Exhibits



Online Exhibits



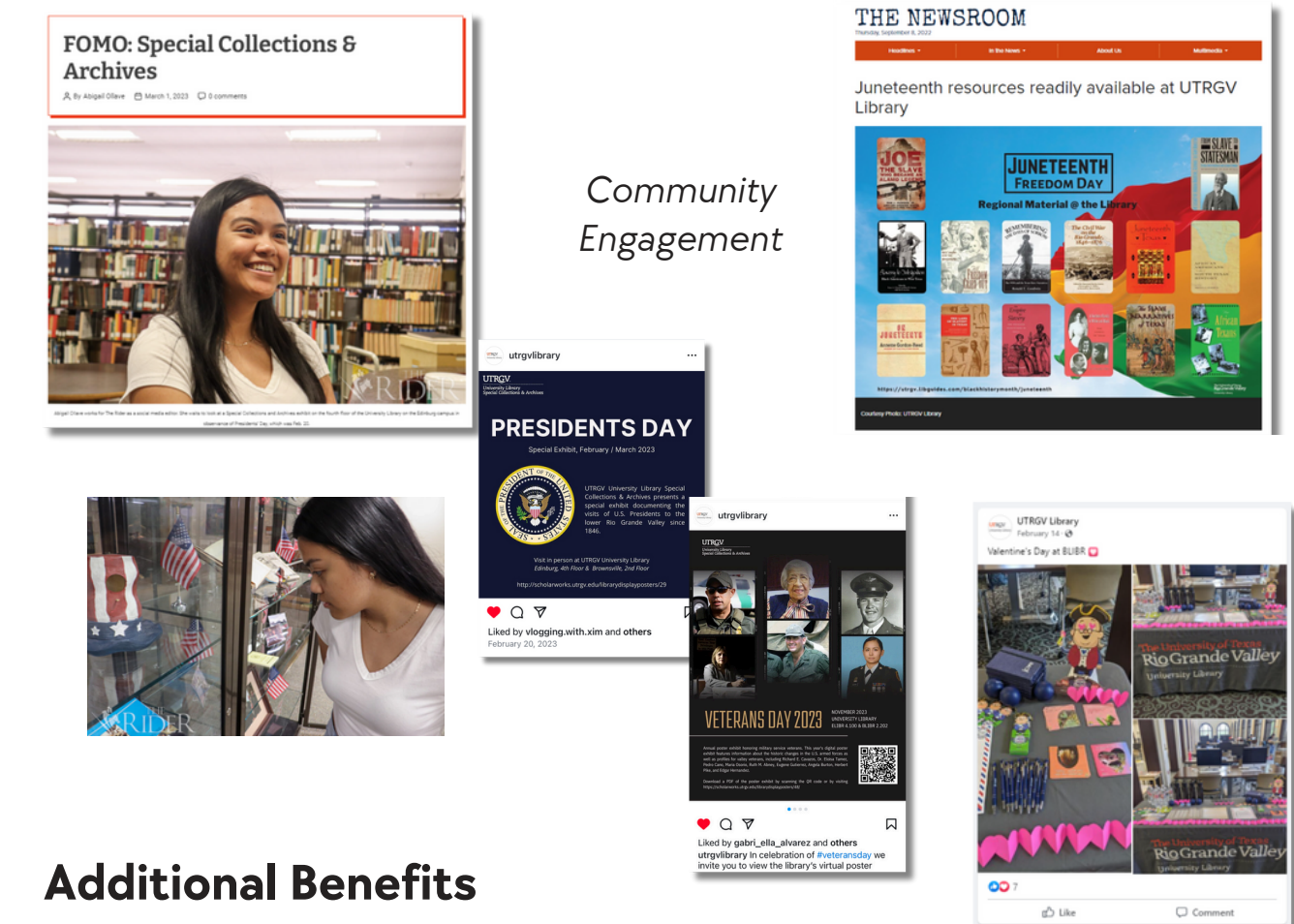
Library Displays & Information Tables

Partnering with Faculty & Students

- Engage a broader academic audience by promoting the FDL conference and resources among faculty and programs.
- Incorporate government resources into research, teaching, and learning.
- Provide students with a platform to share research and expand skills.

Engaging Our Community

- Highlight government resources, especially documents and datasets.
- Outputs are accessible and discoverable via the digital library.
- Variety of formats to meet a variety of needs.
- Generate community awareness and engagement.
- Virtual conference reaches distance learners and remote researchers.



Additional Benefits

- Content is open access.
- Promote evidence-based research.
- Faculty presentation opportunities for curriculum and tenure.
- Résumé- and skill-building for students.

Future Opportunities

- Polling feedback from the community, faculty, and students.
- Highlight government resources in the new library GIS lab.
- Featured material on the library home page.
- Promote open access and digital resources, especially datasets.
- Include and provide bilingual, multilingual resources.