In October, I attended and presented at the Annual Meeting of the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries (ORALL), hosted this year in Fort Wayne. Like many library associations, ORALL members come from a variety of libraries, including law schools, law firms, public, and government law libraries, so programming at these meetings can truly expand your perspective on the profession.

At the opening reception, graciously hosted by the Indiana Tech Law School, we heard from Attorney General Greg Zoeller, who encouraged us to be pioneers in changing the traditional image of the library to meet our tech-heavy times, and Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, andre douglas pond cummings, who passionately spoke of his research into the mass incarceration problems facing the United States.

The programming kicked off on the second day of the conference with a discussion of the state of access to justice for self-represented litigants. In an age of shrinking budgets, many law libraries are having to make difficult weeding decisions, often choosing to remove from their print collections primary sources (such as statutes and cases) that can be found elsewhere online; the speaker, Kim Mattioli from Indiana University Maurer School of Law, posited, however, that many of these self-represented litigants might rely on the print resources because they lack technological literacy to access the electronic versions. When we speak of access to justice, what do we consider sufficient access? And whose responsibility is it to ensure that this access exists? This program sparked a lively conversation on the role of the law librarian in aiding the research of the self-represented litigant while avoiding crossing the line into the unauthorized practice of law.

Other programming that day explored new areas of teaching available to law librarians; while we typically teach basic and advanced legal research, these programs encouraged us to consider expanding into other areas, such as alternative dispute resolution research and competitive intelligence. There is a great push in legal education today for more skills-focused and experiential learning. In order to produce practice-ready graduates, these programs encouraged us to consider other avenues of legal research attorneys will likely encounter in their careers, beyond the traditional resources we already cover.
The afternoon of the second day, I co-presented with Sara Sampson of The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law on modern issues in legal scholarship. Sara led us off by addressing an outdated curiosity of the common legal citation standard, *The Bluebook*, and its preference that authors cite to the print version of a resource, regardless of whether they actually used the resource in print. Since the majority of scholars access these resources electronically today, Sara brought to light the inefficiency of this process, what she refers to as “citation translation” – the author translating the citation from electronic to print, and the reader having to re-translate the citation from print back to electronic. Going along with the emphasis on today’s preference for electronic research, I spoke about a new tool for creating permalinks in legal scholarship, [Perma.cc](#). With authors citing to so many online resources, such as news websites, blogs, and other web pages, we are increasingly – in every discipline – running into the issue of link rot. Perma is a tool created by Harvard Law School for law libraries to create accounts for their constituents – journals, faculty members, research assistants, and more – to create Perma-links for their citations. I spoke of the growing problem of link rot in legal scholarship, the research I did to study the effect of link rot on our four law journals, my approach to presenting this information to our faculty and journal staff, and how this information was received by each.

Programming ended on the third day of the conference with discussion of innovative uses for LibGuides, new standards for county law librarians in Ohio, and common human resources issues in libraries. More information and programming materials can be found at the conference [website](#).

This is my second time attending the ORALL Annual Meeting, and I continue to be amazed by how much I learn from this diverse group. Of particular interest to me is the difference in available law libraries between Ohio and Indiana. In Indiana, our law libraries are for the most part limited to academic, firm, and court law libraries; but Ohio has significant legislative support for law libraries as well, with a mandate that every county have a public law library (and financial support to run it). It is very interesting at these meetings, then, to compare experiences with and services to self-represented litigants with these county law librarians, because I have no frame of reference for this in Indiana; while we work at very different types of libraries, we share this often challenging patron base, and there is much we can learn from each other. Isn’t that the beauty of conferences generally – establishing connections with colleagues far and wide to share experiences and resources to make our own services that much richer?