

When I began working at the Martin Regional Library in Tulsa in the spring of 2014, I discovered the career that was meant for me: libraries. I have been a lifelong user of the Tulsa City-County Library, but it was not until I began working for the library that I realized how well this career fits my personality and skills. As I worked in this busy, diverse location and got to know my customers and co-workers, I fell in love with the profession and knew I had found a place to belong. By the spring of 2015, I started a full-time position in the Martin Children's Department, providing weekly Bilingual (Spanish-English) Storytime along with other family programming and customer service.

With the encouragement of my managers, friends, and family, I embarked on the journey to obtain my MLIS with OU-Tulsa in the fall of 2016. As I work on this degree, my long-term goals are to provide programming and resources to children and their families while supporting Tulsa's growing Spanish-speaking community. Further, when I think about the trends and challenges facing libraries, the following issues rise to the top in importance: censorship and freedom of information, information and digital literacy, and serving diverse populations. In my pursuit of a Master of Library and Information Studies, I want to research and explore these and other relevant topics to prepare for a career in library management and youth services.

I see public librarians on the front lines of a constantly-changing society, supporting their communities with information, programming, and resources they need to survive and thrive. The challenges are many, yet the rewards are great. We have the lofty goal of serving all people, regardless of age, background, gender, or ethnicity. In my own community at Martin Library, I have seen how library work has changed the lives of customers: from posting flyers about a local lawyer providing free powers of attorney to families with mixed documentation, to helping a customer send an essential fax or print an important document, to putting the just-right book in the hands of a child, I can see every day how my work at the library is making a difference.