

## USAIN Oral History Special Project

### Interview Transcript

Narrator: Leslie M. Delserone

Interviewer: Suzanne Stapleton

Date of Interview: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019

File format for transcription: video

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### Interview Introduction

Stapleton: I'm Suzanne Stapleton, and today is November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and I'm so happy to be here with Leslie Delserone, Associate Professor and Liaison Librarian for Researcher Support and Engagement with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. And Leslie, you're joining from your office. Is it in Love Library?

Delserone: Yes, it is.

Stapleton: OK, I love that name. [laugh]

Delserone: It's named after a former mayor of Lincoln who made a large bequest to the university.

Stapleton: Oh, neat, neat. Well, I'm sure you can do so much with that, with a library, [laugh] with marketing.

Delserone: [laugh] We do around Valentine's Day obviously, yes. [laugh]

Stapleton: Good. [laugh] "I love Love Library." The U.S. Agricultural Information Network (USAIN) Oral History Special Project launched during USAIN's 30th year to document USAIN's history as experienced through its members and close affiliates. The goal of the project is to document personal memories, experiences, and perspectives of the impact of this professional organization. And I thank you, Leslie, for your interest and consent to participate in the oral history project for USAIN.

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Stapleton: We previously reviewed the oral history process and permission agreement form. Do you have any additional questions about that?

Delserone: No. It was very clear.

Stapleton: OK, good. We want to make sure that you understand this is—while we're interviewing you live, there will be a transcript that will be produced from the interview, and you will have a chance to review the transcript. There are ten questions in the interview. We've set aside an hour to hear from you. You do not have to answer every question. And if you don't like your response to a question, I'm happy to repeat the question and we can record it again.

Delserone: Sounds good.

Stapleton: Great. All right. So you ready to get started?

Delserone: Sure. [laugh]

Stapleton: OK. So our first question. Since 1990, USAIN has hosted a biannual conference. If you've attended USAIN conferences, which conference was your favorite, and why?

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Delserone: Do I have to just pick one?

Stapleton: You can answer however you like. [laugh]

Delserone: OK. [laugh] Because I actually—I mean, I've enjoyed all of them, to be honest, but certainly the conference in Lexington, Kentucky. It was a biannual jointly with IAALD. So that would have been 2005. And I had just finished my library program, knew that I wanted to be an ag librarian, and was very much encouraged by some of my colleagues here to go to that conference. And I was lucky enough to get a student scholarship so I could attend. And it was just like opening a doorway professionally that was just awesome. I mean, I was a little overwhelmed because of course it was very big, being a joint conference, but I had an opportunity to do a little presentation for AgNIC there, because of the project that I was working on here at Nebraska.

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Delserone: That was sort of like my first place to meet and see faces of some of these people whose names I knew, but I had never had a chance to meet them before. And then I think my other—hmm. Probably my other main favorite—I'm being a little bit selfish—is the conference that we hosted at the University of Minnesota in 2012, because I was the conference planner for that, working primarily with Philip Herold and Julie Kelly. It was a very eye-opening experience to be involved at that level of conference planning. And I know you share that experience as well. [laugh] But I learned just so much. And I think, looking back on the feedback, we put together something that people really got a lot out of, and they seemed to enjoy everything from the venues to the food that we had [laugh] at our different catered meals, and a lot of good conference programming that year.

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Delserone: So I guess those would probably be the two main ones. But I should reiterate, really, I've enjoyed all of the USAIN conferences I've had a chance to go to.

Stapleton: That's great. Can you explain—the first one that you mentioned, you said it was a joint conference with IAALD. What group is that?

Delserone: IAALD—I-A-A-L-D.

Stapleton: Ah!

Delserone: Which doesn't really—I don't know if it has really been disbanded, but it's not very active. So that's the international ag librarians group.

Stapleton: OK, great. Yeah, that would have been interesting.

Delserone: Yeah, because a lot of librarians from other countries were there, so it was pretty cool.

Stapleton: Right, right. Yeah, I haven't had a chance to go to that. Can you describe your involvement with USAIN? Why did you decide to join the organization?

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Delserone: Wow, I have to think about that for a second. So I was finishing my library program. I was based here at Nebraska, but I was doing an online program through the University of Iowa along with two other women. And all of us were training and trying to educate ourselves to be academic science librarians. That was the purpose of the special program that we were part of. And I kind of knew, because of my own education and training, that I wanted to be at the very least in the life sciences, and if I could, I wanted to be in agriculture. My previous education is in plant pathology. And some of that was because I felt very dedicated to the land grant mission.

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Delserone: So in beginning to look around for either activities or meetings or collaborators, my colleagues Elaine Nowick and Dana Boden here at the University of Nebraska Lincoln immediately said, "Well, you should consider joining USAIN." And that was not to take away from other larger groups like ACRL, for example, but it was obviously a group that was very specific to agricultural information and supporting those researchers and students. And also frankly on at that time a grad student budget, USAIN's dues were very affordable in a way that even ACRL wasn't immediately. [laugh]. And also just because I had heard really positive things about the organization from the folks I was working with here. So I think those things put together were kind of the main motivators for joining.

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Stapleton: You already described being very heavily involved with hosting one of the biannual conferences, but could you describe your leadership roles that you have had in serving USAIN?

Delserone: Sure. Very early on, I had a kind of minor leadership role. I guess leadership is how you define it, right? So I'm thinking of things where I was sort of actively on a committee or heading a committee up or something like that. So it would have been 2006, and Philip Herold was trying to put together a pre-conference for the meeting that was going to be held at Mann Library at Cornell.

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Delserone: I volunteered to be on the pre-conference committee with Philip and others and was able to help them for about six months, and then our family moved overseas to Ireland, because my husband was doing a postdoctoral there. And I unfortunately did not have an opportunity to even go to the Cornell conference [laugh] because we were overseas. So that was the very first chance to kind of get involved in a little bit of an influential way to help plan something. Let's see. When I became more active? Hmm. Well, I was a co-chair of the Legislative and Government Relations Committee, and actually I'm that again. I've been that twice. With Ashley Shea the first time, and with Florian Diekmann currently. And that ties to my interest in government information in general.

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Delserone: It also partly ties to some of the responsibilities I currently have here around government information, and also because a lot of the work that I research, I end up drawing from government documentation around agriculture. So it's kind of a happy marriage. [laugh] Oh, I've been on pre-conference planning committees for the international ag group for different conferences. [laugh] I was chair of contributed papers for one conference. I was a reviewer in another case for contributed papers. Eventually I was asked to run to be a member of the EC, to be a director. Was not successful the first time I was on the ballot, but I was the second time. And then most recently, I served as president-elect, president, and past president of USAIN.

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Delserone: And I've been on the budget committee different times. [laugh]

Stapleton: You know the organization very well from many perspectives. [laugh]

Delserone: Yeah. And it's really important, I think, to keep that in mind, that we are small, but there are lots of opportunities to try your hand at different things, and to take different levels of leadership, and to take your interest and connect it with a leadership opportunity. USAIN is really good that way at providing opportunities for people.

Stapleton: Yeah. Neat. So the next question, question three—how have your professional responsibilities changed during your involvement with USAIN?

Delserone: Oh my! [laugh] A lot.

Stapleton: [laugh]

Delserone: So when I first joined, I was a part-time lecturer here. Like I said, I had just finished my library degree.

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Delserone: And I had a little gap in my active involvement and membership in USAIN when we were overseas. When we came back to the States in late 2006, it was in part because I had been hired by the University of Minnesota, but not as an ag librarian. At that time, I was hired as part of a special program. There were three science librarians hired, and we were supposed to kind of be this interdisciplinary team looking for opportunities for the libraries to support interdisciplinary research and teaching. And I was actually assigned to the physical sciences and engineering division, not to the ag and life sciences division. So there was like a year from 2006 to 2007 roughly where I really—I don't think I was officially a member of USAIN, although I was still lurking on the listserv a lot. [laugh]

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Delserone: Officially, my liaison area was biomedical engineering, which was a very interesting and extremely steep learning curve [laugh] for someone like me. Long story short, I kind of knew I didn't want to stay in an engineering librarian position. The Minnesota Libraries still had a vacancy for an agricultural librarian, and so I made the request to be considered for a lateral transfer into that role. And that was granted, and so I became the ag librarian there and served there until 2010. I was very active in USAIN during that period of time. My liaison responsibilities at Minnesota varied a little bit but they were primarily what you would expect—agronomy and plant genetics, plant biology, soil, water, plant pathology]].

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Delserone: But a lot of sort of traditional ag-related fields, with a little bit more of an environmental concern in some cases. Did not have food science at Minnesota. And when I came back here in 2010, it was explicitly to be an ag sciences librarian on Nebraska's East Campus, which is our primary ag research campus in the system. And my assignments here have varied over the years, too. Primarily now I'm focused on agronomy and horticulture and entomology, plant pathology, food science and technology. And then we have the Doctor of Plant Health program, which Florida does as well.

Stapleton: Yes.

Delserone: Actually founded by a colleague of mine during my doctoral program at Cornell, Bob McGovern.

Stapleton: Interesting!

Delserone: Yeah. So I've been very pleased in sort of an extended way to be able to help the program here get off the ground and be successful.

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Stapleton: That's fun. Small world, right?

Delserone: Well, it is, really, when you think about it. It's not just USAIN that's a small world. [laugh] So a little bit of variation during my years with USAIN, but I guess I sort of mark my beginning with USAIN from '05. I had a gap year, but I've been a member ever since.

Stapleton: That's great. The next question, we'll kind of go into a little bit more about the impact. The question is, how has USAIN contributed to your professional development, and could you share a few specific examples?

Delserone: Hmm. Well, we've already talked a lot about the leadership opportunities. Well, actually in all, but primarily the last two professional opportunities in academic librarianship, there has been an expectation for service as part of my position.

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Delserone: And USAIN has been an awesome venue for addressing that. But I think I just look at the opportunities I have to learn, whether it's at a conference or, you know, even the things that come through on our listserv. People ask interesting questions. Maybe you dig around and try to get them an answer. I'm always interested to hear the answers if I'm not the person who answered the question. There have been opportunities to collaborate on panel discussions, to present posters, to facilitate sessions. So it really has been the main—I don't want to say—not outreach, but the main venue for me to either present preliminary research that I'm working on, to hear and read about other people's research in ag information, and I guess also ag science literacy. Throw that in there too.

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Delserone: So yeah, my professional life would be a lot duller if I didn't have USAIN, to be honest. Does that kind of get at what you—?

Stapleton: Yes, it does. And in fact, it leads us right into the next question, which is, can you describe any collaborative research you participated in that grew out of your relationship with colleagues in USAIN?

Delserone: Hmm. Well, probably the best example of that would be the Ithaka project that a number of our colleagues participated in, in interviewing and learning from our ag researchers about their needs and the things that aren't being addressed that they need.

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Delserone: That might have happened anyway. You know, I look back on it now—UNL might have gotten involved anyway, but it was certainly being on the EC at that point in time and then-president Sarah Williams talking about her contact at Ithaka and their interest in doing this project. And so being able then to go to my dean at the time and make a case for our participation—Andrea Dinkelman, who was our veterinary, biomedical sciences and food sciences librarian here at the time was interested in the Ithaka project. We were physically located here together, right, but we were also both USAIN members.

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Delserone: And we worked together then on interviewing and writing up the analysis, also presenting the results of our interviews as part of the Ithaka project. So that's probably the main—and just as a warning, I just got my “Your internet connection is unstable” message popup, so hopefully you can still see and hear me.

Stapleton: I can still see you, but there has been some interruptions into your audio. So I don't know if you might just take another minute to review what you were talking about. The Ithaka project, the research project, and your collaborator there at UNL, if you wouldn't mind just sharing that again?

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Delserone: Yeah. So at that time, Andrea Dinkelman, my former colleague, was the vet-med librarian, and also the food science and technology librarian. And she was interested in going out and talking to our researchers. So as I was kind of saying, even though we were both co-located here, so it wasn't like I had to do outreach to collaborate with a USAID colleague at a different institution, but it was our mutual interest in ag information and what our ag researchers needed that caused the two of us to collaborate—was that captured OK?

Stapleton: Yes, pretty much.

Stapleton: Thank you. And we'll explain that Ithaka S+R is a research and consulting group.

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Delserone: Right, right. Yeah, sorry. I'm talking to someone that I know understands that.

Stapleton: I know. [laugh] That's OK. [laugh]

Delserone: Right. They're a consulting group that advises on a lot of issues, including how libraries could be more responsive to researchers' needs.

Stapleton: Right. And I think this work in 2016 was their first foray into agricultural sciences. They had done a lot with other disciplines, but they were particularly interested in capturing agriculturalist scholars' research practices.

Delserone: Right. So to just finish that thought for the benefit of whoever reads or hears this later, there were a number of reports written by the institutional collaborators, almost all of whom were USAID members. And those were published or made available through institutional repositories, but also were gathered together into a special issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Information*.

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Delserone: ...2017, I believe that was published. And then the Ithaka S+R project leader, Danielle Cooper, also authored a report that's available through the Ithaka S+R website. So we ended up sending a requested subset of our transcripts to Danielle to assist and support the writing that she was doing. So we kind of had like this primary research that was based at each institution, and then you had the synthesized report that Danielle Cooper put out.

Stapleton: I know that that work was based on semi-qualitative interviews. Had you used that type of methodology in other work before?

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Delserone: Only really one other time, and I was a very minor player in that, so it was quite eye-opening. My science research was extremely quantitative, so I didn't [laugh] really have any background in qualitative methods. I will say that the training Ithaka provided us was quite good. I found it more than adequate to help me do a good job. The previous time I was in that sort of an environment was when I was at the University of Minnesota.

Stapleton: We're losing you again. I'm losing the audio.

Stapleton: So I think where we started having some internet bandwidth trouble was you had been describing your collaborative research opportunity that you had through USAIN, which was with the Ithaka S+R project.

Delserone: Right.

Stapleton: And I think you were sharing a bit about how that qualitative methodology was new to you except that you had a prior experience with it. And then that's when we lost you.

Delserone: And the prior experience was a very—really relatively minor involvement. The University of Minnesota Libraries in around late '06, early '07, was in the midst of a project to interview scientists about how they used information, their information seeking behaviors, and things like that.

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Delserone: And so I facilitated a couple of focus groups of those scientists. Of course the questions had already been established by the individual leading the study, and we had a graduate student who did the transcription and the coding. So really my role was facilitating. And then the little cohort of science librarians that I referred to earlier was asked to be involved in writing up the final report, which is available through the University of Minnesota's Institutional Repository. And I ended up writing about the researchers' observations about their data and their management and their storage and preservation, and what they considered to be data in different areas of work.

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Delserone: And that sort of led me down another interest that I have, which is looking at primarily agricultural research data and thinking about management and preservation of that data, but just more generally about scientific research data, and the data needs of our scientists.

Stapleton: Neat. That continues to be an important topic.

Delserone: Yes. In fact, it is now becoming an ever-bigger part of my job. [laugh]

Stapleton: Is it? Tell us a little bit about that.

Delserone: Well, I always was involved in data management from the time I came back to Nebraska, because when I came back in 2010, we were right on the cusp of NSF and NIH beginning to require data management plans to be included in the submitted proposals.

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Delserone: And we had an associate dean here by the name of Elaine Westbrook that was very much on top of this, and ended up having a colleague of mine, Kiyomi Deards—D-E-A-R-D-S is how she spells her last name—Kiyomi and I became sort of the point people, so when requests came in from scientists for assistance in data management, planning, whether it was reviewing or like how do I even start this document, you know, [laugh] we wrote up boilerplate language that could help in some cases and were always willing to review. Jumping ahead, we were able to hire a data curation librarian here who took over the primary role that Kiyomi and I had been filling, although we would occasionally help her, like from a subject specialist standpoint. If she was consulting with a researcher whose research process or the type of data that they were generating wasn't immediately understandable to her, she would ask us to come in and help.

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Delserone: But we unfortunately lost her in January of this year. She had a stunningly great opportunity to begin a doctoral program overseas. And we at this point have not been in a position to advertise and to replace her. So I've been filling in as best I can, and now we're coming to a place where I may actually be walking away from deep engagement with my agricultural departments. I may be sort of a figurehead liaison, their first point of contact, but that unless they're really needing assistance with research data needs, I will probably be—I don't know how to put it—collaborating or passing along requests for instruction and other needs to other colleagues now.

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Stapleton: And primarily focusing then on the data management needs across disciplines at your campus?

Delserone: Right, which is kind of a scary challenge, because I'm certainly not a social scientist. I mean, our hope would be in the long term to develop a team of librarians who are comfortable working in this area, that have the relevant disciplinary backgrounds or understanding of disciplinary areas. So I would expect in our next hiring plan, we'll probably have at least one data librarian position. I sure hope so!

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Stapleton: Well, so an ongoing—I mean, I think that's true with any of our responsibilities, areas of responsibilities—they change as situations change, both in terms of need and resources available.

Delserone: That's absolutely true. I think that my engagement with USAIN is not going to change, even if I'm not explicitly an agricultural liaison anymore. I have too much of a connection to the organization to like just stop being involved. I can see, though, that what would end up happening was I may be engaging a lot more right around data issues. So that may be more of a focus of research or presentations that I'm involved in.

Stapleton: Sure. And I'm sure those would be welcome.

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Stapleton: Leslie, I'm going to move on to our next question, which is just to give us a little break. But you had mentioned how much you have enjoyed all of the USAIN conferences you've attended. This question asks you to share a funny or silly memory about USAIN. One suggestion is to share a theme song that you suggest best embodies this organization.

Delserone: [laugh] Hmm. Well, there have been a lot of funny moments. I think my—maybe the first funny moment—at least it was kind of funny to me—I mentioned that I was lucky enough to get a student scholarship to that very first conference. And Luti Salisbury, who is at the University of Arkansas, was the chairperson of the selection committee for student and new to the profession scholarships that year.

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Delserone: And of course she called me here, and gave me the good news, and I was super happy. And she said, "You are going to come to the conference, right?" And I was like, "Well, yes, absolutely." So then, I don't know, a few weeks, maybe a month or so went by, and it's closer to the conference time now, and I get another call from Luti. She said, "You *are* coming to the conference, right?" [laugh] And so I think she ended up calling me like at least twice, if not three times. Looking back, I thought, "Oh my goodness, she must have just been really concerned that they had made this award and the person wasn't going to bother to show up." It kind of made me wonder, like, "Oh no, did the organization get burned in the past with something like that happening?" So I always kind of tease Luti a little bit about that, when I have a chance to see her.

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Delserone: You asked about the theme song. Just give me a minute on that one. [laugh] Here's the first thing that came in my head, so I'm going to just go with that one. So I grew up in the Pittsburgh area, and with my children always enjoyed watching Mr. Rogers. So I guess I was just thinking, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" would be a good way to describe USAIN. You know, the little theme song he used to sing at the beginning of his show. Because it's friendly, you know? It's a relatively small community of people who are working in an area that we're passionate about, and we kind of take care of each other, I think. At least I've always felt taken care of. So, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" [laugh]

Stapleton: That's a great suggestion. I like it.

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Delserone: It's not very sophisticated or anything, but— [laugh]

Stapleton: That's OK. So the next question is a little bit bigger. And this is one of the ones that we had sent you ahead of time, so hopefully you've had a chance to reflect on it a little bit. This is question seven. The practice of information exchange has been revolutionized by the internet and social media since USAIN launched. How do you think information technology has impacted USAIN's operations and mission?

Delserone: I probably didn't reflect enough on this one. [laugh] On our operations and on our mission? Well, I actually don't think that internet, social media, have had a negative impact on our mission.

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Delserone: If anything—or necessarily on our operations. Because if anything, I think it has made it easier for us as an organization to communicate with each other. Certainly the web gives us a venue. You know, we push out our website. We push out news. I think we could probably do more of that for the public that may look at our site as well as for our members, but we also are an all-volunteer organization, so there's only so much we can do. I don't do a lot on social media, so I don't know what things like the Facebook page—I don't know what kind of activity people see there in terms of likes and stuff. But really in a lot of ways, I think our mission theoretically should be easier, right? Where there might be a negative impact potentially—and I think there was a little bit of that that came out during the Ithaka interviews that I was part of—is the misunderstanding, I think, by some of our researchers, that everything that they need in terms of their agricultural information needs is just out there and available now.

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Delserone: And we know that that's not true, and it probably will never be completely true. So when I would sit down and talk with the researchers during that project about the tools that they used to seek information, and the first thing I hear is Google, and maybe the second thing I hear is Google Scholar, it did become during the interviews a very minor teachable moment to talk about, yes, there's power there, but there's also a lack of power there, and that there are other tools that can be used in combination with, right?

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Delserone: So maybe in that sense, there has been a little bit of potentially a negative impact on our mission because we have researchers and students who don't know what they don't know about where to get information, and in some cases how to vet the quality of that information. Certainly the pop-up predatory journal environment is a tough one, even for good researchers to understand. So it looks great, it sounds great, they're pushing out papers, but are researchers really taking time to vet what they're reading? Was that really good experimentation? Was that good analysis? Was that a good presentation? Was the paper well written and reviewed correctly?

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Delserone: So I suppose it's a little bit of a double-edged sword. I prefer to emphasize the positive a little bit more, that we're not strictly paper-based, right? We can really get our message out there. And I would hope that the changes that we made from Sarah Williams's term through Kristen Mastel's terms, with mine in the middle, in terms of upgrading our website, upgrading our membership directory online, making it easy for people to pay their membership online, getting away from a very paper-based environment that we've been in since 1990—I mean, I think that's a positive, at least for most of us. I know not all—a few older members who aren't happy about that, but I don't think it was a bad change or a wrong change to make.

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Stapleton: It's a big question, and I think you brought up some important considerations with it. I appreciate that. In the interest of time, I'm going to move on, unless you have another thought that you wanted to share about that question?

Delserone: No, we can head on to the next one.

Stapleton: OK, so this is question eight. Agricultural practices, food science, veterinary medicine, and natural resource management have changed significantly since USAIN launched. From your perspective, how have changes in these fields impacted the profession of agricultural information?

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Delserone: Well, again, both positively and negatively, I guess. I think positively, the rapid pace of discovery and to some extent publication of research in those areas is great. I think it's a really interesting phenomenon to see researchers tweeting or sharing on social media when they've had papers published. Kind of recommending each other's papers, as well, on social media, although one does wonder if they've read the papers that they're recommending in some cases. [laugh] Just sayin'! [laugh] I think, again, if there's a negative, it's researchers not fully utilizing agricultural information related resources that are available to them.

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Delserone: And of course I'm thinking primarily in an academic environment. I think that there's a lack of understanding on the part of some of the researchers, still, about what their rights are as authors, what their rights are with regard to so-called ownership of their data. And again just the evaluation of where do you publish and things like that. I actually think that USAIN in the future could probably do a lot towards helping to educate these researchers in these areas. So for me, like the transition is one of, you know, you become an ag librarian, and you have this understanding of the corpus, of the collections that are going to be relevant to your researchers. And what I think I've seen change particularly since about 2007, 2008, is that the separation between those fields—the sort of like, “Well, here's the vet-med collection”—is breaking down.

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Delserone: And that's OK. I think the interdisciplinary—some people say “transdisciplinary”; I still think it's a little more “inter”—but the understanding that there are places where these disciplines are going to intersect when people are working together, and they need to understand kind of each other's resources. And I think we could help with that, if we're not already doing it in our own work. And then there's the involvement of the social sciences, and sort of behavioral research within agriculture now that's really—I mean, it was kind of there with extension, right, for a long time—understanding how to communicate effectively to farmers, and what kind of uptake do farmers have of certain kinds of scientific information.

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Delserone: But what I'm seeing now particularly here in this environment is a push towards science literacy at all ages. And so these combined studies where you have perhaps education people working with people in ag to try to understand like, "What's the best way to teach science? Can we use agricultural models?" Like the entomology department here has a lot of entomological science literacy-based education. And then studying the students, studying the behavior of the people that are learning this stuff.

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Delserone: So—I got maybe a little bit off the topic there, but I think there's some negatives, but I think what we're seeing now is like more meeting together of disciplines that we used to think were like very separate. Now, the researchers may still identify with their particular guild, right? You know, your tenure home is in food science, so yes, I'm a food scientist. But I'm working with a plant pathologist on mycotoxins or I'm working with someone in business because we want to promote some new product that has come out of the food science department. I'm just picking examples. Do you want to revisit that question with me and maybe—?

Stapleton: No, that's fine, but I did want to follow up on it just a bit. So you were focusing a bit on sort of how the disciplines have changed in their practices and in their activities on campus, and I'm wondering if you wanted to share a little bit of your thoughts about how those disciplines may have changed beyond the research area.

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Stapleton: You mentioned a bit about extension and reaching out to farmers, but do you see any impact of changes in the practice of the agricultural, food science, veterinary medicine, or natural resource management, that has impacted ag information?

Delserone: Well, potentially in a couple of areas. I think the emphasis on some of our researchers getting involved in developing patentable products or technologies in a way negatively impacts agricultural information, because you have potentially data and information that are locked up in proprietary agreements that people may never be able to really access.

0:51:22

Delserone: I don't know that there's that—I mean, there's some of that going on here, and I'm sure at other institutions. I don't see it as a primary driver for any of the researchers that I work with in those areas. Again, I think probably the one major impact that is kind of overriding is just the sheer glut of information that's out there, some of it purporting to be peer-reviewed literature. And how the heck do you process, how do you vet this, and what do you choose to retain as part of a library, how do you organize all this stuff and keep track of it?

0:52:08

Delserone: That's probably across the board a problem. Not just for ag information, but—maybe the last comment I'll make is I think that the impact, whether for good or ill, of processes like genetic modifications or the most recent with CRISPR gene editing, I think it in some cases opens doors for agricultural research and by extension then for the sharing of that information, but I think there's also sort of a divide.

0:53:00

Delserone: So you're either pro or you're not, on some of these technologies. And I suspect that some of the folks that are not in favor—and I'm thinking more of the general population—don't get the information they need to make an informed decision about whether something is really of concern or not. And so I wonder a little bit about the free flow of accurate information around, if you will, sort of controversial technologies or practices in agriculture. I mean, animal welfare might be another example, right, where people want to eat cheap food, but they also don't want to be reminded about confined animal operations. Well, [laugh] it's hard to have both.

0:54:00

Delserone: So just an aside on that.

Stapleton: I appreciate it. Leslie, we have just a few minutes here before the hour, and I want to be respectful of your time. I have time to continue on a little bit beyond two, so there's no problem on my end, but I wanted to check in with you, whether you have time to finish two more questions, or whether you would like to reschedule.

Delserone: No, we're fine, because I actually blocked a little bit of time on the tail end, just in anticipation of what exactly happened, which was a technology failure.

Stapleton: OK, good. Well, I did the same with the recording, so it should continue on. So this is question nine. Based on your experiences with USAIN to date, what advice would you share with new members?

Delserone: Well, the same advice I shared with a bunch of them when we were in the meeting in Pullman and [laugh] previous meetings, is look at the organization, find the thing—or things—but find at least one thing that's sort of like in your wheelhouse, something that excites you, and get involved with a committee or an interest group right away so that you begin to meet people in the organization, you begin to have opportunities not only to participate in conferences but also to help with leadership and to help with planning activities that the organization is involved in.

0:55:37

Delserone: It was advice that was given to me, and I took it seriously, and I think it was good advice. And also, it's a way to find yourself in the middle of supportive colleagues. If you join and then you're not active, well, we don't know you, and that's kind of—it can't be a very satisfactory feeling to just sort of be the invisible member.

0:56:12

Stapleton: Final question—do you have anything else that you'd like to share about USAIN?

Delserone: Let's see. I think I said that it's great like a million times, so I probably don't need to say that again. I will say I'm really glad to see this project get off the ground, and I'm hopeful that our pilot will be a successful one and that we will continue with whatever organization we need to do to capture other interviews going forward. So I think that would probably be my closing remark. I've enjoyed talking with you!

Stapleton: It has been lovely, Leslie, yes.

0:57:00

Stapleton: It's a treat to be able to interview people who have such long experience with the organization.

Delserone: Yeah. Well, there's, as you well know, folks with a lot more than I have, and we will try to be capturing what they have to say and what they remember, soon, I hope.

Stapleton: That's right. Yes, yes. Well, thank you so much for your time, and for sharing your thoughts and memories.

End of Interview