

Joe Thompson
CML Davis McCarn Award
May 2007

Davis McCarn was a brilliant man who used his considerable knowledge of technology to benefit libraries. In recognition of his work, Citizens for Maryland Libraries established the Davis McCarn award to recognize effort and achievement in using innovative technology applications to improve library service.

As president of CML, it is my great pleasure to present the Citizens of Maryland Libraries 2007 Davis McCarn Award to Joe Thompson, Project Coordinator of Maryland *AskUsNow!*

Joe was asked to take on this role in March 2003, to ensure the successful launch of *Ask Us Now!* He has done his job very well. Since then *AskUsNow!* has responded to nearly 200,000 chat reference questions from high school, college & university students and the general public. To date, 33 academic, public, and special libraries in Maryland partner to provide *AskUsNow!* service.

A 2001 MLS graduate of the University of Maryland College Park, Joe has worked in the role of reference librarian since 1997, when he began as a Library Associate at the Towson branch of Baltimore County Public Library.

Beginning with the coordination of a pilot "Homework Help" project between Baltimore and Harford County public libraries in 2001, Joe has provided and managed cooperative virtual reference services for almost six years, putting him in the forefront of this innovative service.

The success of *AskUsNow!* has drawn both national and international attention. Joe has had the opportunity to speak about the service to library audiences in Colorado, Louisiana, Arizona, Florida, Quebec, South Africa, Poland, Malta and elsewhere (alas, the last three via U.S. Dept. of State videoconferences).

In 2005, Joe received MLA's first Emerging Leader award. He is currently the MLA Secretary.

Joe is also active in the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of the American Library Association, is the co-chair of the Virtual Reference Services Committee, and had just been elected to the RUSA Board.

Joe, thank you for your innovative work for libraries in Maryland and beyond.