

Libraries still indispensable

Janice Lachance, of the SLA will talk to Puneites about the future of library profession

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Transformation of traditional libraries is the need of the day and it's going to prove helpful. Libraries are no more just a collection of books. Librarians are information professionals. There is need to form a network of professionals all over the world", said Janice Lachance, chief executive officer of the Special Libraries Association (SLA). Lachance who had also served as the director of US office of Personnel Management (OPM) is in town to deliver a key note address in a workshop titled 'Future of Library profession: Embedded Librarianship and beyond' organised by SLA, Asia chapter along with Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics and Pune University Library and Information Science Alumni Association (PULISAA). The seminar is to be held on Monday (October 12) between 9.30 am to 2.00 pm at Gokhale Institute.

Sharing her observations with Pune Mirror, she said, "In the last few months, libraries witnessed increased response. Unfortunately, no good reason is behind it. Because of global recession, people lost jobs and may have lost Internet connectivity due to

which which they are approaching libraries. Also, they might not be buying books because of financial crisis. However, it cannot be denied that the rush in libraries is increasing."

Janice Lachance has more than 20 years of experience in public service and governance in the US, as she was appointed to director of OPM by the then President, Bill Clinton. She said, "Even in today's age, where information is just a click away, for authentic and accurate information, libraries and trained personnel as information professionals are the need of the hour. There are too many commercial search engines but for deep research, these search engines are not enough. The assumption that everything is accessible and available online is not true, as many times information about scientific, legal, business developments are only behind a firewall. There are a lot of things online which may not be recent and as a lay man it is difficult to find out."

Janice Lachance is known for policy changes she brought about in the federal government's executive branch. "We introduced mental health insurance parity for federal employees and their families. If employees get something useful they can be more productive," she said.



—Janice Lachance