

ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce; VPO Appointments

The ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce was developed this fall in response to a challenge by member leaders to create a strategy for recruiting professionals of color to research libraries. The centerpiece of the Initiative is a new program of stipends that will be made available to minority M.L.S. students who demonstrate talent and interest in a career in research libraries. The Initiative has established a fund at ARL that will generate revenue from yearly interest earnings to award \$5,000 stipends. The fund consists of voluntary contributions by ARL member libraries: \$5,000 for each of two years or a one-time total contribution of \$10,000. In exchange for the stipend, the recipient would agree, upon graduation, to work in a residency program or other entry-level professional position in an ARL library for a minimum of two years.

The Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce was discussed at the October 1999 ARL Business Meeting and member support was strong. By the end of the Membership Meeting, over 40 percent of the member institutions had made a commitment to join this program. ARL is also approaching private funding agencies to leverage the Initiative's endowment base, increasing the ability to offer more stipends each year. ARL is currently working with an advisory group to continue laying the groundwork for this Initiative, with plans to offer 10 stipends for students enrolled in the fall of 2000 and 15 stipends each year thereafter.

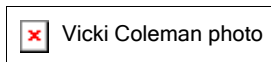
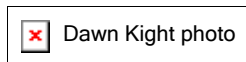
Participating ARL libraries will have greater opportunities to hire talented librarians from underrepresented groups and to help mentor these librarians as they enter the research library profession. Most importantly, participating institutions are playing a major part in attracting more librarians from underrepresented groups into careers in ARL member libraries. Each year, talented minority librarians choose positions in public and special libraries and other new opportunities in the information field rather than careers in research libraries. Many of these graduates would find fulfilling careers in research libraries, if we could attract their attention at the beginning of their graduate studies.

This new program of stipends complements ARL's Leadership and Career Development (LCD) Program. The stipend program will recruit talented minorities into research libraries before or as they enter graduate studies; the LCD Program fosters the professional advancement of midcareer librarians of color.

The new recruitment Initiative also helps ARL libraries take advantage of other recruitment opportunities. For example, participating libraries may encourage current nonlibrarian staff members to apply for these stipends. Many ARL member libraries employ people of color who are interested in attending library school and who could be mentored into the profession.

To support this new effort, ARL is pleased to be working with two new Visiting Program Officers, Dawn Kight and Vicki Coleman. Ms. Kight is Manager, Systems and Technology, at the John B. Cade Library at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and is a member of the current ARL Leadership and Career Development Program class. Ms. Coleman is Engineering Librarian at the University of Kansas Engineering Library, and participated in the inaugural class of the LCD Program. Ms. Kight and Ms. Coleman are helping to develop a strong foundation for the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce and are expanding ARL's web-based resources for recruitment efforts. In addition to contributions to the Diversity Program, Ms. Kight is working with Trish Rosseel, OLMS Program Officer for Distance Learning, to explore funding and technological development for the Online Lyceum. Ms. Coleman is also working with Julia Blixrud, Director of Information Services, and Martha Kyrillidou, Senior Program Officer for Statistics and Measurement, to formulate an action plan for the New Measures projects, including the SERVQUAL pilot project described by Colleen Cook and Fred

Heath on [pages 12–13 of this issue of ARL](#).



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For more information about the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce or other diversity efforts, please contact DeEtta Jones, Director of Diversity Initiatives, at [<deetta@arl.org>](mailto:deetta@arl.org).

[Table of Contents for Issue 207](#) | [Other Cultural Diversity Articles](#)



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