NLM/AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program

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Program Components

- Director’s Course
- Scholarship
- Fellows/Mentors Leadership Program
- Recruitment Guide
The Need for Leadership Identified

• 16% of academic health sciences library directors anticipated retiring by 2005 with an additional 49% retiring by 2010 (1999 survey)
• 1/3 of the respondents anticipated retiring by 2011 and another 1/3 by 2016 (2007 survey)
Program Purpose

- The AAHSL program is intended to address the preparation of academic health sciences library directors.
Program Design

- Combination of virtual and in person learning
- Combination of fellow/mentor pair and cohort experiences
- Small size of cohort
- Exposure to other directors/mentors in addition to their own mentor
- Mentor involvement in the curriculum
Mentoring Program Elements

• Matching of fellows (aspiring directors) with mentors (current library directors)
• Day long orientation
• Attendance at AAMC
• In-person institute at MLA
• Adobe Connect courses and discussions
• Site visits to mentor institution
• Capstone
• Fellow/Mentor relationship
Program Costs

- ½ time Project Coordinator
- Program consultant faculty for institute leadership training
- Travel
- Institute costs (room, food, etc.)
Diversity Initiatives

- 2006/2007—voluntary identification of ethnic/racial identity of fellow applicants was added to the application process
- In 5 classes since, 27% of applicants have self identified as being from an URM
- 28% of selected fellows (7 of 25) have been minority
- 2011—first minority mentor (library director) in upcoming class
Program Evaluation

• Formal evaluation conducted in 2005
• Focus groups of fellows, mentors
• Interviews of key program visionaries from NLM and AAHSL
• Focus groups of home directors/supervisors of fellows
Findings

• Fellows: enhanced leadership skills, opportunity for exposure to people and strategic issues; created new network of peers and directors; “having so many others to learn from.”

• Mentors: All remarked that their stint as a mentor offered them an opportunity they probably would not otherwise have taken to reflect on what was important to their own leadership; and that they learned from the experience too.

• Both groups identified the site visit as the most important program component
Both groups also praised the support system, especially the project coordinator.

Fellows identified a need to stay connected after the program ended and wanted help in doing that.

They also wanted the program to find ways to support fellow attendance at future AAHSL/AAMC meetings post graduation.

Home supervisors felt disconnected from the program and wanted more communication between them and the program administrators.
• Supervisor noted their employees came back from the program more “self-aware” with clearer career goals
• Key informants focused on their role in establishing the program, key success factors and barriers to success
Key Success Factors

- Documented clear need and a clear program plan
- Support and commitment from AAHSL
- Credible initial collaborators (AAHSL and NLM and ARL)
- Sufficient resources
- A well-designed program
- Quality and early successes of the early class of fellows
- Small cohort size
Barriers to Success

- Clarifying the target audience for the program participants
- Defining the role of mentors
- Recruiting and matching participants
- Recruiting underrepresented minorities and hospital librarians
- Virtual learning system
- Sustaining the community over time
Lessons Learned

- Definition of success goes beyond the promotion of fellows to directorships post graduation
- Having said that, to date, there are 40 fellows, 23 of which have been promoted into leadership positions (16 to director positions)
- Other success factors: individualization, socialization, and output/results
Program Modifications

- Procedural—include a phone interview with potential fellows in order to improve the selection process; give more directors an opportunity to be mentors; replace web based learning system with Adobe Connect

- Program design components—orientation of how to be a mentor; enhanced communication with home director; MLA reunion for fellows and mentors; involvement of graduated fellows in AAHSL committees; continued investment of AAHSL and NLM in the program
Conclusion

- The program led to the development of the individual
- The program made contributions to the quality of leadership in the profession
- The program enhanced the visibility of succession planning and leadership development for AAHSL
- AAHSL recognizes that developing the individual does not just benefit the individual but benefits their library, AAHSL and the profession as a whole.