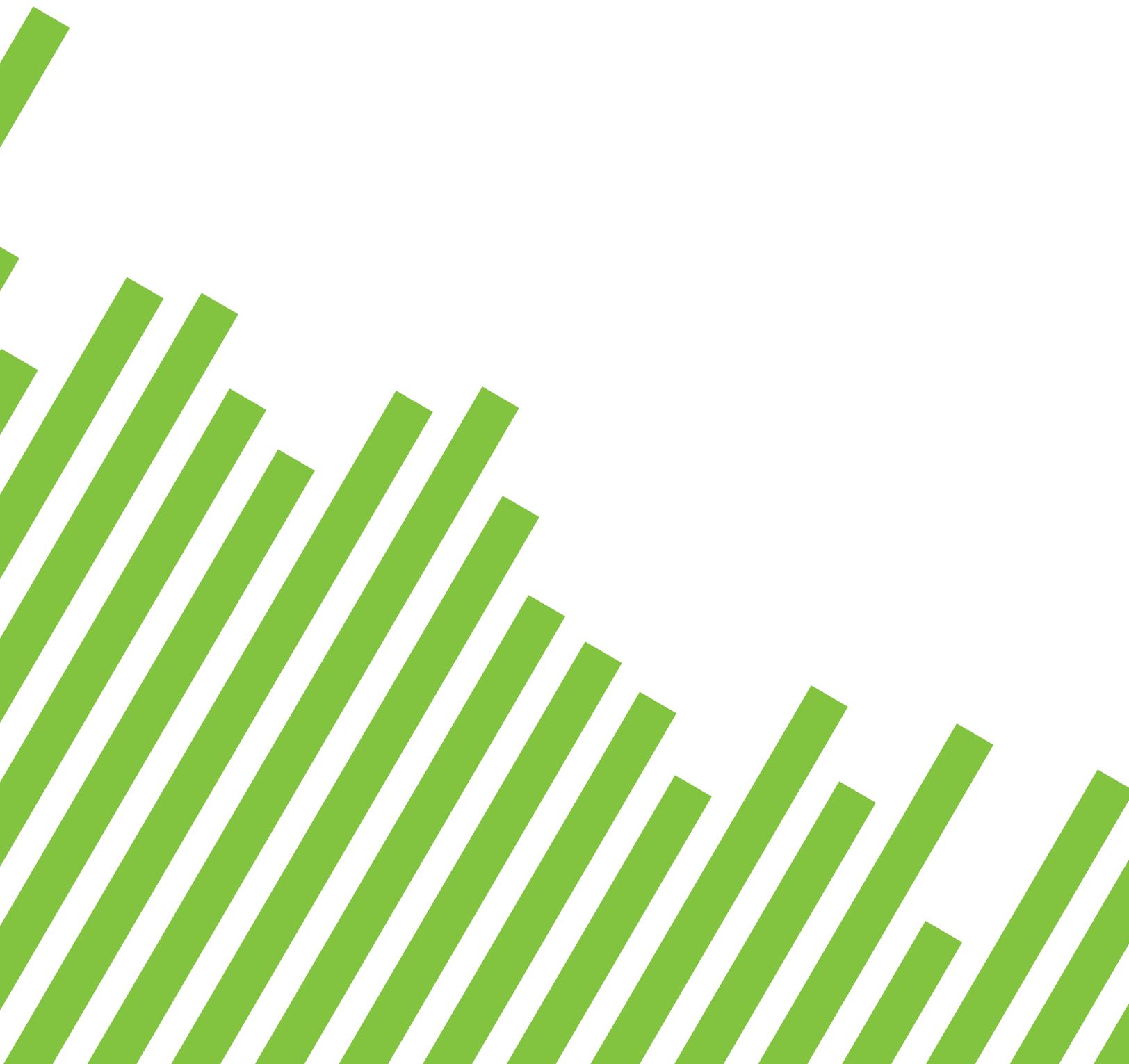


Synergy

News from ARL
Diversity Programs

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In This Issue

In 2015, a wave of student activism moved throughout the United States and Canada as student protesters made demands of their campus administrations for equality and an end to systemic racism and oppression. Heightened media attention to police violence against racial and ethnic minorities and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement have raised consciousness, on both the campus and the civic level, of the dilemma of equal rights and protections for these populations. This issue of *Synergy* contains three articles that relate to the Association's own strategies for increasing diversity and promoting equity in the academic and research library and archive communities.

Diversity Initiatives Still Matter *Charlene Maxey-Harris* p. 4

Charlene Maxey-Harris, a former ARL Leadership and Career Development fellow, reflects on her experience with diversity programming at her institution (University of Nebraska–Lincoln) as well as on a national level through her work with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) “Diversity Standards.” Maxey-Harris stresses the need for continued research and assessment of these programs in order to tell the story of their success.

Paying it Forward: Perspectives on Mentoring Relationships from Past and Present ARL/MLA Diversity and Inclusion Fellows

Joy M. Doan, Treshani Perera, and Patrick Sifuentes p. 13

Throughout ARL's various diversity and leadership programs, mentoring and career coaching remain critical to the success of the programs. Three former fellows from ARL's collaboration with the Music Library Association (MLA), the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative—Joy M. Doan, Treshani Perera, and Patrick Sifuentes—offer important advice on what makes for an effective mentor/mentee relationship.

**Conversations with Gay McDougall: Complementing
the Written Record with Oral Histories** *Erik Ponder* p. 22

Personal and academic interests intersect in Erik Ponder's essay about his experience creating an oral history project while at the Columbia University Libraries as part of his ARL Career Enhancement Program (CEP) internship in summer of 2015. Ponder, a specialist in African history, interviewed Gay McDougall, a human rights activist who was a key figure in the anti-Apartheid movement in the United States and the former head of the Southern Africa Project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Ponder describes the process of identifying the oral history project and quickly developing the skills to complete it as part his CEP fellowship.

This diverse trio of articles provides further evidence of the value of ARL diversity and inclusion programs and the elements that contribute to their success. For years to come, the library and archive professions will reap the benefits of the leadership skills cultivated by these programs. Paraphrasing Maxey-Harris, perhaps more than ever, diversity, inclusion, and social justice matter for libraries and archives.

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Diversity Initiatives Still Matter

Charlene Maxey-Harris

Introduction

After a decade of dedicating my career to diversity-related issues, my desire to continue this work remains as strong as when it was initially sparked in 2005 after attending the Diversity in Libraries Conference. This interest led me to propose a position for a diversity librarian to focus on these issues at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) which, later, I was asked to take. Recognizing the lack of academic librarians of color throughout my career, I accepted the challenge to make a difference in the profession. With the support of UNL library administration, the university formed a diversity committee and together we worked to recruit and retain faculty of color and achieve a healthy workplace climate. These collaborative efforts led to UNL successfully increasing the diversity of library faculty and staff from 2% to 12% in just five short years (2005–2010). It is important to acknowledge that these efforts and initiatives take leadership, investment, and a system-level approach to making progress. This would not have been possible without the support of Joan Giesecke, former dean of UNL Libraries, whose years as a supporter of national diversity initiatives were recognized with the American Library Association (ALA) Equality Award in 2011.

I myself was the recipient of a library and information studies (LIS) fellowship focused on increasing the number of minority librarians from health sciences backgrounds. My experience at UNL has led to a number of invitations to share my story on panels for ALA, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and most recently the Art Libraries Society of North America. UNL's success in the recruitment and retention of diverse staff and faculty members at a predominantly white, geographically challenged institution was an intentional plan to improve search

pools, target recruitment, and support and mentor highly qualified candidates, many from ALA and Association of Research Libraries (ARL) diversity initiatives. The impact of these initiatives on their institutions and on the profession is the focus of this article, providing an overview of diversity initiatives, reviewing how progress is defined, and identifying future trends and areas of research.

Overview of Diversity Initiatives

There are a variety of initiatives designed to change the face of the LIS profession. These include:

- Scholarships and fellowships to recruit students into
- the profession
- Career fairs and marketing campaigns
- Leadership and mentoring programs for early-career librarians
- Post-MLIS fellowships
- Post-MLIS library residency programs
- Library outreach programs targeted for diverse communities
- Research projects on diverse collections and resources

Evaluation and assessment of the impact of this wide range of recruitment initiatives can be challenging. One attempt to collect this information was the 2010 ARL SPEC Kit 319, *Diversity Plans and Programs*, which surveyed ARL libraries in the areas of recruitment, retention, diversity and multicultural programs, evaluation, and assessment (Maxey-Harris and Anaya, 2010). The survey for SPEC Kit 319 was based on two 1990 related SPEC Kits: *Cultural Diversity Programming in ARL Libraries* (no. 165) and *Minority Recruitment and Retention in ARL Libraries* (no. 167).

According to the 2010 survey, 36 (73%) of the 49 libraries that responded have diversity plans and programs in place demonstrating an array of programs shared to promote a more inclusive workplace. Other key findings include the following:

- 57% of the responding libraries had developed their diversity plan within the last five years.
 - 82% (40) of the libraries had employed strategies to increase the pool of ethnically/culturally diversity librarians.
 - Only 57% (21 of those 40) felt these strategies were successful.
 - 49% of responding libraries had ongoing diversity programs.
 - Only 8% (4) had a mentoring program specifically to help ethnically/culturally diverse librarians.
 - 22% of the libraries had developed measures to evaluate success of recruitment efforts.
 - 46% of the libraries had assessed the workplace climate.
- (Maxey-Harris and Anaya, 2010)

These three SPEC surveys provide a snapshot of diversity initiatives found in ARL libraries and serve as starting points for researchers studying the impact of diversity initiatives and programs.

Benchmarks of Progress

One major challenge facing administrators when evaluating impact is defining success. With diversity and inclusion issues, is there an endpoint? Is there a point when diversity no longer needs to be an area of focus? Instead of focusing on how we define “success,” we must identify progress that has been made, rather than striving to reach a final, magical, indefinable goal.

Often there are slight changes to workplace climate, such as fewer conflicts and improved cross-cultural communication, which may be the direct results of successful diversity education and programming. This type of diversity programming requires leadership to understand the current workplace dynamics, define the needs, and then determine the best way to meet needs. With the programming leading to a healthier workplace, recruiting and hiring new diverse staff allows for more diverse voices in collections,

programs, instruction, and new services, which can, in turn, lead to increased attendance. Heightened visibility of programs opens the door to more partnerships to address social justice and diversity issues within and outside the library. These programs provide a snapshot of the health of an organization while also providing evidence of more libraries taking responsibility to provide more inclusive workplaces, improving teaching, research, and services to our campuses.

In 2012, the ACRL Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee (REDC) compiled “Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries,” which “provide a framework to support libraries in engaging the complexities of providing services to diverse populations, and recruiting and maintaining a diverse library workforce.” (ACRL Diversity Standards, 2012) The standards were a collaborative effort authored by librarians working with diversity issues at their home institutions. The guidelines were based on those of the National Social Workers Association, which offered a framework to address individual and organizational responsibility, practice, leadership, and research. The Diversity Standards focus on developing culturally competent individuals and organizations, defined as having:

a congruent set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable a person or group to work effectively in cross-cultural situations; the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families, and the communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each. (National Association of Social Workers, 2001).

These standards provide a structure to document progress. Libraries can choose individual standards to aid in the development of local strategies allowing them to benchmark individual and institutional progress throughout the process of integration. Since these standards are not applied in a systematic manner, nor are libraries

required to use them the same way, there are significant challenges to collecting consistent, qualitative and quantitative data to view the big picture of how libraries are using the Diversity Standards.

Future Trends: Research, Support, Assessment

Research

One of the most encouraging trends resulting from diversity initiatives is increased research. Research has evolved from information about diversity in libraries to studying diverse librarians as the subject. One intriguing topic that is rising in popularity is the impact of microaggressions in the workplace and their connection to institutional and professional retention. Psychologist and scholar Derald Wing Sue has been working in this field for over 30 years and has defined microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial insults towards people.” (Sue et al., 2007) There has been a recent rise in LIS students and professionals hosting blogs and Tumblr sites, such as <http://lismicroaggressions.tumblr.com/>, exposing the harmful effects of this phenomenon within the profession.

In a recent study conducted by Alabi (2015), a survey was distributed to capture academic librarians’ observations and experiences with racial microaggressions. The survey results provide evidence that microaggressions present barriers that influence the success of racially/ethnically diverse librarians within organizations. In her conclusion Alabi states, “The adverse effects of racial microaggressions—negative emotional psychological reactions, decreased productivity and increased desire to leave an organization—may be hampering our profession’s efforts to recruit, retain, and promote librarians from underrepresented groups.” (Alabi, p. 189–190)

A related area is the study of efforts to retain tenure-track librarians.

A recent article by Damasco and Hodges (2012) documents their initial research exploring the work-life experiences of academic librarians of color to achieve promotion and tenure. The authors surveyed and collected narrative comments from librarians of color about the obstacles, supportive initiatives, and processes to attain tenure at their institutions.

These research studies, and other related articles, provide a more complete picture of the challenges and obstacles faced by academic librarians of color that may influence their decision to remain employed in academic and research libraries.

Building a Case for Ongoing Support

An area of concern that must be addressed is understanding the type of data library administrators need to validate their continued support of diversity initiatives. This observation stems from sitting in on a recent ARL Diversity Committee meeting. I was perplexed by the need to justify the ARL Diversity Programs that develop librarians of color at different stages of their careers: beginning, mid-career, and library administration. As an observer, it was unclear why there was the need to constantly validate the need for diversity initiatives to library administrators. Coordinators continually improve the programs to address the changing needs of participants and meet the needs of library directors. Yet the scrutiny speaks to the disconnection between tangible results documenting progress and research about diversity plans and programs. ARL leaders have discussed future goals for diversity in Barbara Dewey's (2009) "Imperative of Diversity." This article traced ARL support and leadership over the past 20 years. It also set the agenda for the future, "...transcending organizational silos and issues and requiring leadership from all member libraries." (Dewey, p. 360). Workplace climate may expose the underlying challenge to seeing significant increases in the numbers. Research needs to demonstrate the significance of the support needed by librarians outside of their workplace for

them to advance in their careers. If administrators are weary of addressing these issues, one can only imagine what it feels like to be frontline staff from an underrepresented or marginalized group.

Assessment

It is clear that assessment will always be challenging if we are relying only on diversity programs and individuals to lead these efforts. Assessment must be embedded into the structure and culture of the organizations. Rather than depend on traditional avenues of assessment, the profession should begin to recognize the new and different voices discussing, writing, or blogging about these issues.

One example of these new avenues is *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*, an open peer-reviewed journal founded and run by an international team of librarians working in various types of libraries. Using this open access format, colleagues have the opportunity to engage in scholarly discourse with one another. *Lead Pipe* has opened the conversation in a different direction and allows readers to engage and debate issues. These conversations have captured the attention of librarians and administrators and have helped raise social justice issues and critical race theories that have been applied to the field.

Due to the variety of efforts to change mind-sets and behaviors, reaching an undefined final goal is like aiming at a moving target. Regarding the UNL story, our goal was to recruit and retain individuals from underrepresented groups. In order to reach this goal it required dedication to improve the organization to make it a more welcoming place. Beyond the numbers, there was an assessment of workplace climate, an increase of programs on social justice and inclusion, and scholarly research on diversity-related themes that contributed to creating a culturally responsive organization. As assessment is an ongoing process, determining how academic and research libraries are documenting their collective efforts will improve the assessment tools or measures that need to be further developed.

With the rise in social justice and diversity issues on university campuses, investment in diversity/inclusion initiatives equips individuals and organizations with the tools necessary to map similar efforts to campus efforts. Effectively addressing these issues through campus-wide diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs benefits the whole campus and society. Diversity initiatives still matter today.

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Charlene Maxey-Harris is the associate professor and chair of the Research and Instructional Services Department at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) Libraries. She joined the faculty in 1999 as a reference librarian and was appointed diversity librarian in 2005. Prior to UNL, she held positions at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Dartmouth College. Her research focuses on diversity and multicultural issues in academic libraries and library instruction for first-generation college students. In 2010, Maxey-Harris published *ARL Diversity Plans and Programs*, SPEC Kit 319. She is also a graduate of the 2011–2012 ARL Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP). Photo: Greg Nathan

Paying it Forward: Perspectives on Mentoring Relationships from Past and Present ARL/MLA Diversity and Inclusion Fellows

Joy M. Doan, Treshani Perera, and Patrick Sifuentes

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) continually strengthens its commitment to diversity recruitment and retention in the library and archives profession. The Association's fellowship programs use apprenticeships and mentorship to help cultivate success for MLIS students from traditionally underrepresented ethnic and minority backgrounds. In 2012, ARL launched another such effort: the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (DII) partnership with the Music Library Association (MLA) focusing on increasing the number of librarians from traditionally underrepresented ethnic and minority backgrounds in the profession of music and performing arts librarianship. In this article three previous ARL/MLA DII program participants discuss various aspects of mentorship.

Introduction

Absorbing the opportunity and expressing yourself as a mentor is a gift that will present you with tremendous benefits. However, stepping into the role of a mentor may not come as naturally for some as it does for others. There are numerous important factors that require consideration prior to making the commitment to become a mentor. Below, we have outlined a few of the advantages of taking on a mentoring role, the potential challenges to consider prior to volunteering as a mentor, and some considerations about a mentoring relationship from the mentee's perspective.

Advantages to Becoming a Mentor

Patrick Sifuentes

Learning/Re-Learning What Is Being Taught in LIS Programs

Librarianship is in a constant state of change. Sure, you lead instructional sessions, and participate in the educational opportunities offered by your institution, but placing yourself alongside a bright-eyed protégé brings a deeper actualization of what is being taught in library and information studies (LIS) classrooms. Advances in presentation delivery platforms such as LibGuides, video tutorials, and flipped-classroom instruction are prime examples of information that has likely changed since you were pursuing your library education. Through sharing and reliving the student experience, you will receive affirmation of your choice in an LIS profession. Add in the fact that you will be able to keep up with the “new kids,” and you will have a win-win for everyone.

Becoming the “Authority”: What This Does for You as Well as Your Protégé

Mentoring also propels you forward as you are now the person someone looks to for guidance. This affirmation will grow as you and your protégé work out problem-solving skills together, or perhaps differ on approaches or resources to answer a reference question. Utilize each of these learning opportunities to deepen your own knowledge and establish yourself as the “authority” in your subject specialization.

Apprenticeships and days of on-the-job-training now yield to employer demands for “plug and play” college graduates, according to Thomas Friedman in the *New York Times* (2014). A mentor capable of conveying his/her experience in the field will foster the career navigational skills your protégé needs for success.

*Add Credibility to Your Subject Matter Expertise
among Your Professional Colleagues*

Music is what brings us together in the DII program. Envision the connection points you have to offer to someone seeking specialization in your area of expertise. Special libraries and archives are particularly well suited to offer a passion- or skillset-driven career as well as provide a wide variety of exploration for someone interested in the LIS profession.

The Value of Serving as a Role Model

The intrinsic value mentorship brings to you, your protégé, and your career will ideally yield innumerable rewards. From the perspective of diversity, if you present yourself as a welcoming sign of change to the future faces of academic librarianship, then you demonstrate to your library colleagues and administrators that you are preparing for the next generation of our changing national demographic. Be a change agent so others will want to follow in your footsteps.

Potential Challenges of Being a Mentor

Joy Doan

*“Tell me and I may forget, teach me and I may remember,
involve me and I learn.” —Benjamin Franklin*

In its best form, a mentoring relationship utilizes active teaching and learning. It is therefore paramount that a potential or current mentor engages in self-reflection and ongoing collaboration with his or her mentee. While this is easier said than done, remaining cognizant of the potential and any evidenced challenges in a mentoring relationship will prove effective and will lessen frustrations for both parties.

Time Commitment

Most calls for mentorship (e.g., ARL diversity fellowships) state the potential time commitment and guidelines. However, oftentimes this is merely delineative. Successful mentoring relationships require thorough planning, routine check-ins (e.g., one-on-ones), and time for assessment—either formal as required by a supporting institution (e.g., ARL), or informal (e.g., exit interview). Therefore, it is advisable that you remain circumspect. If you find that you are already over-committed with job and/or personal responsibilities, ask yourself, “Will I be able to provide a mentee with quality advice and opportunities for professional growth?” Passion about mentorship without adequate time to commit to the process does not serve a mentee well long-term, and may ward off a new professional—the proposed mentee—from engaging again as a mentee, or becoming a mentor later in his or her career.

Co-Developing a Learning Plan

If you have chosen to mentor an LIS student, or an early-career librarian/archivist, an enthusiasm for mentorship is assumed. It is imperative though that mentors not let their excitement about sharing their expertise impede the mentee’s exploration of the field. A co-developed learning plan and timeline acts as a commitment between the mentor and the mentee that waylays tedium, dissatisfaction, or fatigue. The learning plan should be developed prior to the outset of the mentoring relationship and should be referred to and reassessed at least periodically during check-ins.

Gauging Compatibility

Considering compatibility between yourself and the mentee should go beyond the boundaries of like-personalities. As with colleagues, respect and a common goal should (and can) supersede personal tastes. When I reflect on my experiences in a harmonious mentoring relationship—namely as a mentee—I am struck by one commonality,

the mentor's willingness to seek the expertise of other colleagues on my behalf. For example, as an ARL/MLA DII Fellow (2013–2014), my mentor set up a series of informational interviews for me with other library administrators and department heads to ensure that I had a first-hand overview of the different departments and an idea of the skills that I would need for each sector of librarianship. This format of mentorship models the internship rotation module. However, if you are working with an early-career mentee that is already beginning to focus his or her path in your area of librarianship or archives, encourage second opinions. Schedule informational interviews for your mentee with trusted colleagues—either at your institution or remotely. Varying opinions on one topic is one of the greatest strengths that you can give to a mentee.

Mentoring a burgeoning colleague proves its own reward, and while specific or even unanticipated challenges may arise, remembering to keep the mentee and his or her needs at the center of the experience yields advantageous results for both parties.

The Mentor-Mentee Relationship

Treshani Perera

A mentee's needs may range from gaining experience in a new field to pursuing specific career goals within an area in librarianship.

A student mentee may come with limited experience working in a library setting, perhaps as a library page or student worker, or in my case, as a volunteer working on special projects based on subject-specific skills. While formal internship programs offer work experience to bridge gaps in skills, a mentor-mentee relationship should provide a level of comfort to explore genuine questions and concerns about career choices.

A student mentee may have concerns about résumé/cover-letter writing skills, professional development opportunities to explore different areas in librarianship, or learning about personal experience

in the LIS profession. Having navigated student years successfully, an early or mid-career mentee would expect more professional insight from his/her mentor, often relying on the mentor's experience transitioning between stages. In ARL diversity programs, often the mentee defines program goals, including the extent of the mentor-mentee relationship. Therefore, it is crucial for the mentor to have an open conversation with the mentee prior to determining goals and expectations of the mentor-mentee relationship.

A successful mentor-mentee experience leads to an undeniable "pay-it-forward" attitude in both parties. It is important for the mentee to feel valued and respected throughout the process for continued engagement as an emerging professional. Most mentors were once a mentee who benefitted from a rich and supportive professional relationship. The mentor can take leadership in creating a safe environment without high stakes for the mentee to feel the assurance to pay it forward. A mentee may look up to a mentor for their successes and recognition in the field, and it is important for the mentor to take those expectations seriously.

A mentor gets the chance to personally affect a budding professional's career trajectory, and the responsibility is no easy task. Setting up periodical check-ins to ensure both parties are on the same level of engagement will lead to a rich mentoring experience for both sides of the relationship; a mentee may feel discouraged by an unengaged mentor, and vice versa. In the same light, if either party is over-committed at any given point, letting each other know relieves the sense of being an annoyance and burden on the other party.

Setting high yet realistic expectations for the mentor-mentee relationship should take place at the onset of the experience, especially if both parties are new acquaintances. ARL diversity programs provide a learning plan as a checklist for keeping track of goals and accomplishments during the internship year, which could be adopted into the mentor-mentee relationship.

Although the tone of the relationship (formal or informal) is entirely up to both parties, having expectations in written form help guide the relationship without frustrations and apathy.

The takeaway from a mentor-mentee relationship is to reflect on what worked, what did not work, and how to improve commitment from both parties for future mentoring partnerships. A positive experience creates a ripple effect to spread goodwill and share experiences within the LIS profession, and both parties have equal responsibility in nurturing that pay-it-forward attitude.

Conclusion

ARL has built a strong reputation of advancing the careers of budding LIS professionals through fellowships and mentoring. While we have focused on long-term mentoring relationships and their advantages and challenges, mentoring relationships can occur for any given length of time. [ARL's Annual Leadership Symposium](#) is an example of a planned, yet informal short-term mentorship. For three days, select administrators act as mentors and advocates of the diversity fellows' careers, including participating in one-on-one chats and planned group sessions. This same model can be replicated at your home institution. If you are interested in mentorship, but recognize limitations on your time or other resources, place a call out to colleagues and ask if any of their mentees might benefit from an informational interview or workshop. As long as you remember to balance your expertise with the mentee's needs, delving into the role of a mentor will prove a beneficial and rewarding experience.

Further Reading and Resources

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Joy M. Doan is currently a research and instruction librarian at California State University, Northridge (CSUN). She is an alumna of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)/Music Library Association (MLA) Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (host institution, University of California, Los Angeles). Doan holds a BA in English literature and music from the University of Michigan, an MA in music history from Case Western Reserve University, and an MLIS from San José State University. Her professional interests include teaching and learning, emerging technologies, and diversity in academic libraries. Photo: Craig Huey Photography



Treshani Perera is in her final year of graduate studies pursuing an MLIS and a master of music in musicology at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (UWM). Perera is currently serving as the project intern for the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Oral History Project and Sheet Music Collection at UWM Libraries, in the Digital Collections and Initiatives department. Her professional interests include music librarianship, audiovisual archiving and preservation, digital libraries, and diversity in LIS. Upon graduation, Perera hopes to be employed as an academic music librarian/archivist. Photo: Lorenzo De Gregorio Photography



Patrick Sifuentes is a first-generation college graduate from a third-generation Mexican American family from south Texas. He earned degrees in music composition and psychology from Loyola University New Orleans and an MLIS from Dominican University. Sifuentes has chosen a career in music librarianship and, as a result of an ARL fellowship, he is now public services music librarian at Northwestern University Libraries, his ARL/MLA Diversity and Inclusion Initiative host institution. His professional interests include: collection development, special collections, and reference and instruction in academic libraries. Sifuentes is a cohort member of the 2016 Minnesota Institute for Early Career Librarians. Photo: Craig Huey Photography

Conversations with Gay McDougall: Complementing the Written Record with Oral Histories

Erik Ponder

On a breezy fall day, April 27, 1994, in the town of Inanda, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, workers hurriedly moved a ballot box outdoors and throngs of reporters and spectators gathered at a small makeshift voting station to witness the stalwart anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela voting for the very first time. With his huge, trademark, Madiba grin and gray-speckled hair Mandela placed his ballot into the box for the entire world to see. And, standing right next to this nation's future president in one of the more iconic images of that historic Election Day was Gay McDougall, one of the five international members of South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission and the only American appointed to the commission.

As the director of the Southern Africa Project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law from 1980 to 1994, Gay McDougall was in the forefront of the anti-apartheid and divestment movement in the United States. The Southern Africa Project financed and helped direct the defense of thousands of political prisoners in southern Africa, supported lawyers in their challenges to apartheid laws, and raised the consciousness of policy makers in the United States Congress and other branches of government about human rights issues in southern Africa. The project was responsible for freeing thousands of people from jail. They helped to mount cases that challenged numerous apartheid laws and caused many of them to be overturned.

In 2013, Columbia University Libraries' Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research acquired the Gay McDougall South Africa and Namibia Papers and the records of the Southern Africa Project. In addition to documenting the role of the US-based anti-

apartheid movement and the international networking that took place among activists, including efforts to influence US foreign policy, the papers describe the activities and decisions of the Independent Electoral Commission from the perspective of a commission member and reveal a day-by-day detailed picture of the challenges confronted in mounting South Africa's first democratic elections. The papers include correspondence, memoranda, photographs, videos, and ephemera, such as election ballots, original local news coverage, and McDougall's diaries from trips to South Africa, Namibia, and the Frontline States. Also included in this collection are books, reports, and briefing papers published by South African organizations.

In the summer of 2015 I interned at Columbia University Libraries as part of the Association of Research Libraries Career Enhancement Program. My advisor Yuusuf Caruso, African studies librarian, took me to the Rare Book and Manuscript Library in search of ephemera to use in an upcoming library exhibit to promote the acquisition of the Gay McDougall papers. My own search led me to the discovery of campaign and Election Day reports by an international election observer team from Chicago. The observer team, made up of mostly anti-apartheid activists, was in South Africa to ensure that the elections would be both free and fair. To be able to view these reports, which were written over 20 years ago, was just short of amazing. Having access to the papers inspired me to want to do more with the collection.

In 2014 at my home institution, Northwestern University Libraries, I co-curated an exhibit marking 20 years of democracy in South Africa. The exhibit displayed, amongst other things, various election ephemera, from ballots to political party posters, housed in our renowned Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. In conjunction with the exhibit we had a guest speaker series, a film series, multimedia displays, and an oral history project. One of the exhibit elements I was most excited about working on was the collection of oral histories. I was able to gather over 12 oral histories from Chicagoans who were international election

observers for the historic 1994 South African elections. Yes, I am speaking of some of the same Chicagoans whose Election Day reports can be found in the Gay McDougall Papers. It was an incredible opportunity to record their memories of Election Day, traveling from small town to small town witnessing what was arguably the most historic event of the late 20th century.

My previous curatorial work provided an opportunity for me to contribute something significant to the Columbia University Libraries' collection. I thought collecting Gay McDougall's oral history would be an excellent complement to her papers and an excellent way for me to wrap up my summer internship. I suggested this to Pamela Graham, the director of Global Studies and the director of the Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research. She agreed and helped me work towards that goal. I met with Sady Sullivan, curator for the Columbia Center for Oral History Archives, who was able to spend some time with me to go over oral history philosophy, procedures, and evaluation. I also met with Mary Marshall Clark, the director of the Columbia Center for Oral History Research, to discuss principles and best practices for conducting oral history. To meet with these professionals and to learn from them was an invaluable learning experience. There was a good deal of information to learn but I felt I was well on my way to working on a project that would be meaningful and contributive.

After this preparation, I met with Gay McDougall in midtown Manhattan over the course of four days and collected more than six hours of oral history. She talked about growing up in the Jim Crow South and attending segregated schools. She talked about living in the same Atlanta neighborhood as Martin Luther King Jr. and how Atlanta was the epicenter of the civil rights movement. She talked about the influence of women in her life, particularly her mother and her aunts. She talked about being the first African American to attend Agnes Scott College and the burden of integration. She talked about attending Yale University Law School and then the London School of Economics and Political Science. She talked about

her path to activism and her professional trajectory that focused on the major human rights questions of the day. She talked about her work in South Africa and Namibia and her amazing travel across the southern Africa region and the people she met there. She talked about her current work teaching at Fordham University Law School and teaching the next generation of lawyers and activists.

Gay McDougall also talked about how she found herself standing next to Nelson Mandela on that auspicious Election Day and witnessing the man who would become the first black elected President of South Africa vote for the very first time in his life. She said those last few days leading up to the election were very hectic, and she was not getting much sleep. The Independent Electoral Commission was attempting to put out a few last-minute “fires” before the election. One such fire took place in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, the night before the elections, when election workers decided to demand a pay raise. They held an all-night sit-in at the commission’s offices. McDougall and a colleague flew out from Johannesburg to diffuse the situation and to negotiate an agreement. The negotiations with the election workers took most of the night. When she woke up the next morning she was informed that Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress, had decided to vote in KwaZulu-Natal, which was a hotbed for the major opposition party. She knew once she heard the news that was an event she could not miss. So, she went to that little rural schoolhouse, that makeshift polling station, and witnessed history in the making.

From Amartya Sen and Fernando Henrique Cardoso to James Baldwin and Kofi Annan, the Columbia Center for Oral History has quite an extensive collection of interviews. The Gay McDougall interviews will be an excellent complement to her papers and an invaluable resource for researchers who are interested in firsthand accounts of South Africa’s historic democratic elections and the anti-apartheid movement in the United States. If you ever have an opportunity to visit Columbia University Libraries, please take some time to explore the Gay McDougall South Africa and Namibia Papers and many other historical

treasures at the Rare Books and Manuscript Library located in Butler Library. I am immensely grateful and honored to have talked with Gay McDougall and to have recorded her oral history. I am also honored to have been able to make a contribution to Columbia University's impressive collection of oral history interviews. I thank Columbia University Libraries for an unbelievably enriching experience that was invaluable to my growth as a future librarian and professional.



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About the ARL Diversity Programs

The ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce, offers a stipend of up to \$10,000 to each ARL Diversity Scholar in support of graduate library and information science education. ARL Diversity Scholars participate in the annual ARL Leadership Symposium, a research library visit and a mentoring relationship with a research library professional. For more information about the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce, visit <http://www.arl.org/irdw>.

The ARL/Music Library Association (MLA) Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (DII), funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), MLA, and ARL member libraries, seeks to recruit diverse students with advanced degrees in music to careers in academic and research libraries. The program offers tuition support and a paid internship for up to one year in a partner music/research library. Other components of the ARL/MLA DII include a formal mentor program and support to attend the MLA annual conference where participants will receive specialized instruction in the areas of career development and effective job-search strategies. For more information about the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, visit: <http://www.arl.org/arl-mla-dii>.

The ARL Career Enhancement Program (CEP), funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and ARL member libraries, offers MLIS graduate students from underrepresented groups an opportunity to jump-start their careers in research libraries by providing a robust internship experience in an ARL member library. Each CEP fellow participates in a six- to twelve-week paid internship in an ARL library, a mentoring relationship with a professional librarian while on campus for the internship, and an opportunity to attend the annual ARL Leadership Symposium during the American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting. There is also potential for academic credit. For more information about the CEP, visit <http://www.arl.org/cep>.

The ARL Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP) is an 18-month program to prepare midcareer librarians from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to take on increasingly demanding leadership roles in ARL libraries. The LCDP design includes: two LCDP Institutes, an opening and closing event held in conjunction with national professional meetings, a career coaching relationship with an ARL library director or staff member, and a personalized visit to an ARL member library. For more information about the LCDP, visit <http://www.arl.org/lcdp>.

The ARL/Society of American Archivists (SAA) Mosaic Program, funded by IMLS, promotes much-needed diversification of the archives and special collections professional workforce by providing financial support, a paid internship in a partner library or archives, mentoring, career placement assistance, and leadership development to emerging professionals from underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups. An important objective of the program is to attract and retain individuals who demonstrate excellent potential for scholastic and personal achievement and who manifest a commitment both to the archives and special collections profession and to advancing diversity concerns within it. For more information about the Mosaic Program, visit <http://www.arl.org/mosaic>.

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