

Improving Recruitment and Retention Efforts in Community College Libraries to Support Underrepresented Library Employees

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ETHNIC MINORITY CONCERNS

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY IN LIBRARIES

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Objectives

- To address retention and recruitment practices in community college libraries and how they have impacted underrepresented library professionals
- To share strategies on how to tackle our current practices, thus improving visibility and support



Roundtable On Ethnic Minority Concerns

Roundtable on Ethnic Minority Concerns (REMCo) is a round table for North Carolina Library Association that serves as a voice for ethnic and minority members. REMCo strives to improve service to and in some cases even initiate service for the ethnic communities that we all serve.

- To unite in this group North Carolina Library Association members interested in ethnic minority issues in North Carolina libraries;
- To provide an opportunity for discussion and activity of ethnic minority issues in North Carolina libraries;
- To monitor the practices and policies of recruitment and career advancement of minorities in North Carolina;
- To serve as a resource for those North Carolina libraries desiring to positively reflect ethnic cultures in their respective collection;
- To provide a network for ethnic minority librarians in North Carolina;
- To seek to fulfill the objectives of the North Carolina Library Association; and
- To serve as a liaison for local and national ethnic communities and organizations.

Discussion

Thinking about your library, what are some issues with retention of library professionals in community college libraries?

Issues with Recruitment & Retention

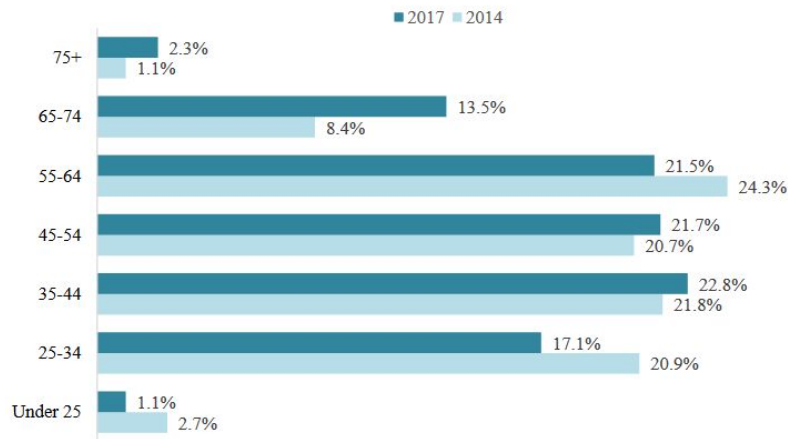
“According to the Association for Library and Information Science Education, 26.2 percent of students enrolled in the LIS programs of the United States are members of an underrepresented race or ethnic group, which includes international student representation; similarly, faculty from underrepresented race or ethnic groups represent 22 percent of all US LIS faculty.” - Lindsey Harper, *“Recruitment and Retention Strategies of LIS Students and Professionals from Underrepresented Groups in the United States”*

2017 ALA Demographic Study

ALA Members by Race or Family Origin
% of members self-identifying

	2014	2017
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.1	1.2
Asian	3.5	3.6
Black or African American	4.3	4.4
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.3	0.2
White	87.1	86.7
Other	3.7	4.0

ALA Members by Age
% of members self-identifying



"Member Demographics Study", American Library Association, September 26, 2007. <http://www.ala.org/tools/research/initiatives/membershipsurveys> (Accessed February 18, 2022)

Document ID: 1122beb9-8ed4-fa74-119e-550b5b72bbf7

Recruitment Issues in Community College Libraries

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- Considering academic librarianship, community college libraries are unnoticed compared to four-year universities/colleges.
- This reason may be connected to the stigma associated with the community college.
- Community college libraries (CCL) are presented with a unique set of challenges, including how CCL library professionals approach career development, tenure/contracts, and retention.
- Despite conversations and action to implement DEI initiatives in librarianship, library administration struggle to recruit librarians and library professionals.
- Current diversity programs/fellowships recruit just enough librarians to replace the number of marginalized librarians who retired or those who have exited the profession.

Career Development

Supporting Career Development

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Free In-House Services

- Understanding staff's career aspirations
- Real-time feedback and support
 - Identifying and developing soft skills
- Cross Training
- Job Shadowing
- State & national sponsored trainings
- Network building
- Encouragement of skills leveraging

Potential Expenditures

- Professional Memberships (NCCCLA, NCLA, ALA)
 - Rountables, small working groups
- Institution focused trainings
- Conferences Registration
 - Travel
 - Accommodations

Benefits of Career Development & Things to Remember

- Boost employee satisfaction
- Culture shifting/relationship building
- Informal mentorship
- Reduction in turnover
- Learning fatigue
 - Process of continual training
- Workplace disruptions
 - Changes in schedules (temporarily)

Library Administration

Current Hiring Practices

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Intentional with hiring needs

- Relevant competencies
- Gaps in performance skills within the organization
- Succession planning
- DEI needs within the organization

What to look for beyond the resume

- Potential
- Attitude
- Presence

Streamline process (from advertising to interviewing)

- Compelling job description
- Recruitment strategy
- Initial Screening
- Well thought out questions
- Virtual interview option

Job Advertising

Compelling Job Description

- Capture essence of the organization with words and images
- Mission, vision, core values, culture, success stories

Recruitment Strategy

- Cast a wide net
- Local, region, state, & national
- Add to relevant organization websites
 - ALA, state library job board, and library sections that cater to underrepresented library personnel
- Make a pitch within relevant community meetings
- Social media platforms & recruitment media platforms
 - LinkedIn, Indeed, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, & TikTok
 - Video job announcement

Onboarding & Mentorship

Defined Mentoring Program

- Becoming Acquainted
- For Your Information (FYI) Sessions
- Company policies & guidelines
- Relevant resources to perform the assigned job
- Directory
- Stakeholders

Mentor/Mentee Alignment

- Skill set
- Position relevance
- Balance of personalities
- Outcomes & Measures

Discussion

In what ways can you engage with your college to improve underrepresented library professional recruitment?

Engagement

How Can Underrepresented Librarians Improve Library Visibility on Community College Campuses?

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Individual Approach

- DEI initiatives or statements
- Office of Diversity and Inclusion (or officer)
 - Reach out to other schools
 - Check with HR for contingencies
- Events and programs
 - Career day
 - Schools of Library & Information Science
- Campus organizations and clubs

Organizational Approach

- Library and Department Mission
- Library Budget and funding
 - Grants
 - Adjustments to support DEI
- Community Engagement Committee
 - Library Staff / student workers
 - DEI Programs
- Professional Development
 - ECU Paraprofessional Conference DEI Themed
- Social Media Presence
 - Promote programs
 - Engage campus departments and clubs

Supporting Clubs and Organizations with Underrepresented Populations Focus

Library Liaison

- Introduce yourself to clubs and organizations
 - Meet with student leaders
 - Email communication to clubs and departments
- Get familiar with clubs and organizations
 - Websites, social media, newsletters, etc.
- Attend Club/Org Events and Programs
- Program Collaboration
 - Partner with clubs & groups

Faculty Relations & Instruction

Instruction

- Community college libraries are essential parts to the teaching and learning missions of community colleges. Libraries support student learning through instruction, scholarly research support, faculty collaboration, and outreach/partnerships with other institutions.
- Colleges and universities that believe in the student-centered approach consider the learner. The learner-centered librarian is what is needed in today's times to help cultivate the academic success of the student.



Positive Actions Steps for Student Centered Academic Librarians

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- Communication
 - Conduct reference interviews
 - Listen for understanding
 - Give constructive and positive feedback
- Engagement
 - Teachable moments-look for moments where you can help guide the learner's growth.
 - View the learner as an individual and develop individual sessions based around the learner's needs.
 - Be creative and find ways to engage the learner.
 - Example: Kahoot, Poll Everywhere, Menti

Faculty Relations and Instruction

- The academic librarian may also want to take the learner-centered approach when collaborating with faculty. It is important to get to know the individual needs of the faculty member and remember that he or she is also an important library patron.
- To service diverse needs of faculty and students, it is important to understand the needs of the faculty member as a learner.

Positive Action Steps for Faculty

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- Building a relationship with faculty
- Conducting faculty interviews
- Communicate what library resources and services are available
- Provide research support services
- Collaborate with faculty

Building Lasting Relationships

- The academic librarian taking a learner-centered approach to instruction should simply remember building lasting relationships with faculty and the learner is what creates a strong foundation.
- As academic librarians, we serve as educators and guides to information. Librarians must stay dedicated to bridging the information divide and serving our academic communities with the learner's best interest at heart.



Discussion

In addition to current initiatives, what ways can NCCCLA support your efforts in supporting underrepresented team members?

Questions

Resources

"Member Demographics Study", American Library Association, September 26, 2007.
<http://www.ala.org/tools/research/initiatives/membershipsurveys> (Accessed February 18, 2022) Document ID: 1122beb9-8ed4-fa74-119e-550b5b72bbf7

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