

# Representative Hiring

A way forward  
serving diverse  
communities

By **Loren Klein**,  
*M.L.I.S. candidate*

The future of libraries lies in hiring staff that reflect the communities we serve. Such a step would shift the conversation from cultural competency training to employment of staff members who match, proportionally, the demographics of the populations served. This article examines two case studies from public libraries that have undertaken representative hiring with the goal of providing actionable, data-driven models relevant to NJ librarians.

## What Is Representative Hiring?

Representative hiring is approaching hiring with the goal of making the library staff proportionally reflect the community it serves with respect to key demographic markers. Important categories of difference include race/ethnicity, language, gender (including transgender folks), immigrant experience, and sexual orientation. Representative hiring does not mean discriminating against certain candidates. Instead, it means, for example, that a library in a town with a large South Asian population might consider the ability to speak Gujarati as a stronger qualification than having experience working in a library. It may mean advertising a summer page job at the local high school's Gay Straight Alliance or Pride Club before posting it on the library's



[Image credit: <https://hafuboti.com/>]

website or bringing job applications as well as library card applications to the town's Hispanic Heritage event. Hiring decisions must be guided by a long-term strategy that recognizes how a staff that reflects the service population can anticipate patrons' needs, design more appealing programs, and provide valuable collection development insight. This hiring strategy often places less emphasis on academic qualifications, library experience, and "cultural fit" in favor of evaluating the skills and competencies of each candidate.

## The Long Game in Saint Paul, Minnesota

The Saint Paul Public Library made two attempts to hire a workforce that reflects the diversity of the city. From 2003 to 2009, the library and a local university operated

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The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* is one  
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issues and activities among the members  
of NJLA.

### **Editorial Statement of the New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter**

The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* shall  
provide news of NJLA and information  
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activities.

News shall be as current as possible within  
the constraints of the publication schedule  
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val record of significant and lasting library  
issues and topics.

The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* shall  
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cles on topics of interest to the New Jersey  
library community. Ephemeral issues and  
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## Letter from the Executive Director

### The Future in Libraries

Certainly, the future has been very much in the minds of the library community recently. NJSL hosted an extremely successful Futures Conference in Atlantic City in September. Then there was the overwhelming voter support for the passage of the NJ Library Construction Bond Act, which will provide funding to upgrade many public libraries as they prepare for the future.

If you ask a group of librarians their predictions for the future, I am sure each will have a different answer. That is the great part—we will get to design the future of libraries in New Jersey as a library community.

Certainly, this is not the first time the *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* looked at this topic. For example, 20 years ago the theme was “Building for the Future” and included articles such as “Is DVD the Next Format for Public Libraries?” Well, I think we now know the answer to that question. The new question is, will DVDs be in our libraries five years from now or completely replaced by streaming content?

The topic this issue is the future in libraries. I think the preposition *in* provides us with many things to think about as we prepare our libraries for the future.

The Pew Research Center reported in June 2017 that Millennials are the most likely generation of Americans to use public libraries. Pew speculated that “relatively high library use by Millennials might be related to changes that many public libraries have undergone in the past 20 years.”

As we plan on how our libraries will begin to use the construction bond monies, we recognize there are tremendous opportunities to use our newly renovated spaces as experimental centers not only for new technology but also for newly expanded services and partnerships. The services highlighted in the Pew report demonstrate that many libraries have already moved into the role of community centers. Libraries have the opportunity to show their communities what the future

will look like. For example, many libraries are already providing working co-op spaces to entrepreneurs for collaboration, including access to necessary office equipment and training on the latest technologies, such as 3-D printers and other tech gadgetry.

What other “futures” could we have in our libraries? Certainly a primary role in many libraries is to serve as an archive of community memories through local history collections. But what if our new future would be that our libraries archive these memories in a very different way by creating their own YouTube channels (like in Kansas City and San Francisco) or do podcasts of programs like the New York Public Library. Libraries would not only be providing programs (either at the library or online) but also archiving them at the same time for future patrons.

What if the library not only provided books but also began working with local authors to publish their own books either in print or digitally? Daily newspapers are also beginning to disappear in many areas. The library could become the information center for the community by posting articles on topics of interest to the community and by collating the community calendar of programs and events.

And what if virtual reality becomes a service in all libraries. It would provide a new way of seeing the world and ourselves. At the Futures Conference, it was shown that virtual reality is not just for gaming but has expanded to develop a wide range of educational uses. In the future, students exploring a new topic might first consult virtual reality for an overview of a topic, when in the past they would have used an encyclopedia (you do remember those, don't you?) or Wikipedia.

Our libraries can demonstrate the future for all communities if we seize every opportunity to be innovative and creative. The library in the future may look very different from the libraries we have today. We must be the leaders in providing the new services and programs for our communities. Yes, the future is IN the library.

**Patricia Tumulty**

## Message from the President

Just a few brief words to share with you this winter season...

Last November, New Jersey residents voted to approve \$125 million in bonds to support construction projects in New Jersey's public libraries. These projects will support new construction, renovations, improvements, and compliance with ADA standards. As a whole, this vote will result in a higher quality of life, improved access to library resources, and countless new opportunities for those residents who need them the most. But you already knew that.

I'd like to take a moment to express my gratitude to the many people who made this referendum possible, including NJLA staff (Executive Director Patricia Tumulty and Office Manager Melissa Lena); all members of the Construction Bond Task Force (led by Jeanne Marie Ryan and Christopher Carbone); NJLA volunteers who donated their time and effort to the cause; the many legislators who sponsored, co-sponsored, and supported this initiative; library friends and champions around the state who spread the word; and you in particular. Yes, you. Because if there's one thing we can take away from this election, it's that New Jersey loves its libraries.

Spending, debt, fiscal responsibility, and taxation are major concerns of New Jersey residents. I'm sure they are concerns of yours. So this commitment of funding to improve essential library services tells us that New Jersey residents are willing to make an investment to ensure that our services continue.

They made that choice because of the work you do every day, promoting literacy, learning, and personal enrichment to each person that walks through the doors of your library.

You already knew that too, of course, but it bears repeating. To every library worker and supporter reading this today: Thank you for everything you do. On to 2018!

**Michael Maziekien**



# Notes from the Futures Conference

## Corporate sponsors vs. creative disruptors

By **Aubrey Rahab Hiers**, Director,  
Otto Bruyns Public Library

I had the honor of attending the NJLA Futures Conference this September in Atlantic City. Closure of casinos in Atlantic City has had a substantial impact on the local economy and, in turn, local libraries. The future is up for grabs in neighborhoods like this one and the libraries serving those communities have an opportunity to play a role in shaping that future.

The conference reinforced—for me—my argument that the library profession needs to stop brainstorming ways in which to remain relevant. To remain implies stagnation. Concern for the future should not be about librarians keeping their jobs, it should be about doing those jobs better. The conversation worth having is how to make libraries more useful to a future society. First, the profession needs to answer the following question: What could the role of a library be in a community? It is worth noting that is not a rhetorical question.

Listening to Dr. James Hughes, dean of the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at

Rutgers, speak at the conference brought a great deal of insight to the shifting demographics within our communities. His statement that “immigration counts for 40% of U.S. growth from 2010-16” should have given every librarian a vision of potential for library service.

Unfortunately, there was not an economic forecast that approached the job sector and the impacts felt by limits to growth. There was no presentation on projected incarceration rates or how libraries can shift the culture within a neighborhood to potentially offset those numbers. I had hoped someone could speak about the impact of heroin on our families and how the library could be a crucial element in escaping that downward spiral.

The Futures Conference was beautifully set in the marina area of Atlantic City, but I could not help but think of how far removed from

**“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”**

*Arthur C. Clarke’s third law*

owners who live in Atlantic City and its surrounding suburbs. My imagination could not find an answer to that question, and I couldn’t help but wonder if this conference

was not sponsored in part by Oculus Rift, would we be talking about virtual reality so much. Instead of offering alternative realities, perhaps we can change the physical reality our communities are fighting so hard to transcend.

I listened intently as Institute for the Future’s David Pescowitz spoke. “A signal is something you read or someone you meet that reveals directions of major change,” he said. “Keep your eyes and minds open to signals, things that are unusual and interesting. Keep a journal of what it is and why you think it matters to your life, your world, your profession.”

Pescowitz spoke of humanity’s inability to cope with change. He suggested the potential role of a library not to offer an alternative reality, but to “be a haven for humanity to approach reality.” That struck me, and he continued by stating that “if the future is made of ideas, the library needs to be the place where those ideas meet and fall in love.”

The library profession must be careful not to buy a corporate version of an American community. Instead of focusing on virtual reality, why not focus on converting saltwater to freshwater, expanding seed libraries, or cultivating pod gardens? Instead of pushing students down entrepreneurial paths, we can provide them with the

skills to imagine social change and improve quality of living through cultural experiences.

Pescowitz reminded us that the word *technology* comes from the Greek word *tekhnē* meaning “art, craft.” Wonder and imagination shape the

potential outcomes of the future, but don’t be naive—so do big corporations. The future of libraries will be determined either

by big corporations, or by those librarians who choose to pay attention, engage, and influence outcomes.

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## Want a taste of the future but didn’t get to the conference?

- Tune in to Phil Bowermaster and Stephen Gordon on their show, BlogTalkRadio’s “The World Transformed.” <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/worldtransformed>

- Take a look at what innovators in Europe are being honored for their achievements in technology and creativity. Check out the Lovie Awards: <https://tinyurl.com/ychvxb4s>

- Don’t miss the ALA Center for the Future of Libraries (<http://www.ala.org/tools/future/engage>). Visit their website and sign up for “Read for Later,” free weekly wrap-ups of news and articles to help library professionals think about the future of our collections, spaces, services, partners, and roles in the community. I also recommend printing out the Trend Cards (<http://www.ala.org/tools/future/engage/TrendCards>) to use as conversation starters at library staff and board meetings.

**“In the future, everything will be a coffee shop.”**

*Blog post by Stephen Gordon in The Speculist, December 26, 2011*

Atlantic City I felt. Watching the Oculus Rift presentation, I pondered

in what way could virtual reality possibly help the unemployed, the addicts, the shift workers, and small business





# Using Data to Guide Future Decision-Making in Libraries

By **Theresa Agostinelli**,  
Reference and Instruction Librarian,  
Middlesex County College Library

In the future, libraries may not possess a physical collection or location. Perhaps we will communicate via chips implanted in our brains. No matter. Our top priorities will still be to know and understand our library communities. Data, interpreted by knowledgeable staff who have first-hand experience with the people they serve, will be at the forefront of our decision-making process. It will also help to justify our worth to the powers that be.

We should give careful thought to the data we collect and the areas that we focus on. We should gather data to learn more about our communities, plan future services, and help solve problems. Libraries need to think about the types of information that are meaningful to their varying stakeholders. Board members may have specific areas of interest, such as assisting job seekers, providing early literacy instruction sessions, and providing adult programming. Colleges place a focus on student achievement and retention, whereas K-12 schools deem student grades a primary goal. Outside sources, community members, and library workers—particularly front-line staff—should provide data.

Simple numbers will only scratch the surface, and we are doing ourselves a disservice if we do not look beyond figures such as door counts, collection size, program attendance rates, or number of questions answered per hour. These numbers can be telling, but we need to delve a little deeper to avoid recording misleading numbers. A library could have a huge collection, but it may be because they never discard any books. In another library, one hour could be consumed with directional questions but, in another hour, where only one question was asked, a librarian sat down with a patron, helped her to create a résumé to apply for a job, and helped her to change her life. Steve Chudnick, director of the Bankier Library at Brookdale Community College, believes that the information guiding our decisions should be “qualita-

tive and quantitative; neither one tells the whole story.”

## Community Data

Before determining what our community wants from us, we need to learn more about the people we serve. That information can include the places they are from, the languages they speak, and their socio-economic levels. These data will help us to build our collections, create programming, and set goals for our libraries, though it cannot replace interaction with real, live people in the community. We need to go where our communities gather, including community events, cultural celebrations, schools, parks, and more.

A strategic plan can help guide the data topics to be collected; conversely, data can help to shape the contents of a strategic plan. NJ School Performance Reports, located at <http://tinyurl.com/mf5sfvb>, provide valuable data on academic achievement, languages spoken in the home, ethnic/racial groups, and more. American Factfinder, at <http://tinyurl.com/jkwl6l4>, allows a user to locate census data on specific locations by state, county, city, and ZIP code. ALA has put together some fabulous community assessment tools in their “Turning Outwards Resources for Libraries” page, at <http://tinyurl.com/y76xgkbb>.

## Developing a World Language Collection

One of my responsibilities as a librarian at the Monroe Township Public Library was to develop a world language collection. My first step was to access data on all of the schools in the district through the NJ School Report Cards (now available through the NJ School Performance Reports). These reports told me the primary language spoken in the homes of students, information that I incorporated in choosing the languages to be added to the collection. I coupled these data with conversations with patrons who would be using the collection. The conversations gave me a better idea of the types of books I should add. After this collection was made available in the library, I made it a point to chat with patrons as they were perusing the shelves. From these conversations, I learned that many of the consumers of our Indic language

collection were older-generation family members and that users of our Russian and Polish books were au pairs who enjoyed reading romance and mystery novels. I also spoke with coworkers to hear their stories about what our patrons were asking for. I understood that patrons we had not spoken with may have other needs, but the information that I was able to gather was helpful. I also recognized that data gathering would be an ongoing process.

## No Log

We may think we know what people want, but it pays to really listen to what they are asking for. Some libraries keep a “No Log.” Every time a patron receives a “no” to a request for a service they want, it is recorded in a log. It is easy to start seeing patterns. Requests that seemed strange may deserve reconsideration if several patrons are asking for the same service. The data gathered in the No Log can guide libraries to implement new services or reconsider existing policies.

## Program Statistics

Some board members may place a high value on programming. Stats on the number of attendees are important, and we can design assessments that allow attendees to provide more in-depth data, such as a program rating by categories, a comment box, and suggestions for future programming.

## Library Value Calculator

“My tax dollars pay your salary” is a phrase that no library worker likes to hear. During my time as webmaster at the Monroe Township Public Library, I adapted the Library Value Calculator, created by the Massachusetts Library Association, to reflect the costs of our library materials and services. I inserted a copy of this form into our library website, at <http://tinyurl.com/aurm57m>. This customizable form allows each user to enter information about the number of books he checked out, programs he attended, number of materials he borrowed or downloaded, museums passes he borrowed, and more. The form generates a dollar amount that represents what a person would spend if he had to pay for these items out-of-pocket. Instructions for adapting the Library Value Calcula-

Background image: By Tammy (Flickr: library card)  
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# Opening the Future of Scholarship and Learning

## Profiling open access initiatives in New Jersey

For over 20 years the open access movement in scholarly communication has been gathering momentum, expanding into a larger number of institutions and launching new initiatives. While college and university faculty are the major producers and consumers of published research, it could be argued that academic libraries have never been the focus of open access advocates. Yet due to the position they occupy and the roles they play in serving all departments on a campus, libraries have become major players in efforts to build a global infrastructure for open access.

The different types of open access publishing, and associated policies and practices, can sometimes be confusing, but what they all have in common are converging efforts by academic researchers to take full advantage of the benefits the internet has brought to disseminate their work. Faculty seeking the geographic reach, the speed and convenience, the research impact, and the new social environments made possible by the global internet have been moving toward open access, and libraries have been helping them.

To understand the shift from traditional modes of academic publishing to open access, it is important to keep in mind that academic researchers receive no payment for the articles they write nor for the peer review services they provide to journals. Their work is supported primarily through their institutions and the agencies that provide research funding, while the tangible rewards they earn by building their reputations—tenure, promotion,



fellowships, invitations to prestigious conferences, and the like—give them an interest in the broadest possible distribution of their work.

What is the current landscape of open access provision in New Jersey, and what initiatives are academic libraries engaged in to support it? I spoke with librarians at eight institutions and found four key areas where they are working with faculty to realize the potential of open access today.

### Repositories and "Green" Open Access

Although digital repositories hold a much lower profile in perceptions of open access than open access journals, they are of critical importance in making academic research more available to the public. According to the Directory of Open Access Repositories, there are currently some 2,600 repositories worldwide hosting scholarly papers and other publications, indexing these materials, and making them available through the web. This sector of open access is commonly described as "green."

Repositories typically contain one or more "self-archived" versions of a scholarly paper, depending on author preference for how quickly they want their work disseminated and whether they have retained copyright over their

work. The most common versions are preprints (now defined by publishers as draft papers deposited prior to peer review), postprints (accepted manuscripts, papers deposited following peer review and revisions), and publisher versions (offprints, papers typeset and formatted as they appear in their final published form).

Among the best-known repositories are the large-scale and well-established disciplinary projects ArXiv (science) and PubMed Central (health sciences), but the majority are based at individual institutions where they are most often managed by library staff and focused on institutional needs and goals.

In New Jersey, at least seven institutions—Rutgers, Princeton, Seton Hall, Rowan, Montclair State, The College of New Jersey, and St. Peter's University—have launched repositories in recent years, and other universities are planning to announce their own in the near future.

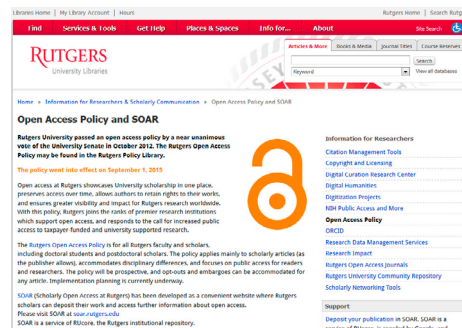
At Rutgers, Scholarly Open Access Repository Librarian Jane Otto and Open Access Specialist Laura Bowering Mullen manage the repository and work closely with faculty to encourage contributions. Their method of campus engagement has been to focus consistently on faculty interests, and Otto says they have emphasized such key themes as "the University's mission, the faculty interest in global reach for their work, the fact that contributing to the repository is free, simple, and easy—we'll even do the work for you—and the fact that we serve all disciplines."

A practical challenge in getting faculty to contribute to the repository is saving faculty time. Mullen and Otto readily acknowledge that faculty have little free time, so they created the repository's web-based self-submission form to have only three required fields; but in addition to this they work directly

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Seton Hall University's eRepository at <http://scholarship.shu.edu/>



Rutgers University's Open Access Policy at [https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/researchers/open\\_access](https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/researchers/open_access)



Passaic County Community College's Open Educational Resources page at <http://pccc.libguides.com/oe>



with publishers, often obtaining post-print versions of faculty articles for the repository and taking care of the other required work to optimize the publications for indexing and discovery.

At Princeton, Scholarly Communications Librarian Yuan Li faced the challenge of implementing a repository for faculty publications without any expectation of the faculty submitting materials themselves, owing to the faculty's expressed preference for an automated solution. Princeton settled on Symplectic's Elements software, which automatically harvests papers from a variety of sources, and they integrated this with the repository's open source DSpace platform. In the year since Princeton's repository officially launched, Li and the staff have carried out pilot projects to test workflow integration and to identify tasks in the deposit process that could be allocated to staff or student workers.

Li notes that faculty response has generally been quite positive. She explained that some faculty publications are especially important where the cost of journal subscriptions may be prohibitive.

At both Seton Hall and Rowan University, the initial focus of repository work was on graduate student theses and dissertations, but both institutions have begun adding faculty publications. At Rowan, librarian Denise Brush manages the repository and has been reaching out to faculty for contributions. She commented that Rowan's Office of Research is a partner in promoting the repository to faculty. Because several important research funding agencies now require grant recipients to make both their publications and their research data available on an open access basis, campus repositories are a welcome resource for grant offices seeking to comply with these requirements.

Both Rowan and Seton Hall use bepress' proprietary Digital Commons software as the platform for their repositories, and both have added the bepress module for creating profiles to showcase the work of individual faculty members, a feature that is effective in attracting faculty attention to the benefits of the repository. In addition, bepress and other repository software also provide useful data on downloads from specific geographical locations, providing faculty with a clear picture of

the usage, reach, and impact of their work.

### **Open Access Policies: Securing Faculty Rights**

The practical benefits repositories offer can be significantly enhanced when institutions couple these with a campus-wide faculty open access policy. Since 2008, when Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences pioneered the basic model of such a policy, over 50 additional institutions have adopted similar policies by a unanimous vote of the full faculty or a representative body, and many other institutions have adopted policies by a majority vote.

While the specific language and features of open access policies can vary, most contain the following key components: (1) they recognize faculty authors as holding copyright in their own work; (2) they mandate that faculty make available to their institutions their scholarly articles and grant them a license to exercise all rights under copyright so long as the articles are not sold for a profit; (3) they provide faculty with an option to have the license waived in the event a publisher requires this as a condition for acceptance of an article; and (4) they indicate the institution will make articles freely available through a repository.

The adoption of institutional open access policies embodying this framework, whereby faculty who hold copyright to their work exercise this right by granting their institution a license to make their articles available on an open access basis, is important because it addresses a longstanding publisher practice that has inhibited the wide dissemination of faculty scholarship. For years most academic publishers have required that faculty surrender their copyright by signing a formal agreement as a condition of having their articles published. As a result faculty often have difficulty making their own work available. For example, faculty who post the text or PDF of an article on their own web page after surrendering copyright are in violation of the rights now held by the publisher and can be required to remove the link.

Open access policies, however, uphold faculty copyright and effectively preempt surrender agreements, putting faculty and their institutions in a position to negotiate with publishers and move toward publishing terms resembling limited licenses.

In New Jersey, Princeton was the first institution to adopt an open access policy, with the faculty voting in 2011. In October 2012, Rutgers' University Senate voted to approve a similar policy following approximately a year of deliberation, and this went into effect three years later. The Princeton policy was notable in being adopted some five years before the university launched its repository, as repositories typically precede open access policies at many institutions, but a key feature of all policies is that they empower libraries to act on behalf of faculty. This can take the form of working directly with publishers to obtain versions of articles for the repository, implementing harvesting software to automate the article collection process, and providing other services on a broad basis because all faculty are covered by the policy.

Mullen and Otto are proud of the fact that Rutgers' policy "was the first in the world to include graduate students in its policy, including making open access principles and practice a part of their education."

### **Supporting "Gold" Open Access: Hosting Journals and Funding Publication**

While repositories and open access policies are the key initiatives structuring the new scholarly communication landscape, most people think of open access journals as the principal "face" of open access. These publications offer the familiar format long associated with scholarly publishing, and even when they have taken advantage of the internet's capacity to expand in size, as in the case of "mega-journals" like the Public Library of Science's PLOS ONE, they have retained the characteristic features of academic journals, including the structure of peer review. A good example is the interdisciplinary journal *New Jersey Studies*, hosted by Rutgers, which employs a double-blind peer review system to evaluate submitted manuscripts.

Because they do not charge subscription fees, open access journals use a variety of business models to operate, including a cost-sharing model whereby faculty authors pay an "article processing charge" following acceptance of a paper for publication. This "author pays" model is somewhat controversial, but its prevalence should not be exaggerated. For example, some 70 percent of the 10,662 journals currently listed in the Directory of Open

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the Urban Library Program, a paraprofessional certification program. The library hoped to develop a local pool of candidates with the skills to provide excellent service without demanding the commitment of a master's degree. The program graduated 72 students from 16 nationalities and placed 29 graduates in jobs within the library system. It was suspended as a partial failure due to a hiring freeze during the 2008 recession, the rigid hiring and promotion procedures already in place, and a feeling among existing professionals that graduates of the program were "dumbing down" librarianship (Wagner & Willms, 2010).

However, the story doesn't end here. In 2014, the Saint Paul Public Library tried again with a new approach. This time, the library administration doubled the staff of color to 40%, which matches the demographics of the city as a whole, and won a 2016 Urban Library Council Innovators Award. Several things had to change to make this possible. First, the administration had to alter hiring practices by convincing unions to loosen promote-from-within requirements and mandated that hiring panels include people of color. They also allowed part-time staff to "stack" multiple jobs to achieve full-time status. This process resulted in a 15% increase in full-time staff of color within three months because part-time positions were disproportionately held by people of color. While this cost more in benefits, it was offset by a reduction in turnover.

Library staff also began offering storytimes in multiple lan-

guages, and they established requirements that a certain percentage of the adult programming budget be spent on hiring authors and performers of color. The library was able to achieve its goal this time because representative hiring complements a city-wide racial equity initiative, and staff

members were able to create a Racial Equity Change Team made up of administrators, professionals, and paraprofessionals who focus on workplace climate and ongoing goal setting (Schwartz, 2016). [this reference is not cited in the reference list.]

### **iCount for Equity in Los Angeles, California**

The Los Angeles County Public Library realized it needed to change its workforce in order to provide equity to patrons. The concept of equity extends beyond the fairness and universal access of equality to include intentional efforts to remove barriers between patrons and the resources they need. Administrators realized it would be easier to identify and remove these barriers, as well as to design more appealing programs, if library staff reflected the race, ethnicity, religious traditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, and physical ability of the diverse city they serve.

To achieve representative staffing, the library began posting job openings in new places such as on social media and community job boards. They also evaluated the qualifications and experience criteria of each job category to focus on skills and competencies rather than on degrees and work history. One element that administrators also emphasized was the importance of diversity within library management and on hiring committees.

Sweeping changes to the organizational culture began at an annual all-staff training day with events emphasizing the importance of diversity. Ongoing changes included new onboarding training, regular diversity support workshops, and the development of toolkits to help frontline staff design more adaptable and inclusive programs (Lin, 2016).

### **Developing Your Own Plan**

Professional organizations like ALA offer concrete advice about how to undertake such a plan successfully. ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services suggests the following:

- Be targeted in listing job requirements and focus on skills and competencies rather than on specific academic requirements.
- Make sure hiring committee members understand the importance of hiring a diverse workforce.
- On applications, include the contact information of a staffer who can provide disability accommodation for applicants.
- Advertise positions in places where a more diverse set of applicants are likely to see them.
- Establish a consistent interview process to ensure that internal and external applicants have the same experience.
- Avoid discriminatory questions and be aware of illegal questions such as those relating to marital status, age, family situation, religious or political affiliation, financial situation, and health/disability.
- Demonstrate a long-term commitment to diversity by encouraging administrators to participate in diverse professional organizations, hiring non-traditional candidates for

internships and paraprofessional roles, and requiring management to learn about the diverse cultures and experiences within the local community.

### **Conclusion**

Representative hiring, which seeks to make library staffers proportionally reflective of

the communities they serve, is one way to meet the changing needs of our communities. Hiring, mentoring, and promoting paraprofessionals who reflect the existing demographics of the United States will result in a more diverse cohort of degreed professionals in the future. More importantly, it will result in libraries that are better equipped to understand the needs of patrons, more willing to change to meet these needs, and positioned to maintain the high levels of public support and trust that libraries currently enjoy.

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## Using Data to Guide Future Decision-Making in Libraries

(Continued from page 5)

tor for your library are available at the Maine State Library's website, at <http://tinyurl.com/zpo59kg>. The results of this form provide data that show each library user the value of his tax dollars.

### Reference Question Statistics

It is important to keep a record of the number of questions that people have asked, but these data are limited. Some libraries take it a step further and include columns for the types of questions that are asked, using categories such as directions, reference, computer assistance, etc. Libraries may choose to keep these statistics all year or only during certain times of the year. At Brookdale Community College, we use a program called Gimlet for more in-depth data tracking. Information collected about each question includes the date, time, question topic, and our responses. Each question is given a category and a rating from 1 to 5, with easiest questions receiving a "1" ranking. These data are used to guide staffing decisions and give management a good idea of the types of questions being asked.

### Student Evaluation Forms

Another form of data gathering at Brookdale is evaluation forms for reference interactions. These forms are distributed to patrons after lengthy reference interactions. Students rate the quality of the service provided, based on several categories, including overall quality, communication skills of the librarian, and more.

### Conclusion

We should continually examine our services, thinking about why we are doing things the way that we are doing them and considering the types of data that will help us to better understand our users. These data will help us adapt, to better serve community needs. Data collection can seem like a necessary evil because it may make us think that our time would be better spent on other tasks. However, if we collect data strategically, it can help us improve our services and ensure a place for libraries in the future.

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# People & Places Around the State

### Honors, Awards, and Recognition

**NJLA** was honored by the NJ Association of School Librarians for its advocacy work on the Unlock Student Potential campaign at their fall conference.

The **Somerset County Library System** was awarded a \$12,000 National Endowment for the Humanities grant to help collect, catalog and preserve county residents' memories of the past.

**Red Bank PL** received funding from the William Gross Foundation to install a permanent Story Walk at Riverside Gardens Park in Red Bank.

### Celebrations

A grand opening was held for the new **Holmdel Library and Learning Center** facility on the Bell Works campus on Dec. 18

**East Brunswick PL** recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

The **Morristown and Morris Township Library** celebrated the 10th anniversary of the library's historic Willis Wing on Oct. 27.

### Appointments and Elections

**Corey Fleming** is the new director of Paterson Free PL.

**Michael Maziekien** was appointed director of Cranford PL. He was previously director of Kenilworth PL.

**Regina Koury** was named director of Paul Robeson Library at Rutgers University - Camden.



*Regina Koury*

### Resignations/Retirements

**Bob Egan** recently retired as the head of technical services of the Evelyn S. Field Library at Raritan Valley Community College.

**Sharon Furgason** retired as director of the McCowan Memorial Library in Pitman in December.

**John Malar** retired as director of Cranford PL in December.

**W. Keith McCoy**, director of public services for the Somerset County Library System, announced that he will retire in the spring.

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## Opening the Future of Scholarship and Learning *(Continued from page 7)*

Access Journals have no article processing charge for authors. Articles published in open access journals are typically distributed through a Creative Commons license which retains author copyright while permitting a set of broad use rights for readers.

In recent years, many in academia have called attention to the problem of so-called predatory open access journals, that is, business enterprises that collect fees from faculty authors to publish their work with little or no review in “journals” they publish on the web. This is widely acknowledged as a problem but is also typical of the fraud that can be found in other areas of the web. With sufficient diligence and research it is not difficult to distinguish between legitimate journals and “predatory” ones, and libraries have been helping faculty by conducting this research.

New Jersey libraries have been supporting faculty publication in open access journals in two major ways. They have begun using their repositories as platforms for hosting journals, in some cases converting established subscription print journals to open access online journals. This process significantly reduces journal production costs, eliminating costs associated with printing, mailing, and subscription management. Seton Hall University currently hosts nine journals on its repository, and other New Jersey colleges are hosting existing journals or launching new open access titles.

Some libraries also support faculty publishing in open access journals by administering a fund to defray the cost of article processing charges. William Paterson University is currently in the third year of its program, and Rowan University began its own program in 2017. Rowan’s Scholarly Communication and Data Curation Librarian Shilpa Rele explained that their program, which is available for tenured and tenure-track faculty, can provide up to \$2,500 to offset an article processing charge for a paper accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals.

### Open Educational Resources

Another emerging area for open access library-faculty partnerships is in Open Educational Resources (OER), a term that encompasses a wide range of materials for use in teaching, learning, and assessment. Faculty have been developing a variety of freely accessible materials for use in courses, including textbooks, audio-visual learning tools, simulations, and much else, and these are now available in sufficient

quantity to support the transition of many courses to a fully open access basis. Notable repositories include the OER Commons and the Open Textbook Library.

Movement on OER development and course redesign has been driven in part by the high and ever-rising cost of textbooks. Greg Fallon, Associate Dean at the Passaic County Community College Library, observes that “the cost of textbooks has outstripped everything else” in terms of its rate of increase, with students being required to spend an average of \$1,200 each year. At Raritan Valley Community College, Instructional Services Librarian Megan Dempsey surveyed students to determine their textbook purchasing habits, finding a large proportion of students who either delayed textbook purchases or did not buy them at all because of the cost.

Seeking to address this problem, Passaic applied funds from a federal Title V grant to provide faculty with time to undertake course redesign on a large scale. Fallon reports that 44 courses have been developed thus far, including all 15 courses in an honors program and several high-enrollment general education courses, with more to come. Many sections ran during the fall 2017 semester, and surveys of both students and faculty indicate a very positive response. At Raritan Valley and Union County colleges, the libraries have begun outreach to faculty to assist them with course redesign.

The New Jersey Institute of Technology has also launched an “Open and Affordable Textbook” initiative this year, hoping to attract faculty to move their courses toward OER materials through a combination of course redesign grants and support from both subject-specialist librarians and instructional design staff. NJIT’s E-Resources and Serials Librarian Haymwantee Singh notes that “this initiative is very important for reducing costs for students,” with about a dozen faculty already taking advantage of the program, and she expects the first group of OER courses will be ready by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, Fallon and his staff have begun working with other community colleges in the area, including Bergen and Union, to assist them in mounting their own OER initiatives. Although the savings to students have not yet been tabulated, these are expected to be quite significant and permanent. Most of the open access initiatives now underway in New Jersey have gained traction in the last three years or less, and all are spreading to other institutions in the state. With open access poised for further growth, New Jersey may be approaching a threshold that will be profoundly transformative for scholarship, teaching, and learning.



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