

# Fact Sheet 2005



## LIBRARY WORKERS: FACTS & FIGURES

### The Numbers

- In 2004, there were 151,857 librarians, 115,080 library technicians, and 102,310 library assistants.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2012, there will be 184,000 librarians, 139,000 library technicians, and 146,000 library assistants, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics' projections.<sup>2</sup>
- Between 2002 and 2012, the number of librarians is expected to increase by 10.1%, while library technicians increase by 16.8% and library assistants by 21.5%. Total employment in the U.S is expected to increase by 14.8% over this period.<sup>3</sup>
- These projections for library workers are consistent with those for 2000–2010, when the number of librarians was expected to increase by 7%, while the number of technicians increased by 19.5% and the number of library assistants by 19.7%.<sup>4</sup>
- This trend points to “deprofessionalization”: Work once performed only by librarians is now performed by support staff. In a recent American Library Association Support Staff Interests Round Table (ALA SSIRT) Survey of 212 library support staff, 73% stated that they are now performing tasks previously performed by Masters of Library Science (MLS) librarians at their library, or have the same or similar duties as MLS librarians at other institutions. The decrease in the number of projected librarians underscores this trend.

### Employment

- Most librarians work in school and academic libraries but nearly one-third work in public libraries. The remainder work in special libraries or as information professionals for companies and other organizations.
- More than two out of 10 librarians work part-time. Public and college librarians often work weekends and evenings, as well as some holidays. School librarians usually have the same workday and vacation schedules as classroom teachers. Special librarians usually work normal business hours, but in fast-paced industries such as advertising or legal services, often work longer hours when needed. This applies also to library technicians.<sup>5</sup>
- More than half of all library assistants are employed by local government in public libraries; most of the remaining employees work in school libraries. Nearly half of all library assistants work part-time.<sup>6</sup>

## **Women's Work**

Library workers have been, and will continue to be, mostly female.

- Most students of library science are women. Women comprise 80.2% of ALA-accredited Master's of Library Science enrollment. Gender distribution is more equal for the Master's of Information Science degree, where men account for 51.8% of all students.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2004, women accounted for 83.2% of all librarians, 83.2% of all library assistants, and the vast majority of library technicians.<sup>8</sup>
- An Association of Research Libraries (ARL) survey found 64.3% of research librarians are female; 35.7% male. While female research librarians now outnumber male librarians among directors (53%), men still predominate as the head of computer systems departments (65.6%).<sup>9</sup>
- In academic libraries, 68% of all librarians are women. In public libraries, 79% are women, and in school libraries, 92% are women.<sup>10</sup>
- While men accounted for only 15.6% of librarians in 2003, they accounted for 47% of library directors in academic settings and 35% in public libraries.<sup>11</sup>

## **Diversity Among Library Workers**

- In 2004, 14.7% of all librarians were minorities: 5.6% were black or African American, 4.6% were Hispanic or Latino, and 4.5% were Asian.<sup>12</sup>
- Minorities accounted for 20.9% of all library assistants in 2004: 6.8% were black or African American, 5.0% were Asian, and 9.1% were Hispanic or Latino. While the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not have these percentages for library technicians, it is safe to assume that they are mostly white.<sup>13</sup>
- In public libraries, 6.3% of the staff is black or African American, 3.0% is Hispanic or Latino, 3.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.25% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 86.6% white, according to an American Library Association survey.
- In ARL libraries, 12.8% of the professional staff is composed of minorities. Asian/Pacific Islanders account for 5.8% of the professional staff, blacks or African Americans for 4.3%, Latinos or Hispanics for 2.5%, and American Indian/Alaskan natives for 0.3%. The number of minorities in managerial or administrative positions in the largest U.S. academic libraries is far lower: 8% are directors, 7% are associate or assistant directors, and 10% are branch librarians. The percentage of minorities varies significantly between geographical regions. Minorities make up 20.3% of professional employees in ARL libraries in the South Atlantic Region, while composing 3.1% of professionals in the East South Central ARL libraries.<sup>14</sup>

## **An Aging Workforce**

- Fifty-eight percent of librarians in the U.S. are projected to reach the retirement age of 65 between 2005 and 2019.<sup>15</sup>
- Forty percent of library directors plan to retire in less than nine years.<sup>16</sup>

## **“Women’s Work”, Women’s Pay**

- Pay inequity remains a persistent and pervasive problem in our society. In 2003, women earned 76% as much as men. For women of color, the gap was wider: African American women earned 66% and Latina women 55% of men’s earnings. While Asian women do better, they still made only 80% of men’s earnings.<sup>17</sup>
- In 2004, the median annual income of a woman with a bachelor’s degree who was aged 25 and older and who worked full-time was 24% (or \$13,104) less than that of a similarly qualified man, according to Census Bureau data. A woman with an advanced degree—master’s, professional, or doctoral degree—earned 28% (or \$20,176) less than a similarly qualified man.<sup>18</sup>
- Workers in predominantly female occupations earn less than others with similar qualifications, experience and responsibility who work in fields that are predominantly male. This is certainly the case for library workers:

In 2001, new MLS graduates from ALA-accredited programs earned an average annual salary of \$36,818; their median salary was \$35,000. The average starting salary for a systems analyst or database administrator with a master’s degree in computer science was \$61,000.<sup>19</sup> These are professions that are more than 82% male.<sup>20</sup>

- The median hourly wage for librarians in 2003 was \$21.50 (an annual wage of \$44,720 for those working full-time); the median hourly wage for similarly qualified computer systems analysts was \$31.28 (an annual wage of \$65,062), that of electrical engineers was \$34.05 (\$70,824 a year), that of computer and information systems research scientists was \$39.81 (\$82,804 a year), and actuaries earned \$36.19 (\$75,275 a year). These (mostly male) professionals have education and responsibilities comparable to those of librarians.<sup>21</sup>
- The median hourly wage of library technicians was \$11.95 (an annual wage of \$24,865 for those working full-time); the median hourly wage for civil engineering technicians was \$18.38, while that of respiratory technicians was \$17.29. Paralegals earned \$18.48 an hour.<sup>22</sup>
- In a 1999 ALA survey of library support staff, 56% of respondents had a bachelor’s or higher degree. The mean hourly wage was \$11.28.
- Library assistants had a median hourly salary of \$9.61 (amounting to \$19,988 annually for full-time work) in 2003, while loan interviewers and clerks earned \$13.70 (\$28,496).<sup>23</sup>

## **The Wage Gap**

- In addition to library workers being poorly paid because they are predominantly female, those library workers who are women may well be paid less than those who are men.
- In a 2003 survey of academic librarians, even when years of experience in a particular job category are accounted for, men still outpace women in salary by almost 6%: \$56,199 for women and \$59,417 for men. The average years of experience for women: 17.0; for men: 16.8. This pattern is repeated for minority librarians. The average salary of minority men is higher than that for minority women in seven of the 10 cohorts.<sup>24</sup>

- The average salary for male directors in ARL libraries was higher than that of their female counterparts. The overall salary for women research librarians was 94.4% that of men in 2003, compared to 94.1% in 2002.<sup>25</sup>
- In 2004, male librarians had median weekly earnings of \$854 while the median weekly earnings for women were \$823.<sup>26</sup>

### **Regional Variance in Salaries**

- The median hourly wage for librarians was \$20.72 in 2002. However, librarians in the West North Central Region earned an hourly median of \$17.65, while librarians in the Pacific Region earned an hourly median of \$24.84. This amounted to an annual difference of nearly \$15,000. Librarians in the Mid-Atlantic, New England, and South Atlantic Regions earned median hourly wages of between \$21.58 and \$22.23.<sup>27</sup>
- While the median hourly wage for library technicians was \$11.58 in 2002, library technicians in the East South Central Region earned a median hourly wage of \$9.05, and their counterparts in the Pacific Region earned \$15.41.<sup>28</sup>
- Library assistants in the Mid-Atlantic Region earned a median hourly wage of \$6.56, while those in the Pacific Region earned nearly double this wage.<sup>29</sup>
- The East South Central and West South Central Regions have salaries below the national median for library workers. These regions also have union membership rates below the national average. The Pacific Region, which has a union membership rate above the national average, also consistently had the highest median salaries for library workers.<sup>30</sup>

### **Benefits**

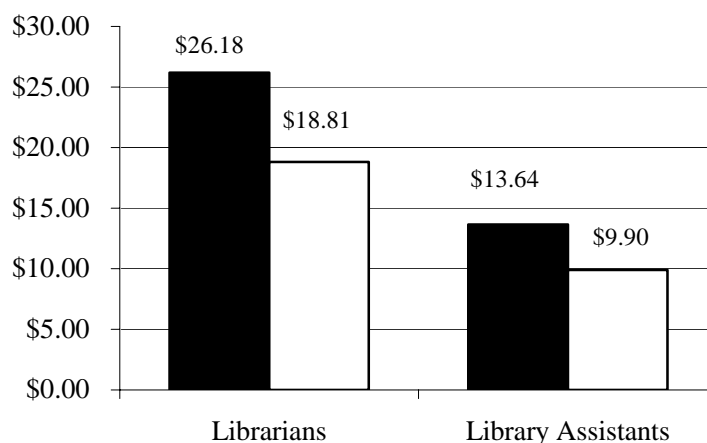
- Nearly 12% of public libraries do not offer a pension and 17.4% do not offer retirement savings. Among academic libraries, 23.3% do not offer a pension and 20% do not offer retirement savings.<sup>31</sup>
- Almost 40% of public libraries do not offer vision insurance and 16% do not offer dental insurance. Among academic libraries, 42.9% do not offer vision insurance and 17.9% do not offer dental insurance.<sup>32</sup>
- Almost 34% of public libraries do not offer disability insurance and almost 17% do not offer prescription coverage; in academic libraries, 19.7% do not offer disability insurance and 23.1% do not offer prescription coverage.<sup>33</sup>

### **Unionization**

- In 2004, 26% of librarians were union members; 30% were represented by unions. Seventeen percent of library technicians were union members—more than twice as many as in 2003— and 17% were represented by unions.<sup>34</sup>
- Union librarians earned an average of 39% more than non-union librarians in 2004.<sup>35</sup>
- Union library assistants earned an average of 38% more than non-union in 2004.<sup>36</sup>

- Through the NY Public Library Guild, Local 1930, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) library workers won an eight percent pay increase in April 2001, in addition to the two four percent raises negotiated for citywide employees, after a three year campaign and negotiating with city officials.<sup>37</sup>
- Orange County, Florida Library System organized and affiliated with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Management spent \$100,000 to defeat the union. Workers got the first pay raise in nine years as a result of bargaining, as well as an extra floating holiday and a grievance procedure that mandates binding arbitration.<sup>38</sup>
- According to ALA, 65.7% of libraries surveyed reported that no one in their library was covered by a collective bargaining agreement, and that all professional staff were covered in only 16.4% of libraries surveyed. All support staff were covered in 20.3% of the libraries surveyed.<sup>39</sup>

### THE UNION DIFFERENCE, 2004 Mean Hourly Earnings



Union librarians earned an average of 39% more than non-union in 2004; union library assistants earned an average of 38% more than non-union.

Source: Bureau of National Affairs, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book, 2004 Edition*, Washington, DC.

<sup>1</sup> Occupational Employment Survey, [http://bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_stru.htm](http://bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm); Office of Personnel Management  
<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Hecker, Daniel, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2012," U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, February 2004, Table 2.; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, Table 11, 2005.  
<sup>3</sup>Ibid.  
<sup>4</sup>Hecker, Daniel, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2010", U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2001, Table 2.  
<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2003, p. 4.  
<sup>6</sup>Ibid.  
<sup>7</sup>ALISE Statistical Report 2004.  
<sup>8</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Vol. 51, No. 1.  
<sup>9</sup>Annual Salary Survey (2003-04) Association of Research Libraries.

- <sup>10</sup>“Racial and Ethnic Diversity Among Librarians: A Status Report” by Mary Jo Lynch, [www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/racial/ethnic.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/racial/ethnic.htm).
- <sup>11</sup>ALA-APA, *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, [www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/toolkit.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/toolkit.pdf).
- <sup>12</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, op. cit.
- <sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup>ARL Annual Salary Survey, 2003-04, op. cit.
- <sup>15</sup>*Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, op. cit.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, “Highlight of Women’s Earnings in 2003”, *Report 978*, September 2004; National Committee on Pay Equity, “Wage Gap Widens”, [www.pay-equity.org/](http://www.pay-equity.org/).
- <sup>18</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*.
- <sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, January 2003, Table 36.
- <sup>21</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, November 2003, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ocwage.pdf>.
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>24</sup>ARL Salary Survey, op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unpublished tabulations from the *Current Population Survey*.
- <sup>27</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages.
- <sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, *Ibid.*; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Union Members in 2004,” USDL 05–112.
- <sup>31</sup>Lynch, Mary Jo, *ALA Employee Benefits*, 2003.
- <sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup>Bureau of National Affairs, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book, 2005 Edition*, Washington, DC.
- <sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup>*Toolkit*, op. cit.
- <sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup>Collective bargaining Agreements and Pay Systems, May Jo Lynch, 1997, [www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/collectivebargaining.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/collectivebargaining.htm).

For further information on professional workers, check out DPE’s Web site: [www.dpeaflcio.org](http://www.dpeaflcio.org).

*The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) comprises 25 AFL-CIO unions representing four million people working in professional, technical and administrative support occupations. DPE-affiliated unions represent: teachers, college professors and school administrators; library workers; nurses, doctors and other health care professionals; engineers, scientists and IT workers; journalists and writers, broadcast technicians and communications specialists; performing and visual artists; professional athletes; professional firefighters; psychologists, social workers and many others. DPE was chartered by the AFL-CIO in 1977 in recognition of the rapidly-growing professional and technical occupations.*

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