

Fact Sheet 2006



LIBRARY WORKERS: FACTS & FIGURES

The Numbers

- § In 2004, there were 159,000 librarians, 122,000 library technicians, and 109,000 library assistants.¹
- § In 2014, there will be 167,000 librarians, 138,000 library technicians, and 122,000 library assistants, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics' projections.²
- § Between 2004 and 2014, the number of librarians is expected to increase by 4.9%, while library technicians increase by 13.4% and library assistants by 12.5%. Total employment in the U.S. is expected to increase by 13% over this period.³
- § These projections for library workers are all lower than the previous projections for 2002–2012, when the number of librarians was expected to increase by 10.1%, while the number of technicians increased by 16.8% and the number of library assistants by 21.5%.⁴ But the overall trend of jobs for librarians growing more slowly than those for library technicians and assistants is the same.
- § 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.

Employment

- § Most librarians work in school and academic libraries. About one-fourth 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.⁵
- § 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.⁶

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 constitute 51.8% of all students.⁷
- § In 2005, women accounted for nearly 85% of all librarians, 85.4% of all library assistants, and the vast majority of library technicians.⁸
- § An Association of Research Libraries (ARL) survey found 62.7% of research librarians are female; 37.3% male. Among research library directors, women are the slight majority (53.5%).⁹
- § 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.¹⁰

Diversity Among Library Workers

- § In 2005, 12.9% of all librarians were minorities: 5.8% were black or African American, 4.6% were Hispanic or Latino, and 2.5% were Asian.¹¹
- § Minorities accounted for 31.5% of all library assistants in 2005, up from 20.9% in 2004: 11% were black or African American, 7.1% were Asian, and 13.4% 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.¹²
- 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 4.5%, Latinos or Hispanics for 2.2%, 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: 5.1% are directors, 6.9% are associate or assistant directors, and 10% are branch librarians.¹³
- The percentage of minorities varies significantly between geographical regions. Minorities make up 20.4% of professional employees in ARL libraries in the South Atlantic Region, while composing 3.3% of professionals in the East South Central ARL libraries.¹⁴

An Aging Workforce

- Fifty-eight percent of librarians in the U.S. are projected to reach the retirement age of 65 between 2005 and 2019.¹⁵
- § Forty percent of library directors plan to retire in the next eight years.¹⁶

“Women’s Work”, Women’s Pay

- § Pay inequity remains a persistent and pervasive problem in our society. In 2004, women earned 77% as much as men. For women of color, the gap was wider: African American women earned 68% and Latina women 57% of men’s earnings. While Asian women do better, they still earned only 88% of men’s earnings.¹⁷
- § 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.¹⁸
- § 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 2005, new MLS graduates from ALA-accredited programs who worked in academic libraries earned an average annual salary of \$38,294; for new graduates working in public libraries, the mean annual salary was \$35,547.¹⁹ In contrast, the average starting salary for a database administrator with a master’s degree in computer science was \$58,032. This profession is more than 70% male.²⁰
- § The median weekly earnings of librarians in 2005 was \$829 (an annual wage of \$43,108 for those working full-time); the median weekly earnings of similarly qualified computer scientists and systems analysts was \$1,091 (an annual wage of \$56,732), that of electrical and electronics engineers was \$1,350 (\$70,200 a year), and that of computer software engineers was \$1,401 (\$72,852 a year). These (mostly male) professionals have education and responsibilities comparable to those of librarians.²¹
- § The median hourly wage of library technicians was \$12.22 in 2004 (an annual wage of \$25,420 for those working full-time);²² comparatively, the 2005 median hourly wage for engineering technicians was \$20.12, while that of medical records and health information technicians was \$13.58. Paralegals earned \$18.50 an hour.²³
- § Library assistants had median weekly earnings of \$517 (amounting to \$26,884 annually for full-time work) in 2005, while loan interviewers and clerks earned \$623 (\$32,396).²⁴

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 2004 survey of academic librarians, even when years of experience in a particular job category are accounted for, men still outpace women in salary by over 5%: \$58,770 for women, and \$59,959 for men. On average, women have more years of experience than men, but still men’s salaries are higher in all ten experience cohorts. This pattern is repeated for minority librarians. The average salary of minority men is higher than that for minority women in 9 of the 10 experience cohorts.²⁵

- § 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 94.78% that of men in 2004–05, compared to 94.4% in 2003–04.²⁶
- § In 2005, female librarians had median weekly earnings of \$826, compared to \$829 for both sexes combined. The weekly earnings data for men is not separately reported, due to the small number of workers in this category.²⁷

Regional Variance in Salaries

- § Nationally, the mean hourly wage for librarians was \$23.42 in 2004. However, librarians in the West South Central Region earned an hourly mean of \$22.76, while librarians in the Mid-Atlantic Region earned an hourly mean of \$35.09. This amounts to an annual difference of over \$25,600.²⁸
- § 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.²⁹
- § Among public and academic librarians, the lowest mean salaries were found in the Southeast region. This region includes states with the lowest unionization rates in the country, as well as several “right to work” states, such as Florida, Georgia, and Alabama.³⁰

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.³¹
- 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.³²
- 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.³³

Unionization

- § In 2005, 26.7% of librarians were union members; 31.1% were represented by unions.
- § Among library technicians, 11% were union members in 2005, and almost 15% were represented by unions. These unionization rates are down considerably from 2004, when 17% of technicians were union members or were represented by unions.³⁴
- § Union librarians earned an average of over 44% more than non-union librarians in 2005.³⁵
- § Union library assistants earned an average of 41% more than non-union.³⁶

- § 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 addition to the two four percent raises negotiated for citywide employees, after a three year campaign and negotiating with city officials.³⁷
- § 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.³⁸

THE UNION DIFFERENCE, 2005
Mean Hourly Earnings



Union librarians earned an average of 44% more than non-union in 2005; union library assistants earned an average of 41% more than non-union.

Source: Bureau of National Affairs, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book, 2006 Edition*, Washington, DC.

¹Hecker, Daniel, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2014", U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2005.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Hecker, Daniel, "Occupational Employment Projections to 2012", U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, February 2004.

⁵U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2006–2007 edition.

⁶Ibid.

⁷ALISE Statistical Report 2004.

⁸U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Annual Averages, Table 11, "Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity", 2006,

<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>

⁹Annual Salary Survey (2004–05) Association of Research Libraries, <http://www.arl.org/stats/pubpdf/ss04.pdf>

¹⁰ALA-APA, *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, www.ala.org/ala/hrdr/libraryempresources/toolkit.pdf

- ¹¹U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, op. cit.
- ¹²Ibid.
- ¹³ARL Annual Salary Survey, 2004–05, op. cit.
- ¹⁴Ibid.
- ¹⁵*Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, op. cit.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Highlight of Women’s Earnings in 2004”, Report 987, September 2005, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom2004.pdf>; National Committee on Pay Equity, www.pay-equity.org
- ¹⁸U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*.
- ¹⁹ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries, 2005.
- ²⁰U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Table 39, 2005.
- ²¹Ibid.
- ²²U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages*, November 2004.
- ²³U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Table 39, 2005.
- ²⁴Ibid.
- ²⁵ARL Salary Survey, op. cit.
- ²⁶Ibid.
- ²⁷U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Table 39, 2005.
- ²⁸U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages*.
- ²⁹U.S. Department of Labor, *Ibid.*; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Union Members in 2004”, USDL 05–112.
- ³⁰ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries, 2005; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Union Members Summary: Union Members in 2005”, January 2006, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>
- ³¹Lynch, Mary Jo. “ALA Employee Benefits”, 2003, <http://www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/employeebenefits.htm>
- ³²Ibid.
- ³³Ibid.
- ³⁴Bureau of National Affairs, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book, 2006 Edition*, Washington, DC.
- ³⁵Ibid.
- ³⁶Ibid.
- ³⁷*Toolkit*, op. cit.
- ³⁸Ibid.

For further information on professional workers, check out DPE’s Web site: www.dpeaflcio.org

The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) comprises 22 AFL-CIO unions representing over 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.

Source: DPE Research Department
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May 2006