Recruiting and Retaining an Ethnically Diverse Workforce

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Background: Diversity in LIS

- **Minority Population**
  - In the US: **32.5%** (Census Bureau, 2001) → Projected to reach **47%** by 2050
  - In US colleges and universities: **26%** of students (Wilds et al, 1998)
  - In LIS schools: **11.2%** of students (ALISE, 2000)
  - Among academic and public librarians: **12-12.5%**

- **Why Diversity Matters?**
  - **Interpersonal similarity** *(e.g., ethnicity)*:
    - Increases ease of communication
    - Fosters relationships of trust and reciprocity, and a sense of belonging and membership (Barak et al., 1998; Hernandez, 1994).
  - **Diversity**
    - Enriches a society by offering more opportunities to experience, learn, and understand one another.
    - Increases the productivity of organizations (Winston, 2005)
Study: Methods

• **Participants**
  – Librarians of color who graduated with a master’s degree from an ALA-accredited LIS program or those who are currently enrolled in such a program (n=182)

• **Web Survey**
  – Supported by *ALA Diversity Research Grant*
  – Data collection (Completed in March 2005)
  – **Questions**
    • Demographics
    • Recruitment/retention efforts by LIS schools and professional associations – Satisfaction & perception
    • Effective recruitment/retention strategies – Suggestions
Participants: Demographics I

- **Gender:** Female (84%); Male (14%)

- **Age:**
  - 20’s (13%); 30’s (30%); 40’s (18%);
  - 50’s (32%); 60’s (4%); 70’s (1%)

- **Graduation Year (MLIS):**
  - 1960s (3%);
  - 1970s (14%); 1990s (26%);
  - 1980s (9%); 2000s (33%)
Participants: Academic Background

- Arts
- Business
- Education
- Engineering
- Humanities
- Laws
- LIS
- Medical Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Other

Levels:
- Undergraduate
- Master's
- PhD
Participants: Demographics II

- **Ethnic Background:**
  - African Am. (40%)
  - Am. Indian (10%)
  - Asian Am./Pacific Islanders (22%)
  - Hispanic (27%)

- **Current Job by Library Type:**
  - Academic library (45%)
  - Public library (28%)
  - Government library (5%)
  - Special library (4%)
  - School library media center (2%)
  - Archives (1%)
  - Others (15%)
Participants: Geographic Distribution

- LIS Programs

- Current Jobs
## Efforts by LIS Schools & Associations: Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment efforts</th>
<th>Retention efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied (34%)</td>
<td>Satisfied (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (30%)</td>
<td>Neutral (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied (35%)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Difference between Degrees of Satisfaction with Recruitment and Retention --> Not statistically significant*
## Efforts by LIS Schools & Associations: Satisfaction by Ethnic Groups

### Satisfaction with Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>Asian American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>-.287*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * p < .05

Dissatisfied (-1); Neutral (0); Satisfied (1)
Satisfaction by Ethnicity

- African American
- American Indian
- Asian American and Pacific Islanders
- Hispanic
Recruitment: Effective Strategies

1. Assistantship/scholarship/financial aid (82%)
2. Ethnic diversity of faculty in the LIS school/program (64%)
3. Role models from ethnic groups (62%)
4. Presence of faculty and staff of color in the recruitment process (57%)
5. Opportunities for students of color to work in LIS-related fields (53%)
6. Special programs (Opportunities to work with LIS faculty, librarians) (48%)
7. Communication/Advertising in media, publications for people of color (46%)
8. Presence of alumni of color in the recruitment process (46%)
9. Availability of career services/job placement in the LIS school/program (43%)
10. Active solicitation and personal contacts from the LIS school/program (43%)
Recruitment Strategies by Ethnicity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>African American</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Hispanic American</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communication /Advertising in media, publications for people of color</td>
<td>Ethnic diversity of FACULTY in the LIS school/program</td>
<td>Role models of your or other ethnic group</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Presence of faculty and staff of color in the recruitment process</td>
<td>Presence of alumni of color in the recruitment process</td>
<td>Ethnic diversity of FACULTY in the LIS school/program</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ethnic diversity of FACULTY in the LIS school/program</td>
<td>Distance learning options in the LIS school/program</td>
<td>Presence of faculty and staff of color in the recruitment process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Presentation of the LIS program/career opportunities in high schools</td>
<td>Presence of faculty and staff of color in the recruitment process</td>
<td>Presence of alumni of color in the recruitment process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Recruitment materials developed especially for students of color</td>
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<td>Availability of career services/job placement in the LIS school/program</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Opportunities for students of color to work in the LIS field</td>
<td>Special programs (Opportunities to work with LIS faculty, graduate students, or librarians)</td>
<td>Ethnic diversity of STUDENT population in the LIS school/program</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Presentation of the LIS program/career opportunities in undergraduate classes</td>
<td>Active solicitation and personal contacts from the LIS school/program</td>
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<td>Presence of alumni of color in the recruitment process</td>
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Retention: Effective Strategies

1. Assistantship/scholarship/financial aid (77%)
2. Opportunities for students of color to work in LIS–related fields (59%)
3. Faculty and staff (sensitive to the needs/concerns of students of color) (56%)
4. Mentoring program in the LIS school/program (54%)
5. Effective academic/career advising (sensitive to the needs of students of color) (52%)
6. Flexible class times (e.g., evening, weekend classes) (49%)
7. Curriculum incorporating diversity/multiculturalism (48%)
8. Partnerships between the LIS school/program and ethnic associations (47%)
9. Support groups/systems in the LIS school/program for students of color (45%)
10. Career services/job placement in the LIS school/program (45%)
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<td>2</td>
<td>Opportunity to work part-time in LIS related jobs while studying</td>
<td>Faculty and staff (sensitive to the needs/concerns of students of color)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mentoring program in the LIS school/program</td>
<td>Partnerships between the LIS school/program and ETHNIC associations affiliated with ALA</td>
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Strategies for Both Recruitment & Retention

1. Assistantship/scholarship/financial aid

2. Faculty and staff
   --> Diverse/Proactive/Understanding/Supportive

3. Opportunities for students of color to work in the LIS field

4. Career services/job placement in the LIS school/program
Decisions to Pursue MLIS - I

When did they decide?

- After completing undergraduate/graduate degree and working in a non-LIS field (29%) … Asi. Am. (40%)

- After completing undergraduate/graduate degree and working in the LIS field (26%) … Am. Ind. (50%)

- In Undergraduate program (18%) … Afr. Am. (23.3%)

- In Graduate program (7%) … Asi. Am. (15%)

- In High school (4%) … His. (8.3%); Asi. Am. (7.5%)
Decisions to Pursue MLIS - II

Who/What influenced?

- Previous library experience (28%)
- Academic librarians (17%)
- Public librarians (11%)
- Friends (9%)
- Parents (7%)
- School librarians (7%)
- Teacher or faculty members (6%)
- Special librarians (6%)
- Spouse or partner (5%)
- Relatives (4%)
- Siblings (2%)

- Librarians (41%)
- Previous library experience (28%)
- Friends, family, relatives (27%)
- Teachers/faculty (6%)

... Am. Ind. (26.7%)
Recruitment/Retention

- **Target groups**
  Library work students/paraprofessionals
  Undergraduates; Graduate; High school

- **Partnership**
  Libraries; Universities; High schools;
  Ethnic organizations; Community organizations

- **Strategies**
  Scholarship/Financial aid;
  Faculty/staff (diverse/proactive/understanding/supportive);
  Work opportunity; Career services
Beyond Recruitment & Retention: Preparation for Diversity

- **LIS Schools**
  - Curriculum (diversity/multiculturalism)
  - Internship/field work in diverse communities
  - Diversity awareness
  - Faculty (diverse/proactive/understanding)
  - Students (diverse)
  - Early intervention programs

- **LIS Associations**
  - Diversity training/Workshop
  - Promote/reinforce diversity
  - Outreach (schools/communities)
  - Mentoring
  - Internship
  - Nation-wide campaign