

# Library Diversity and Residency Studies

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# INTRODUCTION TO LIBRARY DIVERSITY AND RESIDENCY STUDIES

*Journal Overview and Findings Regarding Diversity Residency Programs in Libraries Today*

*Martin Halbert*

Libraries in the United States have struggled with issues of diversity over the past three decades, much as have other institutions. As institutions which seek to foster dialogue on broad social issues, libraries celebrate the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). However, we must also acknowledge that as institutions which developed under the long history in the United States of racism and white privilege, libraries are inevitably also subject to many of the patterns of implicit bias which are deeply intertwined in our shared institutional fabric. As library leaders began to understand this fact decades ago, they began to seek out strategies to actively counter these unfortunate trends in our institutions. These responses took two broad forms: 1) external DEI oriented programs for library clientele, and 2) internal DEI oriented programs for library employees. A prominent focus of the latter programmatic form has for decades been so-called library diversity residencies, which are “post-MLIS programs aimed at providing recently graduated professionals with real work experience, with the expressed goal of recruiting and retaining a more-diverse workforce in professional librarianship.” (Alston 2017)

This journal, Library Diversity and Residency Studies (or LDRS for short), is a new publication dedicated to the exploration of these two broad topical areas, library external and internal DEI programs. The journal was founded as part of the Library Diversity Institutes Pilot Project, a project funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. In this article I will provide a brief overview of the motivations and aims of the project, the structure of the titular Institutes, our

findings from the project, and finally a summary of our project recommendations on futures steps concerning library diversity residencies.

## **MOTIVATIONS AND AIMS OF THE LIBRARY DIVERSITY INSTITUTES PILOT PROJECT**

Library diversity residency programs have been in existence for more than two decades. (Cogell & Gruwell 2001) Why did we initiate this project and associated journal now? To answer that question requires both context about our institution and recurring problems encountered by library diversity residents.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) Libraries have a longstanding commitment to diversity initiatives. Library administrators at UNCG became convinced years ago that programs which advance the diversity of American libraries are critically important for the future of librarianship, and that diversity residency programs were a best practice in supporting this aim. The main campus library has hosted a library diversity residency program since 2008, and as of this writing has employed six different diversity residents. The library’s diversity residency program has seen great success, both in terms of the achievements of the residents in their time here as well as their post-residency career accomplishments.

In 2017 we were seeking a way to build on the success of this program in a manner that would not only benefit our university, but also the wider field of librarianship. We were aware of several recurring problems reported by our residents and many other diversity residents throughout the country. These problems were reported during meetings of participants from institutions taking part in the ACRL Diversity Alliance.

The ACRL Diversity Alliance is comprised of libraries which value diversity residency programs and have come together to share information and work toward the goal of strengthening the hiring pipeline of qualified and talented individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. By working together, ACRL Diversity Alliance institutions hope to diversify and thereby jointly enrich the profession. Each institutional member of the ACRL Diversity Alliance commits to create one or more residency positions to expand the opportunities available to individuals from professionally underrepresented groups to gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to thrive in an academic context. In 2017, there were 36 institutional members of the ACRL Diversity Alliance.

During meetings of diversity coordinators and other representatives of institutional members of the Alliance, two broad interrelated problems reported by residents have regularly been noted. First, residents feel isolated and lack a professional network. They are typically singletons, as there is usually only one resident at a time at most institutions. They are often misunderstood to be graduate students serving in an internship capacity, rather than new professionals serving as full librarians. Because they are usually new graduates, they often lack the kind of professional network of colleagues that more established librarians possess. Second, residents rarely if ever receive any preparation for how to get the most out of their residencies, which are by design short term appointments. As new professionals in temporary assignments they may lack the confidence to assert themselves in seeking out experience in areas that most interest them. Because of misunderstandings about the nature of their residency positions in the host institution they may experience completely inappropriate assignments or other frustrations with their rotations, but are not mentally prepared to ask for clarifications concerning the work they are assigned or simply request a reassignment if they feel a rotation is unproductive. Unfortunate results which occur when these two problems manifest in residencies is that the experience is

unproductive or even mentally distressing and harmful for the career development of the resident.

These problems and negative results do not always manifest; however, they have been reported frequently enough over the years in forums such as the ACRL Residency Interest Group (RIG) that we thought these issues could usefully be addressed in a project. We designed the Library Diversity Institutes Pilot Project in collaboration with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Diversity Alliance with these basic aims in mind.

### **DESIGN AND STRUCTURE OF THE LIBRARY DIVERSITY INSTITUTES**

The core approach that our project took was to conduct brief but intensive institutes for new residents to address the two problems they were most typically reporting, paired with the creation of a journal to address ongoing dissemination of information on this topic. This approach was intended to both address immediate needs of residents as well as fostering improved understanding and practices in the field of librarianship towards residencies and more broadly toward diversity issues in general.

#### *Addressing Isolation Through Cohorts*

The problem of isolation would be addressed by developing the attending residents through a cohort formation model, thereby providing them with an immediate professional network of colleagues with similar experiences. Witteveen (Witteveen 2015, 42) defines such a cohort as “a group of learners who share common learning experiences in order to build a stable, ongoing professional community.” The benefits of cohort models for library professional development in particular are broadly acknowledged, and are often perceived as valuable for library professionals entering new phases of their careers as evinced by the many library leadership institutes which are inherently based on cohort learning models. Examples include the Leading Change Institute (formerly the Frye Leadership Institute) hosted by the Council on Library and Information, the

Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians hosted by ACRL, and the TALL Texans Leadership Institute hosted by the Texas Library Association (<http://www.txla.org/talltexans>).

The benefits of cohort learning programs are widely recognized by many universities. (GSU 2015) (CCU 2011) The pros and cons of various kinds of cohort learning and development programs have been occasionally studied. A multi-year study of females pursuing doctoral degrees in educational leadership (Pemberton and Akkary 2010, 179) reported in summary that cohort approaches “may be more consistent with women’s lived experience, and therefore more relevant, empowering, and sustaining.” Witteveen identifies various benefits, and states “Recent MLIS graduates are particularly likely to benefit from cohort programs as they look for ways to start their careers.”

Because we strongly believed in the power of cohort formation for addressing residents’ problems with isolation and ongoing support, we devoted a significant amount of time during the institutes to activities meant to bring the attending residents together as a cohort quickly. The institutes featured a series of structured and unstructured encounters between small groups of residents. Structured activities included various kinds of icebreakers, get-to-know-you sessions, team-building exercises, and research topic brainstorming, all of which will be shared in this journal separately as examples for others interested in hosting such activities. Unstructured activities included holding meals together, a group tour of the International Civil Rights Museum, and simply providing time for individuals to meet and talk. The structured activities were designed with a “max-mix” approach in mind, such that we tried to maximize the opportunities for residents to meet everyone else in the cohort in at least one session. The cohort formation sessions were organized in a progression, starting with simple starting activities, and eventually moving to more complex tasks such as group research topic exploration. The cohort formation sessions were

designed and conducted by Dr. Martin Halbert and Gerald Holmes, the project co-principal investigators.

As another mechanism for cohort development, we created a listserv to communicate with residents before and during the institute. At the conclusion of the second institute the residents collectively voted to merge this listserv with the listserv established for the prior attendees, a practice that we will likely recommend continuing.

#### *Residency Preparation Curriculum and Cohort Formation Activities*

To create a curriculum that would better prepare the attendees for their residencies, we convened a group of three experts knowledgeable concerning both specific concerns of residencies as well as diversity issues more broadly. These experts, together with the project co-principal investigators, formed the instructors for each institute. In the case of the first institute we also added the keynote speaker, Dr. Jon Cawthorne, who actively took part in instructional sessions. In the case of the second institute, we added the UNCG resident Deborah Caldwell, as well as two other residents who had attended the previous year’s institute. The curriculum that these instructors assembled will be shared in this journal separately, and only summarized here.

Dr. Jason Alston gave a presentation during each institute on his doctoral research, which was extremely apropos in that it focused on the success factors of library diversity residency programs. Dr. Alston could also speak from personal experience in that he had been the first resident at UNCG ten years previously, before going on to earn his Ph.D. in Library and Information Science. This presentation formed the foundation of the curriculum because it laid out a basic framework for understanding how and why residencies do and do not succeed.

Dr. LaTasha Velez gave a presentation at each institute on practical aspects of getting the most from a residency. Dr. Velez could similarly speak from personal experience in that she had

been the second resident at UNCG, and had likewise gone on to earn a LIS Ph.D. Her presentation centered around a handbook for new residents, reproduced elsewhere in this journal. Her handbook included both specific and more general tasks designed to maximize the experience of the residency.

Dr. Irene Owens, Dean Emeritus of the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, conducted an extended session at each institute concerning topics of both self-assessment and conflict management, issues which are centrally germane to residencies and the beginning steps of any new professional's career.

The institutes also each featured an opening keynote and closing presentation by respected leaders in the field who could speak to issues of diversity with regard to either librarians or academic professionals. The purpose of these presentations was to punctuate the opening and closing of the institute with perspectives that would enable attendees to pause and reflect on larger issues that nevertheless related to them. As mentioned, the first institute featured Dr. Jon Cawthorne as the opening speaker. Dr. Cawthorne could speak to a number of perspectives because of his experience as a library dean, a dean of a LIS program, and at the beginning of his career as a resident. Dr. Cawthorne was subsequently elected ACRL President and has continued to participate in the planning activities for the project. Our closing speaker during the first institute was Wanda Brown, the incoming President of the American Library Association. Brown provided a broad perspective on librarianship today and the challenges encountered by librarians of diverse backgrounds. Our opening speaker during the second institute was Dr. Franklin Gilliam, UNCG Chancellor and a respected sociologist of diversity issues. His speech covered both abstract principles and extremely practical considerations for the attendees to consider in their careers. Our closing speaker in the second institute was Loretta Parham, CEO and Library Director of the

Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center. In addition to career advice, Parham spoke to the nature of collaboration and institutional commitment. The addition of opening and closing speakers at the institutes served to bracket and further structure the learning experiences of the events.

Each Library Diversity Institute was structured carefully to provide an arc of learning experiences for attendees over a long weekend, summarized as follows:

1. Welcome and Opening Keynote (Friday mid-day): Institute leaders laid out the structure of the institute, and then introduced a keynote speaker to set the tone by providing a provocative and engaging set of themes to consider.
2. Initial Cohort Formation Activities (Friday afternoon): Institute instructors guided residents in a series of structured activities to introduce them to one another and begin cultivating the group as a cohort.
3. Key Preparatory Curriculum Sessions (Saturday, and optionally, Sunday): These sessions are taught by qualified instructors who are knowledgeable about topics which are essential to the success of residents. These topics include success factors in residencies, practical strategies to get the most out of a residency experience, and approaches to managing conflict when it may arise in the workplace. Note that this curricular material is included in other articles in this issue of LDRS.

#### **WORKSHOPS AND WEBINAR SERIES**

While the Institutes were extremely effective mechanisms for disseminating information to attendees, we needed additional mechanisms to reach institutional diversity coordinators and others who would not be attending. We therefore conducted a series of both workshops and webinars.

The project team held one workshop and participated in another during the course of the

project. During the ACRL Biannual Conference in April 2019, the project team participated in a pre-conference entitled “Taking Charge of Your Narrative” for both residents and coordinators. Participation in this preconference was proposed in the original grant narrative as a way of both continuing the conversation with residents who had attended the first Institute in 2018 and also as a means of broadening the collaboration with other professionals in the field and ACRL as an organization. The preconference succeeded in both aims. We reconnected with the residents from the previous year and were able to engage in follow-on activities with them focused on further advancing their career progression planning. We were able to recruit additional residents to attend the 2019 Institute, as well as engaging many additional professionals in planning for subsequent project activities, as described below. Important connections were established with both ACRL and ALA leadership. The preconference served as an effective bridge event for the project Institutes, and built up the field relationships of the project.

A second workshop was held as a post-conference following the 2019 Institute in Greensboro. This post-conference was extremely well attended by both residents and diversity coordinators, and featured presentations by diversity professionals from around the country. Because it immediately followed the Institute, many or most residents were able to attend and further cultivate their professional expertise on diversity issues. By continuing the conversations across both the Institute and post-conference, attendees experienced a rich blend of discussions and information sharing opportunities. One of our secondary project recommendations is that similar post-conferences which are open to diversity coordinators should be scheduled whenever possible to follow institutes for residents. This provides a dual synergy: residents receive intensive and exclusive attention first, followed quickly thereafter by professional interaction with diversity coordinators. This progression energized many residents to participate more fully in the post-conference

where they might not have otherwise as new professionals not yet accustomed to speaking.

Webinars were another dissemination mechanism we deployed. The obvious advantage of webinars is that they provide opportunities for participation by geographically dispersed individuals in a shared conversation. These periodic sessions included presentations by both diversity coordinators and former residents on topics related to maximizing the results of residencies. We recorded these sessions and archived them on the project website for subsequent viewing.

### **LDRS JOURNAL**

While the workshops and webinars provided occasional opportunities to share information on both library residencies and diversity efforts more broadly, we felt strongly that there was a need for an ongoing forum for professionals to publish research and successful strategies for undertaking such programs. We therefore decided to establish an ongoing open access publication entitled *Library Diversity and Residency Studies* in order to promote improved understanding of diversity issues, best practices in library diversity residencies, and research in emerging topics in these areas to the widest possible audience. This journal aims to disseminate peer-reviewed research and practical guidance for institutions seeking guidance on a wide variety of topics related to diversity and residency programs in library settings.

The first volume of the journal which you are now reading includes reports on results, information produced, conclusions of this project, accounts of the experiences of the first cohort of institute residents, and articles on the broad array of diversity issues in libraries. Near the end of the project period an associated open webinar will present these findings and experiences to a broad audience, including those who might otherwise be unable to attend in-person events.

## **FINDINGS REGARDING THE CURRENT STATE OF LIBRARY DIVERSITY RESIDENCIES**

In the course of this project we have studied the current state of library diversity residencies in the United States, and have a number of findings to share. Each of these findings in turn generated an associated recommendation, which will be discussed in the following section.

*Finding #1: Library diversity residents benefit from cohort institutes.*

A core finding of the project is to confirm the benefits of bringing residents together to attend institutes in which they are provided with exercises and experiences to form them into a cohort. The second goal of the institutes also benefitted residents. These findings were confirmed both through post-institute surveys of attending residents as well as overwhelming anecdotal reports from residents after the two institutes held during the course of the project.

The residents commented on the utility of both the preparatory training and the immediate availability of a new professional network of peers after attending the institutes. During the institutes they quickly became focused on and aware of larger perspectives beyond their own personal residency experiences. This occurred because they were exposed to both research that distilled key points about residency experiences nationally as well as practical reports from their peers concerning other residency experiences. Residents reported that they came away feeling much more prepared, and with a sense of both opportunities to embrace and problems to avoid in their individual residencies.

Residents frequently reported that the institute provided them with many ideas from other attendees to take back to their home institution for both their own residency experience and other diversity programs in their home libraries. In some cases these ideas arose from group discussions during the institute, and in other cases were simply the result of hearing about activities underway elsewhere.

Group discussions between residents during the institutes generated a large number of ideas for research projects they were interested in pursuing in their subsequent professional work. Residents found it beneficial to have access to the institute instructors in order to receive immediate feedback during these brainstorming sessions. A number of residents in the respective cohorts have subsequently followed up with joint inter-institutional projects that they have undertaken since attending. Examples include conference panels, webinars, and advocacy efforts both at the institutional and national levels.

Because residents overwhelmingly reported benefits from attending the institutes, one of our recommendations in the next section is to continue the annual program; however, this raises obvious issues of sustainability which will be discussed.

*Finding #2: There is inadequate information available on library diversity residencies.*

One fact that made it difficult to recruit residents for the institutes was the lack of shared information about library diversity residencies nationally. There is no database or service which lists which institutions are hosting a resident at any given time. Our initial assumption that all institutional members of the ACRL Diversity Alliance were actively hosting residents proved to be false. Many factors affect whether or not particular institutions are able to host a resident in any particular year, including funding, timing of recruiting efforts, changing levels of interest by institutional leadership, and changing levels of support for the program in terms of availability of a diversity coordinator or other individuals who can supervise a resident and champion the idea of a residency. Other assumptions of ours which proved false were that residencies follow conventions in terms of when they start in the year, length of the residencies, and structure of the residencies. We assumed that if institutions hosted residencies that they would be members of the ACRL Diversity Alliance; this also proved to be an inaccurate assumption, as we encountered many residencies at libraries which were not part

of the Alliance and some which were completely unaware of it.

Because there is very little shared information of any kind maintained publicly regarding library diversity residencies, our primary method of gaining information was to contact individual institutions directly. Beyond membership in the ACRL Diversity Alliance, we used a variety of sources to identify institutions which had either hosted residents in the past or were considering hosting them in the future, especially position postings. We created a database of institutions to contact, and then typically began making phone calls. It was often very unclear what individual was the appropriate person to call within a particular library or library system, virtually all of which had idiosyncratic organizational structures and groups which hosted the residency in question.

Because there is so little information available concerning residencies nationally, one of recommendations lays out ways this could be addressed in the future.

*Finding #3: Library diversity residency program expectations, characteristics, experiences, overall numbers, and quality differ widely.*

One of our biggest surprises in this project was the degree of variation we encountered in residencies we encountered. While some prior studies had led us to believe that there was significant consistency in residency programs, we observed significant differences across programs. This variation across programs had already been well documented in the research of Dr. Alston (one of our institute instructors), who has examined how the variances in residencies contribute to either successful outcomes or problems in the experiences with such programs by both residents and institutions. A summary of his research is provided elsewhere in this journal issue. The following are some examples of these variances that we found particularly troubling.

Basic institutional expectations of residents differed widely. The structure of the

residencies varied widely, ranging from some programs that imposed a great deal of structured sequences and specific resident duties, to some programs that left the residents virtually unsupervised with very few constraints. We frequently observed poor articulation by the institution of the basic purposes and rationale for hosting the residency in the first place. The fact that residents gained perspective on these variations during the institutes was one of the benefits they most frequently cited, as it allowed them to make more informed suggestions and requests of their libraries for either more or less structure and/or clarification of their residencies when they returned home.

We were surprised at the degree of variation in numbers of residencies across time. Our inquiries suggested that there is likely significant variation in the number of residencies taking place at any given time, both during the two years of undertaking this program and in previous years that we attempted to reconstruct historical data. This makes capacity planning for institutes difficult, as the number of attendees in a given year may vary unpredictably.

There is also a surprising amount of variation and inconsistency in the basic terminology used to refer to residencies. Many residencies do not explicitly reference diversity, some do so only implicitly, and many seem wholly unconcerned with diversity issues despite being couched in terms of diversity. Despite being post-MLS paid positions, we found many positions that were not termed residencies, but instead were called fellowships, internships, or simply positions named for a donor that gave money to create the temporary position. Yet, there are a large number of similarities that characterized the experiences of all the individuals who ultimately found themselves in these positions.

The most troubling variations we observed came in the form of how well prepared institutions were (or were not) to actually host a diversity resident. Some institutions seemed to have done almost nothing to prepare for the



residency beyond hiring the individual, a situation that understandably led to confusion and disappointment on behalf of both the resident and the institution. This lack of preparation often seemed to be the underlying cause of much of the other variance we observed across residencies.

Because this lack of preparation is one of the single greatest problems we observed in residencies, we have a key recommendation concerning preparatory checklists in the next section of this article.

*Finding #4: The history of library diversity residency programs and outcomes raises many questions.*

One of the primary purposes of diversity residency programs in libraries articulated more than two decades ago was to increase the number and status of marginalized populations in the library profession. Residencies were seen as a first step toward improvements in this area. Yet, many anecdotal critiques of residencies today (including some vocal critiques from residents we spoke to) focus on the lack of progress in this fundamental purpose of residencies. The most frequent formulation of this critique that we heard ran along the lines of, “Why is the library profession still focusing on hiring people of color and other marginalized communities into temporary and contingent professional positions? Why are institutions not taking more measures to avoid bias and simply hiring more people from marginalized groups?”

Our project came to the conclusion that these critiques should be taken seriously, and led to our final recommendation about a broader discussion about hiring patterns in libraries.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING LIBRARY DIVERSITY RESIDENCIES**

Our project findings led us to develop a series of recommendations to be considered by the library field as a whole, and the ACRL Diversity Alliance in particular. They are as follows.

*Recommendation #1: Continue holding annual cohort institutes for library diversity residents.*

Conducting an annual institute for new library diversity residents significantly improves the circumstances of residencies. Residents come away better equipped to get the most out of their positions, and are also better equipped to contribute to their home institutions. We believe our project has conclusively demonstrated these points and has laid out a general model for the structure of such institutes; the main issues revolve around how to fund an annual institute that would accomplish these goals.

Our proposal is to combine two categories of funding with a rotating host institution commitment. First, we believe that the core expenses of the institute could be funded with some of the revenue generated by the annual dues of the ACRL Diversity Alliance, the core expenses being associated with instructor travel funds, food, and other event expenses for the residents. The second category of funding needed is travel funds for the residents; we feel that their home libraries should commit to sending them to the institute as part of the commitment to hosting a residency in the first place. Finally, the responsibility for hosting the institute should rotate among libraries that are members of the ACRL Diversity Alliance. The main duties associated with hosting an institute include venue arrangements, and the various coordinating logistics associated with bringing residents together with high quality instructors in a constructive and positive event experience.

This model does presume that individual libraries will sequentially agree to step up to the responsibility of hosting an institute. We believe that there are enough libraries in the Alliance which have a sufficiently strong commitment to advancing diversity in new librarians that this will be a realistic and attainable goal.

This model would be sustainable in that it distributes the expenses associated with the institute across participating libraries, and allows for a cyclical preparatory planning process to schedule institutes well into the future. Indeed, as part of the final year of the project, we have laid the groundwork for this process, negotiating

agreements with two other research libraries (Texas A&M and Harvard) to host the institute in the coming two years of 2021 and 2022. We hope to be able to catalyze a successful planning process that will enable the Library Diversity Institute to continue annually for the foreseeable future. We would like to invite libraries to consider the possibility of hosting a future institute; discussions on this topic will hopefully take place within the ACRL Diversity Alliance in coming years.

*Recommendation #2: An ongoing information gathering and dissemination program should be established for library diversity residencies.*

The fact that there is no ongoing public record-keeping regarding residencies has hampered the ability of the field to assess either basic numbers or results of residencies over time. We strongly recommend that an ongoing program to track residencies be established.

We are less sure of the best mechanism for sustaining such a record-keeping operation, because unlike the distributed/rotating model for the institute, a centrally maintained database will require a central institutional home. The most logical home for the endeavor would again be ACRL, but we are unsure if the Diversity Alliance dues could fund both the institute (the highest priority in our view) and a record-keeping operation that would proactively gather and maintain statistics and other information on residencies nationally. Other possible models are for another organization to take on the responsibility (the ALA central office and ARL come to mind), or for a large research library to take on this role. We intend to continue this discussion with other interested libraries and organizations in coming months to try to catalyze possibilities for such an endeavor.

A first step is to assemble and ideally publish retrospective records and analysis of previous residencies. Because our project team collated many references to past residencies in the course of this project, we have a starter database for such information, and we are considering publishing it as an article in this

journal in a future issue. We also invite others who have studied residencies to consider publishing such information and their thoughts in this journal.

*Recommendation #3: An LDR (Library Diversity Residency) Checklist should be developed, modeled on the TDR (Trusted Digital Repository) Checklist.*

The Trusted Digital Repository (TDR) Checklist (previous referred to as the TRAC, or Trusted Repositories Audit and Certification checklist) is a well-known and accepted standard for gauging the trustworthiness and preparedness of repositories of information. (CCSDS 2011) This checklist was later formalized as ISO standard 16363:2012. (ISO 2012) This checklist provides both a framework for organizations to formally audit repositories, as well as a framework for repositories to conduct self-audits. An “audit” in this context means documentation of practices undertaken by the repository which make it trustworthy for reliably maintaining digital information. In the case of self-audits, the checklist provides a systematic way for institutions to objectively assess and document their level of preparedness as a repository.

Our recommendation is that a checklist of this kind be developed for institutions either considering hosting a library diversity residency, or considering hosting a residency. Such a checklist would allow institutions to either hire an external agency to assess their level of preparedness to host a residency program, or (if implemented rigorously) conduct a self-assessment of their preparedness.

In the case of TDR audits, what such checklists enable a repository to do is to use broadly accepted external standards in understanding how and to what level they have thought through and made themselves ready to serve as repositories. In the case of an LDR (Library Diversity Residency) audit, it would similarly enable an institution to carefully assess their level of readiness for hosting a resident. Because such an audit can be done internally, especially as a preparatory step, it would allow

institutions to better prepare for the work of hosting a resident, a commitment which entails significant obligations and ramifications for both the institution and prospective residents.

The development of such an LDR checklist, while not as onerous as the development of the TDR checklist (which took many years), would nevertheless require a significant amount of work and buy-in from many librarians across the country to be credible. There are a number of standing ALA committees which might take this work up, including not only the ACRL Diversity Alliance but also the LLAMA Diversity Officers' Discussion Group. The formation of an ad hoc interorganizational task force extending beyond ALA is also a possibility. We hope to engage others in catalyzing such discussions in coming months, and may seek to engage various groups in drafting early recommendations for such a checklist in the form of articles in this journal in future issues.

*Recommendation #4: Library diversity residency programs and library diversity programs in general should be periodically re-evaluated by both institutions and professional associations to identify improvements that would benefit marginalized groups.*

Another discussion that we believe should have attention from a variety of groups is the current configuration of library diversity residency programs, variations found in these configurations, and strategies for improving both residencies and other ways of fostering a more diverse workforce in librarianship.

Such discussions could potentially leverage or be combined with efforts to implement the previous three recommendations in this article. However, we would advise caution in not trying to pile on too many tasks for a single committee or even as large an organization as ALA. A broadly inclusive approach might be to also engage the many ethnic caucuses affiliated with ALA. (ALA 2006)

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

As we have reached the transition point in our work of completing the IMLS-funded Library Diversity Institutes Pilot Project and embarking upon publication of the LDRS journal, it seems remarkable that so much has been accomplished through residencies and other diversity-related efforts in libraries while so little has been done to assess the outcomes of such efforts. Residencies have been foundational to jump-starting the careers of a generation of diverse librarians; however, there is still an enormous range of research and next steps that lays on the path before us to realize the greatest benefits for librarians from marginalized groups. We look forward to a future in which significant progress down this path has been achieved.

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