(Re)Organization
Recruiting, Training and Retaining a Diverse Library Staff

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“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”

Maya Angelou
Diversity

- Age
- Marital status
- Nationality
- Disability
- Physical appearance
- Cultural background
- Economic background
Diversity, cont’d

- Geographical background
- Political affiliation
- Race
- Religious beliefs
- Gender
- Ethnicity
88% are white
5% are African American
3% are Asian/Pacific Islander
3% are Latino
1% are Other

17% are male
83% are female

35% are between the ages of 55-64
Louisiana

Trustees
- Male 34% and female 66%
- White 76% and 20% black and 1% American Indian
- 93% were over the age of 50

Directors
- Male 40% and female 60%
- White 92% and 8% other
- 4% African-American
- The average age of Louisiana’s directors is 56
Why it matters

- 21st Century Library
- Represents the community composition
- New opportunities
- New approaches to problems
- Different points of view
- Strength in differences
Race/Ethnicity

The US is becoming increasingly diverse, with the under-18 population expected to shift to majority-minority by 2019 and the total population expected to shift to majority-minority by 2043.

Latinos and Asian Americans will remain the fastest growing racial/ethnic groups.

Age

By 2030, those 65 & older are projected to be 19.7% of total population.
Gender

The total population is projected to shift slightly more toward an even male-to-female distribution. This shift will be most noticeable in the 65 and older demographic, which is projected to reach 45.1% Male and 54.9% Female by 2050.

Ability

Due to increased total population, there will be a much larger number of people with disabilities. Percentages projected to remain similar to current.
Community Perceptions of Libraries

- Elimination of barriers to access
  - Physical
  - Procedural
  - Technological
  - Perceptual

- Recognition of differences and similarities
  - Avoiding the out-group homogeneity effect

- Human-to-human interactions often more important than stated goals
A Multifaceted Approach

Best practices, potential issues and sources for:
- Recruitment
- Training
- Retention
Recruitment
Best Practices for Recruitment

- Include diversity goals in your strategic planning
- Embrace diversity throughout the organization
- Engage stakeholders/word of mouth
- Compose attractive job descriptions
- Advertise in multiple places
- Actively recruit from diverse groups
- Provide orientation about library school for students in summer jobs
Best practices cont’d.

- Mentor
- Recruit actively not passively
- Maintain a list of minority publications and places to post openings.
- Begin awareness programs (speaking at high schools, etc.)
- Contact minority organizations to promote job opportunities
- Promote from within the organization
- Provide flexibility for staff to pursue MLIS
Training
Best Practices for Training

- Cultural “competency” training across all levels
- Train the Trainer programs
- Equity in conference/workshop attendance
- Recognition of internal and external customers
- Patron-centered approaches
- Recognition of importance of professional and support staff members
- Recognition of importance of full- and part-time staff members
Retention
Best Practices for Retention

- Mentoring program
- Stimulating/creative work environments
- Provide immediate feedback to employees
- Work constantly to create a culture of appreciation of diversity
Potential Issues: Organizational

- Funding/competitive salaries
- Bureaucracy
- Lack of promotional opportunities
- Limited number of applicants
- Lack of transparency
- Competition
- Lack of organizational commitment
Potential Issues: Personal

- Tendency to be more comfortable with people like ourselves
- Fear (of youth, new ideas, change, the unknown)
- Favoritism
- Toxic employees
- Keeping staff involved
- Inertia
Conclusion & Final Thoughts
What Questions Do You Have?