

Task Force to Plan Recruitment of the 21st Century Workforce of Health Information Professionals

REVISED DRAFT PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2002

ORIGINAL CHARGE– OCTOBER 2001

Motion to Create the Task Force to Plan Recruitment of the 21st Century Workforce of Health Information Professionals

The Task Force to Plan Recruitment of the 21st Century Workforce of Health Information Professionals is charged to develop a comprehensive plan to bring new individuals into the profession of health sciences librarianship. Objectives include, but are not limited to, creating interest in health sciences librarianship as a career among high school and college students, including educating their advisors about the attractiveness of health sciences librarianship as a career; attracting promising candidates, especially minority candidates, into library schools having coursework in health sciences librarianship; attracting “second career” individuals who have left another health profession; fostering interest in health sciences librarianship among those working in related professions; and developing mentoring services that facilitate job placement and career advancement. The task force should present an outline of a plan to the Board by its preconference meeting in May 2002 with a final plan by May 2003.

Statement of Need

Evidence suggests that while a large percentage of the current medical librarian workforce will be eligible to retire in this decade, there is not a pipeline of new recruits sufficient to fill positions that will become vacant (Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries has collected this data for academic health sciences library directors, as one source. MLA reports that the percentage of its members under age 40 has dropped from 51% in 1983 to 18.2% in 1998.) At the same time, new librarian jobs are being created. One source reports that reference librarian jobs overall have increased 50% in the past five years. The rapid expansion of information access via the World Wide Web has led to increased demand for librarians to search for, retrieve, filter, synthesize, compile, catalog and evaluate information for people who have neither the time nor expertise to fully manage their information needs for themselves.

Other information professionals are also in increasing demand in the health care field: those who design and manage clinical information systems, create consumer health portals, and develop very large databases of gene sequences are a few examples. Such individuals often collaborate with health sciences librarians, and thus they could develop a professional affinity with health sciences librarianship.

Evidence also suggests that new library school graduates are turning with more frequency to “high tech” jobs in industry that pay higher salaries and may be considered more glamorous than library jobs. MLA’s commissioned Hay Study pointed out that medical librarians are paid less to perform information technology tasks than IT professionals performing the same tasks. Library directors are beginning to use this data to achieve salary increases for their library staff, but more work is needed to promote the technology-intensive aspects of medical librarianship, and to improve salaries that can attract the best people to fill library jobs.

In short, medical libraries are facing a shortage of people both interested in and qualified to form the 21st century health information professional workforce.

Past MLA Action

MLA has established a priority to recruit new MLA members, coordinated by its Membership Committee and the Headquarters Membership Coordinator. MLA has joined with NLM to fund a minority scholarship for a

current library school student through ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program. Recruiting MLA members is related to, but not the same as recruiting a new workforce. The MLA Continuing Education Committee and Membership Committee have created health careers materials aimed at high school and college students to interest them in a career in medical librarianship.

Justification

MLA's vision is to ensure that information professionals provide high quality information to improve health. Achieving this vision begins with recruiting the best and brightest future information professionals into medical librarianship; and goes on to support their career growth and development, and promote their value to society.

Implementation

The task force will be chaired by Elizabeth Irish, Membership Committee chair-elect. Additional members include: Russet Hambrick (2001-2002 Membership Committee chair); Dixie Jones (Section Council Membership Committee rep); Janie Kaplan (Chapter Council Membership Committee rep); Ellen Detlefsen (library school); Brian Bunnnett; Taneya Koonce; Jean Shipman (Board Liaison) and Carla Funk (Staff Liaison).

(Note: In May 2002 Jean Shipman became a regular committee member and Michelynn McKnight became the new Board Liaison. Due to a change in employment, Janie Kaplan became a regular committee member in April 2002.)

ACTIVITIES TO DATE:

The Task Force has had three meetings since its formation:

- December 19, 2001 – Conference Call
- January 27, 2002 – Meeting in Chicago
- May 20, 2002 – Meeting in Dallas

The Task Force also actively uses the discussion list set up by MLA Headquarters.

Activities of the Task Force include:

- Brainstorming general recruitment ideas based on members' experiences and recruitment literature
- Creating objectives
- Identifying potential target audiences
- Developing recruitment strategies to reach these audiences
- Discussing and identifying realistic measurable outcomes
- Exploring potential partnerships
- Determining methods to solicit MLA membership feedback
- Developing a timeline
- Identifying baseline employment statistics and workforce analysis for health sciences libraries

Draft plan was submitted to MLA's Board of Directors for review at their May 2002 meeting.

NOTE: While not mentioned as a partner in the plan, MLA Headquarters staff involvement is key to the success of each objective.

MEMBERSHIP FEEDBACK:

Membership feedback is integral in developing a viable recruitment plan and has been our primary focus since the Annual Meeting in Dallas. Methods for soliciting input include:

- Open Forum on Recruitment at the Annual Meeting in Dallas – *Tape available for purchase*

- Chapter Roundtable on Recruitment in Dallas – *Notes will be available on MLANET*
- Committee and Section presentations in Dallas:
 - Continuing Education Committee
 - Credentialing Committee
 - Membership Committee
 - Medical Library Education Section
 - Leadership and Management Section
 - African American Medical Librarians Special Interest Group
- Revised Draft Plan to be made available on MLANET by Fall 2002
- Chapter Fall 2002 Meetings
 - Credentialing Liaisons and Task Force Members are scheduled to lead sessions, encourage discussion, and promote membership review of the draft plan
 - Bookmarks distributed promoting draft plan to members with directions for providing the Task Force with feedback
- Designing and implementing a way to seek Section member input
- Creating a “chat” room on MLANET focusing on recruitment issues

NEXT STEPS:

The Task Force will continue to:

- Identify and prioritize long term and short term goals with target dates and partners
- Further define objectives and target partners to meet these objectives based on member feedback
- Identify baseline employment statistics and workforce analysis for health sciences libraries
- If necessary, develop and implement a statistical tool to capture current health sciences librarianship workforce data to use as a baseline measurement
- Refine the measurable outcomes in order to properly judge the success of this recruitment initiative
- Develop a resource section for each objective comprised of a bibliography and a list of current activities and examples
- Prepare the final Task Force Report by May 2003

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GOALS:

1. To recruit promising candidates into health sciences librarianship
2. To retain those already in the field
3. To offer mentoring & educational opportunities that develop professional leadership skills within the industry

OBJECTIVES:

1. Create interest in health sciences librarianship among high school students:

Rationale: As students begin to explore options available to them, they are at a teachable moment. Not all students consider librarianship as a career and those who do may not realize that health sciences librarianship is a specialization.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Develop promotional materials in a variety of formats to be distributed to high school students that incorporate their interests and are targeted to their generation
- 1.2 Create a link with high school guidance counselors and their organizations to promote health sciences librarianship as a viable career option
- 1.3 Compile a list of resources on health sciences librarianship on MLANET to assist possible guest speakers to high school groups
- 1.4 Create a Recruitment Bureau comprised of health sciences librarians willing to speak on the profession
- 1.5 Develop a central program that incorporates and builds upon current individual and group initiatives (e.g. AHEC's Health Careers Access program and high school occupational programs)
- 1.6 Partner with high school librarians to promote health sciences librarianship, particularly to promising library workstudy students
- 1.7 Develop and promote a Medical Librarian's Career Day to coincide with MLA's Medical Librarian's Month
 - 1.7.1 Create a national "shadowing" program for potential health sciences librarians to spend a day in a health sciences library environment
 - 1.7.2 Collaborate with the Association of School Librarians and the Young Adult Library Services Association to promote health sciences librarianship as a career option
 - 1.7.3 Actively promote career day to the media for extended coverage

Partners:

- MLA Credentialing Committee
- AHEC Libraries
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach
- High School Guidance Counselors and their organization(s)
- American Association of School Librarians
- Young Adult Library Services Association
- PCI

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of hits on MLANET for the list of resources
- Number of requests and/or hits on MLANET for promotional materials
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
 - Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey asking how the person discovered health sciences librarianship
- Follow-up questionnaire with Guidance Counselors contacted
- Number of presentations made by librarians
- Number of career day participants

2. Create interest in health sciences librarianship among college/university students:

Rationale: Students considering graduate school may not realize that health sciences librarianship is an option.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Develop promotional materials in a variety of formats to be distributed to college/university students that incorporate their interests and are targeted to their generation

- 2.2 Create a link with career advisors and their organizations to promote health sciences librarianship as a viable career option
- 2.3 Compile a list of resources on health sciences librarianship on MLANET to assist possible guest speakers to college/university groups
- 2.4 Create a Recruiter's Bureau comprised of health sciences librarians willing to speak on the profession
- 2.5 Develop a central program that incorporates and builds upon the current individual and group initiatives
- 2.6 Partner with college/university librarians to promote health sciences librarianship, particularly to promising library workstudy students
- 2.7 Develop and promote a Medical Librarian's Career Day to coincide with MLA's Medical Librarian's Month
 - 2.7.1 Create a national "shadowing" program for potential health sciences librarians to spend a day in a health sciences library environment
 - 2.7.2 Expand New York/New Jersey's concept of a "Mini-Medical School for Librarians" to a national program whose audience would include potential library school students
 - 2.7.3 Actively promote career day to the media for extended coverage

Partners:

- MLA Credentialing Committee
- MLA Continuing Education Committee
- MLA Chapters
- Faculty Advisors
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach
- PCI
- ACRL

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of hits on MLANET for the list of resources
- Number of requests and/or hits on MLANET for promotional materials
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
 - Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey asking how the person discovered health sciences librarianship
- Follow-up questionnaire with Faculty Advisors contacted
- Number of presentations made to this group
- Number of Career Day participants
- Number of times MLA Headquarters is contacted for information by Faculty Advisors and university/college students

3. Create interest in health sciences librarianship among current library/information science students.

Rationale: Students currently enrolled in a library/information science school need to be introduced to the field of health sciences librarianship as a career path.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Develop promotional materials in a variety of formats to be distributed to library/information students that incorporate their interests and are targeted to their generation
- 3.2 Promote health sciences librarianship to library and information school deans to encourage the inclusion of health sciences courses within curriculums

- 3.3 Develop opportunities for faculty development in the arena of health sciences librarians to expand upon the number of qualified faculty members in our field
- 3.4 Collaborate with library/information school faculty to develop courses targeted to careers in health sciences librarianship in conjunction with MLA's proposed Center of Excellence – CORE (Center of Research and Education)
- 3.5 Create a link with library/information faculty to promote health sciences librarianship as a viable career option
- 3.6 Provide the opportunity to library schools to offer MLA CE courses for graduate school credit
- 3.7 Promote provisional AHIP membership to students
- 3.8 Partner with SLA student groups on campus to promote health sciences librarianship and to provide learning experiences
- 3.9 Expand the NLM Associate program to increase internship placement in health sciences libraries
- 3.10 Work with academic health sciences libraries to develop paid fellowships supported by grant or local monies to recent graduates
- 3.11 Send information on health sciences librarianship careers to incoming/new LIS students
- 3.12 Send information on MLA's "Placement Service Center" along with health sciences librarianship career information to new LIS graduates
- 3.13 Compile a list of resources on health sciences librarianship on MLANET to assist possible guest speakers to library/information schools
- 3.14 Create a Recruiter's Bureau comprised of HS librarians willing to be guest speakers in library/information sciences classes, preferably alumni from each US/Canadian school
- 3.15 Provide all schools with a "web info package" that provides links to MLA and health sciences librarianship resources
- 3.16 Develop a central program that incorporates and builds upon the current individual and group initiatives (e.g. AHEC initiatives and high school occupational programs)
- 3.17 Encourage library/information students to attend the annual MLA Conference and MLA Chapter meetings
 - 3.17.1 Invite library/information students to a plenary section at the 2004 MLA Annual Conference on how to select a library field, with an emphasis upon opportunities in health sciences librarianship
 - 3.17.2 Encourage networking and promote health sciences librarianship as a career by providing opportunities to library/information students to work at MLA Annual Conferences and at Chapter meetings
- 3.18 Develop and promote a Medical Librarian's Career Day to coincide with MLA's Medical Librarian's Month
 - 3.18.1 Create a national "shadowing" program for potential health sciences librarians to spend a day in a health sciences library environment
 - 3.18.2 Expand New York/New Jersey's concept of a "Mini-Medical School for Librarians" to a national program
 - 3.18.3 Actively promote career day to the media for extended coverage
 - 3.18.4 Sponsor a career day targeted to Deans of Library and Information Science programs to expose them to the opportunities available to students in health sciences librarianship

Partners:

- MLA Library Education Section
- MLA Credentialing Committee
- MLA Continuing Education Committee
- MLA Membership Committee
- MLA Chapters
- LIS Faculty and Administrators
- Academic Health Sciences Center Libraries
- SLA Student Groups
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach

- Alumni of LIS schools
- NPC 2004
- NLM
- PCI

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of hits on MLANET for the list of resources
 - Number of requests and/or hits on MLANET for promotional materials
 - Number of librarians recruited through this objective
 - Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey asking how the person discovered health sciences librarianship
 - Increase in the number of schools offering health sciences librarianship options
 - Increase in student AHIP provisional members
 - Grant monies received and opportunities available for fellowships
 - More entry level applicants for positions at MLA's Placement Service Center
 - Number of health sciences librarians participating in a Medical Librarian's Career Day
4. Create interest in health sciences librarianship among second career seekers, including, but not limited to, healthcare professionals, informationists, service professionals, informaticians, information technology professionals, veterinary technicians, library technicians, and librarians in other types of libraries.

Rationale: Second career seekers often have skills that can easily be incorporated into health sciences librarianship, especially those currently in a service or healthcare profession. Health sciences librarianship has many similar benefits, without the high risk of burnout associated with some other service professions. In terms of recruiting from library technicians, where best to recruit but from our own?

- 4.1 Develop promotional materials in a variety of formats to be distributed to second career seekers that incorporate their interests and are targeted to their generation
- 4.2 Exhibit at career fairs and at other professional association meetings with the assistance of the Recruiter's Bureau
- 4.3 Partner with library/information schools to develop health sciences librarianship programs for distance learning, including web-based courses, to aid those students who are geographically bound in an area without an ALA accredited library/information school or who need a flexible instruction program in conjunction with MLA's CORE Center of Excellence
 - 4.3.1 Develop standard criteria for distance learning courses based on health sciences librarianship competencies
- 4.4 Work with academic health sciences libraries to develop programs which would enable library technicians to work and attend graduate school at the same time, possibly using grant monies to subsidize graduate studies
- 4.5 Promote MLA membership to other information/technology focused professions and to consumer health librarians in public libraries
- 4.6 Compile a list of resources on health sciences librarianship to assist possible guest speakers at Career Fairs
- 4.7 Develop and promote a Medical Librarian's Career Day to coincide with MLA's Medical Librarian's Month
 - 4.7.1 Create a national "shadowing" program for potential health sciences librarians to spend a day in a health sciences library environment
 - 4.7.2 Expand New York/New Jersey's concept of a "Mini-Medical School for Librarians" to a national program
 - 4.7.3 Actively promote career day to the media for extended coverage
- 4.8 Encourage networking and promote health sciences librarianship as a career by providing opportunities to library technicians to work at MLA Annual Conferences and at Chapter meetings

Partners:

- MLA Credentialing Committee
- MLA Membership Committee
- MLA Medical Library Education Section
- MLA Chapters
- MLA National Program Planning Committee
- LIS Faculty and Administrators
- Academic Health Sciences Libraries
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach
- PCI

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of hits on MLANET for the list of resources
- Number of requests and/or hits on MLANET for promotional materials
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
 - Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey asking if the person is a second career person and why
- Increase in the number of schools offering distant learning health sciences librarianship options
- Increase in the number of MLA members who are second career individuals or are members of an affiliated profession

5. Increase Diversity in our workforce

Rationale: Based on the past two MLA membership surveys, diversity is still an issue in health sciences librarianship. Although increases are apparent, these improvements are still far below desirable levels.

Strategies:

- 5.1 Identify opportunities and/or organizations to work with on minority recruitment
- 5.2 Target minority colleges and work with career counselors and faculty advisors
- 5.3 Continue to participate in the ALA Spectrum program
- 5.4 Develop promotional materials in a variety of formats and languages that can be distributed at career fairs
- 5.5 Increase grant funding for minority scholarships
- 5.6 Partner with community based organizations to present health sciences librarianship opportunities
- 5.7 Develop and promote a Medical Librarian's Career Day to coincide with MLA's Medical Librarian's Month
 - 5.7.1 Create a national "shadowing" program for potential health sciences librarians to spend a day in a health sciences library environment
 - 5.7.2 Expand New York/New Jersey's concept of a "Mini-Medical School for Librarians" to a national program
 - 5.7.3 Actively promote career day to the media for extended coverage

Partners:

- MLA Credentialing Committee
- MLA African American Medical Librarians Alliance SIG
- MLA Chapters
- Career Counselors and their organizations
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach

- Training Institute for Early Career Librarians from Traditionally Underrepresented Groups – University of Minnesota
- Community based organizations, such as, community centers, faith based groups, scouts, and minority Chamber of Commerces
- PCI

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of hits on MLANET for the list of resources
- Number of requests and/or hits on MLANET for promotional materials
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
 - Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey regarding ethnic background
- Number of invitations to Career Fairs targeting minority recruitment
- Number of participants at Career Fairs

6. Develop program to retain current health sciences librarians and to provide forums to obtain the skills and knowledge needed for advancement.

Rationale: Recruitment doesn't end with the new librarian. Librarianship is a greying profession with many directors scheduled to retire within the next 10 –15 years. As a profession we need to provide leadership training opportunities to librarians in order to have librarians ready to take the lead by working in conjunction with CORE. By definition, mentoring programs need to play a prominent role in this arena.

- 6.1 Develop educational opportunities for existing health sciences librarianship management/administration/leadership on retention of library staff, incorporating generational and current management theories
- 6.2 Develop mentoring services that facilitate job placement & career advancement
 - 6.2.1 Provide AHIP points for mentoring (in addition to mentoring within the AHIP program)
 - 6.2.2 Provide CE sessions and conference programs on mentoring
 - 6.2.3 Develop and maintain an active list of mentors & mentorees on MLANET
 - 6.2.4 Recognize mentors at a MLA Annual Conference
- 6.3 Provide services to downsized or outsourced librarians to locate health sciences librarianship opportunities and to build new skill sets if needed
- 6.4 Explore grant opportunities to fund a scholarship for librarians wishing to pursue an M.B.A. or other management degree
- 6.5 Review and revise "Platform for Change" and update to address current and predicted trends within health sciences librarianship
 - 6.5.1 Develop competencies for health sciences librarianship that can be transferred to numerous settings and taught via different delivery methods
 - 6.5.2 Promote opportunities to obtain competencies in health sciences librarianship

Partners:

- MLA Continuing Education Committee
- MLA Credentialing Committee
- MLA Leadership & Management Section
- MLA Medical Library Education Section
- MLA African American Medical Librarians Alliance SIG
- MLA Members already involved in this area of outreach
- William Strauss, LifeCourse Associates, Great Falls, VA
- Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries – Future Leadership Task Force

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of mentors & mentorees, CE offerings and attendees, program attendees

- Data on open positions from MLA Placement Services
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
- Revised competencies
- Grant programs established

7. Continue to work with PCI to publicize health sciences librarianship

Rationale: In 1994 when SLA was featured in an article in “Glamour”, SLA received thousands of inquiries about special librarianship. PCI and MLA have aggressively sought opportunities to promote health sciences librarianship to various audiences. This work needs to continue.

7.1 Contact TV shows to develop segments involving health sciences librarianship.

Possible venues include:

7.1.1 Children’s programming: Sesame Street, Barney

7.1.2 Adult programming: ER, Scrubs, Oprah

7.1.3 News formats: 48 Hrs, 20/20, Dateline, Nightline, 60 Minutes – Andy Rooney

7.2 Provide copy to magazine career editors

7.3 Review occupational handbooks and websites for health sciences librarianship information and provide with updated information if necessary

7.4 Collaborate with university radio stations to create promotional spots

7.5 Survey MLA membership about current public relation activities and create a database inventory that can be drawn upon for ideas by other members

7.6 Target advertising based upon other industry/company trends

Partners:

- PCI

Measurable Outcomes:

- Question on 2002 Membership Survey and one on future survey asking if the person was influenced by the mass media on becoming a health sciences librarian
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective
- Growth of MLA members
- Data from PCI on # of slots, shows featuring health sciences librarianship

8. Continue efforts to increase salaries

Rationale: Health sciences librarians are competing with information systems, Health Informatics, and other groups which provide higher salaries. While the Task Force recognizes that health sciences librarianship is a service profession, recruitment efforts can only be assisted by higher salaries.

8.1 Promote MLA salary survey and Hay Study results to administrators and human resource professionals

8.2 Provide a “how-to” guide on MLANET on how to strategically approach administrators to upgrade librarian/library staff classifications

8.3 Improve self-promotion efforts

8.4 Collaborate with other library associations in their efforts to raise salaries

Partners:

- MLA Leadership and Management Section
- PCI
- American Library Association

Measurable Outcomes:

- MLA salary survey data
- Evidence of salary increases
- Anecdotal information of implementation of Hay Study
- Number of librarians recruited through this objective

9. Actively pursue funding for recruitment opportunities

Rationale: In January 2002, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) announced the Bush Administration's plan to provide \$10 million dollars towards the recruitment of new librarians. MLA has already begun to investigate this opportunity. We need to continue to seek funding from a variety of sources to provide resources for recruitment.

- 9.1 Seek funding opportunities to encourage minorities to enter health sciences librarianship
- 9.2 Partner with employers and academic institutions to provide funding for health sciences librarianship fellowships at the graduate and post-graduate levels
- 9.3 Provide scholarship opportunities for current health sciences librarianship to further advance their education in graduate management and/or medical informatics courses
- 9.4 Seek funds to provide non-health sciences librarianship CE or other educational opportunities to develop the knowledge base needed to switch to a health sciences librarianship environment
- 9.5 Pursue funding announced by IMLS in 2001 for library recruitment

Partners:

- MLA/AAHSL Legislative Task Force
- MLA's Governmental Relations Committee
- MLA's Grants and Scholarship Committee
- Other professional associations, including other library associations, such as the American Library Association, the Special Libraries Association, and the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
- MLA members in various types of settings
- IMLS

Measurable Outcomes:

- Number of funded opportunities
- Amount of IMLS monies obtained for MLA based recruitment
- Increased number of fellowships
- Number of new librarians recruited from this objective

Respectfully submitted by:

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