

Fact Sheet 2010



LIBRARY WORKERS: FACTS & FIGURES

The Numbers

- In 2009, there were 206,000 librarians, 50,000 library technicians, and 96,000 other education, training and library workers.¹
- Between 2008 and 2018, the number of librarians is expected to increase by 7.8%, while library technicians increase by 8.8%. Total employment in the U.S. is expected to increase by 10.1% over this period.²
- These projections for library workers are higher than the previous projections for 2006–16, when the number of librarians was expected to increase by 3.6%, while the number of technicians increased by 8.5%.³ The overall trend of jobs for librarians is growing at a slower rate than those for library technicians.
- Work once performed only by librarians is now often 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.
- Furthermore, the current population of librarians is aging; 58% of librarians in the U.S. are projected to reach the retirement age of 65 between 2005 and 2019.⁴
- Forty percent of library directors plan to retire between 2007 and 2016.⁵

Employment

- Most librarians work in school and academic libraries. About one-fourth of librarians 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 also applies to library technicians.⁶
- 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.⁷

Diversity Among Library Workers

- Librarians, technicians, and assistants are predominantly white. Librarians are mainly between the ages of 45 and 55, and assistants are more likely to be under 35 years old. According to an ALA report, there is a persistent lag in diversity of under-represented minorities and few people with disabilities.⁸

- In 2009, 15.1% of all librarians were minorities: 5.3% were Black or African American, 6.8% were Hispanic or Latino, and 3% were Asian.⁹
- Minorities accounted for 20.1% of all other education, training, and library workers in 2009: 10.4% were Black or African American, 4.3% were Asian, and 5.4% were Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 22% of library technicians in 2009 were minorities: 7.7% were Black or African American, 5.3% were Asian, and 9% were Hispanic or Latino.¹⁰
- Among members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), 14.1% of the professional staff is composed of minorities. Asian/Pacific Islanders account for 6.3% of the professional staff, blacks or African Americans for 4.7%, Latinos or Hispanics for 2.8%, 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: 6.1% are directors, 6.9% are associate or assistant directors, and 11.2% are branch librarians.¹¹
- The percentage of minorities varies significantly between geographical regions. Minorities make up 19.39% of professional employees in ARL libraries in the South Atlantic Region, while composing 2.95% of professionals in the East South Central ARL libraries.¹²
- Between 1990 and 2000, the number of librarians under age 35 and between ages 35-44 consistently decreased. The only age group to grow was 45-54, which rose by 28%.¹³

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.¹⁴
- In 2008, women accounted for 82% of all librarians, 77.2% of all other education, training, and library workers and 76.4% of library technicians.¹⁵
- An ARL survey found 63.1% of research librarians are female; 36.9% male. Among research library directors, women are in the majority (56.8%).¹⁶
- While men accounted for only 16.5% of librarians in 2008, they accounted for 47% of library directors in academic settings and 35% in public libraries in 2006.¹⁷

"Women's Work", Women's Pay

Pay inequity remains a persistent and pervasive problem in our society. In 2009, median weekly earnings for women were 80.2% those of men. For most women of color, the earnings gap is even larger: African American women earned just 71 cents for every dollar earned by men in 2009. Hispanic and Latina women earned just 62 cents for every dollar men earned. Only Asian American women's earnings were closer to parity with men's: in 2009, they earned 95% that of all men. However, they earned 82% as much as Asian American men.¹⁸

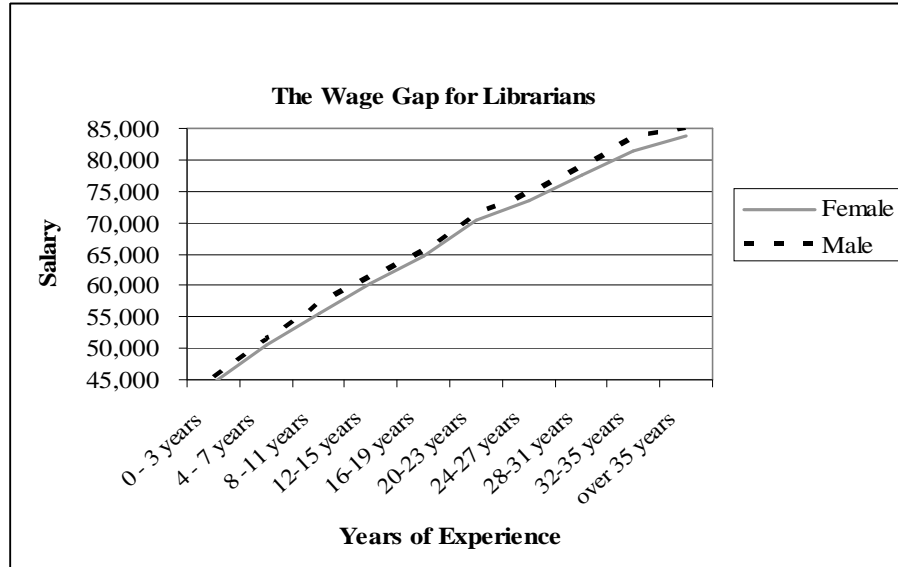
- In 2005, the median annual earnings of a woman with a bachelor's degree were almost 31% (or \$15,911) less than that of a similarly qualified man, according to Census Bureau data. A woman with a master's degree earned 32% (or \$21,374) less than a man with a master's degree; a woman with a doctoral degree earned more than 29% (or \$22,824) less than a similarly qualified man.¹⁹
- 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 2006, new MLS graduates from ALA-accredited programs who worked in academic libraries earned an average annual salary of \$42,186; for new graduates working in public libraries, the mean annual salary was \$40,026.²⁰ In contrast, the average salary for a database administrator with a master's degree in computer science was \$72,900. This profession is 65% male.²¹
- The median hourly earnings of librarians in 2008 were \$25.26 (an annual wage of \$55,700 for those working full-time); the median hourly earnings of similarly qualified computer systems analysts were \$36.30 (an annual wage of \$78,830), those of electrical engineers were \$39.50 (\$85,350 a year), and those of computer software engineers were \$44.44 (\$94,520 a year). These (mostly male) professionals have education and responsibilities comparable to those of librarians.²²
- The median hourly wage of library technicians was \$13.86 in 2008 (an annual wage of \$30,130 for those working full-time);²³ comparatively, the 2008 median hourly wage for mechanical engineering technicians was \$23.14, while that of medical records and health information technicians was \$14.71. Paralegals earned \$22.18 an hour.²⁴
- Library assistants had median hourly earnings of \$10.71 (amounting to \$23,750 annually for full-time work) in 2007, while loan interviewers and clerks earned \$15.23 (\$33,220).²⁵

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 2008 survey of academic librarians, even when years of experience in a particular job category were equal, men still outpaced women in salary by nearly 4%: \$69,610 for women and \$72,344 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. Again, the average salary of minority men is higher than that for minority women in all ten experience cohorts.²⁶
- The average salary for male directors in ARL libraries was lower 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 2003–04.²⁷
- In 2009, female librarians had median weekly earnings of \$875, compared to \$886 for both sexes combined. The weekly earnings data for men is not separately reported, due to the small number of workers in this category.²⁸
- While the rise of information science and technology is driving salaries up, the average starting salary for women remains lower, reaching \$41,731 in 2007.²⁹



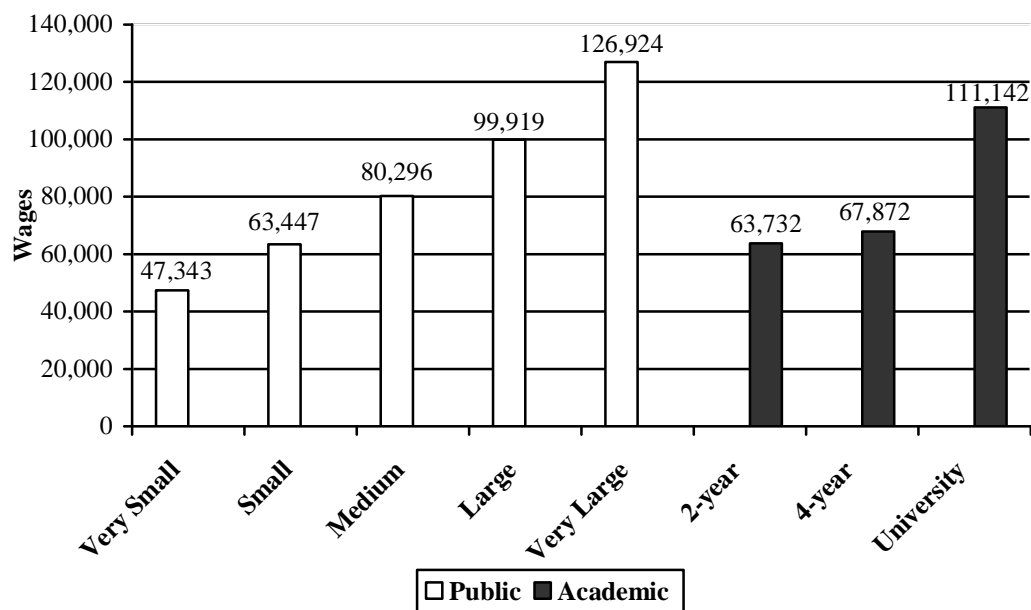
Regional Variance in Salaries

- Nationally, the mean annual wage for librarians was \$54,700 in 2008.³⁰ However, wages varied from state to state. The states with the highest salaries were California, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, and the District of Columbia where the average annual wage among the five highest paid states was \$63,032. The five lowest paying states were South Dakota, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming where the average annual wage among the five lowest paid states was \$39,466.³¹
- The Plains Region has salaries below the national median for library workers. This region also has union membership rates well below the national average with the exception of Montana.³² The West and Southwest and the North Atlantic, which have high union membership rates, also consistently have the highest median salaries for library workers.³³
- Among public librarians the lowest average salaries were found in the Midwest region, while the lowest average salaries for academic librarians were found in the Southwest region. School librarians and librarians at special libraries in the Southeast region had the lowest average salaries. The Southeast region includes states with the lowest unionization rates in the country, as well as several “right to work” states, such as Florida, Georgia, and Virginia.³⁴

Institutional Variance in Salaries

The salary of a Library Director depends on the type of library at which they work. In 2007, directors of very small public libraries (serving a population of less than 10,000) had median wages of \$47,343. In contrast, directors of very large public libraries (500,000 or more) made \$126,924. Differences exist between public and academic libraries as well. Directors of two-year college libraries had median annual wages of \$63,732 while directors of university libraries made nearly \$111,142.³⁵

Median Wages for Public and Academic Library Directors, 2007



Benefits

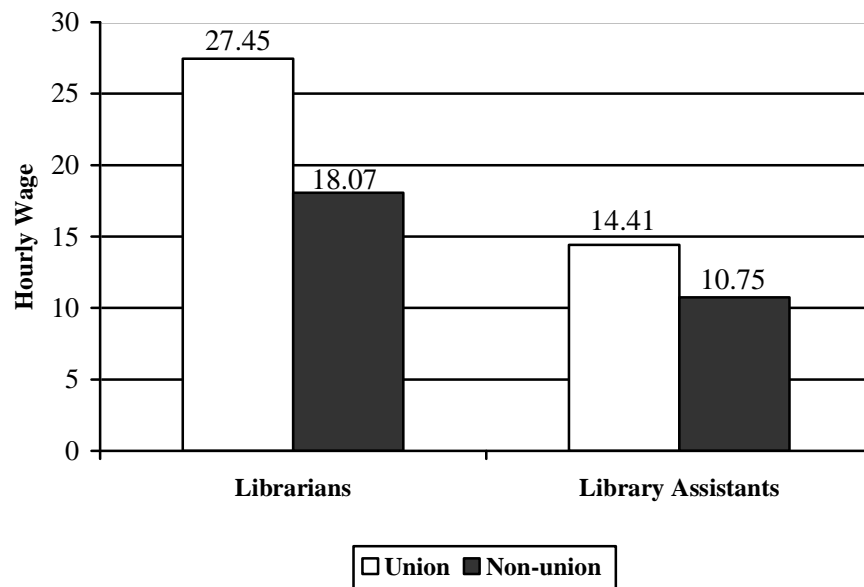
- Nearly 12% of public libraries do not offer a pension and 17.4% do not offer retirement savings. Among academic libraries, 23.3% do not offer a pension and 20% do not offer retirement savings.³⁶
- Almost 40% of public libraries do not offer vision insurance and 16% do not offer dental insurance. Among academic libraries, 42.9% do not offer vision insurance and 17.9% do not offer dental insurance.³⁷
- 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.³⁸

The Union Difference

- In 2009, workers in education, training, and library occupations had the highest unionization rates for any occupation group. Thirty-eight percent of workers in this occupation group were members of a union.³⁹
- In 2009, 24.9% of librarians were union members; 28.7% were represented by unions.
- Among library technicians, 23.7% were union members in 2009, and 29.4% were represented by unions.⁴⁰
- Nineteen percent of other education, training, and library workers were union members in 2009, and 25.4% were represented by unions.
- Union librarians earned an average of 25.5% more than non-union librarians in 2009.⁴¹ Union library technicians earned an average of 32% more than non-union librarian technicians in 2009.
- Union other education, training, and library workers earned an average of 36% more than non-union workers.⁴²

- 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.⁴³
- The 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.⁴⁴
- Across all regions, librarians benefit from unionization. For example, the smallest gain was in the North Atlantic and Great Lakes and Plains regions where union librarians earned nearly 19% more than their fellow non-union librarians. The greatest gains were in the West and Southwest where there was a nearly 27% gain from unionization.⁴⁵
- Across all types of work in the library profession a union advantage existed, from associate librarians who earned more than 27% more than their non-union counterparts, to library techs who earned more than 25% more than their non-union colleagues.⁴⁶
- Almost no matter what type of institution a librarian works at there is a union advantage, be it a gain of over 62% in very small public libraries to over 4% for librarians at four-year colleges, the one employment situation that did not show a marked union advantage.⁴⁷

The Union Advantage



Libraries and Library Staff in the Recession

- In an op-ed piece to the *Huffington Post*, American Library Association President Jim Rettig noted that “As the nation continues to experience a sharp and jarring economic downturn, local libraries are providing valuable free tools and resources to help Americans of all ages through this time of uncertainty. . . . [N]ow more than ever, libraries are proving that they are valued and trusted community partners.”⁴⁸

- Libraries and library staff are under increasing pressure to meet the needs of their communities in this serious economic downturn. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that libraries across the country have seen jumps in attendance of as much as 65% over the past year.⁴⁹
- Nationwide more people applied for library cards than at anytime since records have been kept.⁵⁰ Demand for new library cards, for example, has increased 27% in San Francisco, California and 61% in Boise, Idaho.⁵¹
- Families patronizing libraries during this recession are often looking for less expensive ways to find entertainment and access the internet, while many adults utilize the facilities to find new jobs. In Modesto, California, libraries report a 15% increase in the checkout of books, CDs, and DVDs. Circulation of job-hunting materials is up 14% in Boulder, Colorado, and computer usage in Brantley County, Georgia was up 26% in the last quarter of 2008.⁵²
- At a time when libraries and librarians are facing increasing demands, many states and municipalities are threatening to cut their budgets and close branches as a result of budget shortfalls.⁵³ Libraries and librarians are faced with meeting the challenges of increased usage without increased budgetary support.
- As a result of the recession, libraries and librarians have had to confront challenges like homelessness, increased crime, and violent incidents in their work environment. Although the ALA does not keep statistics on such incidents, there is significant anecdotal evidence that nationwide libraries are struggling with increased usage and the incidents which have come along with it.⁵⁴

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Table 11, “Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity”.

² Lacey, T. Alan and Benjamin Wright. “Occupational Employment Projections to 2018”, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2009.

³ Dohm, Arlene and Lynn Shniper. “Occupational Employment Projections to 2016”, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2007.

⁴ American Library Association-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA), *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, April 2007. Available at: <http://ala-apa.org/salaries/toolkit.pdf>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008–09 Edition*.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ American Library Association, Office of Research and Statistics, *Diversity Counts*, January 2007.

⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2010, Table 11, “Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity”.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Association of Research Libraries (ARL), *Annual Salary Survey (2008–09)*. Available at:

<http://www.arl.org/stats/annualsurveys/salary/sal0809.shtml>

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ American Library Association, Office of Research and Statistics, *Diversity Counts*, January 2007.

¹⁴ Association for Library and Information Science Education, Statistical Report, 2004.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Annual Averages, Table 11, “Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity”, 2010. Available at:

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

¹⁶ Association of Research Libraries, *Annual Salary Survey (2008–09)*, op. cit.

¹⁷ ALA-APA, *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, op. cit.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Table 37, “Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics”, 2010.

- ¹⁹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, “Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006 Detailed Tables”, Table 9, September 7, 2006. Available at: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/education/cps2006.html>
- ²⁰ ALA-APA, Survey of Librarian Salaries, 2006.
- ²¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Survey, 2008; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2008, Table 11, op. cit.
- ²² U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, May 2008.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ Association of Research Libraries, *Annual Salary Survey (2008–09)*, op. cit.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2008, Table 39, “Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by detailed occupation and sex”.
- ²⁹ Maatta, Stephanie. “Placements and Salaries 2008: Jobs and Pay Both Up”, *Library Journal*, October 18, 2008.
- ³⁰ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages*, “Librarians”, May 2008. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes254021.htm>
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² Bureau of National Affairs, *2010 Union Membership and Earnings Data Book*, Table 4a, Washington, DC.
- ³³ Maatta, Stephanie, op. cit.
- ³⁴ Bureau of National Affairs, op. cit.
- ³⁵ ALA provided statistics, 2008.
- ³⁶ Lynch, Mary Jo. “ALA Employee Benefits”, 2003.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, *Union Members Summary*, 2009.
- ⁴⁰ Bureau of National Affairs, op. cit., Table 8a.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ ALA-APA, *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, op. cit.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ American Library Association-Allied Professional Association and Office of Research and Statistics, ALA-APA Salary Survey 2007: Librarian – Public and Academic, ALA-APA Salary Survey 2007: Non-MLS – Public and Academic.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ Rettig, Jim and Greg Worrell. “Libraries Stand to Help in Tough Economic Times”, *The Huffington Post*, December 11, 2008. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jim-rettig/libraries-stand-ready-to_b_150268.html
- ⁴⁹ Carlton, Jim. “Folks are Flocking to the Library, a Cozy Place to Look for a Job”, *The Wall Street Journal*, January 15, 2009, pg. 1.
- ⁵⁰ Hughes, Sandra. “In Recession, Libraries Are Booming”, *CBS Evening News*, February 2, 2009.
- ⁵¹ Jackson, Derrick. “The Library – A Recession Sanctuary”, *The Boston Globe*, January 3, 2009. Available at: http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/01/03/the_library_a_recession_sanctuary/
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ Saulny, Susan and Karen Ann Cullotta. “Downturn Puts New Stresses on Libraries”, *New York Times*, April 1, 2009. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/02/us/02library.html?pagewanted=2& r=1>

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

The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) comprises 23 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.

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