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Abstract:

One of the newer forms of short-term staffing is the establishment of resident librarian and fellowship positions. These programs usually run for one to two years and are designed to provide structured learning opportunities to new professionals. Many of them were originally developed to increase the ranks of ethnically, racially, and other underrepresented groups in the profession. Recently, other programs that offer specific subject or technical skills to support specialization have developed in needed areas, such as medicine, science, or engineering.

This chapter will look at the residency programs and the models that might be used to create a program within a library. Although these are longer in duration than many of the opportunities discussed in other chapters in this book, because they are time limited, it is important to discuss how they fit an organization's staffing needs.

Keywords: residency programs | libraries | short-term staffing

Article

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Diversity Residencies

Diversity resident programs have been developed in libraries over the past 30 years with the goal of providing newly graduated librarians from diverse backgrounds with entry-level, professional experience as practicing librarians. The goal of these programs is to increase diversity in the library and information science (LIS) field by enhancing retention of librarians from traditionally underserved populations. Beginning at the University of Delaware in 1984, these programs are popular across the country and offer post-MLIS graduates professional experience in a real work environment. These residencies typically use position lines within the institution that have been funded for the purpose of appointing a candidate into a time-limited position for the purpose of gaining experience. The motivation for institutions to develop these programs comes from efforts to support needed diversity in the profession. Educating and training librarians who better represent the diversity of the community in which jobs are present was the main goal. Significant underrepresentation of black and Latino librarians exists, according to Jason Alston in his 2017 dissertation, and these programs are a valuable way for new librarians to quickly gain the experience needed to be successful in permanent jobs.

Residency programs overall support two important aspects of workforce development. The first one, as mentioned, is infusing diversity into librarian ranks in order to align with the demographic changes in user populations as it relates to race and ethnicity. This helps to shape not only the demographics and understanding of individual organizations but the larger profession as well.

The second aspect is succession planning, which libraries don't always proactively address because of the nonprofit nature of the organization. Broadly defined, succession planning is developing talent within the organization that can advance and take on additional responsibilities or advance into higher levels of responsibility over time. Succession planning is just as important for libraries as any other organization in order to maintain human resource talent for sustainability. There are already examples in the field of residents who, once they have completed their short-term appointment, are then promoted into regular, permanent positions of responsibility within their own libraries.

Residency programs focused on diversity can complement the organization's larger diversity initiatives (Duffus et al. 2016). Examples exist of library organizations that began with smaller initiatives to promote awareness of diversity issues and grew those initiatives to include residency programs. Libraries can be in the unique position on campus of being able to make statements supporting the needs of students and faculty; the creation of a diversity resident program can make clear that the libraries stand to support diversity.

A great example of a library diversity resident program is at Penn State University, which launched a program in 2013 with two residents (Dewey, Smith, and Berray 2015). They outline the program purposes as:

- To increase diversity among Penn State Libraries' faculty
- To increase diversity in the field of academic librarianship
- To invigorate the organization with fresh ideas, skills, and enthusiasm
- To prepare library leaders for the future
- To enhance Penn State's reputation as an institution that supports, trains, and mentors diversity

The trend in higher education and academic libraries, in particular, has been to develop programs and opportunities to increase acceptance of diversity activities and foster a profession

that better serves its stakeholders with like professionals (Fontenot 2010). Many institutions created task forces charged with improving the libraries' ability to incorporate diversity into the organization.

The use of this institution's example provides the basis for the value that residencies, focused on diversity, can offer an institution and the profession. According to Brewer (2010), these benefits can include the following:

- Create a public display of the institution's commitment to diversity
- Add a recent graduate perspective and facility with current and emerging technologies to the organization
- Demonstrate an organization's ability to manage change
- Create opportunities for early development of leadership skills

Testimonials from diversity residents, who completed the short-term assignment and were now hired and engaged in new positions, typically reflect positively on their experiences, indicating that overall personal and organizational goals were achieved (Alston 2010). But there is still work to do as diversity attributes themselves change for both stakeholders and organizations; as the bar is raised on skills needed by the profession going forward, can entry-level residency programs keep up?

In a study published by College and Research Libraries (Boyd, Blue, and Im 2017), the findings were analyzed to determine diversity resident program impacts. Overall, it was felt that residents participating in these types of programs tended to stay within the profession; thus, they are successful as a recruitment tool. But the study also indicated a need for improvement, in the form of structured mentorship and deeper ownership by the host institutions.

An example of a host institution that has made an investment into a successful diversity resident program is the University Libraries (UL) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). Part of what has fueled this success is programs and initiatives from collaborative efforts undertaken by the UL and the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS), from the UNCG (Crumpton and Holmes 2016). In 2008, the UL developed a new diversity resident program that required a total organizational commitment to create and implement a meaningful position that would attract and support a diversity librarian candidate. Diversity residents work in multiples areas in the UL and complete a variety of roles including working on committees, task forces, and as subject liaisons. Completing these duties requires interaction with all members of the organization.

Part of the support a resident receives is in the form of financial support for professional development as well as mentoring from multiple individuals as to their professional activities and growth. The resident, in turn, has the opportunity to mentor others from the library school, particularly when special initiatives are under way, such as three cohorts of library school students from Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grants for Academic and Culture Enrichment (ACE) scholars beginning in 2010. The purpose of these grants and ACE scholars was to recruit and promote diversity within the profession and train librarians to work with underserved populations, and the resident's role was significant in making the relationships successful.

The diversity and multicultural component is important to keep at the forefront of consideration as populations in the United States and Canada are becoming increasingly diverse and multiethnic. LIS education must become increasingly concerned with providing librarians to

serve a diverse population as well as meeting multilingual needs (Al-Qallaf and Mika 2013). Studies, such as this one by Al-Qallaf and Mika, not only reinforce the need to make changes to the LIS curriculum but also demonstrate the need and value for diversity resident programs.

Considering a human resource perspective regarding recruitment, diversity resident programs offer an opportunity to proactively seek the type of talent needed by libraries, particularly in academic libraries (Bradshaw 2015). Of course, this applies to any type of residency, but the strategy is to project anticipated needs within the workforce, or in this case, librarians serving an increasingly diverse population, so it only makes sense to instill into these programs education and training that are needed in the future for academic libraries.

Other diversity programs, although largely volunteer based, also address the need for increased diversity within the profession and have been agreed to and supported with initiatives that provide opportunities for recruitment and placement into the field by multiple support organizations, such as the American Library Association and the IMLS. These organizations fund and sponsor programs, such as the Spectrum Scholarship Program, Diversity Research Grants, UNCG's ACE scholarships, and many others—all to recruit and encourage education and training into the profession.

A diversity residency alliance was formed in 2008 that created the opportunity to broaden these programs into cohorts and add an element of learning from each other's experiences. This gave residents the ability to see and experience a wider range of concepts and skills than they would naturally be able to encounter at their home institutions. This alliance was created by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) to provide administrative and marketing support in promoting these concepts and programs to the profession (http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/diversityalliance) (Morris 2017).

This ACRL Diversity Alliance program unites libraries committed to increasing the hiring pool of qualified and talented individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. This relationship not only broadens the perspective of residents by providing them a cohort of peers in other institutions to share experiences with, but also the hosting organizations can interact with their peers so as to collaborate on improving and providing a successful experience for all of the residents.

The ACRL Residency Interest Group is an assembly of library residents (both current and former), residency program coordinators, library deans, administrators, diversity officers, and human resources professionals from over 20 different library systems across the country. This group functions to continue and expand the conversation across the many resident programs throughout the country.

While diversity residencies in academic libraries have now existed for over 30 years, much of the literature surrounding them has been written by residents and former residents and consists of basic recaps of their personal experiences as residents. While documentation of their experiences does offer a glimpse into some of the troubles and successes encountered by diversity residents, there are limitations to relying on this type of literature for assessing, improving, and constructing diversity residencies.

The challenge is to ensure that persons newly degreed are equipped to compete for jobs from both experience and social aspect, and in the case of diversity residents, this is critical in order to meet program objectives for ultimately supporting underrepresented populations (Peet 2016). Recognizing that bias exists for residents of color (Alston 2015) and working to ensure an organization that accepts diversity, and is willing to learn from it, are vital for program success.

Residency as apprenticeship

Apprenticeships are a popular method of worker training in most countries around the world. Used primarily in technical or vocational work, apprenticeships represent a formal employer and employee relationship with the overall intended purpose of fulfilling workforce needs within a given occupational community. In the case of library personnel, many potential workers obtain training and guidance through other short-term experiences, such as internships, practicums, or volunteering, in order to gain practical application of theoretical concepts gained from the classroom, as discussed in other places in the book. As with businesses or other graduate programs associated with educating new professionals to enter the workforce, the goal of an apprenticeship is to provide a venue that supplements education for developing workers to an industry or professional standard for the field of work.

In today's labor market, taking classes alone does not provide many graduates with the suitable skills to be successful in the workplace; thus, internships and apprenticeships have gained popularity (McNulty 2016). Apprenticeships have typically been associated with construction and manufacturing jobs, but they can also translate into other professions that need more "hands-on experience," such as health care or librarianship. These types of programs offer similar attributes to residencies by providing a structure and mentorship that reinforces classroom learning (Overman 2017).

Traditional apprenticeships are created with formal agreements between employers and selected individuals that create a contract for learning. Most librarian residents fill an established line within the library organization and are subjected to the same criteria as other librarian positions in the libraries. This might vary based on the time limit involved, typically two or three years, or whether or not the institution is tenured, but the goal is that the librarian resident is treated like a professional and not still a student intern or practicum.

In exchange for the learning expected to occur, the resident is expected to serve the institution by performing needed functions. Many resident experiences are shaped by an organizational need at the time of the search or special skills needed that are not present within the current librarian staff members. Performing real work, having authentic responsibilities for which the resident is evaluated and held accountable, is part of the residency experience.

In the United States, research on successful business relationships and partnerships supporting apprenticeship programs identifies three marks to determine success. According to Jeffrey Cantor (2015), these three attributes are

- deriving or obtaining mutual exchanges or benefits from the relationship,
- purposeful funding sources to ensure sustainability, and
- formal agreements with defined goals to be achieved.

Residencies should offer these same elements so that learning objectives can be achieved by everyone involved, not just the resident. An investment should be made in funding resident positions for the good of the institution and the benefit to the profession, as a whole. Goals and objectives should be clearly stated and modified as needed to ensure that the resident is accomplishing tasks and duties as expected and that the trainers are supporting the effort properly.

Other benefits that arise from the apprenticeship point of view include how older workers can benefit from such a relationship (Field 2016), encouraging second-career librarians to

consider applying for residency programs. Their success and benefit to the organization can be amplified due to a broader array of skills brought from previous experiences.

Apprenticeships are also known for filling in gaps to educational experiences, and this has led to many institutions that offer residency programs to equate years as a resident to multiple years of experience in a regular career-development experience.

Newer residencies like the North Carolina State University Fellowship program are even more strongly aligned with the idea of apprenticeship since they are focused on the acquisition of advanced skills like digital projects, data visualization, and curation. Each resident completes a project in an assigned area. The focus is on skills and not on wider goals like diversity.

While the principles applied to most commercial apprenticeship programs could be applied to residency programs, some drawbacks exist in perception as well as execution. Residents do not always come away from the experience with what was expected, and institutions sometimes struggle with justification of the funding in order to produce a longer-term reputable program. There is still a need to expand offerings by more institutions and broaden subject expertise in order to fill in gaps needed in larger institutions where the subject expert is critical for libraries to embrace.

Developers of resident programs should consider models from apprentice programs geared toward workforce development initiatives and vocational talent development in underrepresented areas. These programs recognize the shortcomings of an educational experience that can be complemented with additional training and real-world experiences in order to strengthen the individual experience and professional talent bench (Carlson 2017).

Residents as peers

In the resident librarian model, it is important to establish right away that the resident has the credentials to be a professional, perhaps in every sense of the word except practical experience. Although, successful candidates for diversity resident positions have demonstrated strong extracurricular activities or involvement with other organizations during their graduate education experience, there are still gaps. This is important in the learning aspect of the program, as in most cases, library staff will be working with someone who should be considered a peer and should be seen as having value to contribute a different professional perspective.

It is also important that residents form their own peer network across institutions. This started with the interest group sponsored by ACRL in which residents and those participating in these programs could meet at conferences and share information and experiences. This ACRL interest group eventually formed into the alliance, the ACRL Diversity Alliance (http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/diversityalliance), that provided institutions that supported these programs to come together and collaborate on creating a resident experience that was meaningful and productive (American Library Association 2016). This also provided the opportunity to conduct joint workshops or institutes to enable residents to form cohorts and learn from a peer experience.

A standard practice of LIS programs is to include internships and practica into the program elements; see Chapter 3 for more details. The peer relationships formed in these types of situations are important but are not meant to be life changing (Salo 2013). A residency, however, is a critical step in someone's career path, and the peer relationships formed in a residency are critical for future success within the profession.

What it means for the organization

A long history exists for paid apprenticeships in business and industry, and this concept is growing into other disciplines, in particular into white-collar professions (Gurchiek 2017). This follows the European model for "fast tracking" careers in areas that need skills and recruitment opportunities, and this type of action has been supported by the federal government with workforce initiatives and policies.

Traditional business internship models have evolved from providing work experience to the individual (intern) to creating a probationary situation in which to recruit needed talent into the organization, either immediately or upon the intern's graduation (Meinert 2013). This provides the advantage of hiring known skills and competencies since the interns were apprenticed in the company environment and culture. In a profession as diverse as librarianship, it seems prudent to strive for the same goal by proactively investing in resident-type programs in order to influence the hiring pool toward expected needs for talent and relative experience.

It becomes an important opportunity for libraries to capture the experience and perspective of residents as an organizational learning tool (Gurchiek 2017). This model is different than traditional methods of seeking talent for the librarian pool but can prove effective when approached broadly through consortium agreements or professional association umbrellas. The organization must not only see the learning opportunities to be gained from outside perspectives but also support the investment in time and resources to add to a more qualified pool of talent for the profession.

In order for residents to lend an informed perspective to the organization's collective knowledge, it is important that the resident is properly inducted into the culture of not only the immediate workspace but also the larger organization's point of view and mission (Sweitzer and King 2004). Residents should be oriented into the libraries' purpose, values, and strategic directives in order to form their own opinions with regard to organizational effectiveness. This should include a detailed understanding of roles and relationships within the organization, identifying teams and work groups, and how they coordinate and exert control over primary responsibilities.

Many great examples exist regarding the success of programs designed to enhance the learning experience for new librarians. Some can take the form of internships and some can fall into residencies. Kate Flanagan (LIScareer.com 2004) provides a clear distinction between these two types of programs. She indicates two criteria that make that distinction: predegree or postdegree attainment and length of time a formal program is offered. This makes the investment into residencies more important and at a total organization commitment level to be most effective.

Early resident programs followed a "nurse" preceptor model in order to facilitate the transfer of skills and knowledge from a host of practitioners to new learners in the form of residents. In nursing this concept, these programs provided a variety of benefits to the organization, including succession planning for an aging workforce, improvement to the public image of the profession, and increased opportunities for women (Perez and Gruwell 2011). The preceptor model utilizes a mentorship approach, which can inform library organizations by equating the preceptor role with a library staff member who acts as a role model by providing socialization skills and serving as the primary educator. This creates an opportunity for development of the mentors within the organization and can become a form of career development for library staff involved with the resident as well.

Assessments on the preceptor model have been conducted to support a positive set of outcomes related to the value obtained by the organization for investing in these types of residency models. Some of these assessments also indicate the value received from incumbent professionals who participate in the programs, interacting with residents. An example from the pharmacy field cited a reduction in medication errors from established professionals as a result of working with residents (Fuller et al. 2012).

This concept lends itself to the creation of organizational benefits related to putting the resident into a role that challenges traditional processes or awakens routine thinking. Thus, the role of the resident as learner can also be seen as the resident as challenger to the current organizational skills and practices. This should be considered as an institutional benefit to the program for organizations willing to grow and change through a continual flow of fresh ideas and new skills.

Conclusion

Residencies play a critical role in a new professional's career trajectory. Libraries have begun to develop residency programs in order to recruit newly degreed librarians into the field and help build a talent pool for skills needed by the profession moving forward. Most widely known are the diversity resident programs, aimed at improving the profession's ability to serve underrepresented populations and better align professional diversity with stakeholder populations.

All residency programs should invest fully into any given resident in order to ensure a successful short-term experience and project that person into other professional roles prepared to meet the challenge. The organization should recognize the benefits to gain by this investment through the sharing of the resident's knowledge and newly degreed skills with the organization.

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