Success through Community

99% of respondents had graduated or were actively pursuing a master’s degree in library and information science.

72% of responding alumni were the first in their families to obtain a master’s degree.

80% of responding alumni were currently employed in a library and information setting.

70% indicated their position provides library services to traditionally underserved populations on a daily basis.

Based on most recent survey of Spectrum alumni, 54% responding.
About Spectrum

Through the Spectrum Scholarship Program, the American Library Association advances racial equity by connecting new generations of racially and ethnically diverse librarians with a network committed to mutual support, advancing one another’s leadership, and making social justice part of everybody’s everyday work. The Spectrum Scholarship Program actively recruits and provides scholarships to American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern and North African, and/or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students.

What does this mean?

We acknowledge the multifaceted identities of our Scholars, and the ways that race and ethnicity uniquely intersect with gender, sexuality, class, religion, immigration and citizenship status, (dis)ability, and more. We acknowledge that there are many communities we serve through Spectrum, and that our Scholars experience the colonization and white supremacy culture of library and information science in different ways. For example, the racism faced by Black Scholars is unique from racism experienced by Pacific Islander Scholars and each is different from the marginalization faced by White or White-passing Hispanic/Latino/a/x Scholars.

We use a social justice framework to build an inclusive community. This means we decenter power and privilege, make space for people’s multiple identities, and seek out ways to bring as many people as possible into the Spectrum network.

How do we do this?

- We pair financial assistance with leadership development resources and community-building to address both short-term and long-term barriers facing the recruitment and retention of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the library and information science world.
- We work with Scholars and the Spectrum Advisory Committee to leverage Spectrum’s name, network of 1200+ alumni, supporters, and partners to creatively build community and leadership spaces for all BIPOC workers in library and information science.
- We create educational curricula around the ways Scholars’ race and ethnicity intersect with other social identities, how folks may experience privilege and oppression, and the ways folks can lead through community organizing.
- We connect the work of Spectrum to the broader work of the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services, and the work of the association at large.
The librarian profession suffers from a persistent lack of racial and ethnic diversity.

- Over 83 percent of librarians were white, non-Hispanic in 2019. Library technicians and assistants were slightly more diverse. Among library technicians and assistants, 68.9 percent identified as white, non-Hispanic in 2019.
- In 2019, just 5.3 percent of librarians identified as Black or African American, 7.1 percent as Hispanic or Latino, and 3.5 percent as Asian-American or Pacific Islander.
- While Americans over 55 account for 19.6 percent of the total workforce, 31.5 percent of the library workforce is over the age of 55.

### Mitigating Cost of Graduate Education & Advancing Pay Equity

Spectrum’s tuition support is, in some cases, matched by LIS degree programs that provide full or partial tuition waivers and additional financial aid to Spectrum recipients. Spectrum’s network helps Scholars maintain employment and advocate for salaries which combat student loan debt and pay equity issues impacting women of color.

- The cost of graduate school varies widely. Total degree cost for a master’s in library science can range from a low of $10,000 to more than $80,000.
- In 2018, the mean annual salary for librarians was $41,704. Among full-time librarians (working 35 hours a week or more), mean annual earnings were higher, at $53,130. Librarian earnings vary significantly from state to state.
Spectrum by the Numbers

- Spectrum funds 60 scholarships per year, each scholarship supports tuition, travel/lodging for a 4-day leadership institute and participation in the ALA Annual Conference, professional memberships for 36 library organizations, and access to life-long networking and community building efforts.
- Since 1997, ALA has awarded more than 1,240 Spectrum Scholarships and 18 doctoral fellowships.
- Each year 150-220 qualified applicants are not funded.

Geographical Location of Scholars

![Map of North America showing the geographical location of Spectrum Scholars by region. The map is color-coded to indicate the number of scholars in each state, ranging from 1-5 scholars to over 200 scholars.](image)
Library Degree Programs

Spectrum Scholars have attended 67 schools in the U.S. and Canada. Scholars can use their funding toward an ALA Accredited master's degree program in library and information studies or master’s degree program with a specialty in school librarianship accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and recognized by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL).

11.6% (137 Scholars) at San José State University’s School of Information
- 43 units, total cost of degree: $18,572 in state | $20,382 out of state
- 100% online since 2009
- Diversity and Inclusion information: [https://ischool.sjsu.edu/news/2020-diversity-webinar-series-presents-eight-free-sessions-diverse-topics-diverse-speakers](https://ischool.sjsu.edu/news/2020-diversity-webinar-series-presents-eight-free-sessions-diverse-topics-diverse-speakers)
- MLIS students have the opportunity to participate in an innovative internship program; program maintains a database of more than 200 internship opportunities each semester, including virtual internships.

8.4% (100 Scholars) at the iSchool at the University of Illinois
- 40 credit hours, total cost of degree: $26,080 in state online | $39,000 out of state online | $28,584 in state on campus | $49,108 out of state on campus
- Provides full tuition waivers to Spectrum recipients
- Oldest existing program in the country and offering online options since 1996
- Diversity and Inclusion information: [https://ischool.illinois.edu/our-school/diversity-inclusion](https://ischool.illinois.edu/our-school/diversity-inclusion)

5.4% (64 Scholars) at Simmons University’s School of Library and Information Science
- 36 credit hours, total cost of degree: $50,715
- Provides Spectrum Scholars with an additional $10,000 award
- 100% online program available for 2020
- Diversity and Inclusion information: [https://www.simmons.edu/your-simmons/commitment-inclusivity](https://www.simmons.edu/your-simmons/commitment-inclusivity)

4.7% (58 Scholars) at University of Washington’s iSchool
- 63 quarter credits, total cost of degree: $53,235
- Provides Spectrum Scholars with an additional $5,000 award
- 100% online program available for 2020
- Diversity and Inclusion information: [https://ischool.uw.edu/diversity](https://ischool.uw.edu/diversity)
Career Paths and Selected Profiles in Leadership

According to the most recent comprehensive survey of Spectrum graduates, 41% work in academic libraries, 31% in public libraries, 8% in school libraries, 4% in archives, 4% in special libraries, 2% in medical libraries, and 10% in other LIS settings and roles.

Tracie D. Hall, ALA Executive Director & 1998 Scholar
Previously she has worked at the Seattle Public Library, the New Haven (Conn.) Free Public Library, Queens (N.Y.) Public Library, and Hartford (Conn.) Public Library. Most recently, Hall directed the culture portfolio at the Chicago-based Joyce Foundation. Hall has also served as assistant dean of Dominican University’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

Dr. Maria McCauley, Cambridge Public Library Director & 1999 Scholar
Previously Maria served as the Director of Libraries in Santa Monica, Director of Libraries for the City of Somerville, and held several library positions at Northeastern University. She is a member of the ALA Executive Board and her PhD from Simmons focused on Community Leadership: The Role of Public Library Directors.

Mark A. Puente, Associate Dean for organizational development, inclusion, and diversity at Purdue Libraries and School of Information Studies & 2003 Scholar
Previously served as senior director of Diversity and Leadership Programs at the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), overseeing the ARL Annual Leadership Symposium, ARL/SAA Mosaic Program, Fellowship for Digital and Inclusive Excellence, Kaleidoscope Program, and Leadership and Career Development Program. Prior to joining ARL, Mark held positions in the libraries of the University of Illinois and University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Nancy Kirkpatrick, OhioNet Executive Director/CEO & 2005 Scholar
Previously the Associate Director of the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS), she also served on the Boards of the Academic Libraries of Indiana (ALI) and Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI) while she was the Director of Library Services at Marian University in Indianapolis. OhioNet provides learning opportunities, technology solutions, collaborative purchasing, and strategic connections to 300 member orgs.

Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, Augusta Baker Endowed Chair & Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina School of Information Science & 2012 Fellow
A practicing librarian for 13 years before completing her Ph.D., Dr. Cooke has experience in public, medical and academic libraries. She has written two books on diversity and social justice, and is a recipient of the 2016 ALA Equality Award, the 2017 ALA Achievet in Library Diversity Research Honor, and the 2019 ALISE Excellence in Teaching Award. She has taught over 500 students a suite of graduate-level LIS classes that are dedicated to diversity, social justice, race, gender, sexuality, cultural competence, and related topics.

Sonia Alcantara-Antoine, Director of Libraries Newport News & 2004 Scholar
She oversees a multi-million dollar budget with 90 staff members and including four traditional libraries and one public law library. Previously she oversaw 10 branches and bookmobile, as well as the youth and family, teen, adult and special services units as the public services manager at Virginia Beach Public Library. She came to VBPL from Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore where she worked for seven years, most recently as state library resource center manager.

Tamika Barnes, Department Head for Perimeter Library Services at Georgia State University & 1998 Scholar
She oversees the work of the five libraries on the Perimeter campuses in the metro Atlanta area. Previously, she was the Library Director at Georgia Perimeter College, Dunwoody Campus. She has worked in a variety of library settings as the Library Director at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a contractor, Head of Reference at North Carolina A&T State University, and Engineering Services Librarian at North Carolina State University. Tamika is a member of the ALA Executive Board.
Visit us at ala.org/spectrum to learn more about the Spectrum Scholars.