

# Inclusive Internship Initiative (III)

## Findings from a 2022 Survey of Intern and Mentor Alumni

*April 2022*  
*Jake Cowan*  
*Independent Consultant to the Public Library Association*

### Evaluation Report Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Are III intern alumni interested in library science education?.....	4
Do III intern alumni continue to work in libraries? .....	6
How did III prepare intern alumni for their education and career? .....	7
How did III influence intern alumni views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice? .....	11
Did participating in III change practices at libraries?.....	13
What did mentors learn through participating in III? .....	17
How did III influence mentor views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice? .....	19
III Participation Summary and Survey Response Rates .....	21

### Executive Summary

---

The Public Library Association’s (PLA’s) [Inclusive Internship Initiative \(III\)](#) was first piloted in 2017 and continued through 2021, with the 2020 program being cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key elements of the III program include paid summer-long internships for high school students at their local public library working with a library mentor on a community-based learning project, and PLA events for interns at program kickoff, during the summer, and at the end of the summer.

These program elements are designed to help high school students better understand the scope of library work and how their interests and skills align with library work. The program also aims to develop in participating high school students an understanding of how libraries positively influence their communities. Other outcomes III seeks to influence include building library capacity to provide programming for diverse audiences and support diverse professionals, and helping library staff better understand their role in supporting diversity in early library career pathways.

In early 2022, mentors and intern alumni across the different program years of III were asked to participate in a follow-up survey to learn more about these outcomes. The findings from the survey show that the first five years of III have accomplished what the program set out to do. Intern alumni explored their passions through III, and created programs that strengthened their libraries connection to the community. Libraries continued these programs, with many also changing their hiring practices with

the goal of having a workforce that reflects their community. Mentors improved their professional skills, and valued working with their interns and with librarians from around the country.

### How did III impact interns?

Intern alumni shared that participation in III helped them build skills and confidence to work in a professional environment. Many intern alumni also shared that they had limited or no exposure to public libraries prior to participating in III, and that working in a library increased their understanding of the library and information technology field. They also learned the importance of libraries reflecting the communities they serve.

Many intern alumni continue to explore their interest in libraries - 75% of intern alumni that participated in the survey reported that they either had post-III work experiences related to libraries, archives, museums, or related organizations, or are still interested in pursuing these experiences. In addition, 35% of intern alumni that participated in the survey indicated that they are interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science.

While some intern alumni have continued to pursue an interest in libraries, others identified that they found their passion for other interests during their internships. Intern alumni also valued the opportunity III provided to meet people from different places, and who had different identities. Intern alumni experienced personal growth and learning from interacting with people who introduced them to new perspectives.

#### Intern Alumni Stories

- Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative allowed me to dive deeper into my passions through the mentorship project while also helping others. I feel more connected with my interests through the internship, and this has helped me in deciding what to study in college.
- It is so important to feel like you are represented in your library. They are places of great power and comfort for children, teens, and adults. Going through this program helped me understand that the future of libraries is what we make it.
- Through participating in III I was able to meet a wide variety of people; some were very similar to me and others had very little in common with me. Being surrounded by many unique and driven people really shaped my future.

### How did III impact Libraries and Mentors?

Participating in III helped mentors improve their skills as librarians, and helped them grow their professional networks. They valued the opportunity to practice mentorship skills, and for several mentors, III provided a first opportunity in a role that supervised teens. Mentors also valued learning about race, equity, diversity, and social justice alongside librarians from around the country.

Mentors shared that III interns created programs that brought new patrons to the library, including many examples of sustained change where libraries have embedded programs created by their III interns. They also described that participating in III changed how their library approached internships so that they focused more on hiring people that reflect the community. Several mentors shared that participating in III influenced their library to increase diversity in hiring for all library staff, not just interns and young adults.

#### Mentor and Library Stories

- After the III, we opened up our library substitute position to candidates with high school diplomas (removing the BA requirement). This attracted younger and more diverse applicants. Several of the library substitutes initially hired have moved into permanent, full-time, benefited positions.
- This was one of my first experiences as a mentor and supervisor. I enjoyed working with the intern and helping her develop in the role. It was a major factor in my decision to seek a promotion and become a supervisor. I've presented with my intern at local conferences to spread her program idea and help other libraries replicate it.

## Evaluation Report Detail

---

### Are III intern alumni interested in library science education?

#### *MLIS Interest*

Intern alumni were asked a series of questions to document their post-secondary education decisions and interests. 35% of survey respondents indicated that they are interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science. Over two-thirds of these 24 survey participants that are interested in pursuing an MLIS do not identify as White/Caucasian. 10 identify as Hispanic or Latino of any race, 7 identify as White/Caucasian, 3 identify as African-American or Black, 2 identify as Asian, 1 identifies as Middle Eastern, and 1 identifies as multiracial.

Are you interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science?		
Yes	24	35%
No	45	65%
<b>69</b>		

92% (22) of these intern alumni indicated that their experience as an III intern encouraged their interest in a Master's in Library Science.

#### *Post-Secondary Education Decisions*

87% (60) of the intern alumni survey respondents are currently enrolled in school. Among the 13% not enrolled in school, some completed their post-secondary education or are planning to pursue more education.

Are you currently enrolled in school?		
Yes	60	87%
No	9	13%
<b>69</b>		

Among the 60 intern alumni still in school, 82% are enrolled in a four-year college or university. Seven are enrolled in Community College, and 3 are in graduate school.

What kind of school do you attend?		
High school	1	2%
Community College (2-year degrees)	7	12%
Four-year College or University	49	82%
Graduate School at College or University (Master's or Doctorate)	3	5%
<b>60</b>		

Among the 49 intern alumni who are enrolled in a four-year college or university, 3 are pursuing a degree with coursework in library and information technology. Some intern alumni interested in pursuing an MLIS are pursuing different undergraduate majors. One intern alumni wrote that, *“I’m still in my undergrad - English with an emphasis on writing, rhetoric and technical communication. I plan on getting my Master’s in Library and Information Science.”*

Are you pursuing a bachelor’s degree with coursework in library and information technology?		
Yes	3	6%
No	46	94%
<b>49</b>		

### *Intern Alumni Undergraduate Majors*

**Responses to ‘what is or was your undergraduate major at your college or university’?** Responses with a “\*” indicate the intern alumni also expressed interest in a MLIS.

Accounting (3)	Elementary Education	Physics and Technology/Applied Design
BFA Musical Theatre	English* (5)	Physics of Medicine and Bioethics
Biochemistry and Biological Sciences	Entrepreneurship Business*	Psychology and Criminal Justice
Biology	Government and International Relations*	Public Affairs*
Business*	Graphic Design	Public Health
Business and Marketing Education Comprehensive	History (2)	Social Science*
Business Finance	International Political Economy	Social Work*
Chemical engineering	Liberal Studies*	Spanish and Business*
Communication and Philosophy	Math	Technical Theatre and Anthropology*
Communication Arts	Media Studies, Political Science, and Spanish	Theater*
Computer Engineering*	Music Education	Urban Studies*
Computer Science*	Nursing	Visual Media (Media Studies)
Criminal Justice	Pastoral Ministries	Writing, Literature, and Publishing*
Criminal Justice	Pharmaceutical Sciences	
Digital Film Making		

## Do III intern alumni continue to work in libraries?

53% (37) intern alumni have post-III experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization. 21 intern alumni are currently working in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization, and another 16 have worked in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization since their III internship experience. Among these 37 intern alumni, 76% (28) indicated that their III experience impacted their decision to pursue these work experiences “very much” or “quite a bit”.

<b>Work or intern experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization post-III?</b>		
Yes – Currently	21	30%
Yes – Not currently	16	23%
No	32	46%
	<b>69</b>	

<b>How much did participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative positively impact your decision to pursue a job or internship in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization?</b>		
Very Much	21	57%
Quite a bit	7	19%
Some	8	22%
Very Little	1	3%
	<b>37</b>	

Among the 32 intern alumni that did not have work experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization post-III, 47% (15) are still interested in these kinds of work experiences. The 15 respondents who did not have post-III work experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization were asked to share ideas about what would help them achieve their goal of working in a library, archive, museum, or a related field. Responses emphasized needing scholarships for their education, and access to work opportunities/experiences.

In total, 25% (17) of all intern alumni that responded to the survey did not have post-III work experiences related to libraries, archives, museums, or a related organizations, and were not interested in pursuing these experiences.

<b>Are you interested in working in a library, archive, museum, or a related field?</b>		
Yes	15	47%
No	17	53%
	<b>32</b>	

Intern alumni were asked in an open-ended question to describe in more detail what their role was and the work they did in the job where they work(ed) or intern(ed) at a library, archive, museum, or a related organization. Some intern alumni described that they were continuing to work in the library where they interned with the III program, while others described experiences working in a different

public library or an academic library while attending college. Several also noted work they were doing in museums and arts and culture organizations. A selection of responses representing these observations follows:

- *When I was an intern at the library....I focused more on my project to make the services known to the young people who have just arrived in this country. Now I work as a Spanish outreach clerk in the same library, I also work with the group of young newcomers.*
- *I was offered a part time position as a Messenger Clerk. I worked as a MC for a little over 2 years while in college. I also was a guest speaker at future internship events, sharing my experience with the new interns.*
- *I currently work as a library assistant in my university's library as part of my work-study. I assist patrons, shelf books, check books in and out, perform headcounts, code RFID tags for the materials, and I make sure the library is neat and orderly.*
- *The role I had in this internship can best be described as a curatorial position in that I was given the freedom and flexibility to create an event for my community. This experience has planted a passion for me to continue to civically engage with my community. Currently I combine my artistry with activism as I empower communities to tell their stories. I am involved with art organizations that have a gallery and archives I enjoy exploring.*

## How did III prepare intern alumni for their education and career?

Intern alumni were asked to describe how participating in III prepared them for their education and career.

A major theme in intern alumni responses is that **participation helped build a wide range of skills**. Communication skills were mentioned frequently, along with networking. Many intern alumni also described that participating in III **helped build their confidence to work in a professional environment**.

- *III helped me gain leadership, writing, and communication skills central to my studies and career goals.*
- *I improved my professional skills as well as my public speaking skills. This has taught me how to be confident. It taught me how to remain calm and prepared for any challenges I may face when speaking about something, as well as the challenges I may face in school or in the workplace.*
- *My experience helped me to be prepared while working with many different people, and being exposed more I was able to gain more confidence in talking. All the knowledge that I got will help me improve even more in my education and career.*
- *I obtained life skills including public speaking, attention to detail, coursework prep, and creating healthy communication. These skills will carry me through the end of my educational journey and throughout my career.*
- *I have learned how to be proactive in the community, which made me more effective at working collaboratively with students in my school and in the workplace. I have also learned social media marketing skills, which can be applied to many different careers. Those skills taught me how to advocate for myself. Lastly, I improved my professional skills as well as my public speaking skills. This has taught me how to be confident. It taught me how to remain calm and prepared for any*

*challenges I may face when speaking about something, as well as the challenges I may face in school or in the workplace. Interning at the library has prepared me for higher education and made me well prepared for a career.*

Another theme from these responses is participating in III **educated intern alumni about the library and information technology field**. Intern alumni identified that they had limited or no prior exposure to public libraries, and **that working in a library increased their understanding that libraries are valuable and important**.

- *The internship taught me that there is a lot more to a library than just checking out books. The internship made me fall in love with the library, being able to spend a few days in essentially each role in the library was an eye opening experience. I worked in accounting, translation, cataloging, special collections, property management, security, basically anything you can think of I got to experience during the internship.*
- *The III opened my eyes to what librarianship really was, and further ignited my passion for libraries. Working in a public library really helped me develop problem solving skills, customer relationship skills, and overall gave me a curiosity for learning. I also got to work closely with community programs and learned the basics of developing one. All of these skills have helped me be a better student, and have given me an insight into what is waiting for me as a librarian.*
- *The III program opened my eyes to the world of information related careers dedicated to maintaining the use of the collective knowledge of humans. I took libraries and other forms of knowledge wells for granted, I thought it was all easy. I could not have been more wrong, and now I wish to help people accumulate and reference more knowledge.*

Intern alumni also described that participating in III **helped them make decisions about their education and professional interests**. Some intern alumni were inspired to pursue careers in librarianship. Others found their passion for other interests through III.

- *Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative allowed me to dive deeper into my passions through the mentorship project while also helping others. I feel more connected with my interests through the internship, and this has helped me in deciding what to study in college.*
- *It helped give me a glimpse of a meaningful career and it guided what undergraduate program would be best for me with the options that I had.*
- *It prepared me a lot. It gave me an actual idea of what I want to do with my life, and I ended up interning at the same location through AmeriCorps the three summers after the Inclusive Internship Initiative because I loved it so much!*
- *The inclusive internship initiative became a start for my future endeavors to help the Latino community despite not pursuing a career as a librarian or social worker. The III was helpful in preparing what to expect of high standard programs.*

Some intern alumni described how III influenced them in multifaceted ways, **sharing what they learned, why that learning was valuable to them, and how they use what they learn**.

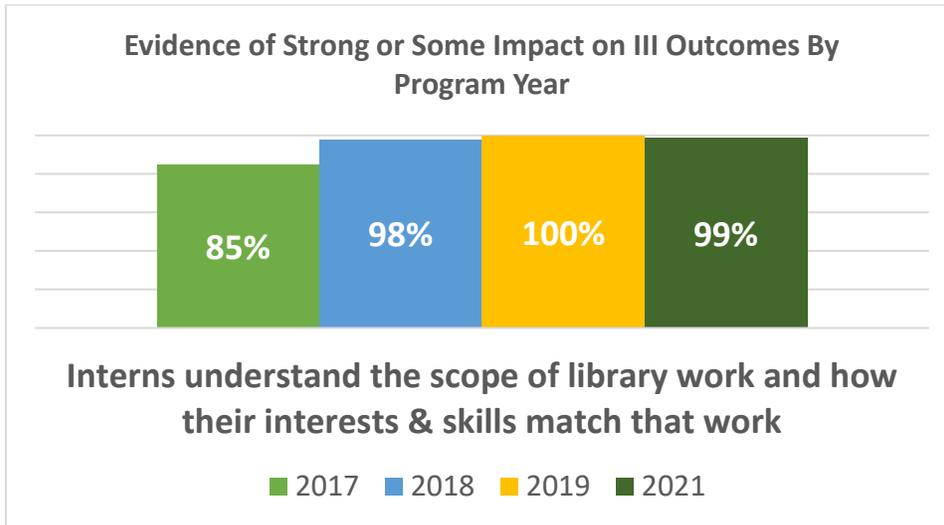
- *III gave me the skills I needed to be successful academically, professionally, and socially. I learned how to network and forged friendships with people that I still talk to, to this day. The freedom we were given to plan and implement our own projects still sticks with me. Today, at University I am putting together an art gallery and musical review for Black History Month; I don't think this project would have been as successful as it is without the skills I learned during my time with III.*

*While at this time I don't intend to pursue a career in the library field, the skills I learned working at a library has given me a newfound respect for people in that field and it rekindled my love for reading.*

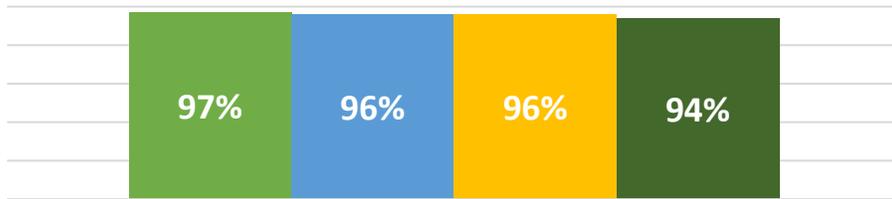
- III prepared me for my educational and career experience by instilling in me the passion and desire to inspire my community to learn, tell, and create our stories. Educationally speaking I learned a lot by asking librarians and points of resources about their studies - that has influenced me to take a similar path. Overall, creating an event for my community felt like I had the power to combine my love for art and empowerment. My educational journey has been strengthened with the knowing that I have resources that believe in me and help me see the desired result that allows me to further my fight in social justice.*
- I believe that this internship prepared me for larger roles in my life in the future, with the freedom granted to me by my mentor, I was able to have complete control over my events and ideas. This was my first internship, and I can honestly say that the experience has made me more confident in public speaking and more independent in idea brainstorming. I learned more about history than I did in high school, and I got to meet a lot of other people who had great ideas to share. I am confident that I will be fully prepared for any internships I may have in the future, regardless of the profession.*

#### *Evidence of III's Impact on Interns from Past Surveys*

Prior surveys also support that III helped prepare interns for their educations and careers. For four key outcomes that interns were asked about in surveys administered immediately after their participation, there was strong or some evidence of impact each year. In some program years, every intern (100%) showed strong or some evidence of impact for these outcomes. For each outcome, for each program year, at least 81% of interns showed strong or some evidence of impact for these outcomes.



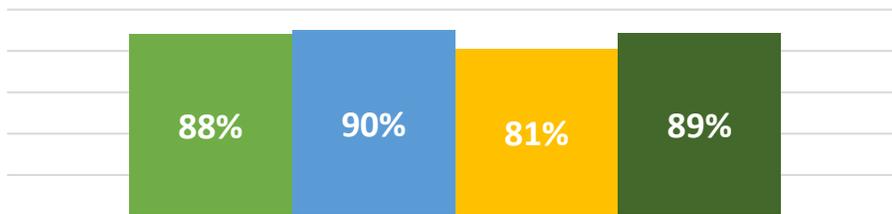
Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



**Interns better understand the ways that librarians positively serve their communities**

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

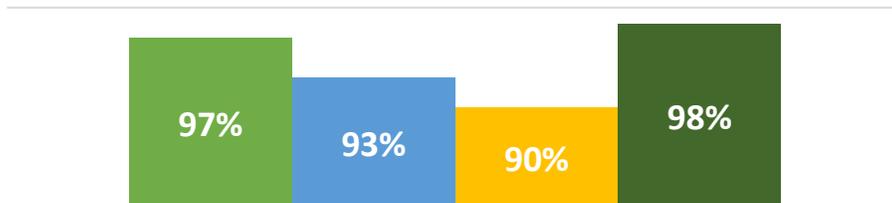
Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



**Interns view librarianship as a viable, rewarding and meaningful career path**

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



**Interns gain tools to make decisions about the educational directions that will lead them to library service & leadership**

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

## How did III influence intern alumni views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice?

Intern alumni were asked to describe how their participation in III influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

One major theme from these responses is that III showed intern alumni that **public libraries are places where equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are valued**. Intern alumni also learned from III the importance of **libraries reflecting the communities that they serve**.

- *It is so important to feel like you are represented in your library. They are places of great power and comfort for children, teens, and adults. Going through this program helped me understand that the future of libraries is what we make it. I got to meet so many like minds that just seemed to want to be apart of positive change for their libraries, apart of change that emphasized equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.*
- *My participation in the internship made me think about the community in an entirely new way. Prior to the internship, I had looked at the world through blinders, and I only saw the things that I believed applied to me and my situation in life. This internship enabled me to surround myself with and learn about people from all walks of life, whether they were patrons or other interns that I met while in DC and Chicago.*
- *It did not particularly because I was aware of much of the information that was said during our conference beforehand, however, it did influence my opinions on the ways libraries are and can be involved with that work*
- *I have learned that equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are all important topics that need to be heard. I've learned that the library should be a place where you can gain a lot of knowledge not only through books but by learning and being active in your community. Many people can really build relationships through their community library and with that community, people can effectively fight for equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.*

Another theme in the responses is that III provided intern alumni the opportunity to **meet people from different places**, and who had different identities. Intern alumni **experience personal growth and learning** from interacting with people who introduced them to new perspectives.

- *Through participating in III I was able to meet a wide variety of people; some were very similar to me and others had very little in common with me. Being surrounded by many unique and driven people really shaped my future. My time at III encouraged me to continue to surround myself with people who are driven. It opened my eyes to how well people can work together even if they are diverse and the importance of inclusion. Hearing the stories of some of the other interns and their rise above adversity encouraged me to be a helping hand to those around me. I was encouraged to care more about social justice and to speak up more when I saw something unfair happening. I still vividly remember the presentation on equity and I try to keep those values with me as a college student surrounded by diversity.*
- *I think the inclusive internship initiative gave me a great host of networks to learn from people different in experiences than my own.*
- *It gave me a fuller understanding about people who were different from me and influenced me to care and fight for social issues.*

Intern alumni also reported in these responses that their experience with III either **reinforced or expanded views** they came to the programs with about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

- *I was passionate about equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice even before the internship, but felt there was little I could do. This internship gave me the confidence, support, and resources needed to make the change I wanted to see in my community.*
- *It influenced my views because I've learned to look at everything more broadly. I also work to look at things with an inclusive mindset.*
- *My views for equality, diversity and inclusion were very strong from a young age. But how to propose a solution within a space such as libraries to make them more inclusive, wasn't something I had knowledge in. So having the opportunity to develop a program was eye opening in the sense that there are plenty of ways and with help of others to make space for inclusiveness.*
- *Increased my views, learned more about my peers across the country and how urban libraries work, power dynamics within librarianship and how they should be modified for equity*
- *As a minority myself, it expanded my views on the work that has been done to achieve equity and what else can be done to continue pushing social justice.*
- *Growing up I always knew the U.S. still struggled with racism, sexism, ableism, almost every "ism" imaginable but it wasn't until the III program that I realized I could do something for the community. That I could help provide a safe space for everyone to enjoy.*

One response to this question came from an intern alumni who experienced racism in an academic setting. While it is the only example of a response like this in this survey, any example of an experience like this is unacceptable and an indicator of the importance of continuing to advocate for the adoption of equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in the library field.

- *My experience of library school at [university name redacted] was quite difficult, due in large part to the racism I experienced from professors and others. Thus the primary influence it had on my views was the result of being exposed to harm. It was one of a number of experiences that led to me eventually leaving the field.*

In addition to these themes, there are **several examples of open-ended responses** where intern alumni described in detailed and personal terms how III influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

- *It had a huge influence. I'm Latina but I'm from a prominently white community and I didn't even feel comfortable describing myself as Latina because I'm mixed and don't speak Spanish. III helped me, not only feel comfortable in my identity, but learn more about the community I've grown up in and how the library helps (and has failed) to support minority groups. Being able to meet with other interns really broadened my worldview and helped me think outside of my own state and step into the broader conversation. I still talk a lot about the importance of diversity in children's literature (actually have written several papers about that) and recently have been thinking critically about how banned books disproportionately affect minority authors (because the news) as well as how being a person of color in the library professions contributes to burnout.*
- *As a big LGBT supporter even before the internship it didn't do a lot in terms of that. I am however currently the treasurer of the libraries LGBTQIA committee and you could argue that*

*that opportunity wouldn't have been available to me without the internship. More so than gender related equity, diversity and inclusion though, the internship really opened my eyes to wealth related equity. The library is a home for everyone, regardless of how poor or rich they are. There are plenty of homeless people that rely on our libraries and I think the internship was the first time I realized that. I'm glad we can be there for them.*

- *III allowed me to see equity and inclusion through another lens, not of my own. I was able to meet and hear stories of librarians and fellow interns from other cities different from my own that were more disadvantaged. I got to learn in what ways libraries are trying to bridge the gap in inclusion and also make content more diverse. Lastly, III emphasized speaking our own truth and creating a place for all backgrounds within the library leadership setting.*

## Did participating in III change practices at libraries?

72% of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III helped their library improve their hiring of teens and young adults so that they reflect the diversity in their community, and helped their library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in their community.

79% of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III made diverse audiences in their community more aware of library programs and resources.

	Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative...					
	...helped our library improve our hiring of teens and young adults so that they reflect the diversity in our community		...helped our library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in our community		...made diverse audiences in our community more aware of library programs and resources.	
Strongly agree	25	30%	28	33%	14	17%
Agree	35	42%	33	39%	52	62%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	24%	21	25%	15	18%
Disagree	4	5%	2	2%	3	4%
Strongly disagree	no responses in this category for any question					

Mentors also shared insights about how participating in III influenced their library in response to an open-ended question. They described that participating in III **changed how their library approached internships** so that they focused more on hiring from the community, and hiring people that reflect the community. Several mentors shared that this included **increased diversity in hiring for all library staff**, not just interns and young adults. Some mentors described that their libraries changed how they approached internships so that they are more substantive and engaging experiences for interns.

- *It helped start conversations about who we are hiring in the library and who gets to see themselves reflected in our staff.*
- *The year prior to our involvement, we started our own paid inclusive teen internship program. Our district is large and it has been difficult to offer more than one teen the opportunity to work*

*with us. Joining Inclusive Internship Initiative gave us ideas for structuring the internship in the future. It also helped us set a pay level we feel is fair for the position and HR agreed on. It paved the way for ideas moving forward with this position.*

- *After the ILL, we opened up our library substitute position to candidates with high school diplomas (removing the BA requirement). This attracted younger and more diverse applicants. Several of the library substitutes initially hired have moved into permanent, full-time, benefited positions.*
- *My library already regularly hired youth from our immediate community. This however created an opportunity for youth to focus more on the big picture work the library does as well as help craft a program, which is not an opportunity we had previously had for youth. We realized we could incorporate our youth workers into this kind of work more, and it has given them a more holistic library work experience.*
- *I think it helped demonstrate that high school level students could be directed to do more substantive projects instead of shelving books and cutting out craft components.*
- *We changed the language of our intern application to make it more inclusive and also restructured the internship to give interns more power.*
- *This initiative started us on a path of placing more value on language skills when hiring at our library. We also hired our intern on a part-time basis after this internship concluded.*
- *Participating in the program became a catalyst for our library seriously looking to create opportunities for BIPOC students as a pipeline to librarianship, and to get serious about hiring a DEI coordinator at our library, which we did over a year ago.*
- *We think far more often of how to encourage diverse young audiences to consider librarianship as a career. Previously our efforts had centered on those already holding a BA, Master's or with longer work histories.*

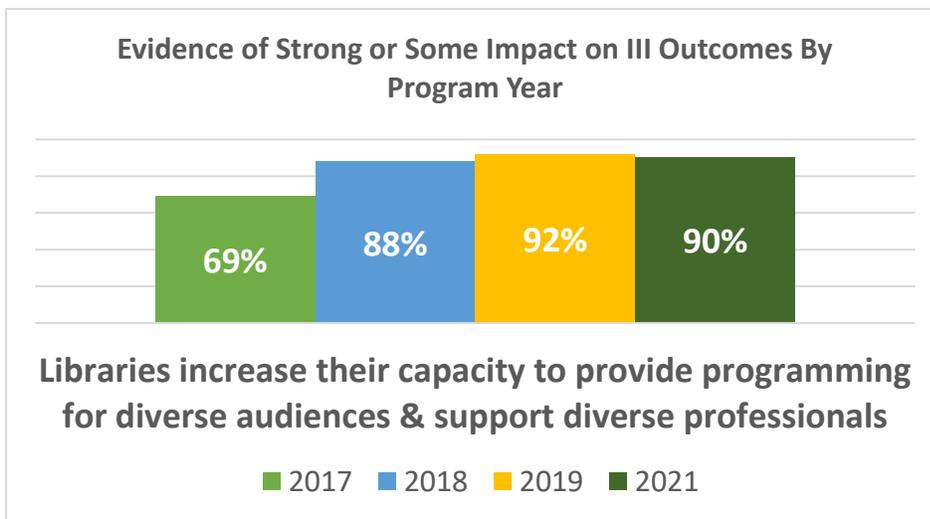
Mentors also identified that their ILL interns **created programs that brought new patrons to the library**, including many examples of sustained change where **libraries have embedded programs created by their ILL interns.**

- *Insight gained during the ILL experience has led to such library projects as initiating and leading the development of a citywide Spanish Facebook page, the purchase of equipment to allow simultaneous translation of live library programs, and seeking funding to hire simultaneous translators for live and virtual library events, and successfully advocating to move the Spanish-language young adult books into the teen collection (they were mixed in with adult).*
- *Participating in the PLA's Inclusive Internship helped my library re-acknowledge the importance and centrality of our teen patrons. A few months ago, after a few years of planning, we opened a new Teen Room, which our teen patrons are using and enjoying.*
- *Participating in this program has helped to spark new teen leadership opportunities at our library. While we do not have funds this year to support a paid internship, we have formed a Youth Board that works with our library system's Board of Trustees to help the library reach teens throughout our community.*
- *Some of our staff began to see library program as an opportunity for outreach to all communities*

- *The ESL program designed at III! served as the platform to hear from our community and design other ESL programs to address those needs. It also made a difference in how Spanish speakers interacted with library materials. After building a connection through the ESL class and sharing our resources, Spanish checkouts increased by 100%.*
- *We were able to gain insight about teens in the community and needs at the high school, which has improved our teen services.*
- *Raised awareness of library programs and opportunities for teens in our area.*
- *We have participated in III 3 times. Each time, our intern's influence among their peer group brought more young people to the library which persisted after the internship ended.*
- *Partnering with a teenage intern helped to introduce library services to other teens through partnering with High School clubs (science and robotics). It was a great way to involve this demographic in participating in library services.*
- *We are still reaping the benefits from our experiences with iii. We are relaunching one of the programs initially developed by one of our interns. We have been offering increased science-based programs because of one of our other interns.*

### Evidence of III's Impact on Libraries from Past Surveys

Prior surveys also show that III helps libraries increase their capacity to provide programming for diverse audiences and support diverse professions. Approximately 90% of libraries showed strong or some impact for this outcome in III program years 2018, 2019, 2020.



### III Library Internship Program Offerings

Among mentors participating in this survey, 37% had a regular paid internship program in their library prior to participating in III. For the majority of respondents (63%) participating in III and offering paid internships was new to their library.

In 2022, 42% of mentors indicated that their library will employ teens and/or young adults in paid internships. 55% of mentors indicated their library has not decided whether to hire interns in 2022, or that they would like to do this but are not able to.

Before participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative, did your library regularly employ paid teens and/or young adults in internships or other early career roles?		
Yes	31	37%
No	53	63%
<b>84</b>		

Will your library employ paid teens and/or young adults in internships in 2022?		
Yes	35	42%
Haven't decided yet	21	25%
No, Interested, but can't do this in 2022	25	30%
No, Not interested	3	4%
<b>84</b>		

Mentors were given space to share additional insights about their 2022 internship program plans. Many mentors elaborated on the internship programs they are operating now, including descriptions of partnerships they have in place. A number of mentors also shared that lack of funding is the main barrier they have to implementing an internship program. A few mentors also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their plans for offering internships.

- *I used the III model to write a grant for older teens to teach coding and run programs for younger teens at the library. We've received the grant 3 times since we participated in III and are currently employing 4 part time teens.*
- *We partner with a county program that provides teens paid internships. We also have teen volunteers who receive stipends for helping with our Lunch at the Library program.*
- *We plan to employ an intern this summer with funds from a STEAM Equity grant.*
- *We would love to and have some future ideas if certain things came to pass, but current funding would not allow for it right now.*
- *Covid-19 has greatly reduced our teen patronage. I am currently not allowed to perform outreach of any kind. I would love to be involved in PLA III in the future or encourage someone at a different branch. Our library funding has really stagnated and we do not have the funding or support from administration to fund an internship program of our own.*

## What did mentors learn through participating in III?

Participating in III helped mentors improve their librarianship skills and helped them grow their professional networks.

	Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative helped me improve my skills as a librarian.		Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative helped me grow my professional network.	
	Strongly agree	39	46%	36
Agree	41	49%	35	42%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	5%	10	12%
Disagree			3	4%
Strongly disagree	no responses in this category for any question			

Mentors were also asked in an open-ended question to describe how being a mentor influenced their professional development as a librarian. Mentors described that their work as an III mentor helped them **refine and develop skills that enabled them to grow in their profession.**

- *Being a mentor changed my outlook. Before, I was just doing the job, but having to mentor required that I took great care in presenting the best practices of the profession to the intern. It caused me to learn more, seek out new information and in the end, I think it made me better.*
- *I learned so much from this internship experience on how to be a mentor, a project manager, a supervisor, and a communicator. This was an invaluable experience in showing me how to value and encourage ideas that are not my own, and to provide the resources and support to those who have incredible contributions. I continue to have teen volunteers year-round, and I have implemented so much of what I learned in this internship experience in working with them. I love helping teens follow projects through, encouraging them to work through and around barriers, but keeping my mind openness to possibilities. Teens are passionate and dream big, and it's been amazing to allow some of that big dreaming into our work when often budgets and other constraints can be an issue. This internship really helped me problem solve barriers like this and I use that knowledge and flexibility every day in my work.*
- *This was one of my first experiences as a mentor and supervisor. I enjoyed working with the intern and helping her develop in the role. It was a major factor in my decision to seek a promotion and become a supervisor. I've presented with my intern at local conferences to spread her program idea and help other libraries replicate it.*
- *Through the internship, I realized that I needed to work on my ability to communicate and lead staff at all levels and just be a better communicator in general. While I'm still improving, I gained valuable opportunities through serving as a mentor.*

Mentors also talked about the **value of being in a network with other mentors, and the value to they find in connecting with peers.**

- *I have met other mentor librarians that I admire and connect with. I have joined PLA and have asked my library to send me to Portland in March. I became one of the first members of our*

*district inclusion committee where I am working with other members to ask the hard questions and confront the difficult situations that are keeping our library from being as equitable, diverse and inclusive as it should be.*

- *I was able to hire and supervise the intern completely on my own, which was a new experience and helped me for the future. I was able to meet librarians from around the country, when I usually only meet librarians from my state.*
- *It has helped me innovate and connect with other rad librarians across the country.*
- *It was very useful to meet other librarians across the country who are also working in teen services and learn about their struggles and successes.*
- *The PLA III mentorship afforded me access to a much broader pool of librarians, which allowed me to see how librarianship is practiced all over the United States. The innovations and ingenuity of more experienced librarians helped me to perform my job better and gave me confidence to try new things. This role as mentor also made me evaluate what libraries think they are offering their communities versus what they are actually delivering. I realized that I need to close the gap between theory and execution and do a better job of making connections within the community I'm serving.*

Mentors **strongly valued the opportunity to practice mentorship skills**. For a number of mentors, III provided a first opportunity in a role that supervised teens.

- *Being a mentor allowed me to develop my training skills, which is integral to my new role. It also gave me countless ideas for partnerships, programs, and services that my library system can offer.*
- *I feel like being an III mentor made me a better supervisor and mentor for teen and young adult volunteers and employees. I have a better grasp of both the support they need and the talent and perspective they can bring to our organization.*
- *I hope I am better at reaching out to others and helping them grow as individuals. I am no longer intimidated about working with teens and have been a mentor to four graduating seniors over the last two years.*
- *It helped me to see a gap in programming and engagement for young adults and has inspired me to fill that gap through youth participatory action research projects that see youth as co-facilitators and co-researchers. III's structure and funding helped me to see what could be possible for collaborative work with youth in support of community aspirations and goals.*

Mentors also shared that **working as an III mentor helped them reconnect with why they decided to work in the library field**, and helped broaden their perspective on how to approach their work.

- *Being a mentor helped me by expanding our outreach to our entire community and also in meeting the needs and interests of our teens.*
- *Being a mentor to a young person taught me the importance of listening, self-awareness, and self-reflection. I realized that my worldview as an older person needed to be interrogated.*
- *I enjoyed sharing what made me go the path I went, why I am on the path still, and what paths teens can take in libraries (which are so varied that it really is a great career path).*
- *I learned a better sense of empathy for others and to bring people up by celebrating their differences.*

- *It has helped me to determine how we should design our programs, based on the community's needs and wants, but considering their assets as well.*

## How did III influence mentor views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice?

Mentors were asked in an open-ended question to describe how being a mentor influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Their responses included reflections on how III influenced them, as well as reflections on how III influenced equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in their libraries.

Mentors described that they took what they learned from participating in III and **implemented new equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in their libraries.**

- *My mentoring experience strengthened my professional commitment to DEI initiatives in the library. It opened my eyes to the social and financial barriers to greater diversity in librarianship. During conversations with our new director, I was one of several staff who advocated for the creation of a DEI coordinator role, which we now have.*
- *I used to believe in the old saying "if you feed them they will come" but now I know if they see themselves they show up. Instead of having middle-aged white librarians lead programs we have teens from the community that obviously represent the community teaching each other. The teen taught programs are the most popular programs we offer.*
- *It was not easy find EDI student participants which surprised me. It made me look more closely at social justice across recruitment and hiring practices.*
- *It was such a timely program, it fit in with conversations that were taking place at work and in the community. It was exciting to have an actionable plan that would help us put our values to work. We've been able to offer it again outside of the official PLA program which is even better.*

Mentors described that **interns influenced library practices and programming** through their project work and through sharing their perspective with mentors.

- *I am much more open to trying new things and advocating for programs that highlight and celebrate the diversity in our city. I try to think critically and carefully about every decision I make in the library to ensure that it offers our city's teens equitable opportunities. My intern also gave our library excellent feedback on the ways we are not offering equitable experiences and we have since then formed task forces to work on these great insights.*
- *I thought that our space was welcoming (smiles, conversations, welcomes, diverse material and displays...). My intern mentioned that she didn't feel comfortable as a library patron because she didn't see anyone like her in our staff. That was eye opening for me.*
- *Our III intern made me aware of how some of our most earnest efforts were falling short, being misunderstood, or simply not getting to the audience we were trying to reach. We have actively used that information to make changes and become more bold and intentional in our social justice and EDI efforts.*

- *Our Intern did a Human Library project. Her passion in hearing diverse viewpoints helped to further stimulate my desire to develop my own lens, assessing how library services meet the needs of my community.*

Mentors also **valued the opportunity to learn about race, equity, diversity, and social justice with mentors and librarians from around the country.**

- *I have become much more committed to learning about equity diversity and inclusion and to find effective ways to support marginalized community members. I have begun following BIPOC Activists, LGBTQIA Activists and Disability Activists on Twitter to learn what the current issues are and to find ways to help. I continue to serve on the Inclusion Committee for my Library District. Finally, I have helped to form a cohort of Project Ready and am working my way through the curriculum.*
- *Being from a mostly white, rural community, it was important for my mentee and I to be able to interact with people from other backgrounds. I have never been in a more diverse space in librarianship; it was a great experience.*
- *It enabled me to have a direct and tangible connection to someone who shared none of my own demographics and I learned how young people view social justice and their struggles going forward.*
- *While each of us are unique in our own way, we all should have the opportunity to be part of something, whether this is a library program or a conference. I saw this diversity reflected in the interns at the conference, along with their programs and the different libraries they represented.*

Some mentors shared that participating in III **reinforced or expanded their views race, equity, diversity, and social justice.**

- *I have always felt strongly about EDISJ work. Before I wasn't as comfortable talking about it, but now I feel that it is an important conversation to have surrounding all areas of the library.*
- *It helped me to see that there are small changes that we can make at library that will have a huge impact on the community.*
- *The program highlighted the fact that libraries are for everyone.*
- *The whole experience, and especially hearing about all the intern projects at the wrap-up, definitely made me more aware of just how important it is to work with diverse stakeholders - whether staff or community members - in developing our services.*
- *Seeing the community respond to intern programs vs traditional library programs made me recognize how much distrust there is between libraries and the communities we claim/hope to serve*
- *As a public librarian in an already diverse community in the state of Hawaii, it made me realize the struggles that other libraries are experiencing across the nation. It has opened my eyes on issues that other communities are experiencing.*
- *Confirmed the importance of a staff that reflects the community.*

### III Participation Summary and Survey Response Rates

III had participating libraries, interns, and mentors from 2017-2019 and in 2021. There was no program in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	# of Participating III Libraries	Urban/Town	Suburban	Rural/Tribal
<b>2017</b>	33	56%	28%	19%
<b>2018</b>	49	46%	46%	8%
<b>2019</b>	50	29%	51%	20%
<b>2021</b>	41	55%	38%	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>			

Some libraries and mentors participated in multiple years. The total number of unique libraries that participated across the four years of the program is 140.

Interns and mentors that participated in III from 2017-2019 were included in this 2022 survey. Interns who participated in 2021 were not included in the survey because their participation was very recent and it was unlikely they would have new insights that vary from responses they gave in the survey they participated in right after their internships concluded. The survey was not sent to mentors who mentored for the first time in 2021. To participate mentors must have mentored sometime in the 2017-2019 window.

The overall response rate for the intern alumni survey was 44%, and for the mentor survey 60%. For interns, the survey response rate is higher for the most recent program year (2019). For the first program year (2017), PLA did not have contact information for interns. Multiple methods were used to contact 2017 interns, including through mentors and fellow interns, and via email, text, phone, and social media. In spite of these efforts, there were 30 (56%) of 2017 III interns for whom contact information was unavailable.

	Number of Survey Responses	Total Number of Interns	Response Rate
<b>2017</b>	16	54	30%
<b>2018</b>	22	54	41%
<b>2019</b>	31	49	63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>44%</b>

	Number of Survey Responses	Total Number of Mentors	Response Rate
2017	19	35	54%
2018	26	47	55%
2019	26	42	62%
Multiple Years*	13	16	81%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>60%</b>

\*Notes mentors who participated several times/multiple libraries.

### **Mentor Survey Respondent Race/Ethnicity**

How do you describe your race/ethnicity?		
African American/Black	12	14%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	2%
Asian	2	2%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	8	10%
White/Caucasian	56	67%
Two or more of these groups	2	2%
Prefer to self-describe	2	2%
	<b>84</b>	

The two self-describe responses were *American*, and *Caucasian and Asian*.

### **Mentor Survey Respondent Gender Identity**

How do you describe your gender identity?		
Man	11	13%
Non-binary	2	2%
Woman	69	82%
Prefer to self-describe	1	1%
Prefer not to respond	1	1%
	<b>84</b>	

The self-describe response was *Non-binary and woman*.

### **Intern Survey Respondent Race/Ethnicity**

How do you describe your race/ethnicity?		
African American/Black	17	25%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	1%
Asian	10	14%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	19	28%
White/Caucasian	15	22%
Two or more of these groups	3	4%
Prefer to self-describe	2	3%
Prefer not to respond	2	3%
	<b>69</b>	

The two self-describe responses were *Middle Eastern & Indigenous* and *Hispanic and Latina*.

### **Intern Survey Respondent Gender Identity**

How do you describe your gender identity?		
Man	15	22%
Non-binary	8	12%
Woman	45	65%
Prefer not to respond	1	1%
	<b>69</b>	