

**ALA SSIRT
TASK FORCE ON COMPENSATION
(not appropriate to level of education, experience and
responsibilities)**

**Submitted to the ALA Support Staff Interests Round Table Board
JUNE, 2000**

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Task Force on Compensation
(not appropriate to level of education, experience, responsibilities)
Final Report
Submitted by The Task Force to the ALA SSIRT Board

Introduction

In 1996, at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Washington DC, the Executive Board of the Support Staff Interests Round Table decided to put together a survey asking paraprofessionals from across the country about their concerns. Ed Gillen, from the State Library of New York, was asked to chair a task force of support staff representing different sections of the United States. The primary charge of the task force was to develop a survey and to see that it reached the largest number of support staff possible.

The task force held all its meetings electronically and developed a comprehensive survey which was sent out electronically on the LIBSUP-L discussion list and the Library Support Staff Resource Center web site. Printed copies were mailed to all state organizations. The survey was also reprinted in Library Mosaics and in the April/June 1997 issue of the NYSLAA Network Connection. In addition, the process and how to access the survey were discussed on the April 11, 1997, Soaring to Excellence teleconference.

The results of the survey indicated that the top three concerns among library support staff were:

1. Career ladders (few opportunities for advancement)
2. Compensation not appropriate to level of education, experience and responsibilities
3. Access to continuing education and training opportunities

At the 1998 midwinter conference, the SSIRT Board decided to set up three task forces, which would analyze and suggest remedies for these concerns.

Data, Comments, and Analysis

Selected data from the ALA SSIRT summary of Survey to Determine Top Three Issues of Concern to Support Staff, June 1997 (1909 respondents)

Of the people who responded:

26 earned less than \$10,000	(06.6%)
256 earned \$10,000 - \$14,999	(13.4%)
444 earned \$15,000 - \$19,999	(23.3%)
513 earned \$20,000 - \$24,999	(26.9%)
346 earned \$25,000 - \$29,999	(18.1%)
141 earned \$30,000 - \$34,999	(07.4%)
83 earned more than \$35,000	(04.3%)

Of the people who responded:

625 earned a high school diploma	(32.7%)
279 earned an Associate's Degree	(14.6%)
727 earned a Bachelor's Degree	(38.1%)
64 earned a Master's Degree--MLS	(3.4%)
116 earned a Master's Degree--"Other"	(6.1%)
10 earned a Ph.D.	(0.5%)

Selected data from LIBSUP-L compensation survey distributed March 29, 1999, with responses received through the beginning of May, 1999. (212 respondents)

Degrees held

High school	13.6%
Some college	7.0
Associate's degree	18.7
Bachelor's degree	50.4
Master's degree	5.6 (not MLS)
MLS	4.2
Other	0.5

Years of library experience

Average of 14.7 years

Salary (all survey respondents)

Less than \$7 per hour	1.9%
7.00-8.99	10.4
9.00-10.99	13.2
11.00-12.99	27.3
13.00-14.99	20.3
15.00-16.99	13.2
More than \$17 per hour	13.7

Salary (union/non-union)

	Union	Non-Union
Less than \$7 per hour	-	3
7.00-8.99	2	19
9.00-10.99	-	24
11.00-12.99	8	41
13.00-14.99	22	18
15.00-16.99	12	16
More than \$17 per hour	15	11

Type of library

Academic	72.6%
Public	16.0
Government/Military	0.5
Special	10.9

Average percentage/type of staff

Full-time	81.4%
Part-time	18.6
MLS	31.9%
Non-MLS	68.1

Is your library unionized?

Yes	31.8%
No	68.2

Are you now performing duties previously performed by an MLS librarian within your institution, or the same kind of duties routinely performed by MLS librarians in other institutions?

Yes	73.6%
No	26.4

Are you in a leadership position?

	Union	Non-Union
Yes	26	73
No	33	59

Have you reached the top level of your position?

	Union	Non-Union
Yes	42	87
No	17	45

Does your job description match the responsibilities you actually have?

	Union	Non-Union
Yes	39	70
No	20	61

Selected comments from LIBSUP-L compensation survey.

"One huge issue we face is simply trying to define our jobs in a way that college budget and human resource officers can comprehend and appreciate the nature, quantity and quality of what we do, particularly given the tremendous impact of automation and technology. Until we can articulate this, we will continue to be classed along with clerical workers and administrative assistants on campus."

"I feel that pay issues cannot come into alignment until things like standard job title and job descriptions are in place."

"Certification or skills testing with uniform standards might be a solution."

"There should be a career ladder for paraprofessionals that is parallel to that of MLS librarians. However, there is not. Paraprofessionals at this library hit the glass ceiling as soon as they are hired; there is nowhere to go."

"In order to increase salary levels for support staff, we need to show importance of libraries and the knowledge, skills necessary at all levels of library workers from the library director to the clerks."

"Continuing education and career ladders are a must."

"I believe that the only way for support staff to improve their situation is to seize every opportunity to obtain additional training (which may or may not include an MLS), volunteer to serve on committees, become active in state and national organizations for support staff, keep an open mind about changes."

"One of the main problems is that minimum requirements for paraprofessional positions here are unrealistically low, and that is how the library justifies paying low wages. For example, the job I had when I started here required me to have an 'excellent reading knowledge' of four foreign languages, including two that are not even taught at this university because they are so esoteric. However, the minimum educational requirement for my job is a high school diploma."

"It has been my experience that the salaries of paralibrarian staff at the institutions where I've worked kept pace reasonably well with the salaries of MLS-endowed staff -- in other words, I've had a high salary at libraries where salaries were generally high, and a low salary at libraries where salaries were generally low. The solution would seem to be better salaries for *all* staff."

"We are state funded so our only hope of raises is to lobby our legislators."

"I would like to see ALA and the other organizations for library support people to work with organizations, such as the national accreditation organizations for colleges, to show them that we are not secretaries, and as such we should not be paid as secretaries."

"I have long been an advocate of some kind of certification for library workers that would be recognized by all libraries/library types."

Task Force Comments/Analysis

Support staff/paraprofessional salaries vary greatly, but are consistently and significantly lower than librarian salaries and apparently are not affected to a great degree by changes (i.e. additions) to job responsibilities.

There is great interest among support staff/paraprofessionals for:

- Continuing education
- Career ladders
- National certification

Job titles for support staff/paraprofessionals are far too numerous to list and serve to divide the workforce and cloud the issues. Some standardization of job titles and job descriptions would help enormously in determining fair and equitable compensation levels.

It is important to clearly define the different characteristics of library paraprofessionals, library support staff, and administrative and/or clerical positions. Such clarification would help support more equitable compensation levels for library staff whose responsibilities have been expanded to include some duties traditionally handled by professional librarians.

Recommendations

1. ALA establish an accredited national certification program for library support staff. As part of this certification program, a skills training program should be initiated. Such a program should give support staff access, on a geographical or distance education basis, to new and continuing education opportunities at a minimal cost to individuals and institutions.
2. ALA develop and implement a personnel utilization plan that acknowledges and values the advanced skill levels achieved by individuals participating in a skills training program. This plan will also encourage the appropriate use of individuals with formal library training below the Master level. Such a plan should also work toward standardization of titles, responsibility and skill and training levels.
3. ALA encourage libraries to "unlink" library support staff positions from clerical classifications, and that SSIRT investigate appropriate comparable positions in the public and private sectors to which support staff pay levels may be linked

4. ALA include support staff in any and all considerations and recommendations concerning library salary levels.
5. SSIRT establish a grant/award program through which support staff may receive funds to support new and continuing education in the library field.
6. SSIRT produce a manual for library employees working in public sector positions on how to lobby and work with government officials to increase the compensation levels for library support staff. Information should also be included for unionized Support Staff explaining how to work within that structure to improve their compensation and address classification and other issues.
7. ALA initiate a strong advertising program within the profession, targeting library directors and administrators, educating them as to the concerns of library support staff and offering suggestions for alternative solutions for staff recognition, morale, and incentives that go beyond monetary considerations.
8. SSIRT take an active role in the implementation of as many of these recommendations as possible, representing the interests of library support staff and reporting back to library support staff on a regular basis.

Conclusion

The Task Force on Compensation was overwhelmed at times with the broad scope that this issue. There are many issues and variables that affect the compensation level of support staff and during our work we discussed and debated many of them. However, through the hard work, determination and perseverance of the committee members our report has been completed for the SSIRT Boards review. We hope that the research, data and recommendations we have provided in this report serve as a catalyst, and that SSIRT begin to organize an action plan to address the compensation issue. We acknowledge that some of these recommendations may be controversial, but we believe that these actions are necessary to help Support Staff achieve a level of compensation equivalent to the responsibility we have in our positions.

This report is the result of the efforts on the part of the following individuals:

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Attachments

1. Comparisons of Library Job Wages with Other Professions Wages.
2. State Wage Comparisons: Librarians, Library Technical Assistants, Library Assistants, and Bookmobile Drivers
3. Compensation for Support Staff, American Library Association, Office for Library Personnel Resources, Standing Committee on Library Education, World Book-ALA Goal Award Project on Library Support Staff, Issue Paper #5

State Wage Comparisons

Librarians, Library Technical Assistants, Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers (1997 data)

State	Librarians (1)				Library Technical Assistants (1)				Library Assistants (1)			
	Median	Midrange		Regional (2) Salary Guide	Median		Midrange		Median		Midrange	
		Low	High			% (3)	Low	High		% (3)	Low	High
Alabama	\$35,800	\$30,300	\$39,500		\$18,000	50.28%	\$12,600	\$22,800	\$15,100	42.18%	\$11,900	\$18,700
Alaska	\$45,400	\$30,600	\$61,400		\$32,600	71.81%	\$26,300	\$43,900	\$28,100	61.89%	\$23,000	\$35,600
Arizona	\$33,400	\$27,700	\$42,500		\$21,200	63.47%	\$17,000	\$28,700	\$18,800	56.29%	\$14,800	\$21,600
Arkansas	\$32,000	\$26,900	\$38,000		\$17,500	54.69%	\$13,900	\$22,600	\$13,900	43.44%	\$11,600	\$17,300
California	\$43,400	\$35,400	\$57,000		\$24,400	56.22%	\$20,800	\$28,200	\$24,300	55.99%	\$19,100	\$28,200
Colorado	\$38,300	\$29,400	\$50,500		\$22,800	59.53%	\$18,600	\$28,200	\$17,700	46.21%	\$14,200	\$22,100
Connecticut	\$44,300	\$35,900	\$59,500	\$31,273	\$27,400	61.85%	\$18,000	\$36,400	\$16,600	37.47%	\$12,300	\$22,900
Delaware	\$40,600	\$32,900	\$47,100	\$22,500 **	\$22,500	55.42%	\$16,000	\$30,800	\$16,600	40.89%	\$14,400	\$21,900
District of Columbia	\$46,600	\$34,100	\$67,500		\$27,500	59.01%	\$21,000	\$35,300	\$21,900	47.00%	\$17,500	\$24,500
Florida	\$34,400	\$27,900	\$42,100		\$20,900	60.76%	\$17,400	\$25,400	\$17,100	49.71%	\$13,900	\$20,200
Georgia	\$40,500	\$34,400	\$46,800		\$17,500	43.21%	\$13,400	\$20,900	\$16,100	39.75%	\$13,100	\$19,500
Hawaii	\$44,300	\$35,000	\$51,000		\$27,700	62.53%	\$24,100	\$32,300	\$19,000	42.89%	\$15,900	\$21,900
Idaho	\$29,300	\$20,900	\$37,300		\$17,300	59.04%	\$14,700	\$20,000	\$17,500	59.73%	\$12,100	\$21,300
Illinois	\$38,400	\$28,500	\$48,300	\$30,096 *	\$19,800	51.56%	\$14,900	\$23,300	\$16,600	43.23%	\$12,400	\$21,400
Indiana	\$35,400	\$29,000	\$44,900		\$17,100	48.31%	\$13,800	\$21,000	\$14,400	40.68%	\$11,800	\$17,400
Iowa	\$26,500	\$12,400	\$38,100	\$23,911	\$22,300	84.15%	\$17,200	\$28,500	\$12,900	48.68%	\$11,500	\$17,300
Kansas	\$33,900	\$23,300	\$39,000		\$20,200	59.59%	\$16,300	\$25,600	\$15,200	44.84%	\$12,100	\$18,900
Kentucky	\$38,100	\$29,400	\$44,700		\$19,300	50.66%	\$15,800	\$23,000	\$12,300	32.28%	\$11,400	\$15,700
Louisiana	\$31,400	\$26,500	\$36,600	\$22,000	\$17,100	54.46%	\$13,700	\$21,300	\$13,100	41.72%	\$11,600	\$16,800
Maine	\$31,000	\$23,200	\$36,900		\$19,300	62.26%	\$14,900	\$22,300	\$15,500	50.00%	\$12,400	\$18,600
Maryland	\$34,000	\$26,500	\$44,600		\$24,200	71.18%	\$18,000	\$29,700	\$16,900	49.71%	\$12,200	\$22,900
Massachusetts	\$40,800	\$33,300	\$49,500	\$31,362 *	\$25,300	62.01%	\$20,600	\$29,900	\$22,700	55.64%	\$15,400	\$26,600
Michigan	\$38,900	\$30,900	\$49,200		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$17,100	43.96%	\$13,500	\$21,900
Minnesota	\$39,400	\$32,800	\$47,900		\$23,500	59.64%	\$19,900	\$30,600	\$18,600	47.21%	\$13,500	\$24,000
Mississippi	\$28,800	\$21,000	\$34,700		\$13,900	48.26%	\$11,500	\$19,700	\$12,300	42.71%	\$11,400	\$15,800
Missouri	\$30,800	\$26,400	\$38,000		\$15,900	51.62%	\$12,000	\$20,400	\$13,600	44.16%	\$11,600	\$18,000
Montana	\$28,700	\$23,800	\$36,900		\$18,300	63.76%	\$14,500	\$22,500	\$14,600	50.87%	\$11,900	\$17,500
Nebraska	\$28,500	\$15,000	\$35,000		\$15,100	52.98%	\$11,800	\$20,900	\$15,500	54.39%	\$12,400	\$19,000
Nevada	\$43,100	\$36,100	\$48,500		\$19,300	44.78%	\$15,500	\$23,100	\$21,000	48.72%	\$16,200	\$25,300
New Hampshire	\$33,600	\$22,300	\$43,600		\$20,700	61.61%	\$15,500	\$25,300	\$17,600	52.38%	\$12,500	\$22,400
New Jersey	\$44,200	\$33,800	\$63,200	\$31,868	\$23,300	52.71%	\$18,000	\$30,200	\$19,200	43.44%	\$13,700	\$24,300
New Mexico	\$32,200	\$25,500	\$39,800		\$17,600	54.66%	\$12,500	\$24,200	\$15,500	48.14%	\$12,500	\$18,500
New York	\$39,800	\$31,600	\$51,000		\$22,900	57.54%	\$15,700	\$28,200	\$18,100	45.48%	\$12,000	\$23,700
North Carolina	\$34,200	\$28,300	\$39,800	\$26,176 **	\$17,800	52.05%	\$14,200	\$22,700	\$16,800	49.12%	\$13,100	\$20,600
North Dakota	\$27,000	\$22,400	\$32,900		\$19,600	72.59%	\$17,800	\$22,700	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ohio	\$37,500	\$27,500	\$46,700	\$25,198 **	\$18,200	48.53%	\$12,700	\$22,500	\$15,300	40.80%	\$12,000	\$19,200
Oklahoma	\$30,900	\$26,500	\$35,400		\$15,600	50.49%	\$11,700	\$20,100	\$13,500	43.69%	\$11,600	\$16,100
Oregon	\$38,000	\$29,800	\$45,900		\$25,600	67.37%	\$21,000	\$30,400	\$19,600	51.58%	\$15,800	\$22,600
Pennsylvania	\$40,400	\$30,000	\$51,900	\$26,400 *	\$20,800	51.49%	\$15,600	\$27,500	\$15,300	37.87%	\$11,900	\$19,300
Puerto Rico	\$21,900	\$19,700	\$23,300		\$12,500	57.08%	\$11,400	\$15,900	\$12,900	58.90%	\$11,500	\$17,200
Rhode Island	\$38,600	\$31,200	\$45,800	\$29,800	\$22,600	58.55%	\$17,900	\$26,700	\$19,700	51.04%	\$14,800	\$23,300
South Carolina	\$34,400	\$29,100	\$40,600		\$17,400	50.58%	\$13,700	\$21,400	\$15,800	45.93%	\$12,800	\$19,600
South Dakota	\$26,000	\$21,200	\$31,900	\$22,000	\$19,400	74.62%	\$15,300	\$23,300	\$13,600	52.31%	\$11,600	\$16,600
Tennessee	\$32,000	\$27,300	\$38,300		\$21,800	68.13%	\$16,600	\$24,800	\$15,100	47.19%	\$12,300	\$18,200
Texas	\$36,000	\$28,500	\$42,200	\$28,000	\$18,700	51.94%	\$14,700	\$22,200	\$14,800	41.11%	\$11,900	\$18,100
Utah	\$31,900	\$25,500	\$43,100		\$19,600	61.44%	\$16,500	\$21,600	\$16,000	50.16%	\$13,500	\$19,200
Vermont	\$31,800	\$24,700	\$42,900	\$26,464	\$18,300	57.55%	\$15,200	\$23,000	\$14,700	46.23%	\$11,900	\$17,700
Virginia	\$37,000	\$30,800	\$44,600		\$24,000	64.86%	\$18,900	\$28,200	\$17,300	46.76%	\$14,100	\$22,600
Washington	\$43,200	\$34,900	\$48,800		\$25,800	59.72%	\$22,000	\$30,100	\$19,800	45.83%	\$15,700	\$23,200
West Virginia	\$33,600	\$26,700	\$37,500	\$22,000	\$18,300	54.46%	\$13,600	\$23,000	\$14,300	42.56%	\$12,000	\$17,000
Wisconsin	\$37,900	\$28,400	\$45,900	\$25,830	\$19,300	50.92%	\$14,700	\$25,400	\$16,300	43.01%	\$12,800	\$20,400
Wyoming	\$32,400	\$29,500	\$37,600		\$17,100	52.78%	\$14,700	\$19,400	\$16,000	49.38%	\$12,900	\$18,700
United States	\$37,000	\$29,300	\$46,400		\$21,000	56.76%	\$15,900	\$26,500	\$16,700	45.14%	\$12,600	\$21,800

**Comparisons of Library Job Wages
with Other Professions Wages
(Median Wages - 1997 Data)**

State	Librarians	Library	Library	Computer	Secretaries	Legal	Paralegal	Medical	Licensed	Office
		Technical	Assistants	Operators		Secretary		Assistants	Practical	Clerks
Typical Educational Level	Masters	Short OJT	Short OJT	Mod OJT	Voc Tech	Voc Tech	Associate	Mod OJT	Voc Tech	Short OJT
Alabama	\$35,800	\$18,000	\$15,100	\$21,600	\$19,300	\$26,000	\$28,100	\$18,100	\$21,400	\$16,500
Alaska	\$45,400	\$32,600	\$28,100	\$24,900	\$27,800	\$37,100	\$42,200	\$25,400	\$32,800	\$23,200
Arizona	\$33,400	\$21,200	\$18,800	\$31,600	\$22,300	\$29,600	\$30,700	\$19,500	\$27,100	\$17,900
Arkansas	\$32,000	\$17,500	\$13,900	\$18,600	\$17,100	\$21,900	\$26,100	\$15,800	\$21,400	\$16,300
California	\$43,400	\$24,400	\$24,300	\$26,300	\$27,100	\$37,600	\$39,800	\$21,400	\$30,300	\$20,900
Colorado	\$38,300	\$22,800	\$17,700	\$24,300	\$23,300	\$27,700	\$31,000	\$20,500	\$26,100	\$19,900
Connecticut	\$44,300	\$27,400	\$16,600	\$28,600	\$28,200	\$31,600	\$36,300	\$23,100	\$36,600	\$21,800
Delaware	\$40,600	\$22,500	\$16,600	\$22,500	\$25,200	\$28,100	\$30,100	\$21,100	\$29,400	\$20,500
District of Columbia	\$46,600	\$27,500	\$21,900	n/a	\$29,100	\$41,500	\$33,700	\$26,000	\$28,900	n/a
Florida	\$34,400	\$20,900	\$17,100	\$23,000	\$21,400	\$29,000	\$31,600	\$19,900	\$26,500	\$17,900
Georgia	\$40,500	\$17,500	\$16,100	\$23,900	\$21,500	\$27,900	\$27,700	\$20,100	\$23,900	\$17,900
Hawaii	\$44,300	\$27,700	\$19,000	\$25,800	\$27,100	\$32,800	\$30,200	\$23,300	\$28,900	\$20,600
Idaho	\$29,300	\$17,300	\$17,500	\$22,300	\$20,100	\$23,000	\$30,600	\$16,900	\$23,800	\$18,400
Illinois	\$38,400	\$19,800	\$16,600	\$24,700	\$23,900	\$28,800	\$29,500	\$21,300	\$25,600	\$19,800
Indiana	\$35,400	\$17,100	\$14,400	\$22,800	\$20,100	\$24,400	\$26,900	\$19,600	\$25,700	\$17,500
Iowa	\$26,500	\$22,300	\$12,900	\$23,600	\$19,400	\$21,700	\$27,100	\$17,700	\$22,900	\$17,500
Kansas	\$33,900	\$20,200	\$15,200	\$20,200	\$19,400	\$22,900	\$26,700	\$17,100	\$23,500	\$18,000
Kentucky	\$38,100	\$19,300	\$12,300	\$21,600	\$19,300	\$22,200	\$25,200	\$18,400	\$23,400	\$16,800
Louisiana	\$31,400	\$17,100	\$13,100	\$20,700	\$18,900	\$24,100	\$26,700	\$15,500	\$22,800	\$16,200
Maine	\$31,000	\$19,300	\$15,500	\$22,700	\$20,600	\$25,000	\$29,600	\$19,600	\$24,600	\$17,600
Maryland	\$34,000	\$24,200	\$16,900	\$25,100	\$24,400	\$25,500	\$33,300	\$21,000	\$30,900	\$21,000
Massachusetts	\$40,800	\$25,300	\$22,700	\$28,500	\$27,400	\$32,000	\$37,500	\$24,300	\$33,200	\$21,900
Michigan	\$38,900	n/a	\$17,100	n/a	\$22,800	\$28,100	\$28,200	\$19,200	\$28,000	\$19,500
Minnesota	\$39,400	\$23,500	\$18,600	\$25,000	\$24,100	\$28,300	\$32,500	\$21,700	\$25,700	\$20,100
Mississippi	\$28,800	\$13,900	\$12,300	\$21,500	\$18,200	\$23,000	\$24,200	\$16,000	\$21,100	\$15,800
Missouri	\$30,800	\$15,900	\$13,600	\$22,900	\$20,600	\$23,900	\$29,900	\$18,000	\$23,200	\$17,400
Montana	\$28,700	\$18,300	\$14,600	\$19,400	\$17,600	\$20,900	\$25,900	\$17,700	\$22,200	\$16,700
Nebraska	\$28,500	\$15,100	\$15,500	\$21,100	\$18,700	\$22,900	\$24,100	\$18,700	\$22,900	\$17,000
Nevada	\$43,100	\$19,300	\$21,000	\$26,400	\$24,200	\$31,000	\$35,800	\$20,800	\$29,500	\$18,700
New Hampshire	\$33,600	\$20,700	\$17,600	\$25,700	\$23,000	\$26,500	\$34,000	\$21,500	\$27,100	\$19,600
New Jersey	\$44,200	\$23,300	\$19,200	\$30,200	\$27,700	\$32,100	\$34,000	\$23,300	\$31,600	\$21,200
New Mexico	\$32,200	\$17,600	\$15,500	\$21,600	\$19,700	\$25,400	\$27,500	\$17,100	\$25,900	\$17,000
New York	\$39,800	\$22,900	\$18,100	\$29,300	\$26,800	\$37,600	\$30,900	\$22,900	\$28,500	\$21,100
North Carolina	\$34,200	\$17,800	\$16,800	\$23,900	\$21,600	\$24,800	\$27,100	\$20,200	\$25,800	\$18,800
North Dakota	\$27,000	\$19,600	n/a	\$20,300	\$17,600	\$18,800	\$25,100	\$18,300	\$22,900	\$16,500
Ohio	\$37,500	\$18,200	\$15,300	\$23,400	\$21,500	\$26,000	\$26,900	\$19,200	\$26,700	\$18,500
Oklahoma	\$30,900	\$15,600	\$13,500	\$19,500	\$19,600	\$24,900	\$26,100	\$18,000	\$22,200	\$15,800
Oregon	\$38,000	\$25,600	\$19,600	\$24,400	\$21,400	\$28,800	\$30,600	\$22,300	\$27,900	\$20,000
Pennsylvania	\$40,400	\$20,800	\$15,300	\$24,300	\$22,500	\$27,500	\$31,600	\$19,400	\$27,500	\$18,900
Puerto Rico	\$21,900	\$12,500	\$12,900	\$16,200	\$14,700	\$16,300	\$24,300	\$12,600	\$34,300	\$11,800
Rhode Island	\$38,600	\$22,600	\$19,700	\$24,700	\$23,800	\$28,400	\$30,900	\$21,200	\$12,400	\$19,900
South Carolina	\$34,400	\$17,400	\$15,800	\$21,800	\$20,300	\$24,400	\$26,200	\$19,200	\$23,600	\$17,300
South Dakota	\$26,000	\$19,400	\$13,600	\$20,100	\$18,800	\$22,300	\$26,100	\$16,900	\$22,200	\$15,400
Tennessee	\$32,000	\$21,800	\$15,100	\$21,500	\$20,700	\$23,500	\$26,100	\$19,200	\$23,200	\$17,700
Texas	\$36,000	\$18,700	\$14,800	\$22,800	\$22,000	\$31,100	\$31,400	\$18,900	\$24,600	\$17,300
Utah	\$31,900	\$19,600	\$16,000	\$16,100	\$21,100	\$27,400	\$31,600	\$19,500	\$23,300	\$17,700
Vermont	\$31,800	\$18,300	\$14,700	\$22,600	\$21,400	\$23,600	\$28,600	\$22,900	\$25,300	\$18,400
Virginia	\$37,000	\$24,000	\$17,300	\$23,500	\$22,600	\$23,600	\$27,000	\$20,400	\$24,600	\$17,800
Washington	\$43,200	\$25,800	\$19,800	\$25,800	\$24,400	\$30,900	\$32,700	\$21,300	\$28,400	\$21,800
West Virginia	\$33,600	\$18,300	\$14,300	\$20,900	\$18,400	\$18,800	\$23,300	\$16,200	\$22,000	\$16,000
Wisconsin	\$37,900	\$19,300	\$16,300	\$22,800	\$22,100	\$25,300	\$29,900	\$20,300	\$26,100	\$18,900
Wyoming	\$32,400	\$17,100	\$16,000	\$20,200	\$19,000	\$20,800	\$21,500	\$16,500	\$22,600	\$15,700
United States	\$37,000	\$21,000	\$16,700	\$24,200	\$22,900	\$29,300	\$31,100	\$20,200	\$25,900	\$18,900

(1) America's Career InfoNet, Wages and Trends (1997 data): <http://www.acinet.org/acinet/occ_sea1.htm> with data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/oeshome.htm>>.

How to interpret wage data -

Detailed Wages:

- The wage data are collected through the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. The OES survey collects wage data for more than 750 occupations. National earnings data is collected from part-time and full-time workers who are paid a wage or salary. The OES survey does not cover the self-employed, owners and partners in unincorporated firms, household workers, or unpaid family workers. It is important to note that the outlook data described below does include the self-employed and unpaid family workers.
- Annualized wage data for all occupations other than teachers was calculated by multiplying the hourly wage by 2080 to account for a 40-hour work week for 52 weeks (year). No hourly wages are presented for most teachers because there is no standard number of hours worked per year (most salaried occupations work a standard 2080 hours).
- **Median Wage** is the estimated 50th percentile of the distribution of wages; fifty percent of workers in an occupation earn wages below and fifty percent earn wages above the median wage.

Typical Educational Level:

- Masters - Masters Degree
- Associates - Associates Degree
- Short OJT - Short-term on-the-job-training
- Mod OJT - Moderate-term on-the-job-training
- Voc Tech - Post-Secondary vocational training

State Wage Comparisons

Librarians, Library Technical Assistants, Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers

(1997 data)

(1) America's Career InfoNet, Wages and Trends (1997 data for "Librarians, Professional," "Technical Assistants, Library," and "Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers"): <http://www.acinet.org/acinet/occ_sea1.htm> with data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/oeshome.htm>>.

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· **Median** Wage is the estimated 50th percentile of the distribution of wages; fifty percent of workers in an occupation earn wages below and fifty percent earn wages above the median wage.

· **Midrange** is the range of wages for the middle 50% of the occupation; 25% of workers in the occupation earn less than the lower midrange estimate and 25% of the workers in the occupation earn more than the higher midrange estimate.

(2) Regional Salary Guide, *American Libraries*, December 1997.

Minimum starting salary figures recommended by state library associations for professional library posts in these states. The recommendations are advisory only, and ALA has not adopted recommendations for minimum salaries.

* Rather than establish one statewide salary minimum, some state associations have adopted a formula based on variables such as comparable salaries for public school teachers in each community, or the grade level of a professional librarian post.

** These recommendations apply only to public librarians.

(3) Comparison of Library Technical Assistants and Library Assistants median wages to Librarians median wages.

Compensation for Support Staff

American Library Association
Office for Library Personnel Resources
Standing Committee on Library Education

World Book-ALA Goal Award Project on Library Support Staff

Issue Paper #5

Most, if not all, paraprofessionals want more compensation. Individuals who think their compensation is reasonable typically express concerns for other paraprofessionals. Library paraprofessionals view themselves as an under-compensated segment of an under-compensated profession. They know their compensation is pegged to that of librarians who are not highly paid and don't have elaborate benefit packages.

Less is known about compensation for paraprofessionals than for librarians. Given all that we do know about salary and benefits in the library field it is safe to say that compensation is relatively low for paraprofessionals. The majority of libraries in this country are in the public or educational sectors where funding is consistently a problem. If salary and benefit packages have been good in the past there is now the potential of erosion and certainly less hope for significant gains than in the past.

It can be assumed that paraprofessional salaries at the local library level are typically lower than those of librarians. While paraprofessional salaries in some libraries are higher than those of some MLS librarians in other libraries it is probably fair to assume that if national level salary data comparable to that of librarians existed, average paraprofessional salaries would be less than those of MLS librarians. Paraprofessionals are also more likely than librarians to be paid on an hourly rather than salary basis and this may have an impact on work attitudes as well as personal finances.

The American Library Association Library Education and Personnel Utilization Policy (LEPU, 1970) recommends some overlap between high level paraprofessional salaries and those of entry level librarians but we don't know how widely this recommendation is implemented.

Even less is known about paraprofessional benefits. Benefits vary greatly from institution to institution. In many organizations policies exist that assign different levels of benefits to different levels of staff. It is likely that many paraprofessionals have fewer or lesser benefits than librarians but we really don't know enough even to make assumptions. Benefits for part-time workers, typically defined as working somewhere under twenty hours a week per year, most particularly health insurance and the right to participate in retirement programs, are also of concern to paraprofessionals and to the libraries which employ them.

Just as librarians suffer from assumptions about the nature of the work done in libraries and the worth of work done by a primarily female work force, so do paraprofessionals. Pay equity studies and court cases have typically resulted in increases in salary for paraprofessionals as well as for librarians although there have been exceptions. Clearly the fact that paraprofessionals, like librarians, are, as far as we know, a female intensive work force affects salary and benefits.

Union activity is another factor that has had an unknown but generally assumed favorable impact on paraprofessional compensation.

The variety of entry level educational credentials required for employment as a paraprofessional and the fact that paraprofessionals tend to learn on the job are also factors likely to affect compensation. (See the paper on Basic Education for further discussion of this issue.) Many paraprofessionals have a higher level of education than required

for employment in their position, and while many libraries have come to rely on this, there typically is no compensation built in for "being over qualified." This is true even if that "over-qualification" exists in terms of requirements set at a lower level than actually needed to do a job.

In fact, maintaining current job descriptions, including appropriate educational and experience requirements, and classification systems is a major issue for paraprofessionals and for the libraries employing them.

The lack of control many library administrators and boards have over the personnel systems they operate under, and often a lack of input in the design of that system, may also be contributing factors to low compensation for paraprofessionals. Paraprofessional positions are often classed with lower paid clerical workers and factors inappropriate to the nature of paraprofessional work applied in classifying them. For example, library paraprofessionals may be seen by a centralized personnel office as data entry clerks, rather than given credit for applying judgment in the use of bibliographic databases. The issue of the weight or ranking given to factors is also of concern to paraprofessionals (and to librarians, too).

Those who favor increased compensation for paraprofessionals argue that the nature of their positions requires more compensation. Many view these jobs as under-rated because of inadequate measures and/or gender bias. They argue further that these positions are increasingly more complex and demanding, requiring greater skill and knowledge, and often having more responsibility than some MLS librarians.

Others think that compensation for librarians is a more serious issue or argue that only when librarians are better rewarded will paraprofessional compensation improve. Some say libraries simply can not afford to pay staff more. Still others argue that paraprofessional jobs are routine and should not have a higher level of compensation.

Questions typically raised about compensation for paraprofessionals include:

How can we convince the administration/library board/personnel department/legislature or personnel consultant that paraprofessionals should earn more?

What factors were/should be used to determine the worth of this (these) jobs?

Where will we get the money to better compensate paraprofessionals?

Comments on compensation from the paraprofessionals and MLS librarians who participated in the 45 focus groups held as part of the ALA project include:

"Low salaries are somewhat conspiratorial. It seems as if there is an effort to keep support staff salaries down, among women especially."

"As a library community we need to articulate ourselves and get comparable worth. At an elite college we looked at library jobs but not at sex issues, the library jobs ended up lower on the pay scale than the people who shovel the snow."

"The personnel consultant hired to facilitate this [reclassification] doesn't have a clear understanding about library staff . . ."

It would help if an official agency such as ALA or ACRL would set up guidelines on linking library positions with job classifications."

"Most of the paraprofessionals are part-time. They receive no benefits. All of the librarians are full-time."

"Professionals get big salary increases every year. Techs get freezing caps . . . and other legislatures must be made to realize . . ."

"[It would help to] work with civil service to get merit increases for support staff, monetary recognition."

"I'm willing to take on any task and become proficient, but there is no wage compensation."

Kathleen Weibel August 13, 1991