



# CONTINUING EDUCATION OF NEW LIBRARIANS

## *Emerging Leaders Project Group O*

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### PROJECT QUESTION

Investigate the continuing education needs of new librarians.

1. What do they need to learn?
2. How does ALA reach them?

### TRANSITION FROM GRADUATE STUDENT TO PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIAN

STRESSFUL DUE TO:

1. Lack of professional experience
2. Limited set of skills

WHY?

Library education emphasizes the theoretical over the practical.

### WIDE VARIETY OF NEW LIBRARIANS

NEW LIBRARIANS

- do not equate young librarians  
(i.e. many come to the field as a second career)
- do not equate individuals new to the library  
environment  
(i.e. paraprofessionals who professionalize)

Theoretical approaches of MLS/MLIS programs leave room for need of a wide set of practical/hands-on skills

### DIVERGENT TRAINING NEEDS

- Literature review★ demonstrated divergent needs
  - Soft Skills Training  
Esp. Communication Skills—writing, PR,  
project management, internal and external politics

But Also

- Practical/“Hands On” Experience  
Esp. reference, technology applications, collection development
- One consistent theme for new graduates:  
Placement and Career Training as the market does not provide the opportunities promised

★ *Synthesis document available at table*

### TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

- Abundance of training opportunities are available★ from multiple institutions
  - ALA
  - Professional Library Organizations
  - State Library Organizations
  - Regional Networks
  - LIS Continuing Education

★ *Opportunities document available at table*



### CONCLUSIONS

Gaps in training opportunities may be perceived rather actual

- Need to educate new librarians on various organizations that provide training
- Need to provide mentoring to devise customized training for new librarians
- Need for new librarians to recognize appropriate training mode (i.e. online, classroom-based) for best outcome

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continued influence in the conversation regarding MLS/MLIS education’s ability to address the need to develop practical/hands on skills through internships and practica
2. Continued development of mentoring programs that allow for the personalization of training to meet the needs of each individual
3. Further promotion of current training activities available by finding communication streams outside of ALA that can meet new librarians on the ground and who may not as yet have made connections to ALA
4. Further promotion and creation of placement assistance activities for newly graduated librarians
5. Promotion of soft skills training with focus on communication skills
  - To address the discrete expressed needs as demonstrated in the literature review
  - To assist to mend the “generational gap” that is often discussed

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