

# Fact Sheet 2011



## LIBRARY WORKERS: FACTS & FIGURES

Libraries and library staff provide essential services for schools, universities, and communities. Among those services are: free, reliable, and organized access to books, the Internet and other sources of information and entertainment; assistance finding work; research and reference assistance; and scores of others, including programs for children; immigrants, and other groups with specific needs.

This fact sheet explores: library staff in the workforce, where library staff work, their diversity, the role of women in the profession, issues of pay and pay equity, the union difference for library staff, and the impact the recession has had on libraries and library staff.

### The Numbers

- In 2010, there were 216,000 librarians, 43,000 library technicians, and 114,000 other education, training, and library workers.<sup>1</sup> “Librarian” is generally defined as a person who holds a master’s degree in library science or meets state teaching license standards for being a school librarian.<sup>2</sup> “Library technicians” assist librarians in the acquisition, preparation, and organization of materials “and assist users in locating the appropriate resources.”<sup>3</sup>
- “Nationwide, visits to public libraries totaled 1.5 billion, or 5.1 library visits per capita. There were 2.28 billion circulations of library materials (7.7 per capita) and 1.21 uses of Internet PCs per capita during fiscal year 2008.”<sup>4</sup> Libraries cost each person about \$35 per year.<sup>5</sup>
- Between 2008 and 2018, the number of librarians is expected to increase by 7.8 percent, while library technician positions are expected to increase by 8.8 percent. Total employment in the U.S. is expected to increase by 10.1 percent over this period.<sup>6</sup>
- These projections for library workers are higher than the previous projections for 2006–16, when the number of librarians was expected to increase by 3.6 percent, while the number of technicians increased by 8.5 percent.<sup>7</sup> Forty percent of library directors plan to retire between 2007 and 2016.<sup>8</sup>
- The mean hourly earnings of librarians in 2010 were \$20.72.<sup>9</sup>
- The mean hourly wage of library technicians was \$12.34 in 2010.<sup>10</sup>
- Library assistants had mean hourly earnings of \$12.15.<sup>11</sup>

### Employment

- Most librarians work in school and academic libraries.<sup>12</sup> About one-fourth of librarians work in public libraries.<sup>13</sup> The remainder work in special libraries or as information professionals for companies and other organizations.<sup>14</sup>

- Nearly three out of 10 librarians work part-time.<sup>15</sup> Public and college librarians often work weekends and evenings, as well as some holidays.<sup>16</sup> School librarians usually have the same workday and vacation schedules as classroom teachers.<sup>17</sup> Special librarians usually work normal business hours, but in fast-paced industries such as advertising or legal services, often work longer hours when needed.<sup>18</sup> This also applies to library technicians.<sup>19</sup>
- More than half of all library assistants are employed by local government in public libraries; most of the remaining employees work in school libraries.<sup>20</sup> Nearly 70 percent of all library assistants work part-time.<sup>21</sup>

### **Diversity among Library Workers**

- Librarians, technicians, and assistants are predominantly white.<sup>22</sup> According to an ALA report, there is a persistent lag in racial diversity and people with disabilities.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2010, 16.1 percent of all librarians were minorities: 9.2 percent were Black or African American, 5.2 percent were Hispanic or Latino, and 1.7 percent were Asian.<sup>24</sup>
- Minorities accounted for 29 percent of all other education, training, and library workers in 2010: 16.1 percent were Black or African American, 1.7 percent were Asian, and 11.2 percent were Hispanic or Latino.<sup>25</sup>
- Approximately 22 percent of library technicians in 2009 were minorities: 10 percent were Black or African American, while other minorities accounted for 12 percent.<sup>26</sup>
- Among members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), 14.3 percent of the professional staff is composed of minorities.<sup>27</sup> Asian/Pacific Islanders account for 6.4 percent of the professional staff, African Americans for 4.6 percent, Latinos or Hispanics for 2.8 percent, and American Indian/Alaskan natives for 0.5 percent.<sup>28</sup>
- “The percentage of minorities in managerial or leadership positions in the largest U.S. academic libraries is far lower: 6.1 percent are directors,” 6.3 percent are associate directors, 5.3 percent are assistant directors, and 9.4 percent are branch librarians.<sup>29</sup>
- The percentage of minorities varies significantly between geographical regions. Minorities make up 19.3 percent of professional employees in ARL libraries in the South Atlantic Region, while composing 2.9 percent of professionals in the East South Central ARL libraries.<sup>30</sup>
- Between 1990 and 2000, the number of librarians under age 35 and between ages 35-44 consistently decreased. The only age group to grow was 45-54, which rose by 28 percent.<sup>31</sup> Librarians have a mean age of 48.<sup>32</sup>

### **Women’s Work**

Library workers have been, and will continue to be, mostly female.

- Most students of library science are women. Women comprise 81 percent of MLS enrollment.<sup>33</sup> Black women comprise 4.2 percent of MLS enrollment, Hispanic women comprise 4.1 percent of MLS enrollment, and Asian women comprise three percent of enrollment.<sup>34</sup>
- In 2010, women accounted for 82.8 percent of all librarians and 75.9 percent of all other education, training, and library workers.<sup>35</sup>
- An ARL survey found that 63 percent of research librarians are female. Among research library directors, women are in the majority (60 percent).<sup>36</sup>

- While men accounted for only 17.2 percent of librarians in 2010, they accounted for 40 percent of library directors in universities.<sup>37</sup>

### **The Wage Gap**

Pay inequity remains a persistent and pervasive problem in our society. In 2010, median weekly earnings for women were 81 percent those of men.<sup>38</sup> For most women of color, the earnings gap is even larger: African American women earned just 72 cents for every dollar earned by men in 2010.<sup>39</sup> Hispanic and Latina women earned just 62 cents for every dollar men earned.<sup>40</sup> Only Asian American women's earnings were closer to parity with men's: in 2010, they earned 94 percent that of all men.<sup>41</sup> However, they earned 83 percent as much as Asian American men.<sup>42</sup>

- In 2010, female librarians had median weekly earnings of \$841, compared to \$921 for men.<sup>43</sup>
- The overall salary for women research librarians was 96.2 percent that of men in 2009-10, compared to 94.4 percent in 2003-04.<sup>44</sup>
- In a 2009-10 survey of academic librarians, even when years of experience in a particular job were equal, men still outpaced women in salary by nearly 3.7 percent: \$69,277 for women and \$71,953 for men.<sup>45</sup> On average, women have more years of experience than men, but men's salaries are still higher in nearly all 10 experience cohorts.<sup>46</sup> This pattern is repeated for minority librarians.<sup>47</sup> The average salary of minority men is higher than that for minority women in nearly all 10 experience cohorts.<sup>48</sup>
- The average salary for male directors in ARL libraries was lower than that of their female counterparts.<sup>49</sup> This is one area of the profession where the wage gap has been closed.

### **Regional Variance in Salaries**

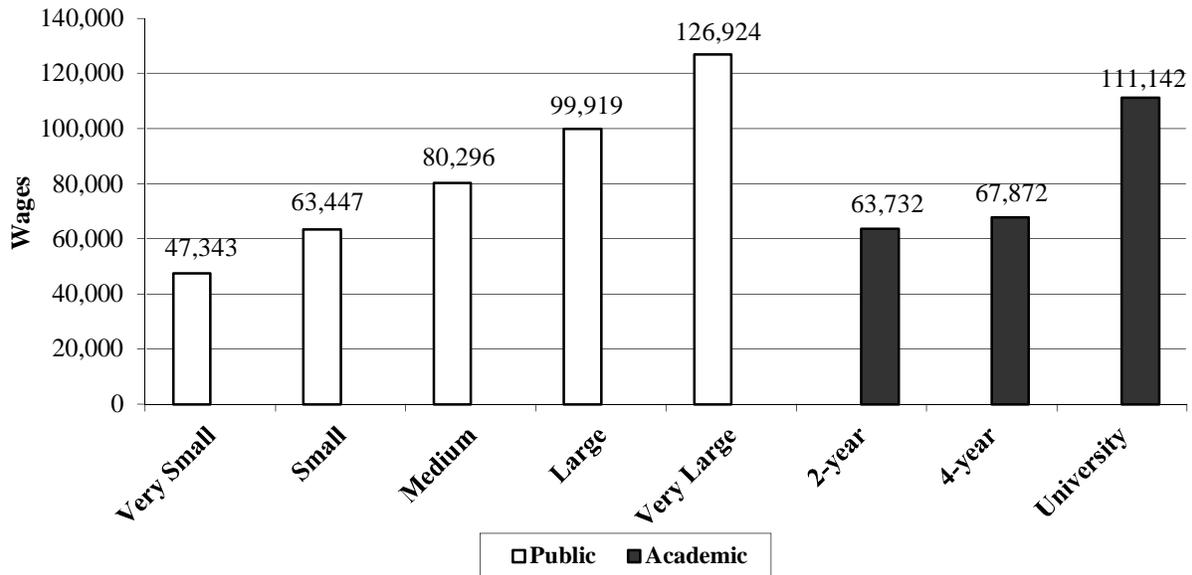
- Nationally, the mean annual wage for librarians was \$55,670 in 2009.<sup>50</sup> However, wages varied from state to state. The states with the highest salaries were the District of Columbia, California, Maryland, Connecticut, and Massachusetts where the average annual wage among the five states was \$64,694.<sup>51</sup> The five lowest paying states were South Dakota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Idaho where the average annual wage among the five states was \$40,626.<sup>52</sup>
- The West and North Atlantic, which have high union membership rates, also consistently have the highest median salaries for library workers.<sup>53</sup>

### **Institutional Variance in Salaries**

Library Director salaries depend on the type of library.

- In 2007, directors of very small public libraries (serving a population of less than 10,000) had median wages of \$47,343. In contrast, directors of very large public libraries (500,000 or more) made \$126,924. Differences exist among academic libraries as well. Directors of two-year college libraries had median annual wages of \$63,732 while directors of university libraries made \$111,142.<sup>54</sup>
- In 2010, directors of public libraries were paid a mean salary of \$100,106, while librarians made \$52,851.<sup>55</sup> Directors of academic libraries earned \$97,767, while librarians earned \$55,732.<sup>56</sup>

**Median Wages for Public and Academic Library Directors, 2007**



### **Benefits**

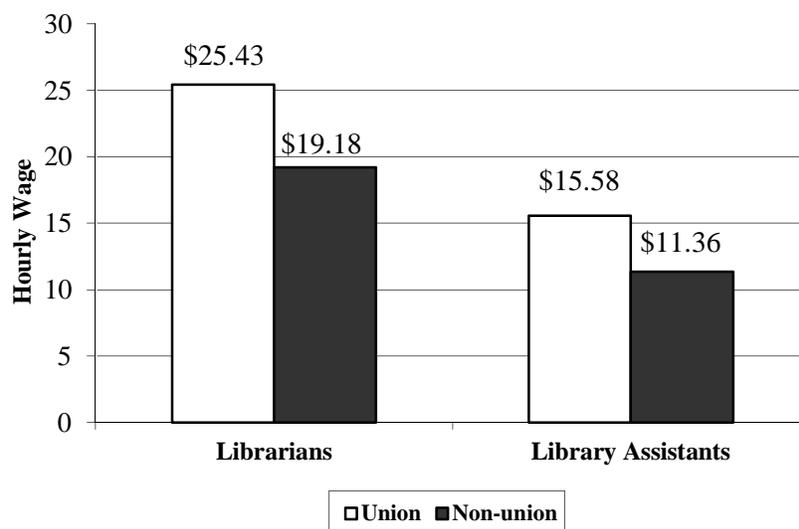
- Nearly 12 percent of public libraries do not offer a pension, and 17.4 percent do not offer retirement savings. Among academic libraries, 23.3 percent do not offer a pension, and 20 percent do not offer retirement savings.<sup>57</sup>
- Almost 40 percent of public libraries do not offer vision insurance, and 16 percent do not offer dental insurance. Among academic libraries, 42.9 percent do not offer vision insurance, and 17.9 percent do not offer dental insurance.<sup>58</sup>
- Almost 34 percent of public libraries do not offer disability insurance, and almost 17 percent do not offer prescription coverage; in academic libraries, 19.7 percent do not offer disability insurance, and 23.1 percent do not offer prescription coverage.<sup>59</sup>

### **The Union Difference**

- In 2010, workers in education, training, and library occupations had the highest unionization rates for any occupation group.<sup>60</sup>
- In 2010, 23.7 percent of librarians were union members.<sup>61</sup>
- In 2010, among library technicians, 8.6 percent were union members.<sup>62</sup>
- Among library assistants, 16.3 percent were union members, in 2010.<sup>63</sup>
- Twenty-one percent of other education, training, and library workers were union members in 2010.
- Union librarians earned an average of 24.6 percent more than non-union librarians in 2010.<sup>64</sup> Union library technicians earned an average of 32.3 percent more than non-union librarian technicians in 2010. Union library assistants earned 27 percent more than non-union library assistants.<sup>65</sup>
- In 2010, union workers in other education, training, and library fields earned an average of 30 percent more than their non-union counterparts.<sup>66</sup>

- Through the NY Public Library Guild, Local 1930, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), library workers won an eight percent pay increase, in addition to the two four percent raises negotiated for citywide employees, after a three-year campaign and negotiations with city officials.<sup>67</sup>
- The Orange County, Florida, Library System voted to organize and affiliate with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Management spent \$100,000 to defeat the union. Workers got the first pay raise in nine years as a result of bargaining, as well as an extra floating holiday and a grievance procedure that mandates binding arbitration.<sup>68</sup>
- A union advantage exists across all types of work in the library profession, from associate librarians who earned more than 27 percent more than their non-union counterparts, to library technicians who earned more than 25 percent more than their non-union colleagues.<sup>69</sup>
- Almost no matter what type of institution a librarian or library workers works in, there is a union advantage, be it a gain of over 62 percent in very small public libraries to over 4 percent for librarians at four-year colleges.<sup>70</sup>

### The Union Advantage in 2010



### Libraries and Library Staff in the Recession

- In an op-ed piece in the *Huffington Post*, former American Library Association President Jim Rettig noted that “as the nation continues to experience a sharp and jarring economic downturn, local libraries are providing valuable free tools and resources to help Americans of all ages through this time of uncertainty. . . . [N]ow more than ever, libraries are proving that they are valued and trusted community partners.”<sup>71</sup>
- Libraries and library staff are under increasing pressure to meet the needs of their communities in this serious economic downturn. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that, in 2008, libraries across the country have seen jumps in attendance of as much as 65 percent.<sup>72</sup>
- Nationwide, more people applied for library cards than at any time since records have been kept.<sup>73</sup> Demand for new library cards, for example, has increased 27 percent in San Francisco, California and 61 percent in Boise, Idaho.<sup>74</sup>

- Families patronizing libraries during this recession are often looking for less expensive ways to find entertainment and access the Internet, while many adults utilize the facilities to find new jobs. In Modesto, California, libraries report a 15 percent increase in the checkout of books, CDs, and DVDs. Circulation of job-hunting materials is up 14 percent in Boulder, Colorado, and computer usage in Brantley County, Georgia was up 26 percent in the last quarter of 2008.<sup>75</sup>
- At a time when libraries and librarians are facing increasing demands, many states and municipalities are threatening to cut their budgets and close branches as a result of budget shortfalls.<sup>76</sup> Libraries and librarians are faced with meeting the challenges of increased usage without increased budgetary support.
- Work once performed only by librarians is now often performed by support staff. In a American Library Association Support Staff Interests Round Table (ALA SSIRT) survey of 212 library support staff, 73 percent stated that they are now performing tasks previously performed by Masters of Library Science (MLS) librarians at their library, or have the same or similar duties as MLS librarians at other institutions.<sup>77</sup>
- As a result of the recession, libraries and librarians have had to confront challenges like homelessness, increased crime, and violent incidents in their work environment. Although the ALA does not keep statistics on such incidents, there is significant anecdotal evidence nationwide that libraries are struggling with increased usage and the incidents which have come along with it.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity*, Table 11. 2011.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Occupational Outlook Handbook, Librarians." 2010-11 Edition. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos068.htm>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Occupational Outlook Handbook, Library Technicians and Library Assistants." 2010-11 Edition. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos316.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Henderson, Everett, et. al., "Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2008," *Institute of Museum and Library Service*. June 2010. Available at: [http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/pub\\_detail.asp?id=130](http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/pub_detail.asp?id=130).

<sup>5</sup> Di Carlo, Matthew, "The High Cost of Closing Public Libraries," *Shanker Blog*. April 18, 2011. Available at: <http://shankerblog.org/?p=2346>.

<sup>6</sup> Lacey, T. Alan and Benjamin Wright. "Occupational Employment Projections to 2018," U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Dohm, Arlene and Lynn Shniper. "Occupational Employment Projections to 2016," U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, November 2007.

<sup>8</sup> American Library Association-Allied Professional Association, "Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit." April 2007. Available at: <http://ala-apa.org/files/2010/07/toolkit.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Hirsch, Barry T., op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Occupational Outlook Handbook, Librarians." 2010-11 Edition. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos068.htm>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Hirsch, Barry T., David A. Macpherson, "Union Membership and Earnings Data Book." *The Bureau of National Affairs*, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> "Occupational Outlook Handbook, Librarians." op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Library Technicians and Library Assistants. 2010-11 Edition. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos316.htm>.
- <sup>21</sup> Hirsch, Barry T., op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup> American Library Association, Office of Research and Statistics, *Diversity Counts*, January 2007.
- <sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2011, Table 11, “Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.” Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> Association of Research Libraries, “Annual Salary Survey (2009-10).” Available at: <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/ss09.pdf>.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>31</sup> American Library Association, Office of Research and Statistics, *Diversity Counts*, January 2007.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2008-2009 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Table 300, Fall 2009. [http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011015\\_3b.pdf](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011015_3b.pdf)
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Annual Averages, Table 11, “Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity”, 2010. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>.
- <sup>36</sup> Association of Research Libraries, *Annual Salary Survey (2009-10)*, op. cit.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Table 37, “Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics.” 2011. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat37.pdf>.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Weekly and hourly earnings data from the current population.” 2010. <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=le>
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 17.
- <sup>45</sup> “Annual Salary Survey (2009-10),” op. cit., Table 17.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup> “Annual Salary Survey (2009-10),” op. cit., Table 27.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 17.
- <sup>50</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages*, “Librarians”, May 2008. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes254021.htm>
- <sup>51</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, *Occupational Employment and Wages*, Librarians. May 2009. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2009/may/oes254021.htm>.
- <sup>52</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Query System, May 2009. Available at: [http://data.bls.gov/oes/search.jsp?data\\_tool=OES](http://data.bls.gov/oes/search.jsp?data_tool=OES).
- <sup>53</sup> Maatta, Stephanie, op. cit.
- <sup>54</sup> ALA provided statistics, 2008.
- <sup>55</sup> Grady, Jenifer, “Salary Survey: 2010 Librarian Pay Up 3 Percent Despite Economic Woes,” *Library Worklife: HR E-News for Today’s Leaders*. November 2010. Available at: <http://ala-apa.org/newsletter/2010/11/01/salary-survey-librarian-pay-increased-3-percent-despite-2010-economic-woes/>.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>57</sup> Lynch, Mary Jo. “ALA Employee Benefits,” 2003.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>60</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Table 3. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers by occupation and industry.” January 2011. Available at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t03.htm>.
- <sup>61</sup> Hirsch, Barry T., op. cit.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> ALA-APA, *Advocating for Better Salaries and Pay Equity Toolkit*, op. cit.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>71</sup> Rettig, Jim and Greg Worrell. “Libraries Stand to Help in Tough Economic Times,” *The Huffington Post*, December 11, 2008. Available at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jim-rettig/libraries-stand-ready-to\\_b\\_150268.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jim-rettig/libraries-stand-ready-to_b_150268.html)
- <sup>72</sup> Carlton, Jim. “Folks are Flocking to the Library, a Cozy Place to Look for a Job,” *The Wall Street Journal*, January 15, 2009, pg. 1.
- <sup>73</sup> Hughes, Sandra. “In Recession, Libraries Are Booming,” *CBS Evening News*, February 2, 2009.
- <sup>74</sup> Jackson, Derrick. “The Library – A Recession Sanctuary,” *The Boston Globe*, January 3, 2009. Available at: [http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2009/01/03/the\\_library\\_a\\_recession\\_sanctuary/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/01/03/the_library_a_recession_sanctuary/)
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>77</sup> American Library Association Support Staff Interests Round Table, Final Report. June, 2000. Available at: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rtss/rtssirt/rtssirtstratplan/taskforcereports/compensa.pdf>
- <sup>78</sup> Saulny, Susan and Karen Ann Cullotta. “Downturn Puts New Stresses on Libraries,” *New York Times*, April 1, 2009. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/02/us/02library.html?pagewanted=2& r=1>

For further information on professional workers, check the DPE website: [www.dpeaflcio.org](http://www.dpeaflcio.org)

*The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) comprises 23 AFL-CIO unions representing over four million people working in professional, technical and administrative support occupations. DPE-affiliated unions represent: teachers, college professors, and school administrators; library workers; nurses, doctors, and other health care professionals; engineers, scientists, and IT workers; journalists and writers, broadcast technicians and communications specialists; performing and visual artists; professional athletes; professional firefighters; psychologists, social workers, and many others. DPE was chartered by the AFL-CIO in 1977 in recognition of the rapidly growing professional and technical occupations.*

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