



Retention of Former Residents in Librarianship: A Preliminary Exploration

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What is a Residency?


“Post-degree work experience designed as an entry-level program for professionals who have recently received a graduate degree.”

*-Association of Library and Information Science Education
(ALISE), 1992*



Residency \neq Internship

Characteristics of Residency Programs

- Length: typically 1-3 years
 - Type of institution: Mostly academic libraries
 - Number of residents: 1 or a cohort (2+)
 - Specialization: Departmental rotation model or focus on specific functional area
 - Support for professional development
 - Diversity?
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What needs are residencies addressing?

- Lack of entry level jobs
- Gap between skills/experience acquired in library school and skills/experience needed in first professional position
- Lack of diversity in the profession



Lack of Entry Level Jobs

- In 2012, 75% of academic librarian jobs were not entry level*
- Many “entry level” jobs ask for at least two years of professional (post-graduate) experience

*Tewell, E. C. (2012). Employment opportunities for new academic librarians: Assessing the availability of entry level jobs. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 12(4), 407-423.



Skill/Experience Gap

- Many recent graduates feel that they don't have enough practical experience to be competitive in the job market*

*Goodsett, M., & Koziura, A. (2016). Are library science programs preparing new librarians? Creating a sustainable and vibrant librarian community. *Journal of Library Administration*, 56(6), 697-721.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2015.1134246>

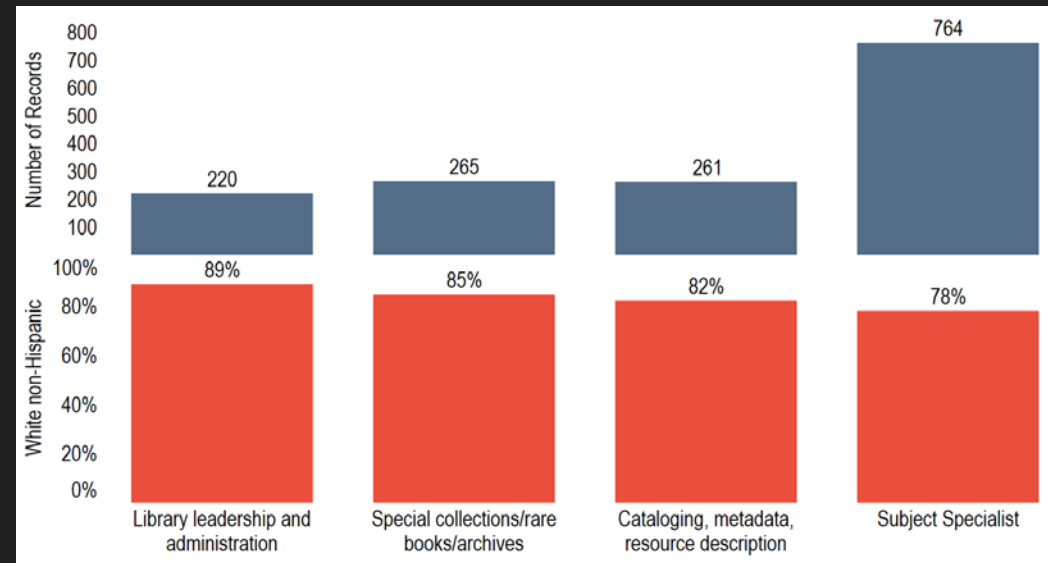


Lack of Diversity

- In 2012, around 88% of librarians identified as white*

*ALA Diversity Counts (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts>

- In ARL institutions, over three quarters of librarians and nearly 90% of academic library leaders identified as white**



**Race/ethnicity—librarians only, by large job types

**Schonfeld, R. C., & Sweeney, L. (2017). Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity: Members of the Association of Research Libraries. Retrieved May 15, 2018, from <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.304524>

A Brief History of Librarian Residencies

- In the 1960s, post-master's internship programs were developed by the National Library of Medicine and at Ohio State University
- In the 1980s, residency programs began to be influenced by affirmative action policies
- 1984: U of Delaware became one of the first residency programs to focus on recruiting librarians from underrepresented groups



A Brief History of Librarian Residencies

- Backlash against affirmative action in early 2000s resulted in bans in some states and changed character of some residency programs
- In 1997, there were approx. 18 residency programs; today there are closer to 49
- The Diversity Alliance began in 2015 at four institutions; now 44 institutions



<http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/diversityalliance/2018roster>

Where are residencies?

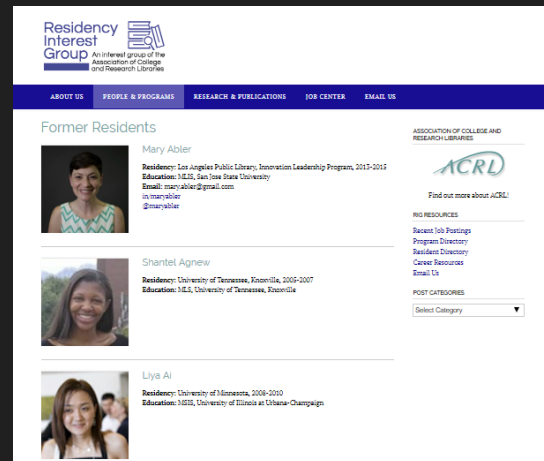
Red = Member of ACRL
Diversity Alliance



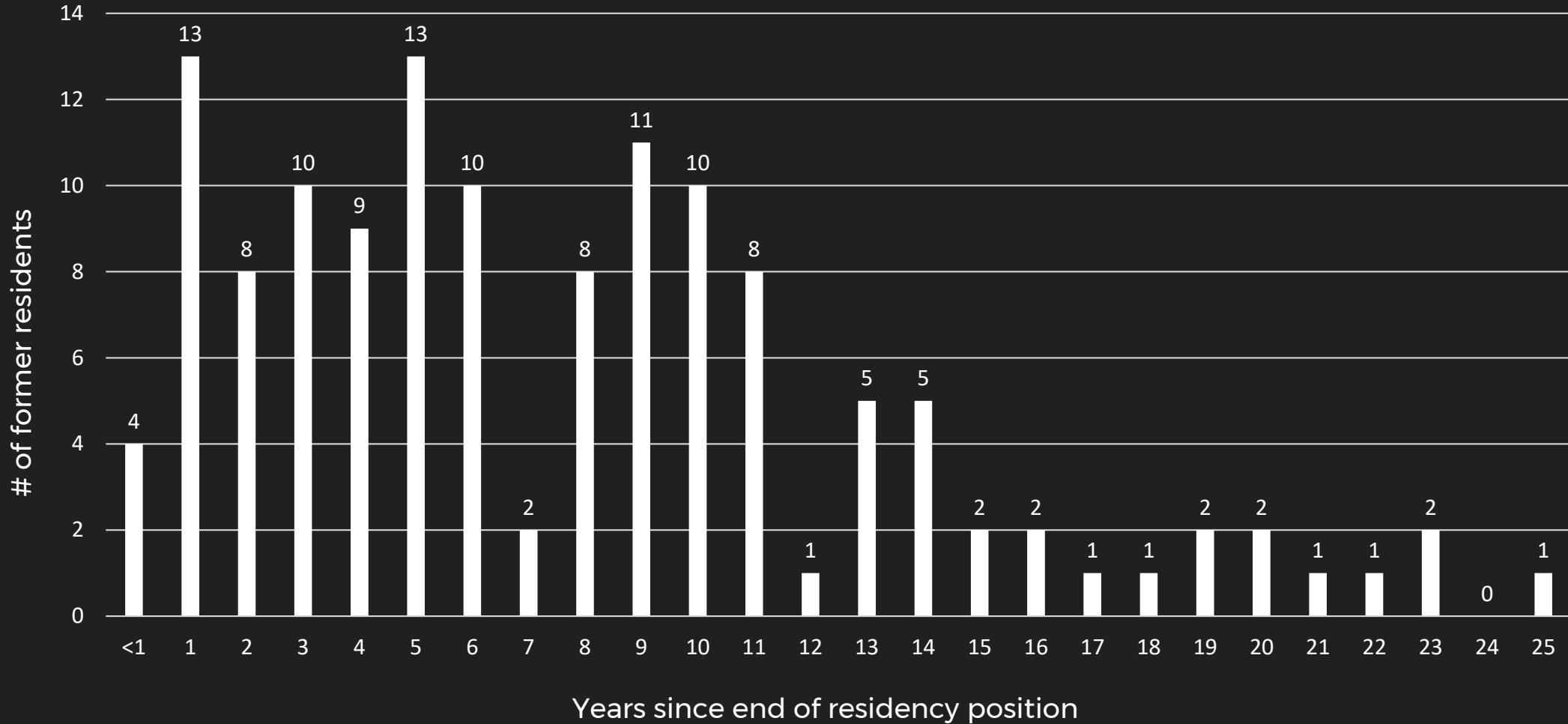
Taken from ACRL RIG website (2018): <http://acrl.ala.org/residency/programs/>

Where are former residents now?

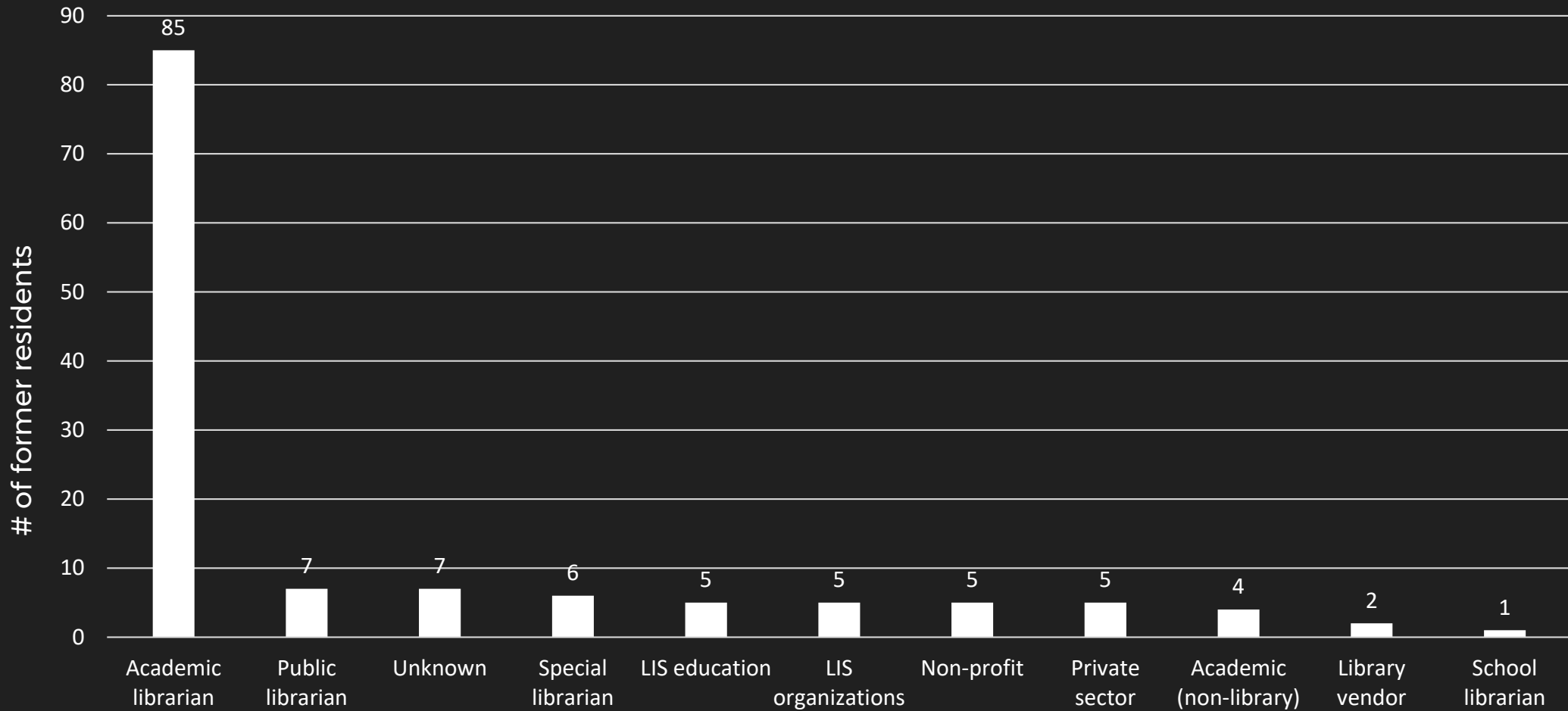
- Sample of residents obtained from ACRL RIG list of former residents (n=132)
- Completed residencies between 1993 and 2018 (as of June 2018)
- Looked at LinkedIn profiles and staff directories to determine current job position



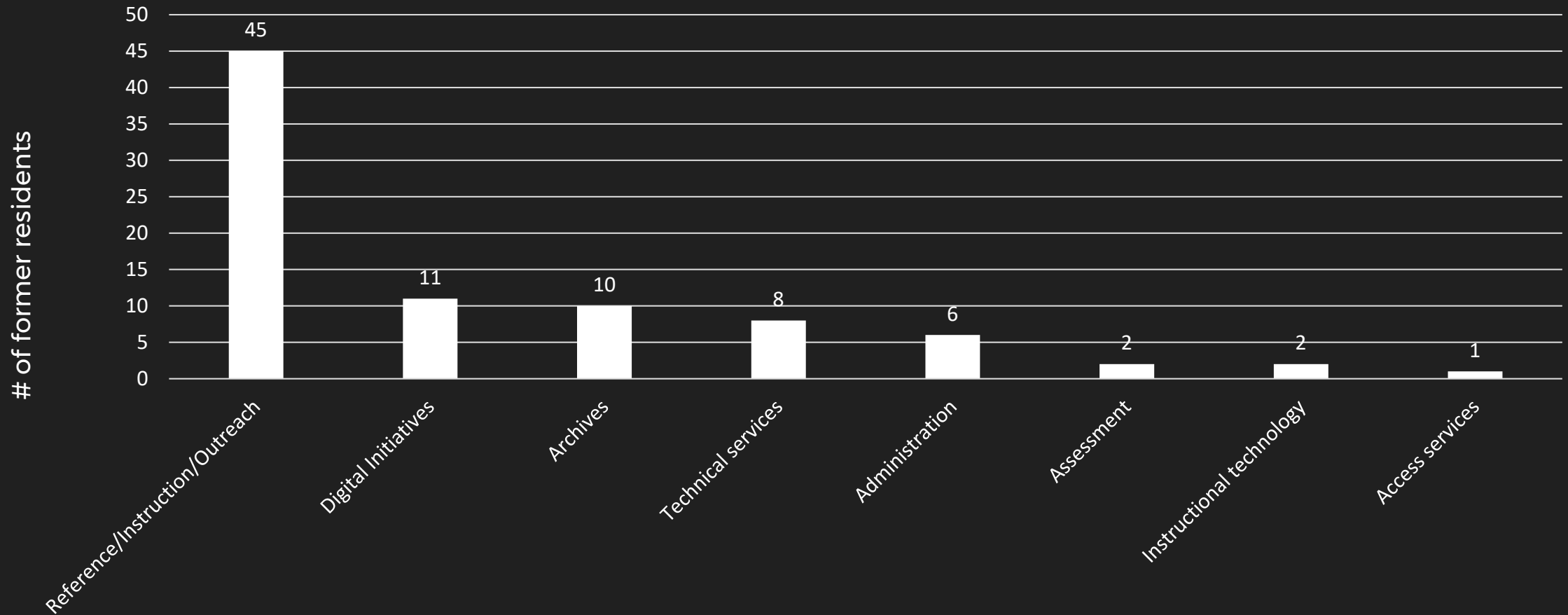
Years after residency



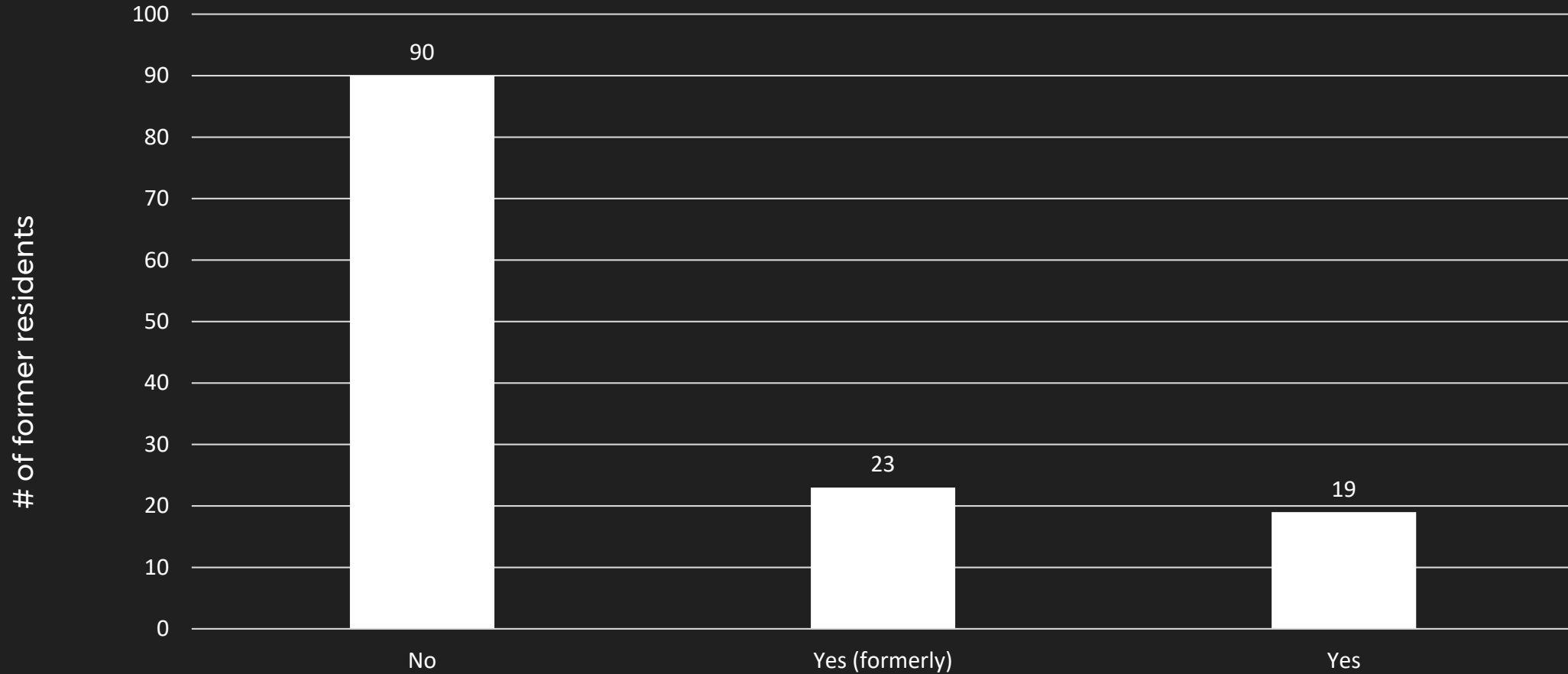
Types of jobs (current position)



Specialization areas in Academic Librarianship



Employed by Residency Institution After Residency?

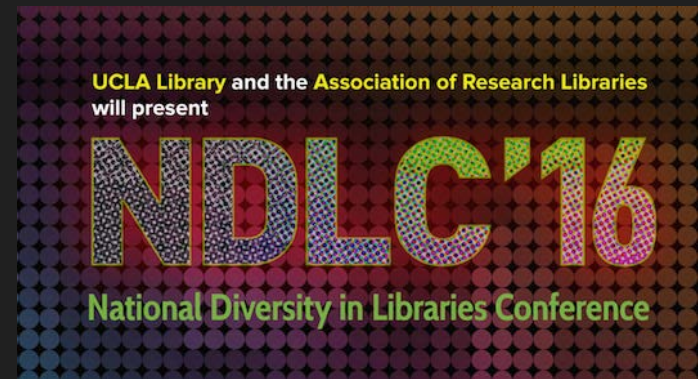
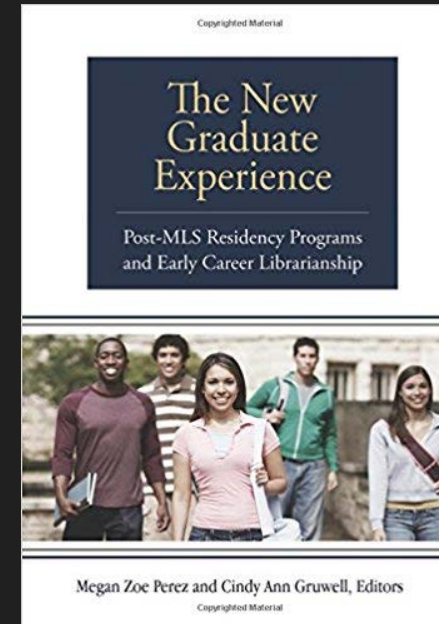
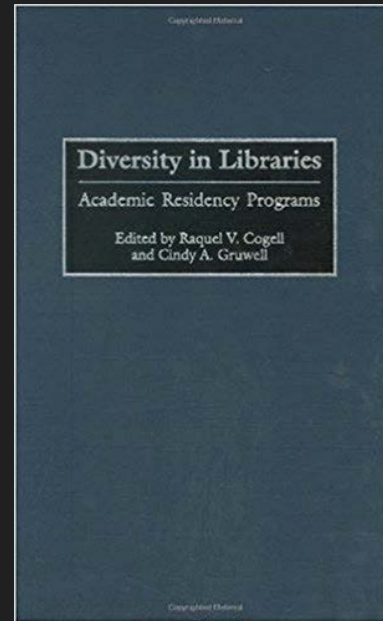
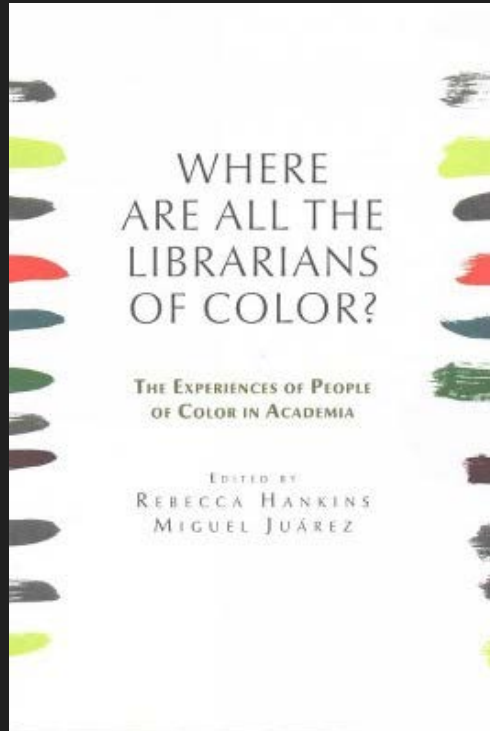


Retention of Librarians of Color

- Lack of research, but implicit and explicit barriers for librarians of color are mentioned in the literature:
 - Workplace environment and microaggressions
 - Undervaluing of diversity work (research and service)
 - Feelings of isolation, tokenism, and imposter syndrome
 - Lack of mentorship and professional development



Resident Experiences



Positive Experiences

“I was looking for an environment where I could gain professional experience in an academic setting as a librarian but also be given the time and support I needed to grow as a professional before looking at tenure. I was really looking for a supportive, learning-based transition into a professional position.”

Marissa Galindo Acorta, former resident at Purdue University



Positive Experiences

“...my residency at Ohio State University Libraries provided me with valuable *time* to think about my future, to see a bigger picture, and to visualize a long-term path for my professional career. More important, the residency program introduced me to all the various facets of academic librarianship, including reference, technical services, collection development, area studies, departmental libraries, and special collections.”

Jon Cawthorne, former resident at Ohio State University



Negative Experiences

“I was the first resident at my university. I don’t think there was and is a ton of cultural buy-in. I still don’t think a lot of library staff know or understand what a residency is or does. I was constantly explaining what I did and why I was there...It would also be nice to have an environment in which to safely share the microaggressions that I think are experienced on a regular basis by someone with a “diversity” tag on their title.”

Anonymous



Negative Experiences

“It is unfortunate that we seemed mostly thought of when multicultural and diversity programs came up and representation from the library was required. Inevitably, we felt that our existence was more about politics rather than an honest attempt to recruit and retain minorities...We believe diversity initiatives are important, but they should be addressed by all, not just those who are visible minorities.”

Sylvia Hu and Demetria Patrick, former residents at Miami University (Ohio)



Successful Residencies

- Institutional buy-in
- Mentorship
- Strategic planning
- Assessment
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the library's strategic plan



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Questions?