

MONEYTALKS LIST

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION current as of June 18, 2003

Academic libraries | Action plans | Activism/advocacy | Administrators | ALA's role | ALA Council | ALTA's role | APA's role | Association publications | Benefits | Bibliography | Budgets | Career | Comparable worth | Education | Evaluation | FAQs | Fundraising | Gender | Government jobs | Government support | Groups | International | Library | MLS | Negotiating | Other Groups | Publicity | Quotes | Resources | Rural libraries | Salary | Staff | Status | Success stories | Support staff | Surveys, statistics, research | [Other] tactics | Talking points | Toronto program ideas | Unions | Work requirements

Academic libraries

- * Unions: Coalition of University Employees (CUE): <http://www.cueunion.org/links.php3>, United Campus Workers (UCW): <http://www.kornnet.org/ucw/>, SEIU, UAW, CUPE,

Action plans

- * Apply & interview for underpaid jobs and reject them if offered, citing the unacceptable salary as the reason.
- * Publish your usage stats & library facts on a poster in the library
- * Put up a sign in the library citing how much all of the "free" services cost
- * Create a national "ask for a raise" day
- * Create a national "fair pay for library workers" week w/informational leafleting (info on library positions, the experience & educational requirements, and their pay) and publicity (letters to editors & promotion on other media outlets) –more like a public awareness campaign
- * Document all of your accomplishments & activities to present when you ask for a raise
- * Put a "tip jar" at the desk
- * Boycott states that don't have state libraries

Activism/advocacy (see also Publicity)

- * National library worker strike
- * Lobbying: including board members
- * Lobby for school libraries as vital support of education
- * Lots of political & community activity—staff, admin, & boards: but campaign starts at service desks
- * Make sure inclusive (support staff) meaning behind "Campaign for America's Librarians" is clear
- * Lobby candidates & incumbents pre-election. Library workers have access to hundreds of potential voters on a daily basis. (We also vote more than other professions.)
- * Create a model of what a "library" would look like without input from librarians (Tiff Conner, message #636)
- * Communicate our success stories (not just professional accomplishments or high usage statistics, but also day to day miracles, like stretching a budget) to city government, college administration, etc.
- * GATS/WTO
- * Report MONEYTALKS activities to local HR administrators
- * Run for office
- * Informational pickets at library board meetings/city council
- * Leaflet supermarkets
- * Always have your sound bite ready
- * Advocates—including those on Task Force need to include a spectrum of library staffers, from pages up to directors. The directors' participation will help give legitimacy to the movement.

- * Communities need to know how important it is to have a good library

Administrators

- * Librarians/administrators our own worst enemies (finding ways to get around problems, rather than solving them, re: staffing)
- * Need to suck up more & better to more people, also publicize successes
- * Need to fight for greater share of institutional budget
- * Can be underpaid, too—especially compared to teachers/principals
- * Directors/trustees have to commit to having the salaries to attract and retain quality staff
- * Are underpaid, too, even those in high profile positions. Their poor pay reflects badly on all of us.
- * Librarians performing HR duties as part of their job being replaced by HR professionals?

ALA's role (see also APA's role, see also Publicity)

- * Needs to get involved in rising cost of library school
- * Compare salary costs not just to Consumer Price Index, but also to variance in growth
- * Set national standards: for pay, for number of librarians in a community, librarians to support staff, etc.
- * Major PR campaign about what we are/what we do. FT PR person or marketing firm
- * Endorse and encourage state, local, and regional groups to endorse living wage policies for support staff.
- * Support General Laws of the Commonwealth of Mass Living Wage thing
<http://www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/151-19.htm>
- * Research Office survey about benefits (see Benefits)
- * Political action committee to train librarians to lobby
- * Encouragement/incentive for libraries to support ALA participation (payment of membership dues, covering conference expenses, etc.)
- * Provide health insurance (check AAUW as a model)
- * Should be advocating for membership (Washington office)

ALA Council

- * Fair Compensation resolution

ALTA's role

- * Should be a driving force in this campaign, not just supporters

APA's role (see also ALA's role)

- * Litigation on gender based pay discrimination
- * Finance a review of salary levels regionally by an independent compensation specialist. (Nassau County Library Association used this method and set its minimum level of compensation for librarians at the 50th percentile level and for clerical personnel at the 75th level.)
- * Lobby on getting benefits for part-timers
- * Should serve as a national union for library workers
- * Have a bargaining unit, like NEA does
- * Provide liability insurance like Texas Lib Assn does (\$28/yr)

Association publications

- * Refuse to accept job ads below a proscribed salary

Benefits

- * Maternity [family] leave
- * Vacation/sick pay
- * Retirement

- * Insurance
- * Domestic partner
- * Meal breaks—not federally mandated
- * Coffee breaks
- * Professional activities (time & money)
- * Free tuition (counted as compensation for those who never use it?)
- * Require state agencies to provide for part-timers
- * Housing assistance
- * Survey questions:
 - Do you offer domestic partner benefits?
 - Does health insurance become effective immediately, or is there a delay before coverage?
 - Do you allow paid breaks during the work day? How many and how long?
 - Do you have a paid or an unpaid meal break? How long? Is it mandatory?
 - Do you offer a pay differential for working nights? weekends?
 - Find out if salary is more important than benefits, what benefits would they rather have than increased salary?
 - Does their library offer unique benefits such as housing assistance.
 - What benefits are most important (ranked in order of importance)
 - Health
 - Dental
 - Vision
 - Short Term Disability
 - Long Term Disability
 - Paid Vacation, including accrual policies
 - Paid Sick Leave
 - Worker's Compensation
 - Access to group insurance plans (i.e. property and casualty, cancer coverage, long-term care)
 - Flexible Scheduling
 - Section 125/Flexible Spending Accounts
 - Having a benefit pool dollar amount to pick and choose the benefits that best suit their needs.
 - Educational Support
 - Adoption Assistance
 - FMLA
 - Access to low interest loans for housing
 - Credit Union
 - Wellness benefits (including subsidized health club membership like the YMCA)
 - Other
 - What is the workweek: 37.5 or 40 hours?
 - Hours/days open
 - Fixed or variable schedule
 - Requirements for different positions
 - Adequate staffing
 - Retirement & pension
 - First career/previous experience
 - If not first career, why the switch
 - Considering leaving librarianship
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Sole support of family
 - Did you relocate to take this job

- If you had to do it all over again, would you
- * Municipal Mortgage Program of the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency www.masshousing.com.
- * No-money-down mortgages for municipal employees
- * Group insurance offerings through ALA:
 - AON (www.aon.com) 800-223-2411. Hospital indemnity, major medical, disability income, term life
 - Arthur J. Gallagher Company (www.coveragefirst.com). 800-234-7542. Errors and Omissions, Property/Casualty, Appraisal programs.
 - Membership Committee, J. Linda Williams, Chair, investigating more options.

Bibliography

- * <http://chronicle.com/jobs/2002/11/2002111401c.htm> Should We Stop Fooling Ourselves About Money? By THOMAS H. BENTON

Budgets

- * City/institution—lobbying & advocacy
- * Including salary increase in them—like rising cost of serials is planned for
- * Salaries vs. materials

Career

- * Nowhere to go. Support staff can become librarians. Librarians can become administrators.
- * Unable to retire because haven't made enough to support retirement. Age for social security is going up.

Comparable worth

- * Compare ourselves with City Planners, the only other city employees who must enter with a Master's Degree.
- * Compare ourselves with Human Resources Employee Assistance Program Managers, the only HR people who are required to have a Master's Degree. [Earns a median base salary of \$77,288. The top half of earners are paid an average of \$95,116. The lower half of earners are paid an average of \$66,613. (This data is as of October, 2002)]

Education

- * High cost of library school/lack of loans, grants
- * Community college & bachelor's programs
- * Tuition reimbursement
- * MLS a "practical" degree, and so will never be respected
- * Statewide/nationwide certification
- * Shortage in applications or not?
- * GRE requirement
- * Lots of IT classes
- * MLS needs to be more challenging/too easy to get it
- * Distance educ. makes it possible to get degree while you're working and/or if you don't have a library school in your state
- * Certification/credentialing needed to identify skill and subject area expertise
- * Cataloging not emphasized in library school, and not attractive to new grads
- * Supporting oneself (and one's family) while in library school

Evaluation

- * Measure output rather than just circ stats ex. www.ils.unc.edu/~marshall/jm_res.html

FAQs

- * Poor economy
 - Couldn't afford to have kids, figured out how to do it anyway

Fundraising

- * Get donors to attach strings, such as money must directly benefit workers

Gender (see also Staff)

- * Underpaid because female profession
- * Salaries viewed as supplemental, not primary in household
- * "The average salary of a black female college graduate is less than that of a white male high-school dropout." Guerilla Girls website: <http://www.guerrillagirls.com/posters/lefttop.html>
- * "Men take longer coffee breaks and lunches than do women in the same jobs." Guerilla Girls website: <http://www.guerrillagirls.com/posters/rightcorner.html>
- * empowering women to ask for more money

Government jobs

- * The Social Security Administration regulations that deny benefits to federal, state and local government employees are referred to as The Windfall Elimination Provision and The Government Pension Offset.

Government support

- * Try to get HUD to add library workers to list of those eligible for housing discounts (cops & teachers) <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/tnd/tnd.cfm>

Groups

- * COLT: Council of Library Technicians

International

- * Lots of interest at IFLA

Library

- * A good one gives town/institution added value...as in "property value"
- * Efficiently run institutions
- * Overall funding issues need to be addressed
- * Library budgets have to improve before salaries can
- * Corporate libraries vulnerable to cuts, too

MLS (see also Support Staff)

- * If the MLS weren't required, public libraries would be staffed by the mayor's cousin's wife and changed with every election.

Negotiating

- * Use your talents and do your research. Most of us are in a position to gather research on librarian salaries, work environments, job descriptions, etc. Salary.com is an excellent resource as well as mlanet.org and ala.org.
- * After looking at the research, take a good look at your current situation. Consider current salary, benefits, schedule flexibility, staffing, work/family life situations, commuting distance, work environment, and especially job description and responsibilities.
- * Benchmark with other area libraries to compare responsibilities, staffing, etc.
- * After reviewing the information you have gathered, decide what you feel is a fair salary increase based on average statistics, education level, seniority, and area of responsibility.
- * Prepare a written proposal and submit to your Supervisor.
- * Be prepared to accept both negative and positive response.

Other Groups

- * No point in fighting with the teachers (or cops or firefighters or sanitation workers) over salary issues. Divisiveness just makes enemies.

Publicity

- * Major PR campaign about what we are/what we do
- * As in a picture of a beautiful garden and the words "Looking for one of these...check out your library's gardening books" OR a picture of a family going on vacation and the words "Planning one of these...check out your library's travel section" Patricia Kaufman
- * Use celebrity author/bibliophiles in campaign (Ray Bradbury)
- * Major PR campaign about what we are/what we do. FT PR person or marketing firm
- * PSAs <https://cs.ala.org/@yourlibrary/vidoopsa.cfm>.
- * \$5 check off box for Media Campaign on ALA registration
- * blitz like "Be all that you can be."
- * Library exhibits at state/county fairs, with raffles and other fund/awareness raisers
- * Talk about your job everywhere: on the plane, on line at the supermarket, etc.
- * Get articles in local paper about you or your activities/accomplishments or just funny/human interest stories
- * Bookmobile

Quotes

- * "I don't begrudge anyone making a good living. I don't begrudge anyone wealth. I don't begrudge anyone payment for the hard work that they've invested. But some of the numbers that you see are obscene to those of us who are at the lower levels of the economy." — Rutgers University student Julie Still, complaining that one corporate executive's recent severance pay request was 10 times what she could expect to earn in a lifetime. [Misidentified as a student, Still is a librarian]
- * "Dollar for Dollar (or Dollar for Degree) the single most underpaid Librarians in our field are Academic Librarians. Public Librarians may be dirt poor, but they are sometimes hired in without degrees and don't have the publication and second masters requirements." James Casey
- * "Yes, salaries are important, but so is job satisfaction, reasonable demands on our time and talents, and working conditions. The trend in public libraries is to place everyone with an MLS into management, particularly in small libraries, and effectively taking them out of the things they are trained for. There is also a trend to hire librarians as computer technicians because that is the only way they can afford the technology help, also not what most of us trained for. And if you think librarians are underpaid, you should see what our paraprofessionals are paid! It is a disgrace! And these are the folks who face the public every day and perform many of the functions we are trained for, but have not the time to do because of the other duties. So, no indeed, salaries are not the only issue." Donna Howell
- * "So, supply and demand does not necessarily apply to workers' salaries. When these employers could not meet their demand for employees at the salaries they were willing to pay, despite the presence of an adequate supply of potential employees, they turned to a third world country to find workers for whom American low wages would be an improvement over what they could earn at home." Dawn Grattino
- * "No one wants to hear that librarians need a raise because teachers get paid more and they don't even have a graduate degree. They do need to hear that librarians should receive higher wages because they fulfill a vital function that is valuable to those who control the "money" (taxpayers, city managers, faculty, administrators, etc.) They also need to hear that the support structure of libraries is manned by highly qualified library staff that are an integral and respected part of the library team and equally deserving of being paid according to the value they provide." Linda Owen

- * "For administrators this means you have to stop trying to get by with the minimal level of staffing. Establish some standards and stick to them. Hire the best, pay them what they are worth and expect them to perform their best." Linda Owen
- * "Unions do more than fight over the pie. They can expand the pie, redefine the pie, identify and propose budget saving measures unrelated to the size of the pie, etc." Cathy Bremer
- * "Meanwhile, however, the Bush administration is "planning on launching a \$200 million dollar PR blitz this week that will be aimed at convincing US and international audiences to support a US-led attack on Iraq" (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,3-418110,00.html>) In the bigger picture, there is PLENTY of money BOTH for well-paid teachers and well-paid librarians, don't you think?" Ann M. Seidl
- * "Yes, an MLS does not pay well, but for REAL poverty, it's hard to beat being a paraprofessional." Phyllis Ann K. Bratton
- * "We absolutely *need* to "squawk" about salaries. Teachers, firemen and police are all public servants, too, and they have no qualms about lobbying as effectively as possible in their own interest, good financial times or bad. They might be more willing to compromise in the end during times like these, but they surely do not hesitate to ask for what they want. What on earth is the ALA *for*, if not to represent librarians in such discussions with the public?" Gerald Holmes
- * "I just wanted to pop in here and add that even in times of huge budget shortfall, teachers have achieved a respectable salary increase. Police and firefighters are not standing by saying 'Times are tough, we don't need a raise.' We had a flat salary contract when I started here in the mid-90's, and times were really good. We saw no benefit from that at all. The library system is running at a large vacancy rate (over 100 positions, more to come with the retirement incentive) and we have a high turn-over rate as well, losing librarians to private industry, the schools, etc. I don't think we can afford to say 'oh it's ok, we don't need the money.'" Alison Hendon
- * "Our librarians took a pay cut when the economy took a dump in the mid-90's (in response to an actual downtrend); however, when things picked up, were we able to make up the money lost and also get a decent raise?" Susan Muller
- * "But then why, when positions cannot be filled by a qualified candidate, do libraries tend to lower the requirements rather than raise the compensation." Linda Owen
- * "Considering that the ALA President and the US President agree on the shortage of librarians, this would seem to be a particularly well timed effort." Patricia Pettijohn
- * "...everyone knows the library is important. How important are the librarians? Is it somehow assumed that a large, high-quality library and a large staff of high-quality librarians are independent variables?" (White, Herbert S., "Faculty Status for Academic Librarians: the Search for the Holy Grail," *Library Journal*, November 15, 1996: 39-40.)

Resources

- * Toolkit http://www.ala.org/pio/advocacy/better_salariestoolkit.pdf: comments from list members sought
- * TF website
- * *Nickel and Dimed*
- * www.bls.gov inflation calculator
- * Jobs with Justice www.jwj.org (active in helping low wage workers get decent pay and respect on the job)
- * Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard (FESS) projects
- * <http://thechampion.org/> Illinois Public School salaries (questionable authority?)
- * <http://autoheadhunter.net/> salary comparison (cost-of-living)
- * <http://radworkshere.org/> Regional Asset District, where half of 1% local sales tax goes for distribution to cultural institutions (including libraries) and parks
- * <http://www.ala.org/pio/advocacy/>
- * *Negotiating Your Salary: How to Make \$1,000 a Minute* by Jack Chapman
- * <http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/library/contracts/occ.html> labor contracts database

- * Occupational Outlook Handbook <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos057.htm>
- * www.salaryexpert.com
- * *The Library Paraprofessional: Notes From The Underground* by Terry Rogers. McFarland: 1997.
- * Housing: Arbolera de Vida in Albuquerque New Mexico
- * <http://www.midYork.org/zogbypoll> (survey of NY opinions about PLs)
- * Rankings of full-time occupations, by earnings, 2000
<http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2002/03/ressum.pdf>
- * Missouri salary survey
http://www.win.org/library/library_office/reports/salariesurvey/2003/index.html
- * WV salary survey
http://librarycommission.lib.wv.us/SurveyForms/SalarySurvey/Survey_Announc.htm
- * Library Director Compensation Guidelines developed by the Kansas Library Association and Kansas State Library <http://www.skyways.org/KSL/development/salaryguidelines.pdf>

Rural libraries

- * What to do in the face of miniscule budgets—just say that’s unacceptable and don’t have a library at all? Or pool resources for a central library that is decently equipped?
- * Pool resources, but keep individual libraries
- * WG devoted to this cause
- * Coordinate with people who sponsored a Council resolution on Rural Libraries

Salary

- * Including salary info. on job ads
- * School vs. public librarians’
- * Outside consultant to do salary survey (legitimizes it)
- * Should be comparable to (Master’s degreed) teachers in same community
- * Merit pay
- * Merit must be evaluated by peers (with input from admin and community)
- * Living Wage
- * Keeping up with cost-of-living (one system that updates annually based on market survey—national for librarians, regional for support staff)
- * Low pay forces people into corporate jobs who would rather serve the public
- * Move/change jobs to get a raise (or just tell your current institution that you are leaving and see what happens)
- * PL salaries should be comparable to city/county workers whose job descriptions call for a master’s degree.
- * Business, law, and medical librarians make more than other librarians
- * State minimum salary guide in *American Libraries* job listings (already exists)

Staff

- * Barriers between professionals and support staff, public and academic librarians, tenure and non-tenure track academic librarians
- * Graying of the profession: replacements not nec. MLS. Lowering of standards→lowering of salary.
- * People taking “info” jobs instead of library
- * Focus on collectors, rather than collection
- * Shortage in particular jobs (children’s, e.g.), not whole profession
- * Be careful of division between MLS and non-librarian staff. Collegiality!
- * Shortage because of poor pay, not “graying” of profession
- * Method for kicking out inept or dishonest library workers (disbarring, defrocking, etc.)
- * Make yourself indispensable—and make sure administrators know it. (Particularly in school libraries.)
- * Hiring of expensive IT people when similarly skilled librarians unavailable

- * Training for PT staff
- * Situations where all or majority of staff is PT, so institution doesn't have to pay benefits
- * PTers getting screwed out of benefits as a gender discrimination issue
- * "permanent part-timers" eligible for benefits after a certain amount of time on the job
- * Residency requirements
- * Replacing librarians with support staff (when they retire or leave for some other reason)
- * Being forced to work unpaid before and after closing
- * Don't forget the retirees
- * Privatizing and outsourcing's effects on salaries, benefits, and working conditions and also costs

Status

- * Replacing MLS librarians with non-librarians
- * People need to know that librarians have master's degrees
- * Value of librarians when "Everything is on the Internet."
- * List degree on business card and other stuff
- * Self-respect/demanding just compensation
- * The L word
- * Libraries need more status if library workers are to achieve the same

Success stories

- * Australia pay equity <http://www.alia.org.au/press.releases/>

Support staff

- * Those with specialized skills, like accounting, also poorly paid
- * Raises have to start with support staff, which will push up everyone's salaries
- * Non or para-professional inaccurate (and offensive) description
- * Ref desk service (for which many are untrained and uncompensated)
- * Blurring of lines between support staff and MLS staff duties
- * Associate's degree
- * Lower salaries for same jobs, if job is in a library vs. elsewhere on campus (Univ. of California)

Surveys, statistics, research

- * ALA salary survey does not account for PT and temp, and other hourly staff, who are even more poorly paid than FTers and don't have any benefits.
- * Should also account for those whose benefits come out of their pay
- * Add a category for beginning librarians' salaries
- * "Starting salaries" only for beginning librarians entering without experience?
- * Survey student loan debt
- * Survey differences between different types of libraries
- * CLA (California) survey found that library workers are making 6-11% less than non-library workers in comparable jobs (at entry, journey, supervisor, and executive levels)
- * Cite median, rather than average salary
- * Starting salary data for support staff?
- * Need to determine quantifiable measures
- * Study of quality of service, as affected by staff wages
- * Reclassification surveys
- * Massachusetts Library Association Personnel Issues Committee recommends minimum salaries for Massachusetts librarians. Do other states' organizations do the same? It's not binding by any stretch, but, for example, the new figure is \$45,107, up from last year's \$40,385. "Bay State Libraries" notes that the committee followed the following formula: Statewide recommended average salary for teachers: \$36,120. Increased workdays (230-245 per year for librarians, as opposed to

180-190 for teachers) adds \$7,950

3.7% cost of living increase adds \$1,037

- * Published surveys have questionable data pools
- * Published surveys report inaccurate information
- * "Self-sufficiency standard" (The Self-sufficiency standard for WV prepared for the WV Community Voices Partnership)

[Other] tactics

- * Pay equity litigation
- * Living wage campaigns at city & county levels

Talking points

- * Acceptance of a low salary is "involuntary philanthropy" and equals a staff subsidy of library services

Toronto program ideas:

- * How to get unions to prioritize their library workers membership
- * Unions primer (vocabulary like "wage reopener," duties/responsibilities of reps, pay, benefits, fairness in raises and vacation bidding, grievance procedures, protection from hellish supervisors)
- * Unions as part of political process
- * Getting rank & file actively involved
- * Union organizing: external & internal (servicing vs. organizing models)

Unions

- * UC Berkeley clerical workers' strike
- * Administrators working with management, rather than library workers on salary/benefit issues
- * AFSCME library workers' committee
- * Cost of dues
- * Seniority v. merit
- * How to organize a union site <http://www.afcio.org/voiceatwork/howto.htm>
- * Which union? (AFSCME, SEIU, CWA, NEA, AFT, etc.)
- * National union?
- * Cooperation with APA
- * Cooperation with ALA AFL-CIO committee
- * Can represent both support staff and librarians. You can be a supervisor and a shop steward simultaneously!
- * Longevity payments based on years of service and pay grade
- * Unions can help/work with administration on many issues—including salaries & benefits.
- * De/recertifying
- * Get involved in union leadership
- * Can management join/how is "management" defined? (varies)
- * Hourly workers in union can make more than salaried bosses
- * Is union pay differential so great because they're stronger in the northeast and other higher cost of living states?
- * Union spread out geographically
- * Leaders can be integrated into city housing, loan, & other projects
- * Use teachers' union as a model—organize statewide and nationally
- * Join with NEA? UAW (like National Writers Union)?
- * Standing Health & Safety committee
- * Gerard Holmes 11/15 discussion of pros & cons of national union

- * AFL-CIO must pay attention to library workers as a group
- * How to serve rural libraries that are too small to have their own union

Work requirements

- * Shifts