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Minority Librarians In Higher Education

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MINORITY LIBRARIANS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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#alaac16



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

✦ Background:

✦ Marshall University

- ✦ Total students: 13,631
- ✦ Minority students: 1,452 (11%)
- ✦ Minority faculty: 14% of instructional faculty
- ✦ Minority librarians: 3 of 19 (15%)



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

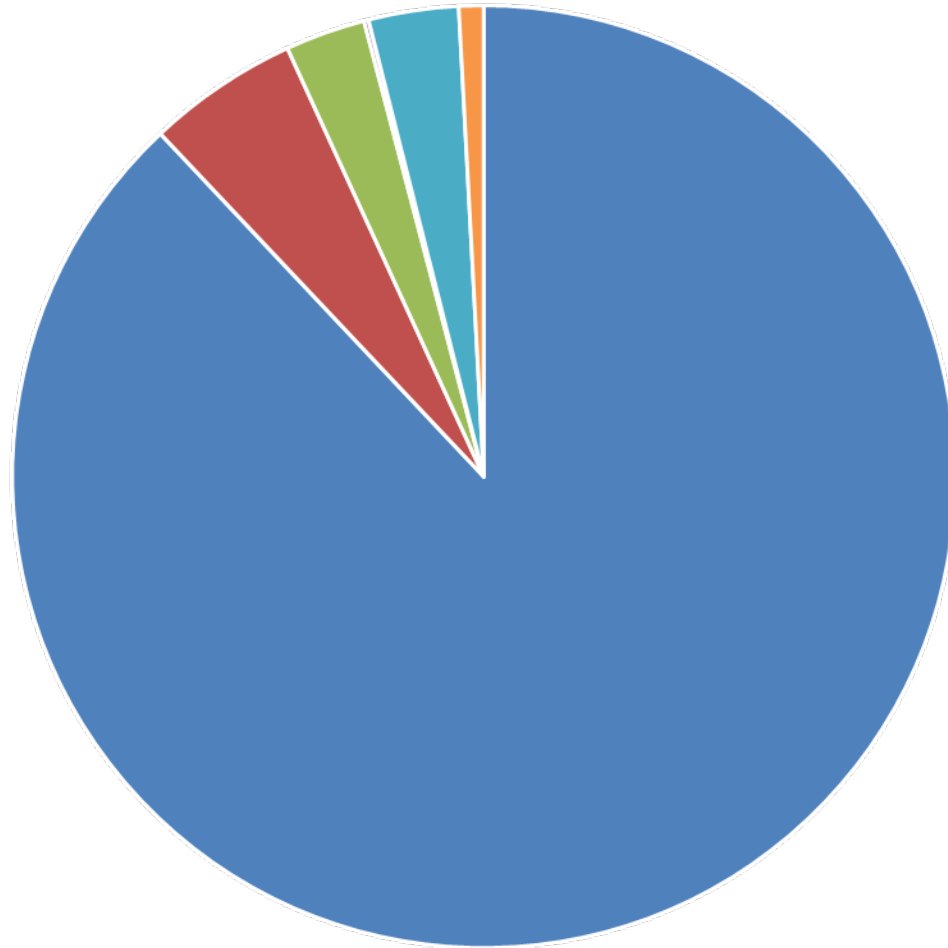
24.9% minority population according to U.S. Census (2011)

38% of students in higher education are minorities according to NCES (2013)

21% of faculty in higher education are minorities according to NCES (2015)



Credentialed Librarians 2009-2010



■ White 87.9% ■ African American 5% ■ API 2.6% ■ Native American 1.4% ■ Latino 3% ■ Two or more races .1%

Minority Librarians in Higher Education

Minorities 12.1% of professional librarians; adapted from ALA Diversity Counts (2011)



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

- ✦ Problem statement and research purpose
- ✦ Library profession is predominantly white (and female)
- ✦ Research shows that students of color respond to teachers of color and that those teachers help them to overcome barriers in education (Coleman, 2008; Crisp, Taggart, & Nora, 2014; Dee, 2004; Dee, 2005; Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, & McLain, 2006; Milner, 2006; Paloma, 2014; Price, 2010)



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

- ✦ Problem statement and research purpose
 - ✦ investigate minority librarian experiences in higher education
 - ✦ examine their perceptions of supports and barriers encountered in becoming and being professional librarians
 - ✦ present and future library leaders will be able to use the information gathered in this study to address the issue of the lack of librarians of color in higher education.



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

✦ Research questions:

- ✦ What supports and barriers have minorities experienced in becoming and working as academic librarians?
- ✦ What perceptions do minority librarians have about being minority librarians and their contributions, if any, to campus diversity?
- ✦ What factors do minority librarians perceive contribute to the small number of minority academic librarians?



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

- ✦ Research
 - ✦ Qualitative methods
 - ✦ Phenomenological
 - ✦ Participants
 - ✦ Analysis



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

✦ Preliminary findings: Themes

- ✦ Theme 1: Service & activism
- ✦ Theme 2: Mentoring & networking
- ✦ Theme 3: Microaggressions
- ✦ Theme 4: Campus diversity
- ✦ Theme 5: Natural born librarian



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

★ Theme 1: Service & activism

- ★ As students, with colleagues, in professional organizations, for causes
- ★ “in service to some greater good”
- ★ “librarians are often looked to to be proactive about [diversity issues]”



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

★ Theme 2: Mentoring & networking

- ★ Formal and informal mentors

- ★ Networking (at ALA and BCALA conferences)

- ★ “one of the things that sustained me was the interaction with other librarians twice a year at those conferences”



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

★ Theme 3: Microaggressions

- ★ Subtle and often unintentionally hostile action or comment directed at a minority member or group
- ★ “... people were saying things like, ‘Is diversity even an issue any more’ and ‘I oppose quotas’”



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

★ Theme 4: Campus diversity

- ★ Attending or working in a predominantly white institution
- ★ “to be a librarian of color, I think it’s a great thing to have started at an HBCU.... It’s been a rewarding experience”



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★ Theme 5: Natural born librarian

- ★ “bookworm as a kid”
- ★ “summer vacations at the library”
- ★ “I grew up in a family of readers”
- ★ “being able to learn new things all of the time”
- ★ “coolest job ... to spend all day with the books”



Minority Librarians in Higher Education

- ✦ Potential implications
 - ✦ Identify undergraduates with a commitment to service
 - ✦ Increasing mentoring opportunities that work
 - ✦ Library schools at HBCUs, TCUs, & HSIs
 - ✦ Identifying the natural born librarian – grow your own?



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