

Changing with the Times? Library Associations and New Librarians



Scott Memorial Library
1020 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Megan von Isenburg, Associate Director, Public Services, Medical Center Library,
Duke University, Durham, NC

Dan Kipnis, Senior Education Services Librarian, Scott Memorial Library,
Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA

Rebecca Pernel, Manager, Access Services, Scott Memorial Library,
Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA



DUMC 3702
Durham, NC 27710

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Objective: To determine what services and programs of national library associations are most valuable to newer librarians.

Methods: As young librarians enter the workforce, many are deciding whether or not to join and become involved with library associations such as SLA, MLA, and their regional chapters. What they decide will become increasingly important to library associations as the traditional member base reaches retirement age. To determine what might attract younger librarians, a survey was emailed to various listservs to ascertain what services are considered most valuable.

The survey was emailed to the following listservs (We received 682 responses):

ALA-NMRT	MLGSCA
HLIB-NW	NAHSL-L
ili-ala.org	NCNMLGLIST
MACMLA-L	SLA Environment & Resource Management Division
MCMLA-L	SLA Leadership & Mangement Division
MEDLIB-L	SLA-PHIL
MLA-NYNJ	SLA Washington DC Chapter
MLA-PHIL-L	

YOUNGER MEMBERS AND RECENT GRADUATES

...are **MORE LIKELY** to:

- read and subscribe to multiple blogs
- have joined and remain members of their association to gain job skills
- remain members of their association for networking support
- value advocacy for the profession, the issuing of policy statements, and the coordination of best practices for the profession

...are **LESS LIKELY** to:

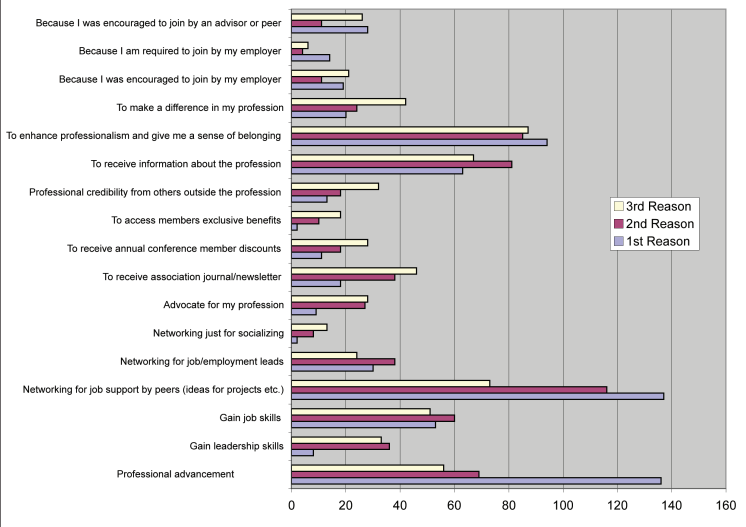
- find their association flexible, informative, innovative or relevant
- say that their associations make them think, help them do their jobs or are worth the dues
- attend CE events of associations to which they don't belong
- have joined their association for conference discounts
- have remained members of their association for professional advancement or to access member only benefits
- value the coordination of research among members, research for the benefit of the profession, the provision of software for association-related work, and the provision of increased and more affordable web-based CE

WHAT MEMBERS WANT FROM THEIR ASSOCIATIONS (Ranked)

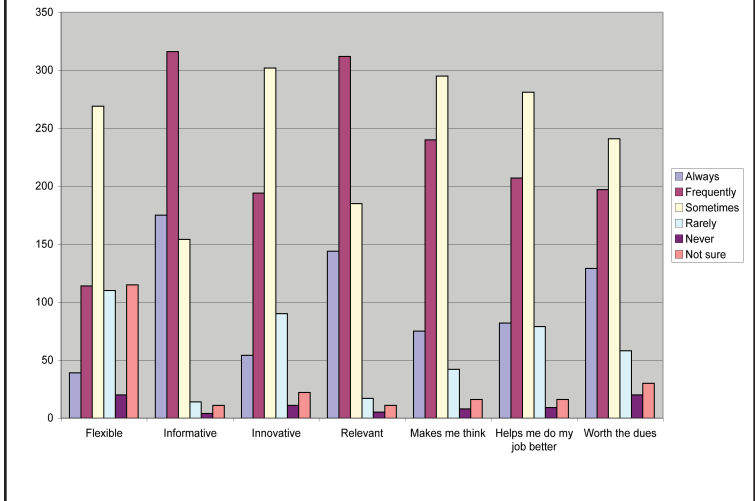
1. *Reduce the cost of participation:* Make dues, classes, and conferences more affordable
2. *Advocate for the profession:* Speak to administrators on the national and state levels; Promote better standards (e.g., JCAHO), hot issues (i.e., PATRIOT Act), better salaries for librarians
3. *Collaborate:* Team up with other library associations, outside organizations (including healthcare, technology and subject-specific organizations), and co-sponsor meetings
4. (TIED) *Offer more diverse training topics:* more IT, management, metrics, diversity, communications, and issues for solo librarians or librarians from rural communities
4. (TIED) *Engage the Membership / Reach out to New Members:* Reach out to students, library schools, old and new members, members in nontraditional library settings; Engage in recruitment (minorities, undergraduate science majors); Create scholarships, grants and internships
5. *Offer ways to meet, learn and network virtually:* Virtual Conference, Meetings and CE
6. *Facilitate sharing of resources:* including consortial purchasing

Based on 196 relevant open-ended answers, 80 to "Are there other program areas, services or missions in which you would like your association to get involved?" and 116 to "Do you have any additional comments that you would like to share regarding professional associations?"

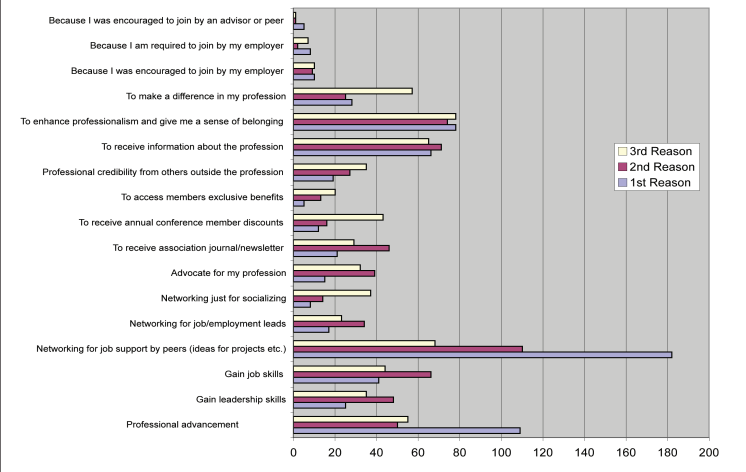
Reasons for Joining Association



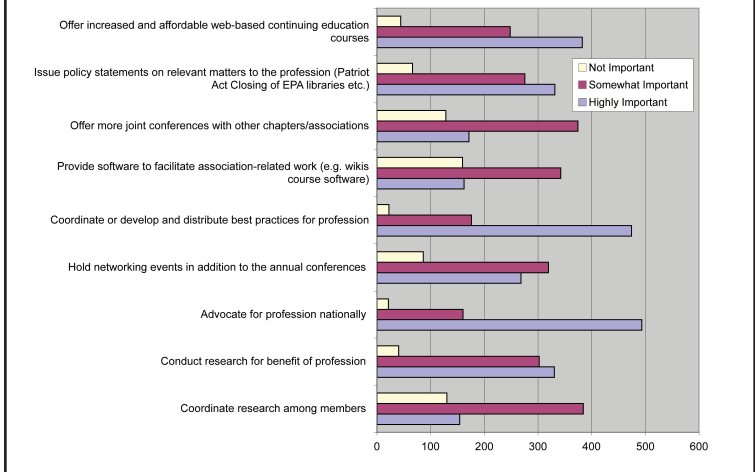
Perceived Characteristics of Primary Associations



Why Remain in Association



Perceived Importance of Program Areas, Services and Missions



CONCLUSIONS AND RESULTS

97% of respondents belong to an association. Associations remain very much a part of librarian culture. 74% currently serve or previously served on any committee and 79% plan to serve on any committee in the future. Surprisingly, only 46% of respondents subscribe to listservs or RSS feeds for associations, sections or chapters that they DO NOT belong to, 20% subscribe to at least two. Even more shocking, the majority of respondents--36%--do not read or subscribe to any blogs on library or librarian issues, although a quarter of respondents do read four or more blogs. Librarians are either avid librarian blog readers or not at all.

For more information:
 megan.vonisenburg@duke.edu
 dan.kipnis@jefferson.edu
 rebecca.pernell@jefferson.edu