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# Academic and Public Librarian Salaries and Library Staffing Expenditures Trends, 2000–2009

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## ABSTRACT

Library salaries/wages and benefits expenditures consume as much as 70 percent of some library operating budgets. The impact of low or negative-growth budgets and the displacement of technology expenditures to other categories of library operating (e.g., collections, programming, and outreach) are significant for many libraries. Relying on national surveys of academic libraries from the National Center for Education Statistics, surveys of public libraries from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and annual salary surveys from the American Library Association (ALA) and ALA-Allied Professional Association, this article will describe, for the period 2000–2009, the distribution of academic and public library expenditures, present librarian salary survey ranges by type of library and position held, and elucidate trends identified from comparison of the three data sources.

## INTRODUCTION

Library expenditures trends indicate that salaries and wages consume half or more of library operating budgets annually. As budgets contract due to the economic downturn, the proportion staffing expenses will take of the remaining dollars could be considerable. Individual staff salary compensation scales and benefits packages are often outside the control of library administrators. However, those same administrators must adjust other operating budget components to maintain library services. Without short-term savings or permanent reductions in staff expenditures, frequently from freezing vacancies or position consolidation or elimination, very few alternatives remain.

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Relying primarily on national surveys of academic libraries from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2000 through 2008, surveys of public libraries from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) 2000 through 2007, and annual salary surveys from the American Library Association (ALA) and ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) 2000 through 2009, this article will describe, for the period 2000 through 2009, the distribution of academic and public library expenditures, present librarian salary survey ranges by type of library and position held, and elucidate trends identified from comparison of the three data sources.

### *Limitations of the Data*

There are certain limitations to the data presented herein. The national library surveys administered by the IMLS and the NCES represent the universe of eligible public (IMLS) and academic (NCES) libraries. In both cases, final data include imputation for item level non-response (e.g., missing values), therefore national figures should be considered estimates. The ALA-APA annual salary survey employs a random sample method (95 percent confidence,  $\pm$  5 percent) of academic and public libraries, stratified by degree-granting level and five population served range clusters. The data are not weighted and salaries reported (mean, median, and quartiles) are derived from total responses and presented by specific position titles surveyed and the sampling stratification levels (e.g., library type, degree-granting level, and population served ranges). National and regional salaries reported should be considered only as estimates. Multi-year salary analysis from raw data files was not possible due to contractual agreements between the various vendors administering the survey and ALA. Analysis was performed using the reported mean, median, and quartile data at the national and regional levels for years 2000 through 2008.

## THE OPERATING BUDGET LANDSCAPE FOR ACADEMIC AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The distribution of expenditures within a library operating budget are reported in three broad categories: salaries and wages (sometimes including benefits), collections, and other expenditures. Collections expenditures may include books, serials, document delivery, preservation, and the like. Other operating expenditures may include computer hardware and software, bibliographic utilities, consortia fees, furniture, and maintenance. Expenditures for new construction and large renovation typically fall into capital expenditures and, depending upon local accounting practices, may or may not be reported with "other expenditures." Historically, there is little proportional variation year-to-year within these broad expenditure categories.

*Academic Libraries*

The most current year of national academic library data available at the time of this publication was 2008 and a baseline year of 2000 is used to illustrate academic library expenditure changes over time.

Total operating expenditures for academic libraries were \$6,785,542,230 in 2008 and \$5,025,943,128 in 2000, an overall increase of about 26 percent. The 2008 through 2000 expenditure distributions (see table 1) remained largely unchanged in 2008 from 2000:

- 49.3 percent (2008) and 50.1 percent (2000) for salaries and wages
- 39.2 percent (2008) and 37.1 percent (2000) for information resources
- 11.5 percent (2008) and 12.8 percent (2000) for operating expenditures

The number of academic libraries surveyed in 2008 was 3,827 and 3,527 in 2000. Much of the 2008 response change is explained by a rise in private, for-profit institutions participating in the 2008 survey compared with other years. It also is important to note that these institutions are primarily two-year degree granting and typically have much smaller operating budgets and many fewer library staff than other academic libraries.

The proportional distributions and percent change in 2008 from 2000 are more interesting when considered by total dollars expended (see table 1):

- \$3,342,081,830 (2008) and \$2,517,271,881 (2000) salaries and wages, an increase of 24.7 percent
- \$2,663,081,820 (2008) and \$1,866,590,224 (2000) information resources, an increase of nearly 30 percent
- \$780,378,590 (2008) and \$642,081,023 (2000) other operating expenditures, an increase of 17.7 percent

The largest percent increase during this period was in collections, followed by salaries and wages, and other operating expenditures. A 2007 report prepared by Sonya White and Claire Creaser at Loughborough University (UK) found that although journal price increases vary by publisher, the median increase between 2000 and 2006 was 39 percent (White & Creaser, 2007). Each year *The Library and Book Trade Almanac* (originally known as *The Bowker Annual: Library and Book Trade Almanac*) reports the average price of books and noted an academic book in 2007 cost \$68.01, up from \$57.42 in 2000 for an increase of about 15.6 percent (Information Today, 2002, 2009).

The 2008 Academic Library Survey (NCES) reported that about 64 percent (\$1,704,298,887) of information resources expenditures went to current serial subscriptions (all formats) and nearly 30 percent (29.6 percent, or \$788,627,781) to books, serial backfiles, and other materials; document delivery, preservation, and other expenditures accounted for about 6.3 percent of information resources (see table 2). Nearly 17

Table 1. Academic Library Operating Expenditures, Biennial 2000–2008 (NCES)

Year	Responding Academic Libraries	Total Expenditures	Salaries and Wages	Information Resources	Operating
2008	3,827	\$6,785,542,230	\$3,342,081,820 49.3%	\$2,663,081,820 39.2%	\$780,378,590 11.5%
2006	3,617	\$6,234,191,836	\$3,102,560,577 49.8%	\$2,375,484,525 38.1%	\$756,146,734 12.1%
2004	3,653	\$5,751,247,194	\$2,913,221,078 50.7%	\$2,157,531,102 37.5%	\$680,495,014 11.8%
2002	3,568	\$5,416,716,283	\$2,753,403,980 50.8%	\$1,990,988,970 36.8%	\$672,323,333 12.4%
2000	3,527	\$5,025,943,128	\$2,517,271,881 50.1%	\$1,866,590,224 37.1%	\$642,081,023 12.8%
Change, 2000–2008		\$1,759,599,102 25.9%	\$824,809,939 24.7%	\$796,491,596 29.9%	\$138,297,567 17.7%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. *Academic Libraries 2000–2008*. Retrieved August 6, 2010, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/getpubcats.asp?sid=041#>

percent of book and serial backfile expenditures went to electronic equivalents, while 59 percent of current serial subscriptions expenditures went to electronic formats. So, not only is more of the academic library operating budget allocated to serials than other materials, more than half of those expenditures are for electronic formats.

#### *Public Libraries*

The most current year of national public library data available at the time of this publication was fiscal year 2007. A baseline year of 2000 is used to illustrate public library expenditure changes.

Total operating expenditures for public libraries in fiscal year 2007 were \$10,205,598,000 and \$7,027,908,000 in fiscal year 2000, showing an overall increase of 31 percent (see table 3). The fiscal years 2007 and 2000 distributions were

- 65.5 percent (2007) and 64.2 percent (2000) on staffing;
- 13.1 percent (2007) and 15.2 percent (2000) on collections;
- 21.3 percent (2007) and 20.6 percent (2000) on other operating expenditures.

As with academic libraries, when considered by dollars expended, the proportional distributions and percent change become more interesting. They were

- \$6,684,666,690 (2007) and \$4,511,916,936 (2000) on staffing, an increase of 32.5 percent
- \$1,336,933,338 (2007) and \$1,068,242,016 (2000) on collections, an increase of 20.1 percent
- \$2,173,792,374 (2007) and \$1,447,749,048 (2000) on other operating expenditures, an increase of 33.4 percent

Table 2. Academic Library 2008 Information Resources Expenditures (NCES)

	Books, Serial Backfiles	Current Serials	Document Delivery, Preservation, etc.
Expenditure	\$788,627,781	\$1,704,298,887	\$167,774,155
Percent of Expenditure	29.6%	64.0%	6.3%
Electronic equivalents as a percentage of expenditures	17.0%	59.0%	

Table 3. Public Library Operation Expenditures, FY 2000–2007 (IMLS)

Year	Responding Academic Libraries	Total Expenditures	Salaries and Wages	Collections	Other Operating
2007	9214	\$10,205,598,000	\$6,684,666,690 65.5%	\$1,336,933,338 13.1%	\$2,173,792,374 21.3%
2006	9208	\$9,595,568,000	\$6,304,288,176 65.7%	\$1,266,614,976 13.2%	\$2,024,664,848 21.1%
2005	9198	\$9,066,040,000	\$5,974,520,360 65.9%	\$1,196,717,280 13.2%	\$1,894,802,360 20.9%
2004	9207	\$8,643,028,000	\$5,687,112,424 65.8%	\$1,140,879,696 13.2%	\$1,815,035,880 21.0%
2003	9211	\$8,297,708,000	\$5,459,891,864 65.8%	\$1,153,381,412 13.9%	\$1,684,434,724 20.3%
2002	9137	\$8,024,133,000	\$5,191,614,051 64.7%	\$1,155,475,152 14.4%	\$1,677,043,797 20.9%
2001	9129	\$7,571,645,000	\$4,845,852,800 64.0%	\$1,150,890,040 15.2%	\$1,574,902,160 20.8%
2000	9074	\$7,027,908,000	\$4,511,916,936 64.2%	\$1,068,242,016 15.2%	\$1,447,749,048 20.6%
Change, 2000–2007		\$3,177,690,000 31.1%	\$2,172,749,754 32.5%	\$268,691,322 20.1%	\$726,043,326 33.4%

Per capita analysis done by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in its fiscal year 2007 public library report indicates that between fiscal years 1998 and 2007, public libraries reported an increase of about 46 percent in total per capita operating expenditures (\$34.95 in 2007 from \$23.92 in 1998). Keeping in alignment with the years studied here (2000 and 2008), the 2000 per capita expenditures were \$26.42, 14 percent higher than in 1998. When considered for fiscal years 2000 and 2007 (the most recent year of data at the time of this writing), figure 1 outlines the per capita expenditures: collections grew to \$4.59 in 2007 from \$4.02 in 2000 (up 14 percent); staffing, \$22.91 in 2007 from \$16.96 in 2000 (up 26 percent); and other expenditures, \$7.45 in 2007 from \$5.44 in 2000 (up 27 percent).

To put the per capita detail in perspective, it is important to note that the number of public library systems increased about 1.5 percent during this period to 9,214 in 2007 from 9,074 in 2000, with the total number

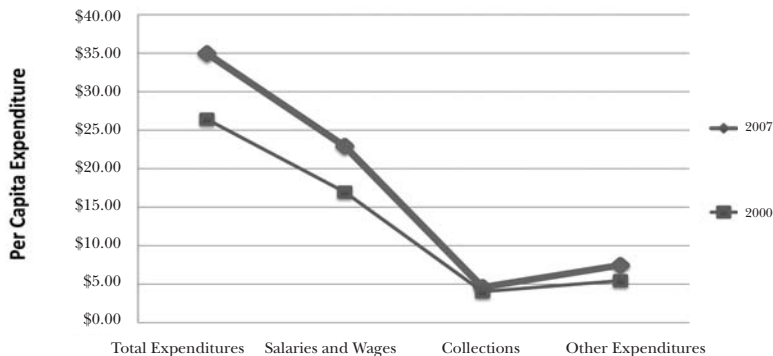


Figure 1. Public Libraries Per Capita Expenditure Change, FY2000–2007 (IMLS)

of outlets (buildings and bookmobiles) increasing to 16,604 (2007) from 16,298 (2000) (table 4). Some of this growth can be explained by changes in the number of libraries meeting state and national eligibility requirements, as well as real additions to the number of public libraries. While the change in the number of public libraries grew by about 1.5 percent, the unduplicated population served grew to 290,029,000 in 2007 from 265,985,000 in 2000, an increase of about 9 percent.

The 2009 report *Libraries Connect Communities 3*, a product of the ALA Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study, found that more libraries reported no change or decreases in operating budgets in fiscal year 2008 to fiscal year 2009, and the number of libraries reporting increases was at its lowest in the three years of gathering this information. Early results from the 2009 to 2010 study indicate continued declines, with twenty-four state libraries reporting declines in state funding to public libraries between fiscal years 2009 and 2010 (“A perfect storm,” 2010). In addition to what state libraries reported, individual libraries reported significant shifts in operating budget changes (see table 5).

As libraries become increasingly vigilant in planning and administering operating budgets, understanding more about variations in the largest expenditures—salaries and wages—become evermore important. Trends in expenditures for salaries and wages and median salaries reported by academic and public libraries are next presented in aggregate, then more granularly for each library type.

### SALARY AND WAGE TRENDS

Salary and wage data are gathered through a variety of sources. The national academic and public library surveys (NCES and IMLS) gather total staff expenditures as a part of total operating expenditures, while surveys conducted by the ALA-APA and the Association of Research Libraries

Table 4. Public Library Staffing, FY2000–2007 (IMLS)

Fiscal Year	Responding Public Libraries	Total Library Outlets	Total Staff	Total ALA-MLS	Unduplicated Population of Legal Service Area
2007	9,214	16,604	144,655	32,173	290,029,000
2006	9,208	16,592	140,443	31,554	288,693,000
2005	9,198	16,543	137,855	30,873	286,472,000
2004	9,207	16,549	136,014	30,560	283,435,000
2003	9,211	16,541	136,172	30,479	280,368,000
2002	9,137	16,486	136,219	30,428	277,253,000
2001	9,129	16,421	133,456	30,094	273,921,000
2000	9,074	16,298	130,102	43,118	265,985,000
Change, FY2000–2007	140 1.54%	306 1.88%	14,553 11.19%	–10,946 –25.39%	24,044,000 9.04%

Table 5. Number of Public Libraries Reporting Operating Budget Change, 2009–10 (PLFTAS)

Operating Budget Change	Year	
	2010	2009
Increased up to 6%	37.0%	50.5%
Increased 6% or more	6.7%	9.4%
Decreased less than 6%	17.1%	10.6%
Decreased more than 6%	14.3%	3.7%
Stayed same	25.0%	25.9%

Source: ALA. *2009–2010 Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study*. Retrieved August 6, 2010, from <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>

gather position-level salary range data.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this discussion only the ALA-APA data will be referenced, in addition to the NCES and IMLS national expenditure data already cited. Limitations of the salary data were noted earlier.

As previously noted, libraries reported increases in total salary and wages expenditures of 24.7 percent (academic) and 32.5 percent (public) between 2000 and 2007/2008, respectively. Regarding individual salaries reported in the *ALA-APA Salary Survey*, the 2008 median MLS librarian salary was \$53,521 and \$42,922 in 2000, an increase of 19.8 percent (see table 6). The salary data also show that the annual percentage change in mean salaries, all positions, ranged from a low of 2 percent in 2008 to a high of 4 percent in 2002 (omitting the years when the survey methodology changed, 2005 to 2006). The two most recent percentage changes were 2 and 2.7 percent, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

Benchmark salary data for non-MLS academic and public library staff was gathered in 2006 and 2007 by the ALA-APA salary survey project, *Non-MLS Public and Academic: A Survey of Library Positions Not Requiring an ALA-Accredited Master's Degree*. The survey gathered information for sixty-

Table 6. Salaries, Mean/Median, 2000–2008 (ALA-APA)

Year	Number of Salaries Reported	Salaries	
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
2008	16,258	\$58,960	\$53,521
change		2.0%	1.0%
2007	7,564	\$57,809	\$53,000
change		2.7%	3.8%
2006*	10,631	\$56,259	\$50,976
change		4.4%	1.4%
2005*	24,814	\$53,779	\$50,274
change		3.0%	2.9%
2004	15,027	\$52,188	\$48,792
change		1.6%	1.8%
2003	15,856	\$51,362	\$47,914
change		2.9%	2.7%
2002	14,805	\$49,866	\$46,600
change		4.0%	4.5%
2001	13,487	\$47,852	\$44,484
change		3.6%	3.5%
2000	14,622	\$46,121	\$42,922

\*Survey methodology changed in survey years 2005–6.

two positions that do not require an ALA accredited master's degree in library science and six traditional library job titles (e.g., Director [non-MLS], Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director [non-MLS], etc.).

The 2007 median MLS salary reported was \$53,000 and non-MLS salary was \$40,710, a difference of \$12,290 (about 23 percent). Although MLS salaries typically are higher, there are more non-MLS staff working in academic and public libraries and it is important to understand the range of those salaries. Non-MLS 2007 mean salaries, highest and lowest, by position designation, geographic region, library type, and median salary are presented in table 7 (American Library Association and Allied Professional Association [ALA-APA], 2007, pp. 397–398).

The education levels required for non-MLS positions varied. A total of 2,099 non-ALA-MLS positions were reported in 2007 and a majority (50 percent) required a bachelor's degree. Another 19 percent (391 positions) required a high school diploma and 14 percent (286) required some college (ALA-APA, 2007, p. 398).

The 2008 ALA-APA librarian salary survey reported that the highest mean and median salaries, academic and public, were held by the Director/Dean/Chief Officer category and only those in university, large and very large public libraries (see table 8). The reported median salaries ranged from a high of \$167,063 (very large public library, North Atlantic region) to a low of \$94,635 (large public library, North Atlantic region) (ALA-APA, 2008, p.64). The highest actual salaries were reported primarily by Directors/Deans/Chief Officers in university libraries, with two of the ten positions reported by their counterparts in very large public



Table 7. Highest and Lowest Mean Non-MLS Salaries, 2007 (ALA-APA)

Position	<i>Highest Mean Non-MLS Salaries, 2007</i>		Mean Salary
	Region	Library	
Web Content Administrator	Great Lakes & Plains	Two-year Academic	\$87,059
Public Relations Officer	North Atlantic	University	\$87,958
Development Manager	Southeast	Very Large Public Library	\$91,143
Information Technology (IT) Manager	North Atlantic	Very Large Public Library	\$92,350
Facility Engineering Manager (Maintenance)	West & Southwest	Two-year Academic	\$94,503
Senior Accountant	North Atlantic	Very Large Public Library	\$95,869
Development Manager	North Atlantic	Very Large Public Library	\$96,677
Information Technology (IT) Manager	Great Lakes & Plains	Very Large Public Library	\$100,971
Human Resources Manager	West & Southwest	Two-year Academic	\$110,532
Information Technology (IT) Manager	West & Southwest	Two-year Academic	\$121,500
Position	<i>Lowest Mean Non-MLS Salaries, 2007</i>		Mean Salary
	Region	Library	
Computer Lab Assistant	Southeast	Medium Public Library	\$10,712
Shelver/Page	Southeast	Small Public Library	\$11,658
Janitorial Cleaner	Great Lakes & Plains	University	\$13,333
Shelver/Page	West & Southwest	Two-year Academic	\$14,040
Shelver/Page	Great Lakes & Plains	Two-year Academic	\$14,075
Clerk-Government Documents	Great Lakes & Plains	Very Small Public Library	\$14,560
Processing Assistant	Great Lakes & Plains	Two-year Academic	\$14,560
Shelver/Page	Great Lakes & Plains	Small Public Library	\$14,707
Receptionist	West & Southwest	Small Public Library	\$15,205
Driver	North Atlantic	Medium Public Library	\$15,600

libraries. The actual salaries ranged from a high of \$331,200 to a low of \$220,000 (ALA-APA, 2008, p. 65).

The lowest mean and median salaries were spread across more positions and four out of ten reported in the Great Lakes and Plains region. The lowest median salaries ranged from a high of \$39,256 (very small public library, librarian who does not supervise, North Atlantic region) to a low of \$26,363 (very small public library, librarian who does not supervise, West and Southwest region) (ALA-APA, 2008, p. 65).

As with non-MLS positions, there were regional differences in the median salaries for each position reported. It is important to remember that the responses more reliably reflect national and regional salaries than at individual state levels due to random sampling methodology and overall response rate. The following observations should, therefore, be considered with that caveat.

Table 8. Highest Actual MLS Librarian Salaries, 2008 (ALA-APA)

Position	Region	Library Type	Maximum Salary Reported
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	Great Lakes & Plains	University	\$331,200
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	North Atlantic	University	\$281,400
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	North Atlantic	University	\$246,000
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	Southeast	University	\$240,000
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	North Atlantic	University	\$235,380
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	Southeast	University	\$222,585
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	North Atlantic	Very Large Public	\$220,000
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	North Atlantic	Very Large Public	\$220,000
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	Great Lakes & Plains	University	\$220,000

The 2008 median salary for all academic director/dean salaries was \$84,500 ( $N=389$ ) and public library director salaries was \$83,000 ( $N=583$ ), a difference of only 1.8 percent (table 9). However, the regional differences were much more pronounced. In two regions the public library salaries exceeded those of academic Directors/Deans: the Southeast by 3 percent; and the West and Southwest by 25 percent. The academic library salaries in two regions exceeded those of public library Directors/Deans: the North Atlantic by 26 percent and the Great Lakes by 11 percent.

Salaries could be ranked on three variables: (1) degree-granting level, (2) population of public library service area, and (3) geographic region. When considering the ranking of reported salaries by these variables, it was observed that

- degree-granting level of the academic institution exposed more variation in median salaries for individual positions but not for aggregate median salaries. Geographic region was a useful variable for only some positions;
- population served range of public libraries exposed more variation of median ranked salary ranges for individual positions but not for aggregate median salaries. This was further demonstrated when salaries were stratified by population served range and geographic region.

The following sections provide more detail on variations in academic and public library salaries and expenditures by level of degree-granting institution, population served ranges of public libraries, and geographic region.

#### *Academic Library Salaries*

Drilling down a bit further into the most recent comprehensive national academic library data (Phan, Sheckells, & Davis, 2009), salaries and wages comprised 49.3 percent of FY2008 operating budgets or about \$3.3 billion. When considered by institutional degree-granting level, those offering less than a four-year degree reported the largest proportion of the

Table 9. Median Director/Dean/Chief Officer MLS Librarian Salaries, Academic and Public Libraries, 2008 (ALA-APA)

Region	Academic Library	Public Library		Difference
North Atlantic	\$91,840	\$72,909	\$18,931	26.0%
Great Lakes	\$80,000	\$72,128	\$7,872	10.9%
Southeast	\$81,445	\$84,000	\$2,555	3.0%
West +Southwest	\$80,078	\$106,670	\$26,593	24.9%
All Regions	\$84,500	\$83,000	\$1,500	1.8%

budget for salaries (71.6 percent), followed by bachelor's degree-granting institutions (54.4 percent), master's degree (53.9 percent), and doctoral degree (45 percent) reported combined as "University." Overall, degree granting institutions at four-year and above reported an average of 46.5 percent of operating budgets to staffing (about \$2.7 billion) (see table 10).

The 2008 NCES data also indicate that the largest enrollment institutions (20,000 or more) had the largest overall staffing levels, the highest total operating expenditures, as well as the highest salaries and benefits expenditures. Although institutions at this enrollment level were only 3 percent of all academic libraries reporting, they account for 29.5 percent of total staffing, 35 percent of total operating expenditures and 32.6 percent of salaries and wages expenditures of U.S. academic libraries.

The proportion of full-time equivalent professional (MLS) and other professional and support (non-MLS, including students) staff reported to NCES in 2008 by degree granting level was less than four-year 32.5 percent MLS, 67.5 percent non-MLS; bachelor's 31.8 percent MLS, 68.2 percent non-MLS; and master's and doctoral 28 percent MLS, 72 percent non-MLS (see table 11).

There was very little difference in the median salaries reported in the 2008 ALA-APA for all MLS positions by degree granting level. The total median salary for two-year institutions was \$53,487, four-year \$53,500, and university (including ARL) \$53,526. Similarly, there was little variation in the mean (average) salaries by degree granting level; two-year \$58,863, four-year \$58,899, and university (including ARL) \$58,961 (see table 12).

Median salary variations were evident by degree-granting level when individual positions were studied. Regional variations were present for only some positions and degree-granting level, but were insufficient to discuss.

The 2008 median salary reported for Dean/Director positions in two-year institutions was \$68,646, \$69,318 in four-year and \$105,726 in universities, a gap of about 35 percent between lowest and highest salaries paid (table 12). Similarly, Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director positions paid a 2008 median salary of \$57,758 at two-year institutions, \$52,240 at four-year, and \$83,788 at universities, a gap of about 31 percent between lowest and highest salary.

Table 10. Academic Library Expenditures and Percentage of Total Operating Expenditures, 2008 (NCES)

	Salary/Wages Expenditures	Information Resources and Other Exp	Total
University (Master's and Doctor's) (N=1,663)	\$2,670,144,123 46.5%	\$3,071,894,066 53.5%	\$5,742,038,189 85.2%
Four-year (N=730)	\$193,061,382 54.4%	\$161,846,182 45.6%	\$354,907,564 5.3%
Less than Four-year (N=1,434)	\$458,847,807 71.6%	\$181,640,349 28.4%	\$640,488,156 9.5%
Total (N=3,827)	\$3,322,053,313 49.3%	\$3,415,380,598 50.7%	\$6,737,433,911 100.0%

Table 11. Percent Distribution Academic Librarians Full-Time Equivalents (FTE), 2008 (NCES)

	Total FTE	Percentage	Total Librarians	Percentage	Total Non-MLS Staff	Percentage
University (Master's and Doctor's)	73,333	78.5%	20,510	28.0%	52,823	72.0%
Four-year	6,572	7.0%	2,093	31.8%	4,479	68.2%
Less than Four-year	13,007	13.9%	4,233	32.5%	8,774	67.5%
Total	93,438	99.4%	26,836	92.4%	66,076	70.7%
<i>FTE Enrollment</i>						
Less than 1,000	6,692	7.2%	2,331	34.8%	4,360	65.2%
1,000 to 2,999	14,630	15.7%	4,534	31.0%	10,096	69.0%
3,000 to 4,999	9,298	10.0%	2,955	31.8%	6,343	68.2%
5,000 to 9,999	14,665	15.7%	4,443	30.3%	10,222	69.7%
10,000 to 19,999	20,625	22.1%	5,541	26.9%	15,084	73.1%
20,000 or more	27,528	29.5%	7,226	26.2%	20,302	73.8%
Total	93,438	100.0%	27,030	28.9%	66,407	71.1%

The salary gap between degree-granting level narrows as the position responsibilities are reduced. For instance, there was about a 9.5 percent gap between lowest and highest median salary paid to Department Heads/Coordinators/Senior Management in academic libraries. This also was the case with Beginning Librarians with two-year institutions reporting a median salary of \$46,370, four-year \$39,500, and university \$42,008—a gap of about 14.8 percent between lowest and highest median salary. Four-year institutions reported the fewest Beginning Librarians (thirty-seven), followed by two-year (forty-four), and universities (166).

An interesting anomaly appears in median salaries reported by two-year degree granting institutions for Managers/Supervisors of Support Staff (\$54,226) and Librarians Who Do Not Supervise (\$53,595). Two-year institutions are far more competitive with university median salaries in these positions than are four-year institutions. As mentioned earlier, universities are lead employers and this is reflected in the number of salaries reported

Table 12. Mean and Median Salaries Reported by Academic Libraries, 2008 (ALA-APA)

	<i>Two-year</i>		<i>Four-year</i>		<i>University (incl. ARL)</i>	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
All Positions	\$58,863	\$53,487	\$58,899	\$53,500	\$58,961	\$53,526
Director/Dean/ Chief Officer	\$73,020	\$68,646	\$74,622	\$69,318	\$114,527	\$105,726
Deputy/Associate/ Assistant Director	\$59,136	\$57,758	\$56,819	\$52,240	\$86,211	\$83,788
Department Head/ Branch Manager/ Coordinator	\$61,827	\$54,910	\$56,830	\$55,331	\$62,491	\$60,688
Manager/ Supervisor of Support Staff	\$56,221	\$54,226	\$49,754	\$48,247	\$55,526	\$52,938
Library who does not supervise	\$56,136	\$53,595	\$47,248	\$46,600	\$55,293	\$52,700
Beginning Librarian	\$50,745	\$46,370	\$40,728	\$39,500	\$44,307	\$42,008

in the ALA-APA survey, representing 42.6 percent of all degree-granting institutions. They are followed by two-year institutions representing about 37.5 percent of academic libraries and about 13.9 percent of the workforce, then four-year institutions representing 19 percent of academic libraries and about 7 percent of the workforce.

The salary survey data also show that the annual percentage change in mean salaries, all positions, ranged from a low of 2 percent in 2008 to a high of 4.7 percent in 2002 (omitting the years when the survey methodology changed, 2005 through 2006). The two most recent percentage changes were 2 and 2.7 percent, respectively.<sup>3</sup> An annual percentage change of 2 percent will be used for the purposes of estimating the impact of salary expenditures on other areas of academic library operating budgets through fiscal year 2012, the year that many economic analysts estimate is the downturn recovery period of the current recession (McNichol & Johnson, 2010). The number of libraries and staff are held constant at 2008 NCES levels.

Applying the 2 percent increase to the NCES academic library expenditures data and stratifying by degree granting level allows for loose estimation of the impact on information resources and other expenditures (table 13). The following scenarios demonstrate the potential impact through 2012.

Two-year institutions spent \$458,847,807 on salaries and wages in 2008. Applying the 2 percent annual increase to salary expenditures while keeping total operating budgets fixed at 2008 levels resulted in estimated reductions to information resources and other expenditures as follows: 5.1 percent in 2009, 5.4 percent in 2010, 5.9 percent in 2011, and 6.3 percent

Table 13. Academic Library Expenditure Projections, 2009-12

<i>Salary and Wages Expenditures</i>									
	2008 (actual)	2009	change	2010	change	2011	change	2012	change
University	\$2,670,144,123	\$53,402,882	2.0%	\$54,470,940	2.0%	\$55,560,359	2.1%	\$56,671,566	2.0%
Four-year	\$193,061,382	\$3,861,228	2.0%	\$3,938,452	2.0%	\$4,017,221	2.1%	\$4,097,566	2.0%
Two-year	\$458,847,807	\$9,176,956	2.0%	\$9,360,495	2.0%	\$9,547,705	2.1%	\$9,738,659	2.0%

<i>Information Resources and Other Expenditures</i>									
	2008 (actual)	2009	change	2010	change	2011	change	2012	change
University	3,071,894,066	3,018,491,184	-1.7%	\$2,964,020,243	-1.8%	\$2,908,459,885	-1.9%	\$2,851,788,318	-1.9%
Four-year	\$161,846,182	\$157,984,954	-2.4%	\$154,046,502	-2.5%	\$150,029,281	-2.6%	\$145,931,715	-2.7%
Two-year	\$181,640,349	\$172,463,393	-5.1%	\$163,102,898	-5.4%	\$153,555,192	-5.9%	\$143,816,533	-6.3%

in 2012. By 2012, expenditures for information resources and other operating expenditures at libraries serving two-year institutions could drop to about \$143.8 million from \$181.6 million in 2008.

Four-year institutions spent \$193,061,382 on salaries and wages in 2008. Applying the two percent annual increase to salary expenditures while keeping total operating budgets fixed at 2008 levels resulted in estimated reductions to information resources and other expenditures as follows: 2.4 percent in 2009, 2.5 percent in 2010, 2.6 percent in 2011, and 2.7 percent in 2012. By 2012, expenditures for information resources and other operating expenditures at libraries serving four-year institutions could drop to about \$145.9 million from \$161.8 million in 2008.

University libraries spent \$2,670,144,123 on salaries and wages in 2008. Applying the 2 percent annual increase to salary expenditures while keeping total operating budgets fixed at 2008 levels resulted in estimated reductions to information resources and other expenditures as follows: 1.7 percent in 2009, 1.8 percent in 2010, 1.9 percent in 2011, and again in 2012. By 2012, expenditures for information resources and other operating expenditures at university libraries could drop to about \$2.8 billion from over \$3 billion in 2008.

#### *Public Library Salaries*

Based on the most recent national comprehensive public library survey (IMLS, 2009), public library salaries and wages expenditures comprised 65.5 percent of FY2007 operating budgets, more than \$6.6 billion (table 14). When considered by population served ranges, the most telling of the variables applied to the ALA-APA Salary Survey data, the distribution of operating expenditures for salaries were that

- very large public libraries spent \$2,072,014,008 among 84 libraries and employed 9,754.8 MLS staff;
- large public libraries spent \$1,876,733,267 among 439 libraries and employed 9,015.4 MLS staff;
- medium public libraries spent \$1,675,610,330 among 1,508 libraries and employed 8,534 MLS staff;
- small public libraries spent \$669,713,680 among 1,764 libraries and employed 3,445 MLS staff;
- very small public libraries spent \$394,989,450 among 5,419 libraries and employed 1,423.5 MLS staff.

The very small libraries serve about 6.4 percent of the total U.S. population, while very large libraries serve about 15.8 percent. The smaller the public library the less likely they have MLS librarians. This may result primarily from an affordability factor—the economy of scale available to larger communities is not possible in those that are small and very small. In fact, 99.5 percent of large and 93 percent of medium public libraries

reported employing MLS librarians while only 73.6 percent of small and 21.9 percent of very small public libraries reported doing so.

Very small libraries were more likely to have non-MLS degreed staff in “librarian” positions (80 percent) than were even small (45 percent) or medium libraries (30 percent). This distinction is important when considering salaries reported in the ALA-APA survey.

The ALA-APA salary survey collected information from public libraries serving 25,000 residents or more until 2005. Collection of data from libraries serving less than 25,000 began in 2006, and the number of cases reported from the smaller libraries has had little impact on the more recent mean and median salaries.

It was only possible to compare mean salaries in 2008 with 2000 due to the methodology differences in the ALA-APA salary survey in those years. The percentage change in mean public library salaries are presented in table 15. The largest percentage increase was seen in Beginning Librarians (34.5 percent, or \$10,916), followed by Deputy/Associate/Assistant Directors (27.5 percent, \$15,829) and Manager/Supervisor of Support Staff (27.7 percent, \$11,197).

The 2008 librarian salary data indicate comparable percentage changes for median salaries by position when considered for each service area range (table 16). For instance, Director/Dean/Chief Officer median salaries for very small libraries (under 10,000 population served) were about 33.7 percent lower than those for small libraries (10,000 to 24,999), and medium libraries (25,000 to 99,999) salaries were about 33.9 percent lower than those for large libraries. However, regional variations by position and size of library were rather dramatic. Director/Dean/Chief Officer median salaries in very small libraries in the West and Southwest were 65.7 percent lower than those of small libraries in the same region. The same position at large public libraries (100,000 to 499,999) in the North Atlantic region were 76.5 percent lower than those in very large public libraries (500,000 or more), and in the Southeast region salaries reported were 41.8 percent lower than in very large public libraries in that region.

The least variation was seen in median salaries for Librarians who do not supervise regardless of library size or geographic region (table 17). In fact, of the 2,264 cases reported in 2008, the median salaries in each region were relatively close—the highest reported in the West and Southwest region at \$48,557 and the lowest \$44,928 reported in the Southeast, a difference of about 7.5 percent.

Also showing little variation were Managers/Supervisors of Support Staff librarian positions. The difference in median salaries by region, highest to lowest, was about 10.5 percent, or \$5,488. Even when considered by library size, salaries in the four census regions varied very little. West and Southwest salaries and those in the North Atlantic tend to be highest overall. For some regions, such as the West and Southwest, large



Table 14. Public Libraries by Population Served Categories, Fiscal Year 2007 (IMLS)

	Total		Salaries and Wages			Population Served Range		
	Library Systems	Library Outlets	MLS Staff	Total Expenditures	Wages	Collections	Other	Population Served Range
Very Large Public	84	2,364	9,754.8	\$3,202,400,000	\$2,072,014,008	\$429,611,264	\$700,774,728	500,000 or more
Large Public	439	3,359	9,015.4	\$2,833,748,000	\$1,876,733,267	\$372,448,216	\$586,184,206	100,000-499,999
Medium Public	1,508	3,627	8,534.0	\$2,510,053,000	\$1,675,610,330	\$317,551,695	\$516,890,975	25,000-99,999
Small Public	1,764	2,385	3,445.0	\$1,020,905,000	\$669,713,680	\$130,675,840	\$220,515,480	10,000-24,999
Very Small Public	5,419	5,677	1,423.5	\$638,492,000	\$394,989,450	\$90,245,609	\$153,256,941	less than 10,000
Total	9,214	17,412	32,172.7	\$10,205,598,000	\$6,689,060,735	\$1,340,532,624	\$2,177,622,330	

Table 15. Public Library Mean Salaries, 2000–2008 (ALA-APA)

Position	<i>Mean Salary Estimate</i>			<i>Median Salary Estimate</i>		
	2008	2000	Percentage Change	2008	2000	Percentage Change
Director/Dean/ Chief Officer	\$86,354	\$72,416	19.2	\$83,000	\$71,388	16.3
Deputy/Associate/ Assistant Director	\$73,385	\$57,556	27.5	\$71,115	\$55,066	29.1
Department Head/ Branch Manager/ Coordinator	\$60,835	\$49,995	21.7	\$58,622	\$49,289	18.9
Manager/ Supervisor of Support Staff	\$51,594	\$40,397	27.7	\$49,344	\$39,076	26.3
Librarian who does not supervise	\$48,167	\$39,371	22.3	\$42,601	\$38,024	12.0
Beginning Librarian	\$42,601	\$31,685	34.5	\$41,018	\$31,340	30.9

libraries reported a higher median salary than did the very large libraries (\$53,490 compared to \$51,418). This can sometimes be explained by fewer cases for a library size and region, but it was not so with Managers/Supervisors of Support Staff salaries reported.

Public library expenditures for salaries and wages increased about 32.5 percent in fiscal year 2007 from 2000 as previously noted. The 2008 public librarian salary mean, all positions all regions, was \$59,801 and the median was \$53,487 and represents an increase of about 2 percent from the prior year. The closeness of the mean and median salary indicates few outliers. Assuming the difference between mean MLS and non-MLS positions remained at the 2007 rate of about 23 percent, one could reasonably estimate the 2008 non-MLS mean salary to be about \$46,047.

As noted in the academic library section, the salary survey data show that the annual percentage change in mean salaries, all positions, ranged from a low of 2 percent in 2008 to a high of 4.7 percent in 2002 (omitting the years when the survey methodology changed, 2005 through 2006). The two most recent percentage changes were 2 and 2.8 percent, respectively. An annual percentage change of 2 percent will be used for the purposes of estimating the impact of salary expenditures on other areas of public library operating budgets through fiscal year 2012, the period of time many economic analysts estimate is the downturn recovery period of the current recession (see table 18). The number of libraries and staff are held constant at fiscal year 2007 IMLS levels.

Very large public libraries spent \$2,072,014,008 on salaries in fiscal year 2007. Applying the 2 percent annual increase to salary expenditures while keeping total operating budgets fixed at fiscal year 2007 levels resulted in estimated reductions to collection and other expenditures as follows:

Table 16. Median Public Library Director/Dean/Chief Officer MLS Librarian Salaries by Region and Library Size, 2008

Region	<i>Library Size and Percentage Variance by Size</i>									
	Very Large	Variance	Large	Variance	Medium	Variance	Small	Variance	Very Small	
North Atlantic	\$167,063	76.5%	\$94,635	9.7%	\$86,297	28.8%	\$67,000	25.3%	\$53,490	
Great Lakes	\$133,900	29.3%	\$103,532	31.9%	\$78,500	29.8%	\$60,488	34.4%	\$45,000	
Southeast	\$124,688	41.8%	\$87,916	41.5%	\$62,148	21.5%	\$51,168	-2.7%	\$52,585	
West +Southwest	\$141,276	22.5%	\$115,282	25.3%	\$92,000	25.4%	\$73,380	65.7%	\$44,275	
All Regions	\$139,752	33.9%	\$104,340	29.9%	\$80,333	28.9%	\$62,303	33.7%	\$46,606	

Table 17. Median Public Librarian Salaries by Region and Position, 2008 (ALA-APA)

Region	Director/ Dean	Deputy	Department Head	Manager Support Staff	Does Not Supervise	Beginning
North Atlantic	\$72,909	\$70,517	\$58,313	\$51,091	\$47,278	\$42,003
Great Lakes	\$72,128	\$62,296	\$55,949	\$47,445	\$45,159	\$37,910
Southeast	\$84,000	\$67,309	\$57,265	\$46,664	\$44,928	\$38,690
West	\$106,670	\$82,644	\$62,535	\$52,152	\$48,557	\$42,973
+Southwest						
All Regions	\$83,000	\$71,115	\$58,622	\$49,344	\$46,426	\$41,018

3.7 percent in 2008, 3.9 percent in 2009, 4.1 percent in 2010, 4.4 percent in 2011, and 4.7 percent in 2012. By 2012, very large public library expenditures for collections and other operating expenditures could drop to about \$914.7 million from \$1.1 billion in 2007.

Large public libraries spent \$1,876,733,267 in fiscal year 2007 and estimated reductions in collection and other expenditures were: 3.9 percent in 2008, 4.2 percent in 2009, 4.4 percent in 2010, 4.7 percent in 2011, and 5.1 percent in 2012. By 2012, large public library expenditures for collections and other operating expenditures could drop to about \$761.6 million from \$957 million in 2007.

Medium public libraries spent \$1,675,610,330 in fiscal year 2007 and estimated reductions in collection and other expenditures were: 4.0 percent in 2008, 4.3 percent in 2009, 4.5 percent in 2010, 4.9 percent in 2011, and 5.2 percent in 2012. By 2012, medium public library expenditures for collections and other operating expenditures could drop to about \$660 million from \$934.4 million in 2007.

Small public libraries spent \$669,713,680 in fiscal year 2007 and estimated reductions in collection and other expenditures were: 3.8 percent in 2008, 4.0 percent in 2009, 4.3 percent in 2010, 4.6 percent in 2011, and 4.9 percent in 2012. By 2012, small public library expenditures for collections and other operating expenditures could drop to about \$281.4 million from \$351.1 million in 2007.

Very small public libraries spent \$394,989,450 in fiscal year 2007 and estimated reductions in collection and other expenditures were: 3.2 percent in 2008, 3.4 percent in 2009, 3.6 percent in 2010, 3.8 percent in 2011, and 4.1 percent in 2012. By 2012, very small public library expenditures for collections and other operating expenditures could drop to about \$202.3 million from \$243.5 million in 2007.

## CONCLUSION

Although we cannot predict with accuracy the impact of the economic downturn on future operating budgets and expenditures for academic and public libraries, we can experiment with various scenarios based upon previous expenditure patterns. This article attempted to provide historic

Table 18. Public Library Expenditure Projections, 2007–12

<i>Salaries and Wages Expenditures</i>											
	2007 (actual)	2008	change	2009	change	2010	change	2011	change	2012	change
Very Large	\$2,072,014,008	\$2,113,454,288	2%	\$2,155,723,374	2%	\$2,198,837,841	2%	\$2,242,814,598	2%	\$2,287,670,890	2%
Large	\$1,876,733,267	\$1,914,267,932	2%	\$1,952,553,291	2%	\$1,991,604,357	2%	\$2,031,436,444	2%	\$2,072,065,173	2%
Medium	\$1,675,610,330	\$1,709,192,537	2%	\$1,743,304,987	2%	\$1,778,171,087	2%	\$1,813,734,509	2%	\$1,850,009,199	2%
Small	\$669,713,680	\$683,107,954	2%	\$696,770,113	2%	\$710,705,515	2%	\$724,919,625	2%	\$739,418,018	2%
Very Small	\$394,989,450	\$402,889,239	2%	\$410,947,024	2%	\$419,165,964	2%	\$427,549,284	2%	\$436,100,269	2%
Total	\$6,689,060,735	\$6,822,841,950	2%	\$6,959,298,789	2%	\$7,098,484,764	2%	\$7,240,454,460	2%	\$7,385,263,549	2%

<i>Collection and Other Exp reduced by salary increases</i>											
	2007	2008	change	2009	change	2010	change	2011	change	2012	change
Very Large	\$1,130,385,992	\$1,088,945,712	-3.7%	\$1,046,676,626	-3.9%	\$1,003,562,159	-4.1%	\$959,585,402	-4.4%	\$914,729,110	-4.7%
Large	\$957,014,733	\$919,480,068	-3.9%	\$881,194,709	-4.2%	\$842,143,643	-4.4%	\$802,311,556	-4.7%	\$761,682,827	-5.1%
Medium	\$834,442,670	\$800,930,463	-4.0%	\$766,748,013	-4.3%	\$731,881,913	-4.5%	\$696,318,491	-4.9%	\$660,043,801	-5.2%
Small	\$351,191,320	\$337,797,046	-3.8%	\$324,134,887	-4.0%	\$310,199,485	-4.3%	\$295,985,375	-4.6%	\$281,486,982	-4.9%
Very Small	\$243,502,550	\$235,602,761	-3.2%	\$227,544,976	-3.4%	\$219,326,036	-3.6%	\$210,942,716	-3.8%	\$202,391,731	-4.1%
Total	\$3,516,537,965	\$3,382,756,050	-3.8%	\$3,246,299,211	-4.0%	\$3,107,113,236	-4.3%	\$2,965,143,540	-4.6%	\$2,820,334,451	-4.9%
Loss		-3.8%	-4.0%	-4.3%	-4.6%	-4.9					

trends in library spending and salary/wages in particular. By applying one scenario to both academic and public libraries, it was possible to provide some insight into the potential challenges facing libraries.

There also are known and unknown influencers impacting library funding. One such known influencer is the residual effect of short-term economic recovery in other public and government sectors, such as education, and the drain that may cause within local, county, and state government appropriations. There is insufficient national data (quantitative or qualitative) to address this, but data are more accessible at the local and state levels. Understanding the historic expenditure patterns of libraries, as well as anticipating the short-term impact of delayed recovery in other public and government sector areas will position libraries to be more proactive in maintaining adequate funding even during an economic downturn of unknown length.

#### *Additional Resources*

The following additional resources are available and may prove useful in library planning, salary assessment, or other evidenced-base assessment:

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) provides annual public and state library data.
- Research funded by IMLS for all types of libraries and museums is located at <http://www.imls.gov/index.shtm>.
- The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, n.d.) reports every three years about school (K-12) library studies as part of the Schools and Staffing Survey series and biennial academic library surveys.
- Detailed education (primary, secondary, and post-secondary) longitudinal studies from NCES are located at <http://nces.ed.gov/>.
- The American Library Association-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) conducts an annual salary survey of public and academic libraries and includes rotating supplemental questions on topics from collective bargaining, director gender and salary, staff development, etc (ALA, n.d.). The most recent survey results are summarized at <http://www.ala-apa.org/>.
- The American Library Association (ALA) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, n.d.) collect general library data and salary data periodically.
- The American Library Association and the Public Library Association (PLA) annual Public Library Data Service Statistical Report (n.d.) reports director salaries and total staff expenditures, they also conduct a supplemental survey each year on a variety of topics (e.g., detailed financial, construction, services to youth, etc.).
- The American Library Association's *Public Library Funding and Technology Access Study (PLFTAS)* (n.d.), includes finance detail (source and estimates) and technology expenditures.

- The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) conducts annual surveys of its members, including a salary survey (n.d.).
- The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics produced the *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010–2011 Edition* (2009). National employment estimates for the profession are available from the Current Employment Statistics survey (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).
- The Special Library Association (SLA) conducts various surveys of its members, including a salary survey, *SLA Members Move Out of Libraries* (2003). Member salary surveys and other information resources are available to members at <http://www.sla.org/>.
- State level studies coordinated by state library agencies are mapped at the Colorado State Library, Library Research Service portal at <http://www.lrs.org/>.
- The University of North Carolina, School of Library and Information Science study *The Future of Librarians in the Workforce* (Presentations, n.d.; Study overview, 2009) was an IMLS-funded national study of librarian workforce patterns, library specialization, job matriculation and satisfaction, salaries, and general library services.

## NOTES

1. ALA-APA Salary Survey collects salary ranges and actual salaries for six positions: Director/Dean/Chief Officer; Deputy/Associate/Assistant Directors; Department Heads/Coordinators/Senior Managers; Managers/Supervisors of Support Staff; Librarians who do not supervise; and Beginning Librarians. The survey reports the actual and ranges by degree granting level of academic libraries (2-year, 4-year, university including ARL) and population served range of public library (Very Small—serving less than 10,000; Small—serving 10,000–24,999; Medium—serving 25,000–99,999; Large—serving 100,000–499,999; and Very large—serving 500,000 or more).
2. The percentage change in mean salaries (ALA-APA Salary Survey, Librarian): 2008 2 percent; 2007 2.8 percent; 2006 4.6 percent (methodology change); 2005 10.2 percent (methodology change); 2004 2.3 percent; 2003 3.6 percent; 2002 4.7 percent; 2001 3.75 percent; 2000 4.3 percent.
3. The percentage change in mean salaries (ALA-APA Salary Survey, Librarian): 2008 2 percent; 2007 2.8 percent; 2006 4.6 percent (methodology change); 2005 10.2 percent (methodology change); 2004 2.3 percent; 2003 3.6 percent; 2002 4.7 percent; 2001 3.75 percent; 2000 4.3 percent.

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