

“Joining Voices, Sharing Visions: Diversity in Academic Libraries” CARL-DIAL South Spring Program

On Friday, May 18th 2007, CARL-DIAL South presented its Spring program, Joining Voices, Sharing Visions: Diversity in Academic Libraries at University of California's Leavey Library Auditorium

Sophie Lesinska, co-chair of DIAL South introduced opening speakers Norma Corral and Silvia Calzada who she had met at the Diversity Summit presented by UCLA's Department of Information Studies on September 18, 2006. This program inspired Lesinska to organize a diversity committee on the USC campus.

Norma Corral, the first speaker on the program is Librarian for Chicana/o Studies, American Indian Studies, Asian American Studies and Reference Collection Coordinator at UCLA's Charles E. Young Research Library. As co-chair of the Diversity Summit, she said that the outcome was to identify strategies for diversity recruitment based on discussion in the breakout sessions. A report currently being drafted will serve as a model for institutions to adopt.

The next speaker, Silvia Calzada is the Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) Grant Librarian at CSU Northridge, and with Corral serves on the UCLA/GSEIS Diversity Recruitment and Mentoring Committee. As a co-chair of the Diversity Summit, Calzada stressed the importance of mentoring library students and the buy-in by management/university administration for diversity recruitment. She emphasized the need to market our profession with minorities to have diverse staffs. Calzada cited the NCATE Institutional Report of Emporia State University and its in-depth treatment of the institution's commitment to cultural diversity across its curriculum as well as a model for recruitment.

The panel of four presenters...John Ayala, Alice Kawakami, Ron Rodriguez, and Marla Peppers followed. Ayala, who has been a librarian since 1970, is currently the Interim Director of the Library and Learning Resources at Compton College, as well as the Emeritus Dean of Library and Learning Resources at Fullerton College. He was a founding member and past President of National REFORMA and the United Mexican American Students (Mecha/Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) at Cal State Long Beach. He has been involved with the recruitment of Latino librarians as a member of CLA, ALA, and with National REFORMA.

Ayala provided a wealth of information on the history of recruitment of Latinos to Library Service. He spoke about the work of Dr. Arnulfo D. Trejo, founder of REFORMA (1971) and founder of the Graduate Library Institute for Spanish-Speaking Americans (GLISA) at the University of Arizona. During its four-year run, approximately 60 students earned their MLS degrees, substantially increasing the percentage of bilingual/bicultural librarians. Distinguished graduates of the GLISA include Margo Gutierrez, Mexican American and Latino Studies Librarian, University of Texas at Austin; Martin Gomez, Executive Director of the Urban Libraries Council; Luis Herra, Director of the San Francisco Public Library; Salvador Guerena, Director of the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives, Donald Davidson Library of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Ayala mentioned Elizabeth Martinez, who, with her colleague, Jose Taylor, formed the Los Angeles-based group called the Committee to Recruit Mexican American Librarians, which led to the founding of the Mexican-American Library Training Institute at California State University, Fullerton. This was the first time a library school program aimed at training Latina/o librarians with specialized course work and seminars and providing financial aid to participants. Distinguished graduates from the CSUF Mexican American Library Science Program are Robert Trujillo, Head of Special Collections, Stanford University and Carmen Martinez, Director of the Public Library for the City of Oakland. Ayala is currently working on a book with Sal Guerena.

The next outstanding panelist was Alice Kawakami who addressed issues of professional development. Kawakami, UCLA's "Librarian of the Year" in 2002, is the University Librarian at CSULA. She spoke about the need for an "upgrade" for librarians of color and pressure on culturally diverse librarians to retain energy and motion. She stressed self-development through attending leadership institutes, such as ARL's Leadership and Career Development Program for mid-career librarians. Kawakami presented a number of suggestions to new librarians for self-development including setting up interviews at conferences and

generally becoming pro-active. For administrators, she advocates providing a support network, being an ally and a mentor. [According to the Diversity Counts report published by ALA in January, 2007, "In addition to the proliferation of new and the expansion of existing LIS diversity education and workforce recruitment programs, efforts must be made to provide accessible career ladders and opportunities for professional learning and development of current library staff".]

Marla Peppers, Head of Library Information Services at Occidental College enthusiastically described her work as coordinator of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Librarian Recruitment Program. The purpose of the Mellon Librarian Recruitment Program is to encourage talented and diverse undergraduates to pursue jobs in libraries. The Mellon Program aims to increase the number of librarians available to fill the projected national shortage of librarians due to retirements. Expanding the racial and ethnic diversity of librarians is also an objective of the program. Mellon internships at the Occidental College Library are designed to give undergraduate students, especially those from diverse backgrounds, a chance to explore the profession of librarianship through projects, readings, field trips, and collaboration with Occidental librarians. Interns work on projects of their own choosing, and of often find ways to incorporate their own interests in to their work at the library. One of the Mellon internship projects was the creation of a diversity book collection at the Occidental College Library. So far, the Library has had eighteen interns in the Mellon Program and four who pursued the MLIS. See:

<http://departments.oxy.edu/library/geninfo/mellon> for additional information.

The grand finale of the panel presentation was Ron Rodriguez who addressed the topic: "The Librarian of Color in Post Affirmative Action Times: Retention and Promotion". Ron is currently Head of Access Services at California State University, Fullerton and Past President of CARL and National REFORMA. In his opening remarks, he said he last spoke about the same topic 26 years ago at UC Berkeley. The writer of this report consulted *Diversity Counts*, the report compiled by the Office for Research and Statistics Office of Diversity (ALA 2007) with the statistics to which Ron Rodriguez referred. According the report, "Compared to credentialed librarians, non-credentialed librarians have a slightly more balanced ethnic and racial distribution. Three (3) percent more Latinos reported holding non-credentialed librarian positions, and 2% more African Americans in a 2000 census. In 2006, the number of credentialed Latino librarians increased from 2% (2000) to 3% (2006)." Rodriguez emphasized that it takes individuals committed to affirmative action to intensify recruitment and retention strategies. Although there are many outstanding Hispanic librarians as is evidenced in our California libraries and library associations, according to the Diversity Counts, "the incremental increase in numbers of racial and ethnic minorities enrolled in the nation's LIS programs have not reflected the rate of increase, by percentage, of racial and ethnic minorities in this country over the past decade or more." Rodriguez emphasized the need to keep mentoring, and use virtual sites for discussion.

Poster presenters included Marjorie Acevedo, Mount Saint Mary's College, Angela Boyd, University of California, Santa Barbara, Melanie Chu, California State University, San Marcos, Valeria Molteni, California State University, Dominguez Hills, Alanna Aiko Moore, University of California, San Diego, Ed Tinoco, University of Southern California, and Chimene Tucker, University of California, Santa Barbara.

The success of the spring program is due to so many people in DIAL-South. Special thanks go to Sophie Lesinska, USC, Valeria Molteni CSUDH, Susan Luevano CSULB; Marjorie Acevedo Mount Saint Mary's, Melanie Chu CSUSM, Sue Tyson USC, Felicia Pallsson USC, and Shahla Bahavar USC.

Prepared by Judith Samuel
DIAL-South archivist