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### Interns, Inclusion, And Iteration: Undergraduates Influencing The Library Profession

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# 10

## Interns, Inclusion, and Iteration

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Undergraduates Influencing the Library Profession

### INTRODUCTION

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A lack of diversity in libraries may impact student experience, thereby affecting library use patterns, help-seeking behavior, and the general sense of libraries as a welcoming space. When students do not see themselves reflected in the library staff, they are also less likely to consider librarianship as a career. In recognition of the need to address diversity, Swarthmore College Libraries uses internships as a successful means of impacting the profession through increased visibility and intentional recruitment. Our story begins in 2003 with participation in a landmark, multi-institutional initiative to diversify the profession and recruitment at the undergraduate level, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Now, nearly two decades later, that initiative has grown into a series of college-sponsored and -funded internships that remain relevant as the library profession is under scrutiny for its lack of diversity.

Swarthmore College Libraries work to build an inclusive community and seek to provide a supportive environment for learning and constructive engagement that equips our students to make a difference in the broader

world. Internships can serve as the starting point for enriching the student experience, informing hiring practices, and creating a rich, inclusive environment for the campus community. Swarthmore College is a small liberal arts college located in southeastern Pennsylvania. Despite its small student body of approximately 1,620 students, seven libraries or collections are offered: McCabe, the main library, which provides holdings in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, along with a special collection of fine press and artist books; Cornell Science Library; Underhill Performing Arts Library; two independent special collections: Friends Historical Library and the Peace Collection; the Beit Midrash, a collection of Hebrew texts; and the Black Cultural Center. Founded by members of the Society of Friends in 1864, Swarthmore College was coeducational dating as far back as its onset. Although the college ceased to be affiliated with the Society of Friends in 1908, the Quaker influence persists.

In this chapter we highlight an internship program dedicated to broadening diversity and inclusion in the information professions. We discuss how the success of this program has led to other initiatives, outreach, and hiring practices promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the libraries, as well as examine how many of these projects could be applied, wholesale or with some modest adaptations, on other campuses.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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Much of what has been written about internship programs in librarianship highlights the need for innovative approaches to recruitment of a diverse workforce. However, the literature reveals the tenuous nature of many internships, whether they are short-lived, underfunded, or restrictive in scope. In 1972, before the advent of professional chapters for librarians of color, in light of barriers to graduate education, and recognizing a need to diversify the profession, activist and librarian E. J. Josey edited the seminal publication on recruitment issues in the profession, *The Black Librarian in America* (1970). In the chapter on “Black Recruitment: The Issue and an Approach,” esteemed librarian and educator James C. Welbourne remarks that recruitment is critical for the profession, “a matter of survival,” and that the “profession is desperately in need of an infusion of new ideas and fresh perspectives.”<sup>1</sup> Nearly half a century later, Welbourne’s appeal is more relevant than ever. Academic libraries are uniquely positioned to foster the next generation of librarians, especially through the creation of internships.

One of the first established internships to recruit undergraduates through intentional programming was the 1989 University of California, San Diego’s, “Undergraduate Student Internship Program,” managed by one dedicated

librarian with modest operating funds to pay regular student wages to attend twice-weekly meetings and take field trips.<sup>2</sup> With the 1999 publication of *Stop Talking, Start Doing! Attracting People of Color to the Library Profession*, Reese and Hawkins gave a call to action for innovative recruitment practices and, through case studies, highlighted barriers to graduate school for minority students such as GPA scores, test scores, lack of financial assistance, and academic mentors, suggesting that the “need for collaborative recruitment efforts between library practitioners and library educators is great.”<sup>3</sup>

Although the 1980s and '90s saw an increased interest in diversity recruitment through internships, it was not until the 2000s that the movement gained traction. With the establishment of the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce in 2000 by the Association of Research Libraries, recruitment became a national focus. The program was designed to recruit Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) students from historically underrepresented ethnic and racial minority groups into careers in research libraries and archives. Yet, the role of undergraduate recruitment initiatives remained elusive.

A major initiative for undergraduate recruitment to the library profession was the 2003 Recruiting to the Library Profession, a multi-institutional program funded by two \$500,000 grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to Atlanta University, Johnson C. Smith University, Mount Holyoke College, Oberlin College, Occidental College, St. Augustine's University, Swarthmore College, and Wellesley College. Recruiting to the Library Profession addressed diversity in the library profession and recruitment at the undergraduate level. Further examples of internships from the first decade of the twenty-first century seem to exhibit an ephemeral nature, given the vagaries of staff availability, funding, and institutional support. Although Asher and Alexander's California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) internship had a focus on mentorship and minority recruitment for undergraduates, few programs exist today with intentional focus to recruit minority undergraduates to librarianship.<sup>4</sup>

In 2016, Vinopal observed in “The Quest for Diversity in Library Staffing: From Awareness to Action” that despite growing numbers of initiatives, the demographics of the profession remain fairly constant. Vinopal urges individual libraries and library schools to include diversity in their strategic plans and to create special initiatives to diversify staff or bring more people from underrepresented groups to the profession.<sup>5</sup> In tandem, Hathcock cautions to not approach diversity as a problem to be solved but rather as a goal worth achieving. Initiatives focused primarily on increasing numbers and visibility risk missing the opportunity to pay attention to the “lived experiences of underrepresented librarians surrounded by the whiteness of the profession.”<sup>6</sup> Hathcock espouses modification of diversity programs to attract truly diverse candidates and mentorship of early-career librarians.

Although not entirely unique, the Swarthmore College Libraries Internship is the longest running internship of its kind. Unlike most others, it is designed specifically to introduce underrepresented undergraduates to the field, pays either an hourly wage or offers course credit, and allows library staff to explore critical librarianship through teaching weekly seminars.

## SWARTHMORE COLLEGE PROGRAMS

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The Mellon-funded program, Recruiting to the Library Profession (2003–2009), was both a multi-institutional and multitiered program created to make the library profession more visible to large numbers of undergraduate students at participating institutions and to provide in-depth exposure to the library field for selected students from diverse backgrounds. The program had four primary components:

- broad-based, issues-oriented programming that familiarizes large numbers of students with significant challenges facing the library profession, draws their attention to the potential of librarianship as a career, and alerts them to the more selective internship opportunities of the program
- an undergraduate internship experience for two to ten students annually at each campus that gives them a thorough understanding of librarianship as a profession
- five full-time, one-year postbaccalaureate library associate positions, awarded competitively among the participating institutions in the second and third years of the project, that provide in-depth, hands-on experience with various aspects of academic librarianship
- four graduate library school scholarships awarded competitively among participating institutions in the second and third year of the project

After the Mellon grant ended, and due to its success, Swarthmore College Libraries continued to sponsor a similar internship using student employment funds and renamed it the Swarthmore Libraries Internship. As the sixteenth anniversary approached, we examined the Mellon program's original goals and created new ones: address the shortage of professional librarians due to retirement, recruit talented undergraduates early in the hiring pipeline, and broaden the racial and ethnic composition of the library profession so that it can better serve increasingly diverse populations.

The Swarthmore Libraries Internship is unique in that it serves as both a model for other forms of programming and as a foundation for much of the

pedagogical approaches championed by our research and instruction librarians. Chosen through a rigorous and selective application process, six students are shepherded annually through a semester of weekly seminars on many aspects of librarianship and the information professions, including discussions with professionals and field trips.

In late fall, we begin to advertise the internship with fliers, postcards, and emails sent to the entire student body. In addition, we target specific students who expressed interest in the curriculum as well as student library employees. Applicants complete a questionnaire, shown in text box 10.1, that clarifies their interest in the program and addresses how they perceive themselves

### TEXT BOX 10.1

#### Swarthmore College Libraries Internship Application

Thank you for your interest in the Swarthmore College Libraries Internship!

During this paid internship, students will have the opportunity to explore careers in libraries, special collections and archives, and information science through weekly seminars; field trips to Philadelphia-area libraries, archives, and museums; and (optional) independent projects.

The Library Internship, originally funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2003, aims to introduce students to the field of information science and to promote the American Library Association's fundamental values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

1. Name
2. Email address
3. Anticipated graduation date
4. What do you study (include declared or anticipated majors and minors)?

#### Short Answers

1. What attracted you to this internship?
2. Give some detail about your experience in libraries, archives, or museums, whether as a visitor or an employee. If possible, give examples of one positive and one negative experience.
3. In your opinion, what role do libraries play in Swarthmore's campus culture?
4. Although the American Library Association claims diversity as a core value, the profession remains largely homogenous. How would your experiences and interests contribute to inclusiveness and diversity in the field?
5. Provide the name & contact information of one reference and indicate their relationship to you (e.g., professor, supervisor, etc.).

contributing to inclusion and diversity in the library profession. We typically receive approximately twenty applications, and upon review, the program facilitators select nine to twelve students to interview, ultimately hiring six. In terms of the intern selection, we define diversity broadly, which allows for flexibility and inclusiveness.

The original curricular component of Recruiting to the Library Profession was centrally developed and administered by a curriculum committee made up of members from participating institutions. It focused on active learning, self-discovery, and career exploration through the following broad units: Why Librarianship?, The Global Information Environment, What Do Librarians Do Anyway?, Management & Leadership, and Values. Though centralized, it was built to allow for customization across campuses. Each institution made additions to the core curriculum to allow points of emphasis appropriate to the local institutional context. Interns also engaged in three to four hours of individual project work per week with library staff mentors. Projects varied in scope and content at each campus, from original cataloging to library space use and design to an off-campus project developing a plan for a school library at a local charter school. Another feature of the undergraduate internship at some of the schools has been occasional field trips to local institutions that fall under the umbrella of libraries, archives, and museums.

As Swarthmore continued the internship, we were able to adapt and change the curriculum based on the expertise and interests of the facilitators and guest speakers. For example, the curriculum adapted to include critical privacy issues facing the profession as a result of the USA Patriot Act of 2001 and the open access movement.<sup>7</sup> Some aspects of the curriculum have endured through all sixteen iterations, such as field trips and the interactive game “Papyrus to Print to Pixel,” in which students build a timeline of library and information history from 5000 BCE through 2005. Other aspects, such as the personality and leadership assessments, were removed to allow time for other topics. Newer additions include exploring our artists’ book collection, practicing paleography and letterlocking, and learning about digital scholarship. The latter choices were inspired by current and former resident librarians, one of whom had a background in archives and another who became our digital scholarship librarian. We have also become more intentional about illuminating connections between information careers and social justice with selected readings, discussion, and student-led mini lessons about libraries, archives, or librarians engaged in critical librarianship. A recent syllabus has been reproduced in text box 10.2.

Within each topic area we strive to assign readings or other homework that provides students with some basic knowledge, as well as a connection to social justice issues in that area. Many of our librarians volunteer as guest presenters and cover topics such as cataloging and metadata, scholarly

## TEXT BOX 10.2

### Example Syllabus

#### **Swarthmore College Libraries Spring Internship**

The goal of this internship is to introduce students to the field of library and information science and to promote the American Library Association's fundamental values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion through weekly seminar-style meetings, discussions with professionals, and field trips. We will explore connections between librarianship and pressing social issues.

#### **Mini-Lesson**

Students select an outside library or librarian engaged in critical librarianship or social justice. You are responsible for researching this entity in preparation for a ten-minute presentation to class. (required)

#### **Independent Project**

Develop an independent project to explore the field. This might include a small research project or physical/online exhibition inspired by our collections, an outreach event, or a collection development project. (optional)

#### **Course Schedule**

**Week One** | Introductions + History

**Week Two** | Collection Development, Acquisitions + Cataloging

**Week Three** | Scholarly Communication + Research & Instruction

**Week Four** | Artists' Books

**Week Five** | Information Ethics + Accessibility

**Week Six** | Digital Scholarship

--- SPRING BREAK ---

**Week Seven** | Paleography + Letterlocking

**Week Eight** | FIELD TRIP: University of Delaware Special Collections & Museum

**Week Nine** | #critlib + Secret Spaces Tour

**Week Ten** | Special Collections and Archives

**Week Eleven** | FIELD TRIP: African American Museum in Philadelphia

**Week Twelve** | Graduate School + Careers

**Week Thirteen** | Highlights of the Rare Book Room + Wrap Party

communications, and archives. They have free rein over the content for their topic and homework assignment, though the program facilitators do set the time allotment and offer suggestions based on previous iterations and social

justice connections. When possible, we include active learning, having students work on projects such as designing a zine based on an aspect of critical librarianship discussed on the blog *critlib*, a create-then-reuse activity designed to illustrate fair use (text box 10.3) using artifakes to transcribe historic documents and letterlocking in tiny spy style. We find that a combination of lecture, discussion, and activity helps students with different learning styles engage with the material in the way that suits them best. When possible, we collaborate with campus partners to enhance the overall internship experience. Career services have administered the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator and cosponsored a career day. More recently we worked with Swarthmore’s Center for Civic and Social Responsibility, which has cosponsored field trips and helped students employ the fundamentals of engaged scholarship within the curriculum.

Field trips are a popular part of the internship, and we are fortunate to have a wealth of options in the Philadelphia area. We are open to visiting any location related to libraries, archives, and museums in an effort to

### TEXT BOX 10.3

#### Copyright and Fair Use Activity

After learning about copyright and the concept of fair use, including the four factors listed below, students will do the following activity.

You have five minutes to create a copyrighted work.

- You can use your laptop, phone, or any of the provided materials.
- Your work must be fixed in a tangible expression, whether that is physical or digital.
- Your work must not infringe anyone else’s copyright.

Show & Tell! In 30 seconds, tell us about your work.

You have five minutes to make a fair use of someone else’s work (trade with your neighbor!).

- Remember the four factors:
  1. the purpose and character of the use
  2. the nature of the copyrighted work
  3. the amount and substantiality of the portion taken
  4. the effect of the use upon the potential market
- Your work must not infringe anyone else’s copyright.

Show & Tell! The class will be the judge—you have one minute to share your work, and we will decide whether or not it’s protected by fair use.

expose students to a variety of professional options. At the beginning of each internship we present the interns with several options and allow them to vote for their top choices. Some recent examples include: The Soapbox: Community Print Shop and Zine Library; University of Pennsylvania's Kislak Center, Materials Library, and Museum Library; and the African American Museum in Philadelphia. Before each field trip, students review each institution's website and develop questions, which we share with our hosts ahead of time. We have found that this promotes a fruitful discussion, as the students ask about aspects that interest them most, and the hosts feel prepared to answer those questions. Students are particularly interested in meeting with outreach staff to explore ways of reaching local communities and welcoming those communities into their spaces.

We have also experimented with requiring interns to present a ten-minute mini lesson. The first year, we asked them to select any library-related topic of interest to present to the class. The following year, we asked them to select from a list of librarians, archivists, and institutions with a connection to activism or social justice issues, including ties to the Free Black Women's Library, Erin Glasco, Books through Bars, and Dorothy Porter. Anecdotally, we found that the activist and social justice topics were more engaging overall, led to more consistency in quality and presentation, and tied into our overarching theme of critical librarianship.

At the end of each semester, the interns fill out a survey about the program. Regarding the curriculum, we ask them what engaged them most, what they would have liked to learn more about, and whether they have any suggestions for improvement. This helps us to continually monitor the value of the program and look for avenues of positive change.

## ASSESSMENT

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After the Swarthmore program had run for thirteen years, we surveyed internship alumni to assess the overall impact of the program. Modeled on "Undergraduate Library Internships and Professional Success," by Clinton Baugess and colleagues, the assessment evaluated the effect of the Swarthmore College Libraries Internship on participants' undergraduate experience, career trajectories, and/or graduate study.<sup>8</sup>

We emailed a Qualtrics survey to all eighty-one internship alumni. The survey featured internal skip logic that revealed more questions to interns who went on to work in the library field, with a maximum of twenty-nine questions. The questions primarily focused on the overall internship experience, its impact on the intern's graduate school experience and early career, and the skills acquired. Two questions, copied from the Consortium on

Financing Higher Education (COFHE) Alumni Survey, addressed continued connection to Swarthmore College and its staff and faculty. In the survey, we asked respondents whether they would be interested in participating in semi-structured follow-up phone interviews.

Of the eighty-one survey invitations emailed to former interns, we received forty-nine responses, a response rate of 60.5 percent. Among the respondents, nineteen expressed a willingness to participate in follow-up phone interviews; ultimately, five half-hour phone interviews were conducted, in which participants could elaborate on their graduate school and career path after graduation, as well as further thoughts on the internship program.

The forty-nine survey respondents represented at least one intern from every year (excluding 2010, in which there was no internship program), ranging from one to seven respondents per cohort. Demographic questions related to ethnicity and citizenship were optional in the survey. Of those who responded, 46 percent identified as white, 24 percent as Asian, 18 percent as black or African American, and 4 percent as American Indian or Alaska Native; 11 percent were not United States citizens or permanent residents at the time of the internship.

The survey indicated high levels of satisfaction with the internship. Eighty percent were extremely satisfied, and 95 percent moderately or extremely satisfied; nobody stated that they were neutral or dissatisfied. Just over half (twenty-four people, or 53 percent) completed an independent project while an intern at the Swarthmore College Libraries. Ten students received funding for a library-based summer research project, and three worked as a post-bac in the libraries. The majority (thirty-eight people, or 84 percent) had held student jobs in other areas of the libraries and archives, with research and instruction, access and lending, and the Friends Historical Library being the most widely represented departments. Some former interns had worked in more than one area while students. In terms of significance in shaping career, academic, or personal interests, an impressive 82 percent of all survey respondents believed that the internship was moderately, very, or extremely significant. All respondents believed that the internship was significant to some degree.

A recurring theme among phone interviewees was, to quote one of them, the “semi-academic and semi-vocational” nature of the internship. When compared to the Swarthmore curriculum that tended toward academic and theoretical education, the internship offered hands-on, practical exposure to a viable career. Another interviewee emphasized the importance of the internship being a paid opportunity, which mitigated some of the risk of exploring an unknown area.

Over half of the phone respondents (twenty-six, or 57 percent) went on to postgraduate study, including fourteen people who went on to an MLIS

program. These fourteen MLIS students represent 42 percent of the survey respondents who went on to postgraduate study and 29 percent of all survey respondents.

Twenty respondents (43 percent of all respondents) are currently employed in libraries, archives, museums, publishing, or a related field. A further eight respondents have previously been employed in the field but are not now. Together, those currently or previously employed in a library, archive, or museum account for an impressive 57 percent of former interns who responded to the survey. Of those currently employed in the field, 62 percent have an MLIS.

Perhaps more significant for recent graduates in a difficult economy, 67 percent believe that the internship helped a lot or a great deal in landing them their first position in the field. According to one phone interviewee, their current supervisor “told me quite explicitly that for the job I would have, they had never hired somebody with my background, and the library internship and other roles I had had in libraries as a result of the internship was a huge part of why I was hired.”

The Swarthmore College Libraries Internship has made a modest contribution to the diversification of the profession. Of the twenty former interns currently working in the field, the demographics differ broadly from national statistics: 43 percent identify as Black or African American, 14 percent as Latino, 7 percent as American Indian/Alaska Native, and 7 percent as Asian.<sup>9</sup> Though not all Swarthmore interns self-identify as belonging to an under-represented group, they all leave the internship understanding the need to improve diversity and promote inclusiveness in our profession. One former intern working as a librarian stated, “There is really a lack of racial diversity in librarianship from what I have seen, so if this program can help promote and encourage people to go into the field, I think it’s really invaluable.”

## DISCUSSION

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As the internship continues to put into practice its goals to broaden diversity and inclusion in the information professions, the library as a whole has benefited greatly from its curriculum, from the work environment it has helped build, and from students who have participated. Although the structure and influence of the internship did not solve all issues concerning diversity in our library, it did contribute to our understanding of internal hiring practices, such as who gets interviewed, the language used on the job description, and who leads and participates in the hiring committee. These are now key components driving the development of many of our programs. If the reasoning behind these hiring practices is not written into the protocols and shared publicly, the

practices in the library tend to default to the patterns of the dominant culture, in this case white culture. However, it can be challenging to find administrators willing to write or endorse explicit procedures that consider librarians of color. Often, what gets written in job descriptions and mission statements are vague words such as “justice,” “inclusion,” and “diversity,” which can account for the total effort some will make when it comes to hiring librarians of color. What makes the internship effective and holds it up as an example of how to build a successful program is the written record and the visible practices of hiring questions, job descriptions, and curriculum, which are explicit in their design—to support the hiring of librarians of color. In addition, the internship curriculum, crafted to stay current and critical of the field, serves as a sandbox to process ideas and topics relevant to other programs in the library, acting as a catalyst to reflect on our own ideas of diversity and inclusion, thereby helping us avoid seeing programs as a way to fill our “minority quota.”

This reflection led to the creation of multiple programs at Swarthmore College, one of which is Research and Information Associates (RIAs). RIAs are students who assist peers with finding and evaluating information by staffing the reference desk. The position was created in an effort to broaden the face of diversity at our reference desk and address the desire to engage students more fully in the research instruction process. RIAs average one hundred reference consultations annually, a significant number given our relatively small population. To further promote services, RIAs and librarians host research parties during semester crunch times. Events such as these serve to create a sense of community between librarians and RIAs and contribute to making RIAs a core part of our culture. In addition, since its inception, the RIA program continues to have a symbiotic relationship with the internship, as many of the students who participate in the internship also apply to become an RIA and vice versa. This relationship was not intentional but has now become part of a more holistic approach to introducing students to the profession. While the internship gives the students a theoretical introduction to librarianship, the RIA program gives them a chance to practice librarianship. Finally, as our survey data suggests, having some experience in the library contributes to participants landing their first job in the field.

In 2013, Swarthmore College Libraries joined the ACRL Diversity Alliance and created the ACRL Diversity Fellow Resident Librarian. One of the main criticisms of resident programs is the temporary nature of the position, frequently lasting between two and three years. Critics question why, if a library is truly behind creating a diverse and inclusive climate, hiring managers make the position a temporary one instead of applying the same inclusive approach in hiring to all open positions in the library. Having a temporary position primarily created for addressing diversity can bring complacency in terms of thinking about diversity when hiring for other positions. The danger here is

that diversity can be approached with a quota in mind, and the resident position always fills this quota. This issue is often reflected in residents' lack of support from the library, unrealistic job expectations, and lack of meaningful job experience. As Hathcock writes, "We tell them to be people of color but not too much color. . . . We don't work on our inclusionary practices or organizational cultures. We don't work on providing systemic, long-term professional and personal development support. We don't work on changing the way we think about and treat historically oppressed people in our workplaces."<sup>10</sup> If the goal of having a resident has been fulfilled, why put any more effort in supporting the resident? Of course, the question of a "minority quota" is often not explicitly expressed. Nonetheless, we believe that recent conversations in the field regarding the "pipeline" excuse (i.e., "We do not hire librarians of color because they do not apply to our positions") are a reflection of the issue stated above. Librarians of color are applying for positions in the library field, but libraries are not providing sufficient support for librarians of color to stay.

The less critical answer to the questions stated above is that the resident position is temporary in nature because it gives experience to librarians of color on a regular basis and ensures that others also get this opportunity in the future. This approach assumes that the status quo in the job market leans heavily toward white librarians and those with some experience. At Swarthmore, due to the small size of our library and low turnover, we do not have open positions as frequently as a larger institution would. We have created the position with the idea that it would involve meaningful job experiences and would receive support from administration and colleagues. Specifically, the resident has and continues to play a primary role in developing and shaping the curriculum of the internship. Participation in the internship allows the resident, a newly minted librarian, to gain meaningful classroom experience as well as help shape potential future librarians. This experience has contributed to all four residents gaining full-time employment either during their tenure or right at the end of it, including two permanent positions at Swarthmore College.

The latest iteration of creative programming comes in the shape of a fellowship called Lib/Lab Fellows. Just like the library internship, Lib/Lab is a curriculum-based fellowship in which five to seven fellows meet once a week to explore the theory and practice of digital scholarship. This approach has meant drawing upon the hiring practices and culture of the library by which the Lib/Lab fellowship aims to attract students of color and those representing a broad range of interests and college majors, from engineering and computer science to linguistics, classics, sociology, and anthropology. The Lib/Lab fellowship is led and supervised by two former residents who emphasize how they have benefited from the internship. Allowing former residents to lead the fellowship contributes to the domino effect the internship has had on many of

our programs, in which participants in one program are often inspired to continue their exploration of information science fields by applying to other programs. The goals and outcomes for this fellowship have varied, but in general, the Lib/Lab fellowship seeks to bring together students from the humanities and STEM fields to collaborate on projects that require both technical and critical approaches. The curriculum aims to cover a broad range of subjects, which we hope that, by the end of the semester, has provided the fellows a critical language with which to view the history of technology and information.<sup>11</sup> To participate, students complete a brief application, which includes questions such as “What departments and classes do you find yourself gravitating toward?” and “What do digital environments have to do with the liberal arts?” Upon review of the applications, the Lib/Lab facilitators select up to seven students to become part of the fellowship. In addition, as is the case with the internship, the Lib/Lab fellowship acts as a sandbox for self-reflection, in which we delve into critical discussions of current issues in technology, media, and culture, as well as their applications to life, both personal and academic. Just as the internship fosters a spirit of collaboration with outside instructors, the Lib/Lab fellowship also includes outside speakers.

Nonetheless, the effects of these opportunities have not solved most diversity issues. The creation of the internship in 2003 means that a span of ten years passed before the formation of most of the programs mentioned above. The ongoing challenge is determining how to apply the hiring practices of the internship, RIAs, residents, and Lib/Lab fellows to all open positions in the library, not only to reflect the diverse student body but also to hire more librarians of color.

## CONCLUSION

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Internships may not solve all of the profession’s issues with DEI, but they can foster change through the creation of meaningful opportunities, shifting the culture in one’s own library and beyond. In our experience, lasting change begins as mere ripples, but results in long-term benefits such as the relationships formed between interns and staff lasting far beyond the students’ graduation; innovative approaches to pedagogy within the internship curriculum; visibility of a diverse staff of employees, both students and professionals, who find themselves in positions of expertise staffing the reference desk or leading workshops on library resources; and the joy of welcoming many graduates into the profession. For most students, the internship serves as an eye-opening experience, expanding their notion of what being a librarian means and cultivating the understanding that there is no one path to get there.

Recently, a new iteration of the internship was held as a one-week intensive program in collaboration with four other colleges in the area. Each college selected two students and funded their participation, including a stipend plus room and board. The curriculum was based on our spring internship and facilitated by librarians from all five schools. This is just one more example of the many ways our original internship continues to serve as an exemplar. At Swarthmore, we recognize that we have deep resources, privileges, and certain advantages not afforded to every institution, but we feel strongly that some investment, financial or otherwise, must be made by an institution to help bring about diversity in libraries. While we rely on our colleagues as guest presenters in about half of the classes, coordinating and facilitating a semester-long internship does require a significant time investment. Time and money are often barriers to establishing new programming. Ways to alleviate some of that burden include seeking campus partners to sponsor an intern or a field trip, consulting with your fundraising or student employment office, reaching out to area schools to establish a collaborative internship, offering an internship for course credit, recruiting library staff to assist with planning and teaching, and modifying model program(s) in ways that feel manageable.

It is our hope that the Swarthmore College Libraries Internship and other spin-off programs can serve as inspiration for other schools to customize aspects that best fit within their individual contexts.

## NOTES

1. James C. Welbourne, "Black Recruitment: The Issue and an Approach," part 1 in *The Black Librarian in America*, ed. E. J. Josey. (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1970), 93.
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3. Gregory L. Reese and Ernestine L. Hawkins, *Stop Talking, Start Doing! Attracting People of Color to the Library Profession* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1995), 95.
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