

NARRATIVE

Project Overview

Making It REAL! Recruitment, Education, And Learning: Creating a New Generation of Librarians to Serve All New Yorkers supports IMLS Priority 1. Its purpose is to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians in such a way that diversity in the profession will be enhanced and new librarians will be well prepared to serve diverse populations.

The target population, prospective librarians, will be served by this project through interrelated components:

- **Teaching Library Component:** MLS degree candidates will be offered experience-based learning opportunities tied to pre-identified career opportunities. Each student will receive teaching, mentoring, and work experience in the Teaching Library to gain specific knowledge and acquire competencies needed for successfully filling local community needs in the identified librarian position(s).
- **Scholarship Component:** MLS degree candidates will receive scholarships tied to experience-based learning and diversity with a twofold purpose:
 1. To increase the numbers of candidates representing diverse groups who enter the profession.
 2. To develop the capabilities of future librarians to serve diverse populations. In addition to recruiting students from diverse backgrounds, one participating library school will identify competencies required to serve patrons with disabilities and provide the learning experiences needed to attain competency.

The project partners will also institute activities to strengthen overall library education. MLS degree candidates will benefit from grant activities aimed at...

1. Strengthening the recruitment process and developing improved recruitment strategies.
2. Building Teaching Library and library school partnerships that yield graduates who both represent diverse populations and are prepared to serve diverse populations.
3. Building a website of value to recruitment and career placement.
4. Providing professional opportunities, such as programs at New York Library Association conferences, where recruits and others can learn about serving diverse populations.
5. Increasing awareness of recruitment needs among members of the library community, including library professionals, library boards, library associations, and patrons.

Teaching Libraries: This project component is based on programs of major libraries that identify high-quality candidates and assist them in their efforts to become library professionals. A variety of work experiences, mentoring, and assistance in balancing work with study characterize these programs, which draw heavily on the resources of the libraries to enrich the learning experience.

Internships are frequently part of degree requirements in library schools. However, this project's Teaching Library component enhances conventional internships because it is based on partnerships between accredited library schools and New York State's library systems. The library schools will provide the coursework necessary to achieve the MLS degree. The library systems will identify available career opportunities, supply the facilities of a system member library to serve as the Teaching Library, and provide professional development opportunities for students. For example, the Queens Borough Public Library has identified career openings for children's or young-adult librarians; it will recruit two MLS candidates, with preference to diverse groups, to receive appropriate training, mentoring, and experience in its central and member libraries. Together, the library schools and the library systems will create a plan tailored to provide a rich educational experience, including the academic content, the practical experience, and the mentoring needed for the student to succeed in the available career position.

To achieve the project objectives, 13 of the state's library systems will establish 14 models for Teaching Libraries in partnership with library schools, including two models within The New York Public Library. These models have been selected because each is a building block in the overall design of the project. Each Teaching Library will not only increase overall librarian recruitment; it will fill specific regional needs that are characteristic of the needs in other, similar communities in New York State and across the nation. The teaching, mentoring, and work experience provided by the model Teaching

Libraries can then be replicated in other communities. The Teaching Library participants and brief descriptions are listed in the following chart.

Library System	Teaching Library(ies)	Library School Partner	Brief Project Description
Capital District Library Council (CDLC) Albany, NY	New York State Research Library, New York State Archives, regional academic libraries	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	One student selected from student assistants in member academic libraries will earn an MLS specializing in academic librarianship, digital services, and digitization.
Capital Region Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) School Library System	System member school library media centers	School of Information Science and Policy at the University at Albany	A current teacher in a Capital Region school will earn an MLS and New York State certification as a school library media specialist.
Mid-York Library System Utica, NY	Member public libraries	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	One student will earn an MLS as a children's librarian.
Monroe County Library System Rochester, NY	Local History and Genealogy Department of the Central Library, Henrietta Public Library, Ogdon Farmers' Library	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	One student, recruited as a Genealogy and Local History intern from among current employees; local colleges; community organizations such as the Urban League of Rochester; and various local ethnic organizations such as the Frederick Douglass Society, will earn an MLS specializing in archives and methods of historical research.
New York Public Library (NYPL) Branches New York, NY	Nathan Strauss Young Adult Department at Donnell Library Center in Manhattan	Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens College	One student will earn an MLS specializing in young adult librarianship.
New York Public Library's Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL) New York, NY	Science, Industry and Business Library with assignments at the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and NYPL branches	Pratt Institute or Rutgers University	One student recruited from current staff will earn an MLS with a focus on business librarianship.
Northern NY Library Network North Country Library System Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System Franklin-Essex-Hamilton School Library System	System member libraries	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	Four students will earn MLS degrees through a combination of Teaching Library experience and distance learning, with emphasis on meeting the needs of students, libraries, and the public in remote rural communities.
Onondaga County Public Library Syracuse, NY	Member public libraries	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	One student recruited from current clerks and assistants with bachelor's degrees will earn an MLS as a children's librarian.
Queens Borough Public Library Jamaica, NY	Central Library, member libraries	Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens College	Two current hourly-rate staff, selected with preference to diverse groups/immigrant populations and bilingual skills, will earn MLS degrees to become children's or young-adult librarians.
Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) Fairport, NY 14450	Member academic, public, and special libraries	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	A student recruited from RRLC member school library systems will earn certification as a school library media specialist.
Southeastern NY Library Resources Council (SENYLRC) Highland, NY 12528	US Military Academy at West Point, Wilderstein Preservation, SENYLRC	Division of Library and Information Science, St. John's University	One student will earn an MLS degree, with a specialization in digitization.

Scholarships: To promote diversity in the library workforce and develop competencies for serving diverse and underserved populations, six of New York’s library schools will participate in the project’s scholarship component:

Division of Library and Information Science, St. John’s University
Graduate School of Information & Library Science, Pratt Institute
Palmer School of Library & Information Science, C.W. Post Center of Long Island University
School of Information Science and Policy, University at Albany
School of Information Studies, Syracuse University
School of Informatics, Department of Library and Information Studies, University at Buffalo

Five will recruit to enhance diversity, and the University at Buffalo will develop a program to recruit librarians with the special skills needed to serve people with disabilities.

The library schools have submitted project plans that address the following:

- The target for recruiting to develop a pool of candidates for scholarships
- Recruitment strategy; how many students will be recruited by each school and the methods employed for recruitment
- Support for recruits that can help ensure their success
- Terms of the projected scholarships to show how the grant would be expended
- Expected outcomes to support the project priorities
- Evaluation plan

An announcement of the competition for scholarships will include a statement of what the project offers and intends, what scholarships are available, and conditions with which recipients must comply to receive financial help. Recipients will sign an agreement that they will comply with specific requirements for work as librarians in their area of specialization within the U.S. for a specific length of time and participate in follow-up to the project.

Support for the recruitment efforts of the Teaching Libraries and the library schools includes the following:

- *Making It REAL! Recruitment, Education, And Learning* Website: Expansion of the METRO Magnet career website of the Metropolitan New York Library Council at <http://www.metro.org/magnet/>. The Metropolitan New York area resource will become a statewide employment and recruitment resource. Special resources for prospective students and career information on librarianship will be added. Links to New York’s library schools will provide additional information about their programs, with emphasis on resources they use in recruiting for diversity and services to special populations.
- Annual meetings for participants and scholars, offering opportunities for recruits to learn about serving diverse populations, communication on recruitment strategies, and the strengthening of partnerships between library systems/Teaching Libraries and the library schools.
- Public-relations campaign aimed at raising awareness among potential students, particularly those from diverse populations.

Impact

The project will increase the number of professionals qualified for employment as librarians:

- Through the Teaching Libraries, 15 people will earn MLS degrees at the collaborating library schools.
- Through the library school scholarship component, 29 students will be recruited to earn MLS degrees, with an emphasis on drawing from and serving diverse populations.

The project will benefit multiple institutions and diverse constituencies:

- This project will implement 14 Teaching Library models in 13 library systems to enhance recruitment and training of professional librarians.

- Eighty-two percent of the students recruited through the scholarship component will come from under-represented groups. The library schools have set targets, and will be able to demonstrate that recruits are members of under-represented groups.
- One library school will develop a program to recruit MLS students who will serve people with disabilities. It will develop competencies for the coursework, identify what learning experiences have potential to achieve these competencies, and explore techniques for recruiting promising students. Six MLS students will graduate from this program.
- Participating library schools will change their recruitment practices to improve targeting under-represented groups.

The project will help to fill library service needs in the communities served by New York's library systems and will address issues facing system member libraries:

- The Teaching Libraries, in addition to recruiting for diversity, address a specific local need (e.g., the need for school library media specialists in urban school libraries and for librarians to serve in remote rural areas).
- The statewide career website will help to recruit students from diverse backgrounds to fill the library service needs of diverse populations.

The project anticipates changing practices of recruitment and library education:

- The project will establish Teaching Library models that benefit library students by enabling and broadening their learning experiences while the students serve the needs of the communities served by the libraries.
- The Teaching Library component will provide models for other State Library Agencies and for schools of library and information science. The geographic and cultural diversity of New York State represents a wide range of environments and needs that are reflected nationwide, making the project easily replicable in other states.
- The statewide career website will aid library systems and libraries in recruiting, and will help students obtain information about opportunities in the profession, scholarships, and other financial resources and programs.
- The project will change people's perception of recruitment, leading to a new emphasis on recruiting diverse candidates who can best serve multicultural and multiethnic communities and groups such as the disabled, who are traditionally underserved.

Diversity

New York State is one of the most diverse areas in the U.S., with more than 100 ethnic groups within its population of more than 19 million people. It is home to the largest city in the nation, and is also home to vast rural areas of small hamlets and farms (*Encyclopedia of New York State*, 2003). Preparing a new generation of librarians to serve this extraordinary population is the focus of this grant.

All the Teaching Libraries respond to clearly identified community needs. For example, the Teaching Libraries in the Queens Borough Public Library, the Monroe County Library System, and The New York Public Library respond to community needs for ethnically diverse librarians as well as local needs for specialty librarians. The library systems' plans demonstrate a knowledge of their communities and a strong commitment to enhancing diversity.

Diversity within the library community in New York State can range from the bustling Science, Industry and Business Library of The New York Public Library to small rural libraries in northern New York State that are widely separated, poorly equipped, and often without professional librarians. The state's urban public libraries serving disadvantaged, multiethnic neighborhoods are usually overcrowded and understaffed; lack adequate collections, facilities, and resources; and cannot meet the increasing demand for library services. Each strategically located Teaching Library provides an important first step toward improving library service and addressing community needs.

The project's scholarship component will provide opportunities to reach out to potential students in underserved groups. In addition, rather than concentrating only on the demographics of ethnic and racial diversity in the recruits, the scholarship component will focus on helping *all* students develop

competencies for serving and responding to the needs of diverse populations. The Buffalo program will study competencies for serving the disabled, another underserved community.

Part of the evaluation process of each project will be an assessment of the competencies acquired in serving special populations. A fundamental change in recruitment philosophy and practices is a likely long-term outcome.

Design

This project is designed to meet the challenges of a shortage of professional librarians, and particularly librarians who come from under-represented groups and those who possess the competencies to serve diverse populations and the disabled.

New York faces a critical and rapidly growing need for highly trained and skilled professional librarians intensified by New Yorkers' increasing use of libraries and the growth of high-tech information tools. A large percentage of the current library workforce will soon retire (more than 50 percent by 2019), and new recruits are not entering the profession to replace them or meet increased demand (*Facts on Recruitment and Retention of Librarians*, American Library Association, September 2002).

A lack of librarians trained as school library media specialists is of particular concern in New York State. There is clear evidence of the importance of library resources and services in education. For example, research shows that quality school library media programs help students succeed. Yet 860 schools in New York—including 500 in New York City and 360 upstate—do not have a certified school library media specialist. Only 16 states have a poorer school librarian-to-student ratio than New York, with Mississippi, South Carolina, and West Virginia among those leading New York in providing school librarians.

The greatest shortage of school and public librarians is often in high-need districts with large minority communities. However, enrollment data for ALA-accredited MLS programs show that students are predominantly white. Association for Library and Information Science Education data on the ALISE website (<http://ils.unc.edu/ALISE/2002/Students/Table%20II-4-c-1.htm>) for the 2001 fall term reveal that black students made up only 4.9 percent of MLS candidates although African Americans constitute 12.3 percent of the U.S. population. Percentages for Hispanics, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans are even lower.

Local assessments performed by the library systems establishing Teaching Libraries reflect the state and national findings. For example:

- The Queens Borough Public Library reflects the dilemma of an aging population of librarians. Approximately 20 percent of its librarian staff will be eligible for retirement in the next three years. Also, because Queens is the most ethnically diverse county in the country, it especially needs a professional staff that mirrors the communities it serves. Although the library system already uses a number of recruitment strategies, it cannot meet the need for librarians, especially librarians to focus on children's and young-adult services.
- The Mid-York Library System reports that its 43 public libraries have a total of only five professional children's librarians. At least two libraries have tried to recruit librarians to specialize in children's services recently without success. The library system also expects many retirements within the next five to 10 years.
- The Capital Region BOCES School Library System faces a critical shortage of certified school library media specialists, particularly in the rural and urban schools. Last year saw a 16-percent turnover in professional staff due to retirements or job changes.

This project's statewide approach of collaboration among library systems and library schools involves a greater number and variety of stakeholders than would be possible with a narrower focus. The design builds on the New York State Library's past experience and success in administering statewide projects through similar collaborations, e.g., the Gates Foundation Library Training Program and Staying Connected Grants, LSTA-funded grant projects, etc. The interaction of project partners will encourage sustainability by establishing a mechanism for ongoing project activities.

Finally, because the Teaching Libraries address specific local needs in addition to the broader statewide and national need for more professional librarians, the project is far more likely to lead to the successful employment of the recruits after they have earned the MLS degree. Through partnerships between the Teaching Libraries and the library schools, as well as financial assistance through the

scholarship component, recruits will have a very realistic opportunity to excel as they acquire their library education and to go on to a successful career as a professional librarian. This strategy furthers the project goals of enhancing diversity in the profession and preparing new librarians to serve diverse populations.

Management Plan

The overall administration of this project will rest with the New York State Library. The State Library will provide overall management and coordination, and assume responsibility for the legal use of all federal grant funds and for ensuring that the project is carried out by the partners in accordance with applicable federal laws, regulations, and requirements.

Project Management: Mary Linda Todd will be the Project Manager, under the leadership of Janet M. Welch, New York State Librarian, and Carol Ann Desch, Coordinator of Statewide Library Services.

Upon awarding of the grant, the Project Manager and a Project Team of other staff totaling one FTE will work with the library systems and library schools to develop agreements that include a timeline for completion of various activities such as recruitment and reporting of progress. The Project Manager and the Project Team will assist participants as they identify learning outcomes for the project.

Upon completion of recruitment and other specified preparatory activities, the state will authorize release of money to the library systems and library schools based on the timeline and satisfactory completion of subsequent steps.

The State Library will contract with one of the state's 74 library systems to implement the project's statewide career website. It will also contract with a public-relations/marketing firm to facilitate a campaign to publicize the project, and with a writer to produce a publication on the experiences gained through the Teaching Library project component. The State Library will also create four to six student assistantships in cooperation with a local library school to help implement the project.

The Project Manager and Project Team, in cooperation with the Advisory Group, the New York Library Association, and project participants, will facilitate communications about the project, plan meetings and events, and coordinate all project activities. The Project Manager will be in close communication with all participants to provide encouragement and support. The Project Manager will also be the contact person for communicating with IMLS and will help ensure broad State Library involvement in project activities. Administration of this project will be coordinated with programs of training for Outcome-Based Evaluation currently being implemented by the State Library.

Advisory Group: The Project Manager, in consultation with the State Librarian and the project participants, will invite library leaders to form an Advisory Group that represents different types of libraries and different regions of the state. This group will meet at least two times per year, sponsor activities in support of the project in their home regions, monitor and contribute to the evaluation process, assist in planning conferences for participants, and generally contribute to learning valuable lessons from the project. This will be a voluntary group and expenses will be borne by the volunteers or their organizations.

Project Evaluator: The State Library will also contract with an independent evaluator selected through a competitive bidding process as required by New York State finance law. The contracting evaluator will provide overall evaluation of the statewide project under the direction of the Project Manager. This evaluation will use OBE methodology. Each system and library school will also evaluate its own component in cooperation with the evaluator and the Project Manager.

The budgets of the project partners show the commitment of staff time needed to achieve the project goals. The library systems/Teaching Libraries will in turn benefit from acquiring professional staff to meet specific community needs, such as the need for children's librarians.

The New York Library Association will contribute to planning conference activities on the theme of diversity in recruitment that are designed for project recruits and other interested participants. It will benefit from having new librarians as potential members who already have a relationship with the association.

Budget

Sixty-seven percent of the total grant request is for student support.

Funds to pay expenses for statewide coordination and services will be necessary to achieve the goals of increasing interest in workforce issues (public relations), building relationships (meetings, conference events, and communication), evaluating project results, and producing a publication to disseminate lessons learned about Teaching Libraries. Website expenses are based on the experience of the LSTA-funded project METRO Magnet.

Library schools participating in the scholarship component will provide funding to match the scholarships and contribute staff time to recruiting, implementing, and evaluating their parts of the project.

Participating library systems, their Teaching Libraries, and the library schools will contribute significant staff time for recruiting, developing curricula, and evaluation. These groups are all essential to realizing the overall success of the project.

The members of the statewide Advisory Group will volunteer their time.

The New York Library Association will assist with developing programs for two of their annual conferences, which will address issues related to recruitment for diversity and services to diverse communities. Registration for the students and funding for programs have been included in the budget.

The New York State Library will provide the equivalent of one FTE to coordinate and manage this project. State Library staff will provide leadership, expertise, and oversight for project administration. The biographies of specific State Library staff members who will carry out project roles and activities are included with this proposal.

Contributions

- The library systems establishing Teaching Libraries will contribute \$419,531 in matching funds.
- The library schools participating in the Teaching Libraries and the scholarship component will contribute more than \$148,707.
- The State Library will contribute \$158,240.

The library systems' match, which consists primarily of in-kind contributions of staff time for recruitment, developing and implementing the Teaching Libraries, and participating in the evaluation, demonstrate that the systems understand that the project will require time and effort. The library systems will benefit because new librarians will be trained in specialties that respond to regional needs. They will also benefit from learning new competencies through participation in annual meetings and working with the evaluator.

The participating library schools also demonstrate an understanding of the required commitment on their part. They will benefit from enhancing their recruitment techniques in regard to diversity and by having scholarships available to offer promising students who might otherwise never become librarians. As partners with the library systems, the library schools will benefit from new relationships and assistance in broadening the learning experience for their students.

The State Library match consists of salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for State Library staff working on the project.

Personnel

Project Manager

Mary Linda Todd, Library Specialist in the New York State Library's Division of Library Development, is an experienced grant administrator. She has also had training in Outcome-Based Evaluation. As Project Manager, she will also serve as team leader for State Library staff working on the project.

Project Evaluator

The State Library will contract with an independent evaluator to provide overall evaluation of the statewide project. The evaluator will be required to have a number of qualifications, including but not limited to the following:

- A master's degree in library science with a preference for a PhD in education or evaluation

- Consulting experience in evaluation of statewide library programs
- Consulting experience in library and program development and training
- Knowledge and proficiency in Outcome-Based Evaluation methods
- Evidence of excellent presentation skills and clear communication of evaluation results

Library System/Teaching Library Personnel

The staff in the participating Teaching Library sites are knowledgeable about the needs for library service in the region, and are experts in the specialties on which the student recruits will concentrate.

Library School Faculties

The participating library schools are all experiencing enrollment increases, following successful recruitment efforts. The deans are committed to building on this proven expertise to implement this project (Source: Minutes of May 28, 2003, meeting of Library School Deans with the Commissioner of Education and State Librarian).

Project Evaluation

The project identifies the following outcomes:

Outcomes of Teaching Library Component

- Fifteen students will enter programs sponsored by Teaching Libraries and complete the MLS within the grant period. Reasons for both success and failure will be gathered for publication.
- Students will demonstrate the competencies in a work situation related to the needs specified by the sponsoring Teaching Library or system to the satisfaction of the monitoring library according to pre-established standards.
- Teaching Libraries will meet or exceed a target of 50 percent for diversity.
- Both teaching and learning participants will report best practices for publication and replication.

Outcomes of Scholarship Component

- Twenty-nine MLS degree candidates will participate. Library schools will meet or exceed recruitment targets of 82 percent for student diversity.
- Eighty percent of the students will complete the MLS degree requirements within the grant period. Exit interview data for students who do not complete requirements will be analyzed (e.g., some students who attend library school part-time will require a longer time to complete the MLS requirements).
- Changes in recruitment practices to improve diversity in recruitment will be documented.
- Six MLS degree students will demonstrate the competencies for library service to disabled persons to the satisfaction of library school faculty according to pre-established standards.

Outcomes of Support Activities to Strengthen Overall Library Education

- Best practices for recruiting students for diversity will be identified.
- Tracking of students recruited through the project will demonstrate project success through employment in library careers.
- Libraries, library systems, and library schools will report more frequent partnering to provide internships and support independent learning projects to achieve specific skills and competencies in prospective librarians.
- Website activity will be monitored and user satisfaction assessed.
- Participants in annual meetings will report satisfaction with learning opportunities and will be able to identify when asked at least one new concept learned.
- Libraries and library boards will report increases in recruitment-related activities.

Dissemination

The following list includes communications vehicles and events that will afford opportunities to promote the project and to communicate the results of the project to a wide audience.

Communications Vehicle

Person/Group Responsible

- Expansion of the METRO Magnet career website to provide a statewide employment resource, with links to New York's library schools
Contracting library system
- Publication on development and implementation of Teaching Libraries, including findings on competencies needed for success in the available librarian positions and project evaluation results
Project Manager, contracting writer
- Public-relations campaign, communications, and event planning
Project Manager, contracting public relations/marketing firm
- Communication through NYLINE, New York's electronic listserv for the library community, including releases, discussions, and cross-posting to other listservs
Project Manager, Project Team, New York State Library Communications Office
- Press releases
Project Manager, New York State Library Communications Office
- Articles in newspapers, newsletters, and magazines
Project Manager, New York State Library Communications Office
- New York State Library website (<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/>)
Project Manager, Project Team
- New York Library Association (NYLA) website (<http://www.nyla.org/>)
NYLA personnel in cooperation with State Library personnel and Advisory Group
- New York Library Association Annual Conference
 - ~ Informational programs on project activities; communication of successful recruitment and education methods; opportunities to promote the project
 - ~ Forum for evaluation of recruitment efforts
 - ~ New Member Roundtable events for new recruitsProject Manager, Advisory Group, State Library staff, project participants in cooperation with NYLA personnel
- Annual meetings for participants and scholars
Advisory Group, Project Manager, other project participants

Sustainability

New York State is the ideal locus for sustainability of the project's benefits for a number of reasons:

- New York has a highly developed and effective network of library systems and libraries that are supported by a coordinated \$90 million annual program of state aid.
- The state is home to the rich resources of seven exceptional library schools. The State Library has convened, with the Commissioner of Education, a working group of the seven library school deans, who for the first time are working together to recruit and train a new generation of librarians.

- New York has a proven track record of obtaining both public funding and grants from private organizations, such as the Viburnum Foundation, for creation and support of statewide library initiatives.
- New York has demonstrated an ability to sustain state support for libraries even in precarious economic times. In 2003, state funding for libraries was fully restored after a proposed 15-percent cut, even as the state was facing a \$12 billion deficit.
- New York has an outstanding library association that is committed to recruitment. The President-Elect is highly supportive of this project, and has stated that the New York Library Association will explore the creation of a scholarship to enhance diversity in the profession. The scholarship would be ongoing after the grant period.
- A powerful legislative proposal, called *New Century Libraries*, is now one of the most recognized initiatives in the New York State Legislature and on the high-priority short list of the New York State Board of Regents and a host of other statewide educational and business organizations. (For detailed information, see the *New Century Libraries* website at <http://www.ncl.nysed.gov/>.)
- New York has a clearly defined and widely supported plan for recruitment and training. The plan, “Recruiting a New Generation of Librarians,” is a vital component of the *New Century Libraries* legislation, which is based on the work of the 1998–2000 Regents Commission on Library Services. The Regents Commission, consisting of leaders in New York’s private and educational communities, conducted research, held public hearings, and carried on lengthy discussion throughout the state. In their final report to the Regents, they presented 10 recommendations to effect profound change in libraries statewide. In calling attention to the need for “a highly skilled library workforce,” their ninth recommendation emphasized the importance of workforce excellence, improved access to library education programs, and a diverse, well-trained workforce, particularly in urban public libraries. The major activities proposed in “Recruiting a Generation of New Librarians” are “Recruitment, Retention, and Training” and “Matching Scholarship Grants.”

Making It REAL! Recruitment, Education, And Learning: Creating a New Generation of Librarians to Serve All New Yorkers and the proposed recruitment initiative in *New Century Libraries* are ideal complements to one another. Many library, educational, business, and professional organizations, as well as library trustees, Friends, and grass-roots supporters, are cooperating to raise public awareness of *New Century Libraries* and its recruitment component. The Commissioner of Education, the New York Library Association (NYLA), the New York State Association of Library Boards, the Library Friends Roundtable of NYLA, and regional library, civic, and education groups are conducting statewide *New Century Libraries* Leadership Meetings around the state, building a corps of advocates on behalf of the legislation.

Ideally, new state funding through the *New Century Libraries* legislation would sustain and extend the IMLS project. As New York’s economy improves, we are poised to obtain this funding. In the meantime, *Making It REAL! Recruitment, Education, And Learning*, through the Teaching Libraries and library school scholarships, will demonstrate to the library community and the general public the potential impact of ongoing state funding. If the legislation is not enacted for some time, LSTA funds administered by the State Library or funds from other sources, including private foundations, will facilitate development of programs that build on the experiences of the IMLS grant.

As demonstrated by progress made in implementing other initiatives in *New Century Libraries* legislation, e.g., the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVEL), the State Library has considered a number of priorities as too important to wait for the availability of new state funding. Recruiting a highly skilled and diverse library workforce for the 21st century is one of those priorities.