Creating a Representative Library Workforce in Saskatchewan

1. Purpose

The information in this background paper is intended to aid the Multitype Library Board in the process of developing policy recommendations regarding the creation of a more representative library workforce in Saskatchewan. The issues discussed are closely tied to the Board's strategic plan. The environmental scan section in the Board's current strategic plan identifies both Saskatchewan's increasing Aboriginal population and the struggle to recruit and retain library staff as key trends. The goal, "Research and document emerging issues facing the partners and develop strategies," includes a statement about ensuring the participation of First Nations libraries and libraries servicing primarily Aboriginal communities. Another goal is to "Expand Multitype projects to encompass archives, Aboriginal communities and other service providers." The involvement of Aboriginal libraries and communities in multitype projects is closely related to developing a library workforce that represents their communities.

The Board has also noted that other visible minorities and people with disabilities may not be adequately reflected in the workforces of libraries in Saskatchewan. This paper will investigate that issue. Throughout this discussion, references to a representative workforce refer to a workforce that reflects **all** of the diversity in this province, rather than the Public Service Commission's definition of a representative workforce that refers specifically to Aboriginal people.

2. Introduction

The Public Service Commission, Government of Saskatchewan states that "**Diversity** refers to all of the characteristics that make individuals different from each other. These differences can include factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, or having a disability."[1] The Public Service Commission explains that "It is important that the Saskatchewan public service reflect the diversity found in our province, to ensure our policies, programs and frontline services are responsive and relevant to the people of the province." All service-oriented institutions, including libraries, must be acutely aware of the need to be relevant and responsive to an increasingly diverse population. To illustrate this point, *Information is for Everyone : Final Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Library Services for Aboriginal People,*[2] found that the lack of Aboriginal staff in libraries is one reason why Aboriginal people often don't feel comfortable or welcome in libraries. It is reasonable to expect that visible minorities and people with disabilities would share some of these feelings.

The Board encourages visible minorities to consider library careers. Many new immigrants are visible minorities and the Board has discussed some strategies for

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[1] From the Public Service Commission web site: http://www.psc.gov.sk.ca/diversity/
[2] Available on the Sask Libraries web site: http://www.lib.sk.ca/staff/minaboriginal/ablib/ablibfinal.html

encouraging new immigrants join the library workforce, including identifying assessment processes for foreign library credentials. According to the *Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*, Saskatchewan's "cities have relatively few immigrants compared with Canada as a whole, and in most cases recent immigrants (1991–2001) account for less than 1% of their populations."[3] In fact, only 57% of the new immigrants who settled in Saskatchewan between 1991 and 2001 have stayed.[4] The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC), states that Regina has the highest proportion of visible minorities in the province at 5.4%.[5] However, this number includes people whose ancestry is from any of ten different countries or regions identified by SHRC. Currently, the Public Service Commission reports that 3.1 percent of its workforce is made up of visible minorities, the exact proportion of Saskatchewan's overall population.[6] Statistics for the library sector in Saskatchewan are not readily available, so further research is needed to determine if visible minorities as a group are adequately represented. Further subdivision to assess the representation of each of the ten groups identified by SHRC would be very difficult because of small numbers.

Aboriginal people are by far the largest minority group in this province and they make up a substantial and growing proportion of several urban communities. By 2001, census data revealed that 13.5 percent of the Saskatchewan population was Aboriginal; however the mean age of Aboriginals was 20.1, compared to 38.8 for non-Aboriginals.[7] In other words, the number of working-age Aboriginal people is expected to grow very rapidly. The under representation of Aboriginal librarians and library support staff in Saskatchewan libraries will become even more apparent unless some action is taken.

Within the government of Saskatchewan, a **representative workforce** is defined as "one where Aboriginal workers are represented at all occupational levels (entry level, middle and senior management) in proportion to their numbers in the province's population."[8] This definition reminds us that a representative library workforce is not simply about professional librarians. We must include clerks, technicians and managers in this discussion.

Another other group of people who are likely to be underrepresented is people with disabilities. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission reports that people with disabilities make up 9.7% of the working-age population. As of March 2006, 3.5% of the Saskatchewan public service workforce self-declared as being a person with a disability.[9] While statistics for libraries in Saskatchewan are not readily available, libraries cannot overlook this under-utilized labour pool. An increasing number of people with disabilities are completing university (12.9 percent as of 2004)[10] so there is potential

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[3] Thraves, Bernard D. *Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*:
http://esask.uregina.ca/entry/urban_ethnic_diversity.html
[4] Retention study commissioned by Immigration Branch, AEE 2006
[5] SHRC Policy Relating to Visible Minorities as a Designated Equity Group
(Adopted June 16, 1999) http://www.shrc.gov.sk.ca/policy/policy3.htm
[6] Public Service Commission: http://www.psc.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=e61eda27-1631-492a-8535-05f32150eb88
[7] FNMR data derived from 2001 census: http://www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/demographics/
[8] From the First Nations and Métis Relations web page for the Aboriginal Employee Development Program
http://www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/aedp/workforce/
[9] http://www.psc.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=1f898eba-bf87-4653-a5e5-207d9644ca07
[10] Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for
Persons with Disabilities, Saskatchewan Report 2005-2006:

for some of these graduates to complete Master of Library Science degrees or library technician diplomas. Of course, the fact that there is no Master of Library Science program in the province remains a barrier.

Staff members with disabilities can also bring a first-hand understanding of accessibility issues that libraries could translate into more accessible services for people who need them. This topic could easily warrant its own discussion paper and improving services for people with disabilities has been identified in the Board's strategic plan. The Board's position on inclusive library services for Saskatchewan closely resembles the Canadian Library Association's vision that;

> All persons in Canada will receive library and information services that are respectful to them as individuals. Libraries in Canada endeavor to provide services that recognize and affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of a person's heritage, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental capabilities, or personal wealth."

In fact, their position statement on diversity and inclusion ends with the overarching statement; "Public institutions, including libraries, have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion."[11]

The library sector has shown an awareness of the representative workforce issue and a willingness to respond to the Board's inquiries on this topic. Employment equity programs are commonplace today; however, these programs do not appear to have changed the face of the library workforce in Saskatchewan. Diversity programs are increasingly becoming part of the corporate ethics plans. Creating a more diverse workforce is not only a human rights issue; it is an opportunity for libraries to develop a patron base that includes an even greater cross section of the population. The rest of this paper will provide some additional context that may highlight areas for improvement and/or opportunities for libraries to co-operate in addressing this issue.

3. Recruitment and Retention of Library Workforce (8Rs)

Librarians are all too familiar with predictions about the looming shortage of professional librarians; however, this much-discussed future is quickly approaching. According to _The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries,_ written in 2005, 44% of librarians in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (measured together) will be over 61 years of age within ten years.[12] That's the largest number among the provinces. Since there is a trend for librarians to retire early, it is unlikely that the end of mandatory retirement will provide significant relief from the expected labour shortage outlined in the tables below.

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http://www.cr.gov.sk.ca/labour-market-disabled05-06.pdf

[11] CLA Statement on Diversity and Inclusion
http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=4713
[12] 8Rs Study: http://www.ls.ualberta.ca/8rs/reports.html

The study also finds that 38% of libraries located in Saskatchewan and Manitoba experience problems recruiting.[13] Since there are no library science programs in either province, libraries are often faced with the task of attracting librarians from out of province. A successful diversity strategy would find candidates in underutilized segments of Saskatchewan's existing population as described in the introduction. Libraries will certainly need to widen their search for librarians, managers and support staff, in order to develop a larger pool of candidates. Saskatchewan libraries, therefore, would be well-served by developing a strategy to help Aboriginal people, recent immigrants and people with disabilities obtain library science degrees and library technician diplomas.

The following three tables from *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries* indicate the critical human resources issues that Canadian libraries will face in the next decade:

Predicted Future Librarian Supply

Time Period	Current Librarian Workforce1	New Librarian Entrants2	Departures from Retirement3	Future Librarian Workforce	Future Librarians as % of Current Librarians
In 5 years (2009)	11,700	+1,600	- 1,870	11,430	98%
In 10 years (2014)	11,700	+ 3,250	- 4,560	10,390	89%

Predicted Future Library Technician Supply1

Time Period	Current Library Technician Workforce	New Library Technician Entrants	Departures from Retirement	Future Library Technician Workforce	Future Library Technicians as % of Current Technicians
In 5 years (2009)	10,360	1,200	- 1,350	10,210	99%
In 10 years (2014)	10,360	2,400	- 3,500	9,260	89%

The estimated current number of library technicians is derived from the National Core Library Statistical Program estimates of 7,220 FTE library technicians (not including school staff)

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[13] Ibid.

Table E.7 Predicted Librarian Retirements within the Next 5 and 10 Years by Career Level and Library Sector

(Based on minimum age of retirement of 62 Years) (Individual Survey; n=1,886)

Percent over 61 Years of Age[1]

Library Sector	Within 5 Years (by 2009)			Within 10 Years (by 2014)		
	Total Librarians	Non-Management	Management[2]	Total Librarians	Non-Management	Management[2]
TOTAL SAMPLE	**16**	**13**	**17**	**39**	**31**	**43**
TOTAL ACADEMIC	**19**	**17**	**20**	**42**	**33**	**48**
CARL	20	19	22	43	35	48
Other Academic	16	11	18	41	27	48
TOTAL PUBLIC	**14**	**12**	**14**	**36**	**31**	**38**
CULC	11	9	13	35	31	37
Other Public	19	26	17	38	35	39
TOTAL SPECIAL	**14**	**9**	**16**	**37**	**23**	**43**
Government	14	12	15	38	26	45
Non-Profit	11	3	16	35	21	41
For-Profit	16	7	21	34	21	42
SCHOOL[3]	**19**	**--**	**22**	**66**	**--**	**74**

Source: 8Rs Canadian Library Human Resource Individual Survey

1 Calculated by adding 5 and 10 years to current age.

2 Management includes supervisors, middle management, and senior administration.

3 Separate career level results are not presented when there are fewer than 15 cases reporting; however, they are included in the *Total Sample* results.

The Multitype Library Board contributes to the recruitment of librarians though its support of the Saskatchewan Library Education Bursary. The bursary, managed by the Saskatchewan Library Association, provides $5000 each year to one library science student enrolled in an ALA-accredited program who agrees to work in Saskatchewan as a professional librarian for a minimum of two years upon completion of their studies. The bursary program has been a great success, as all recipients have worked as professional librarians in Saskatchewan. This success has led some librarians discuss the creation of an additional bursary to encourage Aboriginal people and members of other diversity groups to pursue library-related education.

While recruitment is important, retention cannot be ignored. American research has found an attrition problem among credentialed librarians 35 and under. Though attrition is only about 1% for young to mid-career white librarians, 47.6% of African Americans, 41.1% of Latinos, 17.6% of Native Americans and 6.8% of Alaskan Natives and Pacific

Islanders in this age group leave the profession.[14] Downing et al., go on to explain that leadership training and mentoring for early to mid-level career librarians is especially crucial for members of minority groups who often do not have access to, or awareness of, informal social networks that exist within their workplaces. The authors describe some examples of leadership and coaching programs that have produced good results, though on a limited scale. Saskatchewan libraries need to be proactive in their efforts to avoid similar retention problems.

4. Aboriginal Labour Force and Education Trends

Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing demographic in Saskatchewan. According to the 2001 Census, "The total population of 12-24 year olds in the non-Aboriginal community is projected to decrease by 6 per cent by the by the year 2011, while the corresponding Aboriginal group will increase 71 per cent." If the Board and its partners can generate interest in library careers among Aboriginal youth, libraries could benefit from this tremendous opportunity for creating a "home grown" labour force. Recruitment concerns would be reduced while providing good jobs for Aboriginal people. In addition, since Aboriginal people often want to stay close to their communities in Saskatchewan, the retention problems faced by libraries that recruit from out of province would be mitigated.

Not only is the working age population of Aboriginal people growing, but, an increasing number of Aboriginal youth are enrolling in post-secondary education. Nation-wide, there were approximately 4,100 First Nations students enrolled in Canadian colleges and universities in the late 1970s. That number grew to almost 26,000 by 2003.[15] Though statistics for Saskatchewan are not readily available, there are certainly many more Aboriginal people enrolled in colleges and universities today than in past generations. First Nations University of Canada has 1110 registered students for 2007[16] and the most recent report from the Gabriel Dumont Institute (FY 2005-2006) indicates that the Dumont Technical Institute provided services to 564 students for that school year.[17]

Despite the growing number of working-age Aboriginal people that are enrolled in post-secondary education, a recent report by the C.D Howe Institute, citing 2001 census figures, showed that Saskatchewan has the second lowest off-reserve employment rate and the lowest on-reserve employment rate in Canada. If labour force participation rates and GDP generated by the average working age Aboriginal person were raised to levels of non-Aboriginals, "not only would the boost to living standards of the Aboriginal population be immense, but there would be a material impact on average living

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[14] Downing, Alire, Cawthorne et al. *Library Leadership Development : Institutional Commitment, Increasing Underrepresented Populations and Impacting the Information Profession.* IFLA Publications 2007 (126), 20-39: http://www.ifla.org/V/pr/saur126.htm

[15] Junor, Sean and Alex Usher. *The Price of Knowledge 2004: Access and Student Finance in Canada.* Montreal: Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, Research Series, 2004, p. 61. http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/uploadfiles/documents/research/Price_of_Knowledge-2004.pdf

[16] Information obtained from University of Regina web site: http://www.uregina.ca/news/releases/2007/october/17(b).shtml

[17] Gabriel Dumont Institute Operational Highlights 2005-2006: http://gdins.org/documents/OperationalHighlights2005-2006.pdf

standards for all Saskatchewan residents." [18] According to the authors, such a convergence in employment numbers would offset the economic impact of out migration (based on the trend of the past 20 years) for decades to come.[19] Libraries have an opportunity to play a positive role in changing this trend to the benefit of all Saskatchewan residents. Recent data indicates that the number of employed working-age Aboriginal people (15-64) in Saskatchewan increased 15% between 2004 and 2006.[20]

The need for trained Aboriginal librarians is most pronounced in First Nations school libraries, which also serve as public libraries in many places. A recent discussion paper written by Gregory Salmers of Southeast Regional Library explains that "First Nations people have an urgent need for improved literacy skills, employment readiness, and community builders. They are turning to library service for part of the answer, and have an excellent vision of what library service can be."[21] This vision is essentially a blend of traditional library services, cultural preservation and community development. Libraries can be places where elders meet with youth, community meetings are held, where the band website is developed and many other community and cultural programs take place. Despite the fact that First Nations libraries tend to be new, clean and bright, Jeremy Fourhorns, Provincial Library's Aboriginal Library Coordinator at the time, noted that training was lacking and that librarians were often working in isolation. Credentialed librarians and technicians who are connected to the wider library community could potentially make a huge impact on First Nations communities. To overcome this isolation, Salmers recommends "that collaborative relationships be built with First Nations, schools, municipalities, government departments, community groups, and businesses which share our values and goals in order to select, develop and deliver services and programmes."[22]

5. Barriers/ Issues related to Creating a Diverse Workforce in Libraries

Many of the barriers to creating a representative library workforce are similar to those in other sectors. The following list of challenges is essentially an adapted version of the list Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) developed with regard to increasing Aboriginal employment rates and is not meant to be comprehensive:

        a. Lack of information and awareness about careers in libraries;
        b. Lack of career planning and finding available training;
        c. No Master of Library Science program in Saskatchewan;
        d. Workplace issues including unwelcoming staff; and
        e. Lack of supports (social supports, mentors, transportation, childcare, etc.)

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[18] Guiolmette, Yvan and William B.P. Robson. "Realistic expectations: Demographics, Economics and the Pursuit of Prosperity in Saskatchewan" C.D. Howe Institute Backgrounder 107: http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/backgrounder_107.pdf

[19] The authors attribute the recent reversal in migration patterns to the current resource boom, which they describe as cyclical and not necessarily a long-term trend.

[20] Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March 2007

[21] Salmers, Gregory. "Community-based Library Services : Connecting Library Services with our Communities" November, 2007

[22] Ibid

From this list, we can see that a program intended to support greater Aboriginal participation in library workforces must encompass much more than equity hiring practises. These same barriers also apply to other underrepresented groups, especially recent immigrants. The library sector will have to reach out to the various communities and form partnerships to address these issues. Some workplace issues can be improved though government-sponsored programs mentioned in the next section.

Another factor to consider is that people who use libraries are much more likely to be interested in pursuing library careers. At a Multitype Library Board meeting in 2006, a number of Board members recalled how their positive library experiences as young people led them to pursue careers in libraries. Providing relevant library services for Aboriginal people is one way to create interest in library careers among young Aboriginal people. The challenge is to initiate this self-reinforcing pattern of Aboriginal librarians who provide quality library services and for their communities and young Aboriginal people who grow up inspired to do the same. In addition, the Canadian Library Association has noted that current library staff is the group most interested in pursuing a master's degree in library science.

One more barrier to workplace diversity is the lack of recognition for foreign credentials. This is a national problem that affects many fields outside of librarianship; however, the Board will continue to monitor the efforts of the Ontario Library Association and other groups who are working to establish guidelines for assessing foreign library education. The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission has a competency profile for professional librarians that could help with a competency-based approach to assessment and a competency profile for library technicians is in the planning stages.

6. Government Policies, Actions and Programs

The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission states on its web site that "The diversity of the people in the Saskatchewan public service is one of its greatest strengths. Managing diversity successfully means creating an environment that values and uses the contributions of people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives."[23] The same could easily be said about libraries. A workforce with varied backgrounds and experiences can be a great asset in serving our communities.

The Public Service Commission has a number of programs in place to ensure that the workforce reflects our population. It also provides tools and information for managers and employees. For example, the Employability Assistance for People With Disabilities (EAPD) Program provides funding to assist adults with disabilities to prepare for, secure and maintain employment. Employers who hire a person with a disability can receive support for the disability-related costs of accommodating that person. The EAPD Program is cost shared under the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities.[24] This is an excellent opportunity for libraries, since they don't have to shoulder all of the accessibility-related costs.

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[23] Saskatchewan Public Service Commission statement on workplace diversity
http://www.psc.gov.sk.ca/diversity/
[24] For more information, see the EAPD web site: http://www.aee.gov.sk.ca/eapd/

Simply encouraging Aboriginal people and other diversity candidates to self-declare in response to job advertisements will not create a representative workplace. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission's Policy Relating to Aboriginal People as a Designated Equity Group (Adopted November 15, 2000) highlights a few of the initiatives that will be necessary to achieve the ideal workplace.

Goals
In the ideal workplace, employees are hired and promoted based on their skills and abilities and without regard to ancestry or perceived race.
Their workplace environment is free of harassment. This is not the reality for most working-age Aboriginal people. To achieve the ideal requires many initiatives, such as the following.

- *Anti-racism policies and procedures*
- *Policies and activities to encourage respect for cultural diversity*
- *A support system for Aboriginal employees*
- *Measures to address the glass ceiling with respect to Aboriginal persons*
- *Partnerships with the Aboriginal community*
- *Education on the rationale for equity initiatives*
- *Many others, depending on the circumstances of the workplace[25]*

Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP) partnerships bring together employers, Aboriginal communities, government and unions to work together to find mutually beneficial plans that increase job opportunities for Aboriginal people. The 81st AEDP partnership agreement in Saskatchewan was signed on July 27, 2007 between the Government of Saskatchewan and the City of North Battleford, the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 287 and the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighter's Association No. 1756.[26] While there might be too many employers and unions in the library sector to easily create a single agreement, some libraries are part of organizations that have signed agreements. Nearly one hundred AEDP partnership agreements have now been signed (as of early 2009). Libraries may be able to use the experiences of some of these partnerships to find common ground on this issue as sector.

The Federal Government's Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI) is another initiative that provides tools and information related to hiring Aboriginal people. They have contact people in all of the provinces, including Saskatchewan. The first question in the Employer Toolkit is, "Why should we hire Aboriginal peoples?" The answer is that "Aboriginal employees help reach the large, growing Aboriginal market."[27] This is essentially the same conclusion reached by the Minister's Advisory Committee on Library Services for Aboriginal People. If the library community is successful in its diversity efforts, Aboriginal people and those from other diversity groups will become library users in greater numbers.

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[25]Policy Relating to Aboriginal People as a Designated Equity Group (Adopted November 15, 2000): http://www.shrc.gov.sk.ca/policy/policy5.htm

[26] See the full press release at: http://www.gov.sk.ca/news?newsId=0529aa08-7863-4d16-8663-90af28dfc2a0
[27]AWPI Employer Toolkit: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/awpi/mbr_e.html

Public-private ventures, such as the Aboriginal Human Resource Council, are creating new opportunities for employers to connect to the Aboriginal talent pool. One of their programs, the Inclusion Network, works with over 400 Aboriginal employment centres. Hundreds of employers have registered and according to their website over 3,000 Aboriginal job seekers have posted resumes. [28] However, the Minister's Advisory Committee on Library Services for Aboriginal People has warned that existing workforces must be prepared for an influx of Aboriginal employees as partnership agreements progress. The Public Service Commission provides training sessions such as Diversity and Respect in the Workplace and the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program (ACAP) which may offer models to the library community.[29] Cultural awareness training is also available through the Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP).

7. Experience of Province-Wide Employers

Some other sectors have seen significant progress in addressing the representative workforce issue through the programs described. Below are some of the results seen by employers that have implemented strategies, such as AEDP partnerships.

- Increasing numbers of qualified Aboriginal people are being hired as a result of AEDP. 2950 Aboriginal people had been hired through AEDP partnerships from the program's inception through March 31, 2006. [30] Survey results indicate that the number of Aboriginal employees in partnering organizations rose from 977 in the 2002/03 fiscal year to 2195 in 2005/06.

- "Multi-party agreements have been signed with all twelve Regional Health Authorities, unions, SAHO, and First Nations and Métis Relations. Since the signing of these "formal' partnership agreements, approximately 1800 Aboriginal people have been hired in the health sector, an increase from less than 1 percent to 5.5 percent." [1996-2005]

- Aboriginal awareness training workshops designed to increase understanding and prepare the workplace to create a positive environment for Aboriginal employees have been used by SAHO and others. 20 602 people had received this training by the end of the 2005/06 fiscal year.

8. Experiences and Strategies in the Saskatchewan Library Sector

The Multitype Library Board sent a letter to the public systems, the Legislative Library, the universities and SIAST asking Saskatchewan libraries about their experience with promoting or developing a representative workforce. This section summarizes the

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[28]Inclusion Network: http://www.inclusionnetwork.ca/CareerSite/AIN/index.html

[29] PSC diversity training links: http://www.psc.gov.sk.ca/diversity/

[30] More statistics are available on the AEDP results page: http://www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/aedp/results/

responses, followed by a detailed description of the project led by the Pahkisimon Nuye?áh Library System.

Aboriginal populations vary widely between public library systems. Wheatland Regional Library has only one reserve with 155 people, while other regions, such as Lakeland, have large Aboriginal populations. The recruitment challenge often stems from a lack of interest in or knowledge of library careers among Aboriginal people. A principle reason for lack of interest in one case was the inability of the library to provide financial help for library education or to offer a higher salary for employees who obtain library qualifications. Some of the library systems stated that it is generally a challenge to get qualified applicants of any background for professional positions.

University of Saskatchewan participates in the Association of Research Libraries "Leadership & Career Development Program" which has the stated goal of preparing librarians from "underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to take on increasingly demanding leadership roles in ARL [American Research Libraries] libraries."[31] This program, however, is really aimed at mid-career librarians. University of Saskatchewan is also working on implementing recommendations from the 8Rs Study. University of Regina is a partner in the Aboriginal Employment Development Program (AEDP). It has agreed to prepare its workplaces for the Aboriginal workforce and to promote employment opportunities within the Aboriginal community. University of Regina is also a member of the Provincial Representative Workforce Council (PRWC). Board members from those institutions involved with these programs will share information about the successes and failures of these programs at the Board table as they work on recommendations for the library sector.

The Pahkisimon Nuye?áh Library System (PNLS) and its partners have embarked upon a project that is designed to provide accredited training to library staff working in the partners' libraries. This project is designed to assist working library staff in school and public libraries within the Northern Lights School Division #113, Creighton School Division #112, Ile à la Crosse School Division #111, Prince Albert Grand Council, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, NorthWest Nations Education Council schools, Pahkisimon Nuye?áh Library System, Parkland Regional Library System, Palliser Regional Library System and Swift Current public libraries, to improve their basic workplace skills through an accredited a library training program. The participants require these certificate courses to provide effective library services to the students, teachers and communities within Saskatchewan. The project builds on previous literacy projects of Northlands College, P.N.L.S. and P.A.G.C. where the techniques of portfolio development and adult upgrading were introduced to participants to prepare them for college level courses.

This project intends to assist staff to complete the nine courses required to acquire a certificate in the Library Training Program at Red River College. The overall project, which is a four year project, is called the Library Staff Education Project (LSEP). There are two groups of students: LSEP Group 1 began studies in 2007 and have completed 3 courses. Based on the success of the first group, a second group, LSEP Group 2, began in January 2008 and have completed 1 course. LSEP Group 1 students will be studying the *Introduction to Reference* course from September 2008 to February 2009.

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[31] ARL Leadership and Career Development Program: http://www.arl.org/diversity/lcdp/

Group 2 will be studying the *Introduction to Libraries* from September 2008 to January 2009. Then both groups will merge together and will be studying *Collection Development* from February to June 2009. At the end of this time, LSEP Group 1 will have only 3 more courses to complete to achieve their certificates from Red River College. LSEP Group 2 will have 5 more courses.

Students take an on-line course within the Library Technology Certificate program from Red River College through the Credenda institution in Prince Albert. Electronic meeting rooms, email, telephone calls and videoconferencing sessions will be arranged with mentors assigned to -students during the courses. Students have weekly classes on-line led by an instructor, who is currently Linda Aksomitis. This set up is founded upon a survey done in 2003 which showed that people were unable to leave their families to study library skills in distant cities, yet needed the personal attention of a teacher in order to succeed. This project depends on the partners finding grants to support it. Unfortunately, grants for people who are adult members in the workforce are extremely limited.

9. Role of the Multitype Library Board

The Board recently promoted Dr. Ken Haycock's September 2007 presentation on the San Jose State University School of Library and Information Science held at Regina Public Library. This program is the largest of its kind and is fully available online. The Board would like to see Saskatchewan residents who are not able to obtain library science education outside of the province consider online education. Given the reluctance of many Aboriginal people to leave their families and communities for out-of-province education, online library science programs present a more viable option. Saskatchewan residents with physical disabilities might also find online education to be a better option.

During its fall 2006 and winter 2007 meetings, the Multitype Library Board developed a short list of ideas for addressing the representative workforce issue. As the Board enters its strategic planning process, it will be exploring possibilities including, but not limited to:
- a mentoring program;
- workplace readiness (preparing existing workforces for change);
- use work placements to raise awareness about library careers;
- target a bursary for designated groups;
- establishing a residency for an online MLIS in Saskatchewan (e.g. At First Nations University of Canada).

The above indicates that the Board recognizes the need to do more than encourage diverse candidates to respond to job advertisements. Cam Stewart, President of the Alberta Association for Multicultural Education, states that in his experience, mentoring is the single most cost-effective method for creating a diverse workforce, especially with respect to retention and promotion.[32]

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[32] From "Diversity and Respect in the Workplace" training session in Regina, Oct. 30, 2007.

Saskatchewan Libraries Working Together, the Board's discussion paper from 2002, states that the Saskatchewan Libraries Education Bursary program "could be promoted to many Saskatchewan residents including Aboriginal youth." To date, no Aboriginal person has been awarded the bursary and it is unclear if any have applied since the application does not ask Aboriginal people to self-identify. The bursary might not be sufficiently promoted in Aboriginal communities, or library science might just be too foreign given the limited and alienating experiences many Aboriginal people have had with libraries.

10.   Options/ Recommendations…

Equity hiring practises have been in effect for a number of years in many workplaces and library workforces have not been transformed. It is clear from the literature and announcements produced by other sectors that more active partnerships are needed to bring about change. This paper has highlighted a number of programs and services provided by the provincial and federal governments, many of which are paid for or subsidised by the government department involved. It has also highlighted a few of the reports and organizations that articulate the need for collaboration among a range of stakeholders to address diversity and Aboriginal workplace issues.

This paper proposes that the Board start creating some broad-based strategies to encourage and support libraries to work toward more diverse workforces. Fundamental to this is determining what opportunities there may be for cross-sectoral partnerships, as this is one of the important roles of the Board.