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Salary Survey: 2010 Librarian Pay Up 3 Percent Despite Economic Woes

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By Jenifer Grady

How can the American Library Association (ALA) and ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) report that librarian salaries rose three percent in 2010 when librarians are losing jobs; salaries are stagnant; hours are being cut; and new librarians are struggling to find positions? Despite the conditions faced by some individual librarians and libraries in 2010, the aggregate of 11,554 salaries reported by directors and human resources (HR) staff from public and academic libraries calculated to a mean librarian salary of \$60,734, and a median \$55,883. The 2009 mean was \$58,860, \$1,874 less than in 2010, and the 2009 median was \$54,500, \$1,383 less than in 2010.

This summary discusses salary changes on a national level for public and academic libraries together and separately. Regional and state level data and reports may be found in the print version called ALA-APA Salary Survey: Librarians – Public and Academic, available for purchase at the ALA Online Store, and the Library Salary Database, available for subscription at the [ALA-APA website](#).

For 2010, the survey received at least one response from a public or academic library in 49 states and the District of Columbia. However, separating those responses by library class and region reduced the significance of individual library responses.

However, there were no responses from public libraries in Nebraska, Vermont and West Virginia and none from academic libraries in Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island or South Dakota.

Methodology, Means and Medians

Below are the rise and fall of means and medians since 2005, when the survey began stratifying the sample for state level reporting:

Table 1: Change in means and medians since 2005

Salary	Mean	% change from previous year	Median	% change from previous year
2010	\$60,734	3.2	\$55,883	2.5
2009	\$58,860	-1.0	\$54,500	1.8
2008	\$58,960	2.0	\$53,521	1.0
2007	\$57,809	2.8	\$53,000	4.0
2006	\$56,259	4.6	\$50,976	1.4
2005	\$53,779		\$50,274	

Many factors influence means and medians, including actual salaries, response rate and the number of salaries submitted. These averages and modes, as well as quartile and ranges reported in the *ALA-APA Salary Survey: Librarians – Public and Academic* and the Library Salary Database, are based on actual salaries submitted. In 2009, there were 17,018 salaries included; in 2010, there were 11,554 (Table 2). The difference may be attributed to a change in the number of invitations sent. Fewer invitations still resulted in a similar percentage of responses by position and library type and size (see Table 6).

To relieve the burdens of survey overload on the nation's library directors and HR staff, the ALA Office for Research and Statistics reduced the sample from 3,590 to 1,672, maintaining the stratification by library type and size. This decision proved wise, increasing the response rate to 35 percent, up two percent from 2009. In 2008, the rate was 29 percent.

Salaries for the following positions have been surveyed annually since 1999:

- Director/Dean/Chief Officer – includes Association of Research Libraries member data (ARL has participated since 1991)

- Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director – includes ARL
- Department Head/Branch Manager/Coordinator/Senior Manager
- Manager/Supervisor of Support Staff
- Librarian Who Does Not Supervise – includes ARL
- Beginning Librarian – includes ARL

Though the percentages of salaries reported by position might vary by library size, they were relatively consistent overall by type from 2009 to 2010. Although the 2010 survey collected a higher percentage of data from public libraries, the percentages by position represented were similar for public and academic libraries. The percentage of participating public and academic libraries fluctuates, but it appears that public libraries are becoming more likely to respond – in 2006 through 2008, approximately 60 percent of salaries were from public libraries. Most salaries reported in public libraries were for Librarians who do not supervise, Department Heads and Managers of Support Staff; while for academics, staff were predominantly more likely to be Librarians who do not supervise.

Table 2: Comparison of total number and percentage of salaries reported in 2009 and 2010 by position and library type

2009							
	2009 Number of Salaries for Responding Public Libraries	% of Total Public Library Salaries	% of Total Salaries Reported	2009 Number of Salaries for Responding Academic Libraries	% of Total Academic Library Salaries	% of Total Salaries Reported	
Director	649	5%	4%	459	9%	3%	
Deputy	676	6%	4%	573	11%	3%	
Department Head	3447	29%	20%	505	10%	3%	
Manager	1709	14%	10%	680	13%	4%	
Librarian	4475	38%	26%	2458	48%	14%	
Beginning	946	8%	6%	441	9%	3%	
Total	11902		70%	5116		30%	17,018
2010							
	2010 Number of Salaries for Responding Public Libraries	% of Total Public Library Salaries	% of Total Salaries Reported	2010 Number of Salaries for Responding Academic Libraries	% of Total Academic Library Salaries	% of Total Salaries Reported	
Director	328	4%	3%	217	9%	2%	
Deputy	451	5%	4%	282	11%	2%	
Department Head	2855	32%	25%	261	10%	2%	
Manager	1225	14%	11%	347	14%	3%	
Librarian	3706	41%	32%	1260	50%	11%	
Beginning	467	5%	4%	153	6%	1%	
Total	9032		78%	2520		22%	11,552

All six positions, in both public and academic libraries, show an increase. No salaries below \$22,000 are included in the calculation and high salary outliers are removed, based on the judgment of the consultant compiling the data, in this case The Management Association of Illinois. The range for 2010 was \$22,000 to \$302,500, and for 2009 it was \$22,000 to \$256,800.

Table 3: Comparison of mean of salaries paid by position, 2009 and 2010

	Combined Regional Salary Data 2009	Combined Regional Salary Data 2010	Difference	% change	N
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	87,525	99,176	11,651	13.3%	546
Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director	76,750	79,274	2,524	3.3%	733
Department Head/Branch Manager/Coordinator/Senior Manager	63,079	65,829	2,750	4.4%	3116
Manager/Supervisor of Support Staff	54,173	55,055	882	1.6%	1573
Librarian Who Does Not Supervise	52,803	53,923	1,120	2.1%	4966
Beginning Librarian	46,175	48,317	2,142	4.6%	620
Total					11,554

Results

(see 2009 summary for full comparison)

Tables 4 and 5 illustrate that salaries for all positions are higher in 2010 than they were in 2009. The largest increase is seen in pay for public library Directors. In 2009, Directors on average saw losses overall of 3.13 percent in public and 1.66 percent in academic libraries. In 2010, the average salary for Directors of public libraries was 20 percent higher, the range narrowing from a \$22,000 minimum in 2009 to a \$38,000 minimum for all regions. The maximum salary remained at \$229,460 for both years. Although the maximum salaries for each region were the same or lower this year, the means and medians were all higher.

Beginning academic librarians saw a 3.43 percent increase from 2008 to 2009, but this dropped to 1.16 percent for 2010.

Table 4: Rank Order of Position Types by Mean of Salaries Paid, Public Libraries, Comparison 2009 and 2010

	Public Regional Salary Data 2009	Public Regional Salary Data 2010	Difference	% Difference	N
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	83,655	100,106	16,451	20%	329
Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director	73,236	77,633	4,397	6%	451
Department Head/Branch Manager/Coordinator/Senior Manager	63,236	65,875	2,639	4%	2855
Manager/Supervisor of Support Staff	53,564	54,863	1,299	2%	1226
Librarian Who Does Not Supervise	51,556	52,851	1,295	3%	3706
Beginning Librarian	46,042	48,749	2,707	6%	467
Total					9034

Table 5. Rank Order of Position Types by Mean of Salaries Paid, Academic Libraries, Comparison 2009 and 2010

	Academic Regional Salary	Academic Regional Salary	Difference	%	N
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	Data 2009	Data 2010		Difference	
Director/Dean/Chief Officer	92,996	97,767	4,771	5.13%	217
Deputy/Associate/Assistant Director	80,895	81,897	1,002	1.24%	282
Department Head/Branch Manager/Coordinator/Senior Manager	62,007	65,320	3,313	5.34%	261
Manager/Supervisor of Support Staff	55,704	57,079	1,375	2.47%	1260
Librarian Who Does Not Supervise	55,073	55,732	659	1.20%	347
Beginning Librarian	46,459	47,000	541	1.16%	153
Total					2520

Response Rate

The 2009 survey elicited a 35 percent response rate; the 2009 survey had a 33 percent response rate (Table 6).

Table 6: Response Rates, 2000-2010

Year and Survey	Sample	Responses	Response Rate %
2010 – Librarian	1,672	583	35
2009 – Librarian	3,590	1,179	33
2008 – Librarian	3,484	1,010	29
2007 – Librarian and Non-MLS combined	3,484	834	24
2006 – Librarian	3,418	1,053	31
2006 – Non-MLS	3,418	836	24
2005 – Librarian	4,343	2,058	47
2004 – Librarian	1,275	881	69
2003 – Librarian	1,268	901	72
2002 – Librarian	1,320	924	70
2001 – Librarian	1,297	866	67
2000 – Librarian	1,294	931	72

*Survey sample expanded to include state-level data.

Despite the respectable response rates, much of the state-level data reported is too low to be statistically significant for each state. The project directors decided to include all data, including those with low response rates. However, results are not presented where salaries could be individually identified, such as in a state where there is one Very Large public library and one Director.

How to Access the Data

Data from the Librarian Salary Survey is available through the ALA-APA Library Salary Database, a subscription-based tool that costs \$50 for 30-day access and \$150 for annual access (\$250 for non-ALA members). Subscribers can run reports for data collected between 2006 and 2010, organized by position (60 MLS and non-MLS), library type, region and state. The database is useful for job seekers, employees preparing for performance reviews, library administrators and human resources staff.

The print editions of the survey offer more extensive data analyses and salary resources. There are separate sections for public and academic librarians in six position categories. State-level data are presented in each section by position, following the regional salary table. The full Library Salary Survey is \$90 (\$81 for ALA members). The printed versions can be ordered by mail from the ALA Store, P.O. Box 932501, Atlanta, GA 31193-2501; by phone (1-866-746-7252); by fax (1-770-442-9742); or online (<http://www.alastore.ala.org/>).

Please note that survey respondents receive a 25 percent discount.

For more information, visit <http://ala-apa.org> or call ALA-APA Director Jenifer Grady at 800-545-2433 , x2424.

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