

Minutes from RBMS Diversity Committee meeting at ALA Midwinter January 9, 2016

Present: RBMS Diversity Committee, co-chairs Juli McLoone (University of Michigan) and Beth Joffrion (Western Washington University)

Members: Curtis Small (University of Delaware), Kim Tully (ktully@temple.edu); Danielle Culpepper (University of Virginia); Jen Talley (University of Michigan)

Visitors: Karla Nielsen (Columbia University); Arvid Nelsen (University of Minnesota); Athena Jackson (University of Michigan); Sara Powell, John Overholt (Harvard University)

1. Call to Order, Introductions, and Selection of Recorder (Karla Nielsen, University of Columbia)
2. Reviewed and approved meeting minutes from Diversity Committee Meeting at ALA Annual 2015
3. Old/Current Business
 1. 2016 Seminars Proposal Update: Curtis Small reported that the panel “Whose History is it Anyway? Diversity and Outreach by Miami-area Collections” has come together nicely and has been accepted for the 2016 meeting in Coral Gables; Athena added that the plenaries at RBMS 2016 are the most diverse in RBMS conference history.
 2. Reports/Updates from other Committees
 1. Scholarships: Melissa Nykanan submitted a written report on behalf of the Scholarships Committee that discussed criteria to be used for evaluating scholarship applications, as well as a set of guidelines and a methodology for guiding the selection process. Beth noted that the review process has been simplified (scale of 5 rather than ranking candidates 1-50); new criteria and methodology for selection have been revised and reviewed by Membership, Diversity, and Executive committees. Debate was had by that group about whether “diversity” should include LGBTQ people but decision was made to keep the focus on racial and ethnic diversity to better account for underrepresentation.
 2. Membership and Professional Development. Concern was raised about support for mid-career librarians, and helping people to transition from library school to their first jobs; focus now is on library school students.
 3. Other Committee Updates: Membership committee reported that there is a surplus of mentors in the buddy program for the first time.
 3. Diversity Postcard Distribution
 1. Book Fair update; postcard was distributed at four bookfairs in 2014 and three bookfairs in 2015.
 2. Future distribution –Juli discussed a request for additional funds from the Budget Committee to distribute current card more widely to library schools. The group discussed the benefits of having a tangible object that people can hold on to and consult later.
 3. A future redesign was considered and supported. Current card matches the design and color scheme of the old RBMS website.
4. New Business

1. 2017 Seminars Proposal - brainstorming and volunteers needed. Discussion was had about a panel highlighting the stories of librarians of diverse backgrounds and scholarship recipients.
2. New Diversity chair(s) beginning after ALA annual – Call for new chairs was made. Arvid Nelsen mentioned that one chair could remain on the committee while the other cycled off. He also encouraged people to think of 1-year as well as 2-year terms.
3. Seeking volunteers to implement priorities identified at ALA Annual 2015
 1. Coordinate with ALA for career support and awareness (ex. is there information programming on areas of librarianship at ALA that RBMS could contribute to?) Need to identify the appropriate contacts at ALA.
 2. Reach out to scholarship recipients and RBS fellows.
ACTION ITEM: Danielle Culpepper (point person for the RBS Scholars), Curtis Small, and Karla Nielsen (ARL Diversity scholars connection) will work together to reach out to ARL and SAA Diversity scholars To encourage attendance, return, and participation in RBMS.
 3. Create a Diversity Blog (or feature diversity on RBMS blog); John Overholt said that when he becomes Section Chair that he would he would avail the chair's blog for this purpose if desired: <http://rbms.info/chairs-blog/>

ACTION ITEM: Chairs Juli McLoone and Beth Joffrion will communicate with 2016 conference planning committee to explore possible diversity-related content on conference blog.
 4. ACTION ITEM: Incoming chair(s) in July 2016 will coordinate with John Overholt to feature Diversity content on chair's blog.
 5. Site visits to MLIS programs in conference region.
 6. Reactivate Diversity Toolkit ACTION ITEM: Individuals working on 2017 conference proposal will consider the benefits of using the Diversity Toolkit as a way to structure the 2017 Diversity seminar was discussed as way to publicize the toolkit.
 7. Organize service projects
ACTION ITEM: Beth Joffrion and Athena Jackson will work together to brainstorm ideas for upcoming conferences. Juli McLoone will connect Beth and Athena to Liz Call, subcommittee chair for 2017 conference participatory programming

Publicize the Diversity Committee beyond RBMS. Publicize Diversity statement ACTION ITEM: Beth Joffrion and Athena Jackson will ask 2016 and 2017 conference planning committees to consider including the Diversity Statement in the Vade Mecum).
 8. Videos that feature the diversity of RBMS, personal profiles.