

AAHSL Future Leadership Committee

Annual Report - October 2022

Leadership Fellows Program: A report for the hiatus year (2020/2021) was sent to the National Library of Medicine. While no class was held, the report was generated to capture the FLC activities that would have an impact on the 2021/2022 class and new classes going forward, especially diversity recruitment.

Among the current fellows, Erinn Aspinall, has been appointed HSL director at the University of Minnesota and Saori Wendy Herman has been promoted to director of the Health Sciences Library at Hofstra / Northwell. A third fellow has a pending job offer. Two prior fellows (Gail Kouame, Univ. of Sothern Alabama, and Bart Ragon, University of Virginia) were recently appointed as directors and another prior fellow (Erika Stevenson, Brown University) had a major promotion last year making her director of health and biomedical library services. With the new class we now have had 97 fellows and 54 (56%) have been appointed directors.

The FLC did address the question about how long it takes a fellow to be appointed a director. Data from prior final reports to NLM were analyzed to determine how many years on average elapsed from the fellow's participation in the program until being appointed to a director's position. The mean appears to be 2.8 years, and the median 2 years, with 86% being appointed within 4 years or less. Very few (8%) are appointed beyond the 10th year post graduation.

Given that 97 fellows have completed the program over the past 20 years, the FLC did review the pool to determine its actual size since some fellows have retired or are no longer available to be recruited as HSL directors. As of February 2022, 22 fellows are no longer in the pool and 37 are currently in director positions. Of the remaining pool, 33 have never been appointed to a director's position and another 5 stepped down from a director's position and could apply for another director positions, for a total of 38 available candidates in the pool. Of the 33 fellows not currently directors, 12 graduated more than 10 years ago making it less likely that they will be hired into director positions. This data indicates that there is a much smaller pool to fill ongoing vacancies in AAHSL director positions.

Leadership Fellows Program 2021/2022: The 2021 Orientation programs were held as Zoom sessions and received strong ratings from the participants. The focus on the role of the leader in DEI worked very well, including a follow-up session in November as part of the programs' regular virtual series. We did learn that having virtual/online "Introductions to the Learning Community" (i.e., having a session for mentors and then for fellows) worked well and if used in the future would provide more time for leadership topics during the in-person Orientation. The Zoom session on MBTI was also well received. The strengths-based leadership assessment that replaced FIRO-B provided additional insights into leadership strengths and preferences. The focus on emotional intelligence resonated with the fellows and in the future the program may prefer to use an assessment tool based on that leadership theory. The first virtual session facilitated by a fellow and mentor was on emerging leadership theories and was very successful and was followed an online session focusing on mentoring and another on building relationships and partnerships. In May, another Zoom session provided a follow-up to the Institute's topics. The class also set up a Slack channel for further discussions.

The Leadership Institute was in-person! All the participants were vaccinated and boosted, willing to wear masks, and eager to finally come together to share and learn from each other. Back-up

arrangements were made for using Zoom in case either trainers or class members became sick, but everyone was well and in-person discussions were rich and varied. The theme for the Institute was leading in complexity, with a balance of theory and practice. Janice Jaguszewski worked closely with the multicultural training specialist Pamela Espinosa de los Monteros to further integrate DEI content into the discussions of leadership roles. Case studies were used to underscore the content and spark engagement and deep discussions. Leadership tools were reviewed as well, including the power of questions and adaptive action. By the end of the three days the class members had identified their leadership framework: values, purpose, simple rules for interactions, and interdependent pairs. The evaluation ratings for all sessions were strong and everyone commented on how wonderful it was to explore the leadership content and share experiences in person.

The Capstone event was held in Washington, DC and while the class and trainers met in person, COVID continued to be a concern. The class was not able to meet at NLM due to COVID restrictions and all the speakers opted to “attend” via Zoom, some due to restrictions and others because they had relocated outside of DC or were traveling. However, the hybrid format of external Zoom speakers and internal class discussions worked very well. The discussions and sharing among the class focused on major issues and challenges as well as reflection on their experiences. The fellows presented their leadership plan – values, rules, vision, and insights – and the group discussed the importance of resilience.

Again, COVID limited graduation attendance to about 25 people, including the class. Dianne Babski spoke on behalf of NLM and Gabe Rios, AAHSL Board member, delivered AAHSL’s remarks.

Leadership Fellows Program 2022/2023: The FLC subcommittee on Diversity Recruitment reviewed the application for possible revisions before it was sent to NLM for final approval. A group photo of the current class was added back to the online information and posted on the AAHSL Website by May 1. Announcements began to be distributed on May 2 through 9 and reminders were sent out in late May. The list of library groups and communication channels continued to be expanded to reach librarians of color and increase the diversity of the applicant pool. Two special Zoom sessions were scheduled in June to provide more information and answer questions. Twenty-eight potential applicants registered for the sessions. At the request of the attendees, a timeline for the program was compiled describing the activities and time commitment for fellows. This was distributed to all the attendees of both sessions. Members of the FLC facilitated both sessions.

The recruitment efforts were very successful with a larger pool of sixteen applicants, over last year’s twelve. Eight (50%) of the sixteen applications were from librarians who self-identified as being of a specific racial or ethnic group. Six directors volunteered to be mentors. All the applicants were from academic health sciences libraries.

Four of the five mentors for the 2022/2023 class are prior fellows. All are first-time mentors, and three have been members of the FLC.

Leadership Program Evaluation Methods: Another FLC subcommittee has been sent a list of all the evaluation methods used and metrics collected by the program. This group will review these evaluation measures to see what changes might be implemented.

Buddy program: One additional buddy match was made in 2021 with another 5 in 2022, bringing the total to 26 pairs. This program is now being handled by an FLC subcommittee.

New Director Activities: The FLC discussed with the Board whether new director activities should be placed in a new committee that can focus on those issues, especially given that the FLC's focus needs to be on emerging leaders. The FLC submitted a motion to the Board regarding the creation of a new committee to focus on support for new directors. The FLC proposed moving the New Director Buddy Program to that committee in the future as well as any further work on exploring networking opportunities for both new and interim directors.

Program Director Recruitment: Pat Thibodeau announced that she will be stepping down as program director at the end of the 2021/2022 class activities. The FLC has finalized the recruitment process and invited Kelly Gonzalez to represent the Board during the selection process. The call for applications and nominations went out in February with a reminder in March, and two applicants were interviewed and one recommended to the AAHSL Board. Judy Cohn was selected as the new program director, beginning with the selection of the 2022/2023 class. The committee chairs will send the recommendation to the AAHSL Board. The new program director's work will start in June when the selection of the 2022/2023 class begins.

Leadership Diversity Scholarship: The list of contacts for announcing the award has been updated and the subcommittee assigned to this activity revised the announcements for release in February and March. The FLC's request for 4 scholarships (\$1,500 each) was approved for 2022. Two outstanding applications were received and approved. Both were hoping to attend the Minnesota Institute but were not accepted. However, both found alternate programs that were approved by the FLC.

Other FLC Activities: The FLC has appointed a subcommittee to work on the review and selection of the 2022/2023 fellows. The networking opportunities for new and interim directors was halted given the motion sent to the Board about forming a new committee to focus on those needs.

Cost Containment: The AAHSL Board asked the FLC to look at cost containment methods going forward. The FLC has had several brainstorming sessions to consider how to reduce costs. Shrinking the size of

the program probably does not make sense given the number of retirements each year. Charging fees to fellows or mentors would also work against the goal of increasing diversity and block some institutions from ever participating. The FLC has discussed implementing more online sessions and plans to use more but the consistent feedback from fellows and mentors, as well as committee members, is that in-person sessions are important for forming connections and networking with colleagues, as well as adding a much richer dimension to learning. The leadership program must also meet the requirements the NLM contract laid out in the Statement of Work, such as supporting AAMC attendance and providing a site visit at the mentor's institution. One approach that might reduce costs is to hold the program events in less expensive cities and send out an RFP to AAHSL members to see if anyone could help host the program at lower costs. Speakers from DC based agencies and NLM could be scheduled via Zoom and the Capstone could be held elsewhere or restructured. An RFP detailing the requirements for the Institute and Capstone events was drafted for the AAHSL Office, which sent out a call for interested AAHSL members. The FLC also continued to look at ways to reduce costs, including a less expensive venue for the 2022 graduation and reducing those food and beverage costs.

October 2022

Submitted by:

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