

Future Leadership Committee (FLC) Annual Report 2025

October 1, 2025

With thanks to the following FLC leaders and members: Shannon Jones (Chair), Emily Glenn (Chair-Designate), Teresa Knott, (Past-Chair), Marie Ascher, Erinn Aspinall, Gail Kouame, Darlene Parker Kelly, Jeff Slagell, Terrie Wheeler, and Beth Whipple.

1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the FLC's role in supporting AAHSL's leadership pipeline. The FLC accomplishments for the year include:

- Recruiting and graduating the 2024-2025 class of fellows and mentors
- Recruiting the Leadership Fellows Program 2025-2026 class
- Updating and posting the Director Recruitment Brochure
- Conducting a Professional Coaching Pilot
- Completing a 10-Year Evaluation of the Leadership Fellows Program
- Awarding 4 Leadership Scholarships

2024–2025 was a **year of transition**, with the conclusion of NLM funding, the continuation of the LFP with full AAHSL support for 2025-2026 and looking ahead to program transformation in the hiatus year in 2026–2027.

Several subcommittees work on FLC projects throughout the year. The Program Director, with support from FLC Leaders, Shannon Jones, Emily Glenn, and Teresa Knott oversee these activities and provide major input and guidance to successfully implement the Leadership Fellows Program and other major activities bulleted above.

2. Leadership Fellows Program (LFP)

Class of 2023/2024 (L24)

- A successful **Capstone and Graduation** was held in Baltimore, MD hosted by the University of Maryland Health Sciences and Human Services Library (Sept 2024)
- Capstone and Graduation continued in a hybrid format with both in-person and remote speakers.
- The 2024-2025 class of fellows and mentors praised the experience with high marks on evaluation.
- **Career advancement** : Naomi Bishop (fellow) moved into a new library leadership role (outside of health sciences).

Class of 2024/2025 (L25)

- Orientation held in **Atlanta, Nov 2024** (in-person).
- Virtual sessions facilitated by fellow/mentor pairs completed to date include:
 - Inclusive Leadership & DEI (Dec 2024) Pamela Espinosa de los Monteros
 - Session with AAHSL Board (Dec 2024) Gabe Rios
 - Imposter Syndrome (Jan 2025) Shalu Gillum / Amy Allison
 - Authentic Leadership (Feb 2025) Brian Leaf / Anne Seymour
 - AI and Leadership (Mar 2025) Frank Fajardo / Michelle Kraft
 - Managing Difficult Conversations (May 2025) Catherine Soehner
 - Mock Interviews Debrief (June 2025) Janice Jaguszewski
 - Change Management (July 2025) Faith Steele / Joy Summers-Ables
 - Inclusive Hiring (August 2025) Lindsay Blake / Melissa Rethlefsen
- **Leadership Institute** (April 2025) The 3-day program was held at the Medical University of South Carolina with all in attendance received very positive reviews on all sessions. The Institute does a deep dive into leading in complexity, defining leadership values, sticky issues, and shifting culture among other related topics
- **Mock interviews conducted** (May 2025) with mentor/fellow pairings.
 - Guest speakers engaged from University of Minnesota (Erinn Aspinall) and Geisinger Health (Amy Allison) in the virtual debrief
- **Capstone and Graduation** (September 18-19, 2025)
 - Hosted at ARL and NLM; Graduation hosted at Howard University (Fatima)
 - Combination of in-person and remote presenters
 - Evaluation of Capstone in process
- **Career Advancement** - Fellow, Brian Leaf, accepted a position at the San Jose State University as Associate Dean for Student and Faculty Engagement.

Class of 2025/2026 (L26) Recruitment

- Recruitment planning initiated June 2025.
- AAHSL Board approved **funding for the full class** following end of NLM support.
- Emphasis on outreach and keeping the membership aware of the program and promoting its value to potential applicants
- Record number of applicants for LFP 2025 (14) many of very high quality
 - Reasons to consider are 1) announced program hiatus in 2026-2027 and 2) FLC subcommittee formed to boost and promote applicants.
- The [2025-2026 class](#) was announced to the AAHSL membership and posted on the AAHSL website.

3. NLM Contract and Transition

- NLM funding **ceased April 30, 2025**, concluding 20 years of financial support. NLM very much wants to continue having its name on the program due to its collaborative nature and recognition of the need to develop strong academic health sciences library leaders
- Worked with AAHSL President, Gabe Rios, on messaging out to the AAHSL membership notifying all of the change and future plans.
- The AAHSL Board assumes **full financial responsibility** for the L26 class.
- Post-2025, LFP will go on **hiatus for 2026–2027** to enable program transformation.
- NLM and AAHSL collaborated on communications and celebration of the partnership's impact.

4. Major Initiatives

10-Year Program Evaluation

- Completed and shared the full report in November 2024.
- Overwhelmingly positive findings on program impact.
- Recommendations include:
 - Addressing **budget/financial planning** in curriculum
 - Collaborated with the Program & Education Committee to address the topic at the October 2025 Annual AAHSL meeting
 - Strengthening **recruitment strategies**
 - Considering new models for program delivery
- Although a subcommittee was formed to integrate recommendations into long-term planning, with the news of the LFP program hiatus, this activity was put on hold to be addressed during the planning/transition year.

Professional Coaching Pilot

- Funded by NNLM Region 1 (University of Maryland)
- 9 participants matched with coaches; 100% completion rate.
- Final report submitted to NNLM Region 1 in May 2025.
- [Poster](#) presented at MLA 2025.
- Should funding be made available again, continuing the relationship with Culture Cultivation (Becca Bartholomew) should be pursued due to the high quality of the coaches and ease of working with this firm.

Leadership Scholarships

- 8 applications received for 2025 cycle; 4 awarded.

- High-quality applicant pool with varied proposed projects.
- Acceptance and decline letters distributed with Board approval.
- See list of [award winners](#):
 - **Catisha Benjamin**
Manager of Library Services
Clinical & Research Library
Children's Hospital Colorado
To attend Library Juice Academy's Library Leadership and Management Series
 - **Sonya Lamke**
Sciences Liaison, Access Services and Systems Librarian
Arkansas Colleges of Health Education
Taylor Health Sciences Library College of Health
To attend the Library Management Skills Institute 2: The Organization
 - **Carol Ng-He**
Associate Director
Boxer Library
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science
To attend at the [Harvard Graduate School of Education's Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians](#).
 - Marlena Rose
Assistant Director of Collections & Historical Services
Laupus Health Sciences Library at East Carolina University
To attend the [Harvard Graduate School of Education's Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians](#).

Director Recruitment Guide

- Updated and [posted on AAHSL website](#) (2025).
- Next update scheduled for 2027–2028 cycle.

5. Future Planning

- The recommendations included in the 10-Year Evaluation will be taken into account during the LFP Program hiatus year, 2026-2027, rather than proposing changes at this time.
- **Capstone & Host Sites:** RFP for 2025–2026 cycle under review; submitted request for Board consideration to move to a hotel venue for stability, preferably in Washington, DC

- **Program Hiatus (2026–2027):** Evaluation recommendations and FLC discussions will inform re-envisioning of the LFP.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Exploring partnerships and revised funding models under full AAHSL responsibility.
- **Recruitment:** Focus on outreach and follow-up with prospective fellows to counter dwindling applications.
- **Curriculum:** Although a strong curriculum is in place, continue to modify, update, and adjust based on the needs of the cohort. A major strength of the curriculum and the program faculty is their ability respond to class needs.

6. Acknowledgments

- Thanks to **NLM** for two decades of partnership and support.
- Recognition of **mentors, fellows, and speakers** for 2024–2025 contributions took place at the FLC Graduation hosted by Howard University. A special thanks to Fatima Barnes and her team for their flexibility, excellent facilities, and staff.
- Appreciation to FLC leaders, subcommittee members, and the AAHSL Board for their guidance and financial support during the transition period.

7. Conclusion

The FLC successfully navigated the year sustaining a high-quality fellowship experience while considering the program's future with AAHSL funding in 2025–2026. There is continued interest in offering professional coaching to members as the pilot was evaluated highly by participants. As the program enters its final year before its planned hiatus, FLC is committed to delivering a strong program for the 2025–2026 class, honoring the NLM partnership, and preparing for a reimagined leadership program aligned with the evolving needs of academic health sciences libraries.

Submitted by:

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Teresa Knott, Past-Chair
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September 30, 2025