

## A Brief History of the LAUC and Diversity

The Librarians Association of the University of California (LAUC) Committee on Diversity advises the Executive Board and University Librarians on issues pertaining to mentoring and professional growth to help recruit, develop and retain a diverse group of librarians. While the Committee on Diversity was formally created in 1992, its origins stem from earlier, organic efforts to bring attention to the topic of diversity at a statewide level.

In 1988 the LAUC leadership conducted a Delphi Study to ascertain the membership's concerns; "cultural diversity" was one of the issues identified. In December of 1989 an Ad Hoc Committee to Plan LAUC Regional Workshops on Cultural Diversity was established. The workshop was held in October 1990 with 82 librarians in attendance and resulted in the "[Many Voices of Diversity](#)" report, which was discussed extensively at every campus. The report's 26 recommendations framed the conversation on diversity along cultural lines. A major focus of the report was the need to strengthen collections and services of UC libraries focusing on underrepresented groups in California; the report simultaneously recognized the contributions already made towards supporting cultural diversity within the libraries.. The first recommendation of the report was to "Establish a permanent system-wide committee to deal with issues of cultural diversity in the University's libraries as well as implement the recommendations of this report."

1996 saw the drafting of the "[Principles of Community](#)" which sought to expand the scope of diversity beyond cultural confines. The principles "reject all manifestations of discrimination, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, or any of the other differences among people which have been excuses for misunderstandings, dissensions, or hatred." In 2000, the Committee's name was changed to the "Committee on Diversity."

Throughout its evolution, the Committee on Diversity has placed a consistent emphasis on celebrating and expanding the diversity of UC library holdings and its librarians. A recognition of the importance of "recruitment and retention" of a diverse library workforce prompted the 2009 incorporation of these terms into the Committee's charge. The Committee maintains ongoing efforts to provide orientation and mentoring opportunities to members of LAUC, and continues in its work of encouraging and supporting the retention of a diversified group of librarians. It is the unique role of the Committee on Diversity to educate and advise the University to consider the value of diversity.

--Jennifer Chan, UCLA