Arkansas Library Association Mentoring Program

**Welcome**

The Arkansas Library Association (ArLA) is proud and honored to have you join our Mentoring Program. As a mentor, you will be providing library staff and students with an understanding of what librarianship is all about. Plus, you will be helping them to understand the importance of volunteerism and professional involvement. As a mentee, you are the future of librarianship and the strength of library associations such as the Arkansas Library Association.

We hope you will enjoy your year\* as either a mentor or mentee in the Arkansas Library Association Mentoring Program. The future of the mentoring program is dependent on you. As a mentee, this program will provide experience and guidance from a knowledgeable library professional. As a mentor, the program will provide an opportunity to give back to the profession, model volunteerism, and help guide the future of librarianship.

Both as a mentor and mentee, your involvement in the Arkansas Library Association will bring many benefits to you and your Arkansas Library Association.

* **Your involvement is needed.**
* **Your guidance is valued.**
* **Your experience is critical.**
* **Your support is essential.**

**\***The ArLA Mentoring Program can run for either one or two years, depending on the needs and goals of the mentor and mentee.

Program Description - Mentoring Program\*

**\*A number of items found in this document were developed after reading the Southeastern Library Association’s Mentoring Program.**  
  
The ArLA Mentoring Program has been established in order to provide a method of introducing and encouraging library staff and students to work together, to network, and to support the ArLA organization. Mentors are current members of the association who have agreed to help other members learn about the profession in general and more specifically about the different aspects of ArLA and how it functions. The development of a professional relationship between the mentor and mentee is one of the many benefits of the ArLA Mentoring Program. The long-term goal of the ArLA Mentoring Program is to foster and grow an interest in library staff and students to work together to create a dynamic professional organization of learning.  
  
On the membership form, members of the association are given the opportunity to join the mentoring program and have a mentor assigned to them. Existing members will have the opportunity to participate in the mentoring program by choosing to become a mentor on their renewal form. Mentors will normally share job titles and/or responsibilities with the mentee in order to provide a more comprehensive relationship.  
  
The Mentoring Committee will pair mentors with their mentees. Mentors will be provided an email address for their mentees in order to make first contact. Mentees will be provided the contact information for their mentors to facilitate the introductory process. This information will be delivered to individuals with their membership/renewal information.

ArLA Mentoring Program Mission Statement

The ArLA Mentoring Program is an invitation for library professionals at all levels to learn, develop, and meet their individual potential with assistance from more experienced professionals. The Program is designed to help library professionals succeed, empower them to make decisions, enhance self-awareness, and promote a sense of belonging.

What is a Mentor?

**Definition**  
An ArLA mentor is an experienced library staff person who willingly provides professional and practical advice to less experienced library staff and students in order for them to achieve success in their new positions and professions.

**Qualifications**

* Be an ArLA member.
* Have five plus (5+) years of professional library experience.
* Be willing to make a commitment of one year to the program.\*
* Be willing to communicate with mentee as often as necessary, at least 4–6 times during the year.

**Role**

* To serve as a guide, sharing your professional experiences, triumphs, and struggles.
* To listen, answer questions, and offer tips and suggestions for action.
* To promote and encourage the importance of participation in ArLA activities and committees.
* To provide feedback to the mentee regarding their strengths and development needs.
* To be a sounding board for ideas.
* To assist in setting goals.

**Benefits**

* To share knowledge and experiences.
* To assist in the growth and education of library professionals.
* To gain insights into new and cutting-edge librarianship from new graduates.
* To give back what has been gained (if you had a mentor in the past).
* To practice problem solving and listening skills.
* To meet people with diverse experiences, skills, and contacts.
* To collaborate with mentors/mentees who have similar career goals, interests, and job functions.

**Expectations**

* You will clarify expectations with the mentee as to the extent to which you will offer guidance.
* You will become familiar with the mentee through personal interactions and reading their resume.
* You will attend either the ArLA Conference or Leadership Conference and provide guidance to the mentee during the Conference.\*\*
* You will introduce the mentee to other professionals.
* You will share pertinent information and email messages.
* You will advise mentees on ArLA organizational norms and expectations.
* You will be honest and professional in all interactions with mentees following the [ALA Code of Ethics](http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/codeofethics/codeethics.htm).
* You will submit a report via Survey Monkey every 6 months about the mentoring program and your relationship with the individual you are mentoring to the Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

**\*If both the mentee and mentor agree, the mentoring program can be extended to a second year.  
\*\*If you are unable to attend the ArLA Conference you will arrange with an ArLA Board Member to meet with the mentee and provide them with an agenda.**

What is a Mentee?

**Definition**  
An ArLA mentee, a.k.a. the person being mentored, is a library staff person or student seeking professional advice and guidance from a more experienced library professional in order to achieve success in their new position or profession.

**Qualifications**

* Be an ArLA member.
* Be a library staff person or student.
* Be willing to make a commitment of one year to program.\*
* Be willing to communicate with mentor as often as necessary, at least 4–6 times during the year.

**Benefits**

* To share knowledge and experiences.
* To practice problem solving and listening skills.
* To meet people with varied experiences, skills, and contacts.
* To collaborate with mentors/mentees who have similar career goals, interests, and job functions.
* To learn what ArLA has to offer.
* To network with others in your field from various places.
* To become a future mentor for other professionals.

**Expectations**

* You will communicate effectively with your mentor at least 4-6 times per year.
* You will take initiative and seek professional advice from your mentor when needed.
* You will know and be able to discuss your needs and objectives with your mentor.
* You will take responsibility for your career goals.
* You will receive feedback from your mentor objectively.
* You will submit a report via Survey Monkey every 6 months about the mentoring program and your relationship with the individual who is mentoring you to the Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

**\* If both the mentee and mentor agree, the mentoring program can be extended to a second year.**

Mentoring Committee

The Mentoring Committee will maintain and expand the membership rolls of ArLA and offer a mentoring program to support library staff and students as they develop within the profession and the Association.

Mentoring Timeline

* You can become part of the Mentoring Program at any time.
* There is no specific timeline for accomplishing different aspects of the mentoring program. Each mentoring pair will work on different projects they develop.
* The ArLA Mentoring Program is a one-year program, with the possibility of a second year if both the mentor and the mentee agree they would like to continue to work together to accomplish the goals they have developed.

Required Activities for Mentors and Mentees

**Develop Program Goals and Objectives**

* Each pair will define their own goals in a contract at the beginning of the mentoring year (discussed more in-depth further on.)
* Each pair will submit a contract of goals to the Chair of the Mentoring Program within 2 months of mentor and mentee working together.
* Each pair agrees to the minimum commitment of one year to program.\*
* Each pair agrees to commit to better understanding the mission and standards of librarianship and how ArLA functions.
* Each pair agree to commit to the specific mentee's professional goals and interest both within and outside of ArLA.

Suggested Activities for Mentors

**Develop Program Goals and Objectives**

1. Recommend podcasts, webinars, online workshops, and in-person workshops.
   * Mentor may suggest different career learning opportunities for the mentee to attend or listen to.
   * Mentee should attend or listen to at least one program or workshop per year.
   * Mentee should summarize and evaluate the program and submit response to mentor.
2. Provide resume building suggestions.
   * Mentor may suggest different career learning opportunities for the mentee to either attend or listen to.
   * Mentor should work with mentee to develop goals and objectives to explore career interests and evaluate the overall focus and appearance of the resume/curriculum vitae.
3. Develop a special project.
   * Mentor may recommend a particular program to attend during the ArLA Annual Conference.
   * At the end of the mentoring relationship, mentor may either give a presentation at the ArLA Conference or write an article for the Arkansas Libraries on the mentoring experience and how it helped with the mentee’s career development.
4. Mentor should read at least two articles on mentoring.
5. Mentor should assist mentee in joining an ArLA Committee.
6. Mentor and mentee should create a personal log or journal for all mentor/mentee interactions.

Frequently Ask Questions

**MENTOR:  
What is mentoring?**

* Listening
* Volunteering
* Supporting & Caring
* Developing
* Encouraging
* Partnership

“The concept of mentoring is no longer tailored to tall, hierarchical organizations. Mentoring is now seen as a process whereby mentor and mentee work together to discover and develop the mentee’s talents.” (*Mentoring: How to Develop Successful Mentor Behaviors* by Gordon F. Shea)

**What is not mentoring?**

* Spending more time than you have
* Just advising
* Criticizing
* Rescuing
* A lengthy or exhausting relationship
* Reserved for experts
* Hard work

**Why have an ArLA mentor?**

Mentees will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with an experienced professional and learn about the ArLA organization, how it functions, and how to get more involved.

**Why are mentors so important?**  
Mentors play a significant role in the lives of developing professionals by serving as teacher, coach, counselor, and role model. They provide feedback and encouragement, offer professional advice, and help others make the connection between their present performance and their future goals.

**I have never been a mentor before. Do you offer any training for me?**  
As a mentor, you will need to have an understanding of ArLA and its committees as well as an interest in providing guidance to someone who seeks your background as a library professional. If you are interested in learning more about ArLA and its structure, visit the website at: https://arlib.org  
  
Under the Resources section of this handbook you will find a list of books, articles and websites that will help you find out more about mentoring. If you still have questions after reading the material, please contact the Membership and Mentoring Committee Chair. At the ArLA Annual Conference, we will provide a workshop orientation for new mentors/mentees.

**What if I cannot answer the mentee's questions?**  
Some questions posed to you by your mentee might not be in your field of interest or within your scope of knowledge. When this situation arises, we encourage you to share this with the mentee and forward their question on to the Membership and Mentoring Chair. Notify the mentee that their question has been forwarded and that they will be contacted soon by the Membership and Mentoring Chair.

**What if I'm not comfortable with my mentee?**  
Please tell us! The purpose of your first meeting is to see whether the two of you are compatible—the match won't be finalized until you have both approved it. Tell us frankly if things aren't working the way you had hoped. If you haven't talked directly with your mentee about the issues that are causing a disagreement, do so. Often it will be a question of miscommunication that can be cleared up through open conversation. If this does not resolve the issue the next step is to talk with the Chair of the Membership and Mentoring Committee.  
  
**How do I become a mentor?**  
To become a mentor, you need to fill out the Mentor Form. After your form has been received and evaluated, the Chair of the Membership and Mentoring Committee will contact you.

**MENTEE:**  
**What are the starting and ending dates for the Mentoring Program?**  
You can become part of the Mentoring Program at any time. It is a one-year commitment.\* During the year you are in the Mentoring Program, you will be required to attend the ArLA Annual Conference.

**Who can be an ArLA mentee?**  
Any library staff or student who is a member of ArLA.

**Is there a fee for joining the ArLA Mentoring Program?**  
No, there is no fee to join the ArLA Mentoring Program.

**How many mentees can be involved in the ArLA Mentoring Program?**  
There is no set limit.

**How long does a mentee participate in the ArLA Mentoring Program?**  
The mentee and mentor pair will participate in the program for one year with the possibility of extending to a second year if both agree it would be beneficial. During each year you participate you will be required to attend the ArLA Conference.

**Who do I contact for more information on the Mentoring Program?**  
Arkansas Library Association

c/o Mentoring Program  
P.O. Box 3821  
Little Rock, AR 72203  
501-313-1398 (Phone)  
  
Attn: Becky Fischer ([becky.fisher@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:becky.fisher@ade.arkansas.gov)) or Chair of the Mentoring Committee  
  
**How do I apply for the ArLA Mentoring Program?**  
Complete the Mentee Application Form.

**After I apply for the ArLA Mentoring Program, who will contact me?**  
After your application has been received and evaluated, you will be notified by mail and email that you have either been accepted into the ArLA Mentoring Program or that your application has been denied. Once a mentor is identified, one who matches your area of librarianship and interests as described by your answers on the mentee's application, they will contact you by mail, phone, or email. No match between mentor and mentee is complete until both parties agree that they are comfortable with each other.

**What will my mentor do for me?**  
It is up to the mentee to take the initiative and make the ArLA Mentoring Program a successful experience. Mentors offer information, support, feedback, contacts, and ideas—but the mentee must take it from there.

**What types of things should I ask my mentor?**  
The types of questions asked vary and there are no right or wrong questions to ask. When you first meet your mentor, ground rules should be set so that each individual in the relationship is comfortable sharing information. As a general rule, if you are not comfortable asking a question or sharing certain information, then don't share it. As you develop a relationship with your mentor and the comfort level increases, you will eventually feel more comfortable discussing issues.

**Are mentoring connections confidential?**  
In order to foster open and honest communication, the mentee must be able to trust the mentor not to disclose their discussions with others. Therefore, communication between the mentee and mentor will be kept confidential.

**How many times should I meet with my mentor?**  
The number of times will vary depending on the needs of the pairs. During the year, you should meet or communicate at least 4-6 times with your mentor. It is up to you how you do this—face to face, on Zoom, via email, reviewing documents, giving feedback, etc. This is something you and your mentor should agree on at the outset.

**Is my mentor available any time day or night?**  
Your mentor's availability and the best times and methods of getting in touch with them are items to discuss during your first meetings. You and your mentor should share your communication styles and preferences to ensure you have the best communication possible and set expectations in that area of your relationship.

**Who can I go to if I have questions about the effectiveness of my mentor or the program?**  
Contact the Chair of the Mentoring Committee. The Chair will follow up periodically with both mentors and mentees to inquire how the relationship is progressing.

**Are there certain things that I should or shouldn't do as a mentee?**  
Always be open, honest, and respectful with your mentor, and the relationship and work you are doing together.

**If I lost my mentor's email address/phone number/mailing address, how can I obtain that information?**  
Contact the Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

**What if I'm not comfortable with my mentor?**  
Please tell us! The purpose of your first meeting is to see whether the two of you are compatible—the match won't be finalized until you have both approved it. Tell us frankly if things aren't working the way you had hoped. If you haven't talked directly with your mentor about the issues that are causing a disagreement, do so. Often it will be a question of miscommunication that can be cleared up through open conversation. If this does not resolve the issue the next step is to talk with the Chair of the Membership and Mentoring Committee.  
  
**If I have a complaint or a suggestion to improve the Mentoring Program, whom can I contact?**  
Your comments are very important to us and we appreciate all types of feedback. Please send questions and comments via email to either your mentor or the Chair of the Mentoring Committee.

What are the goals of the ArLA Mentoring Program?

**Goal #1**

For library students and new library professionals to work collaboratively with experienced library professionals to learn more about the ArLA organization, how it functions, and how to get more involved.

**Objective #1**  
The mentor will educate the mentee on how ArLA is organized and what the different committees do.

**Goal #2**

For experienced library professionals to provide guidance and leadership through modeling, networking, and fostering open communication with library students and new library professionals.

**Objective #2**  
The mentee will gain an understanding of the importance of volunteerism and being involved in a professional organization.

**Goal #3**  
For continuing generations of library workers to demonstrate leadership and excellence in the field.

**Objective #3**

Mentees will become involved in ArLA committees, the leadership of ArLA, and eventually become committee chairs and run for leadership offices.

Mentoring Committee **What is the role of the Mentoring Committee?**

* Recruit mentors.
* Develop criteria to match mentors and mentees.
* Evaluate the goals and objectives of mentors and mentees.
* Match mentors and mentees.
* Train new mentors.
* Write a brief guide designed to help new mentors and mentees understand the mentoring program.
* Design an application form requesting relevant information to match mentors and mentees.
* Provide an annual orientation for new mentors and mentees At the ArLA Conference.

**How will the Program be evaluated?**  
Each pair will define their own goals in a contract at the beginning of the mentoring year. The mentor and mentee will be responsible for evaluating their progress toward meeting the mentor's and mentee's goals and objectives. The Chair of the Mentoring Committee will provide support by checking in with the mentor and mentee and offering resources when needed. In addition, the Chair of the Mentoring Committee will ask the mentor and mentee to evaluate the program to see if it is successful, either after one year or the optional second year of the program.

Resources: Books, Articles, Websites

**Books**

1. Ambrose, Larry. Common Sense Mentoring. Chicago: Perrone-Ambrose, 2008.
2. Donovan, Georgie L and Miguel A Figueroa. Staff Development Strategies That Work! New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2009.
3. Lee, Marta K. Mentoring in the Library: Building for the Future. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011.
4. Mavrinac, Mary Ann and Kim Stymest. Pay it Forward: Mentoring New Information Professionals (ACRL Active Guide #4). Chicago: ACRL, 2013.
5. Maxwell, John C. Mentoring 101: What every leader needs to know. Nashville, Tenn: T. Nelson. 2008 and 2010.
6. Metz, Ruth F. Coaching in the Library: A Management Strategy for Achieving Excellence, Chicago: American Library Association, 2001 and 2011.
7. Shea, Gordon F. Making the Most of Being Mentored: How to Grow from a Mentoring Relationship.
8. Smallwood, Carole and Rebecca Tolley-Stokes. Mentoring in Librarianship: Essays on Working with Adults and Students to Further the Profession. Jefferson City, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., 2012.
9. Stoddard, David and Robert J. Tamasy. The Heart of Mentoring: Ten Proven Principles for Developing People to Their Fullest Potential. Colorado Springs, Colo: NavPress, 2003.
10. Stueart, Robert D. and Maureen Sullivan. Developing library leaders: a how-to-do-it manual for coaching, team building, and mentoring library staff. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2010.
11. Tucker, Cory and Reeta Sinha, editors. New Librarian, New Job: Practical Advice for Managing the Transition. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2006.
12. Zachary, Lois J. and Lory A. Fischler. The Mentee's Guide: making mentoring work for you. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

**Articles**

1. Fyn, A. (2013). Peer Group Mentoring Relationships and the Role of Narrative. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 39(4), 330-334.
2. Gallo, A. (2011, February 1). Demystifying Mentoring. Harvard Business Review, HBR Blog Network.
3. Lacy, M. & Copeland. A. (2013, Spring). The Role of Mentorship Programs in LIS Education and in Professional Development. Journal of Education for Library & Information Science, 54(1), 135-146.
4. Moore, A. A., Miller, M. J., Pitchford, V. J., & Ling, H. J. (2008). Mentoring in the Millennium: New Views, Climate, and Action. New Library World, 109(1/2), 75-86.
5. Neyer, L., & Yelinek, K. (2011, May). Beyond Boomer Meets NextGen: Examining Mentoring Practices among Pennsylvania Academic Librarians. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 37(3), 215-221.
6. Olivas, A., & Ma, R. (2009, Winter). Increasing Retention Rates in Minority Librarians through Mentoring. Electronic Journal of Academic & Special Librarianship, 10(3), 1-5.
7. Robbeloth, A., Eng, A., & Weiss, S. (2013, March). Disconnect Between Literature and Libraries: The Availability of Mentoring Programs for Academic Librarians. Endnotes, 4(1), 1-19.
8. Smith, J. How to Be A Great Mentor. Forbes, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/05/17/how-to-become-a-great-mentor>

**Websites**

1. Attributes of Effective Mentoring Relationships: Partner's Perspective <http://coachingandmentoring.com/mentsurvey.htm>
2. Coaching and Mentoring Network - Articles <http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/ResourceCentre/Articles/Default.asp>
3. Developing the Mentor/Protégé Relationship <http://www.ache.org/newclub/CAREER/MentorArticles/Developing.cfm>
4. Mentoring <http://www.sonic.net/~mfreeman/mentor/mentsupp.htm>
5. Mentoring Group <http://mentoringgroup.com/>
6. Partnership for Success: Learn how having a mentor can help you develop personally and professionally <http://www.ache.org/newclub/CAREER/MentorArticles/Partnership.cfm>