Each profession throughout the world has an ever-changing profession. For library professionals, the things that change the most are salary, where the job is, the type of organization that the work is done for, and how the person contributes to an organization. This paper will look at look at how much a professional starting out will most likely get paid; the output of an organization, and how the professional plays a part in that; and finally, this paper will discuss how a professional contributes to an organization.

 The setting I chose would an archivist at a public state university library. At this library I would most likely be responsible for maintaining the collection, building the collection, supervising staff, and allowing access to the collection. This library would be publically funded by the state but funding could also come from private donations. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics from the US Department of Labor, the mean wage for librarians in 2008 was “$54,700” (BLS, 2008). Also according to the BLS, mean hourly wage in 2008 was “$26.30” (BLS, 2008). However, this the national average meaning that it varies from city to city, county to county. The average wage for a library in at a college, university, or professional school, is, according to the BLS in 2008 was, “$58,450” (BLS, 2008).

However, archivists across the country make less than librarians. After talking with a local archivist, the going rate for his position which is non-tenure is $42,400 yearly pay. Another coworker of his is tenure and she is paid roughly $53,000 (M. O’English, personal communication, March 18, 2010). According to the BLS, the average pay of an archivist in the United States is “$48,222” and the average hourly pay is “$23.18” (BLS, 2008). At the university level, the average pay was “46,170” (BLS, 2008).

 In terms of benefits, most employers will provide fulltime employees went dental and medical, as well as, vision insurance. One woman I talked to said that her library in the Lansing, MI area pays for medical, dental, and life insurance. She says that “My library pays the vast majority of the premiums. I pay 10% of the yearly increase in premiums” (A. McKay, personal communication, March 18, 2010). Other benefits may include such things as tuition waivers (for the local archivist that I talked to a tuition waiver for Washington State University is up to six credit hours for a $5 flat rate during the school year). Other benefits may also include expanses for travel/continuing education. The continuing education/travel benefits is probably the most beneficial in terms of the state of both the economy and job market, not to mention that the field of archival work is changing rapidly. Other benefits may also include sick days, vacation time, and personal days. Less common benefits may be “paid study leave, subsidized mortgage, relocation costs, access to or provision of a maintained vehicle for travel between braches of the service, and bonus/awards for service or useful ideas” (Evans & Ward, 2007, p. 381).

The output of an organization depends on what the organization it is. An organization such as a private library there is not much output. However, for an organization such as a university library, the output me measured by many different things. Some of these things could be test scores, academic scholarships awarded to students, or funds given to the university by various organizations. At the university level however, test scores can be influenced by number of different factors. Therefore it would be hard to judge whether the library had anything to do with these test scores rising or falling. The same is true for grades. In the case of funding, the there are many places to look, a librarian just needs to know where to look. For example, there is a special page for Washington State University librarians as to where they can acquire funding. They list some places as “The office of Grant and Research and Development”, Internet sources, and several print sources that can be checked out of the library (Washington State University, 2010). Being able to raise funds is a standard part of many librarians careers and part of the output is the possibility that being able to raise enough funds to help the organization function.

Another possible output is to assess the number of circulations that a library has. While this varies from library to library and is based on the number of users, it can be looked by comparing average daily check outs and projecting that over both a monthly and yearly basis. As of now, Washington State University’s checkout statistics are not available at this time. However, University of Oregon, which is roughly the same size of school, had in 2006-2007, “198,105” (University of Oregon Libraries Assessment Team Report, 2008, p. 27). For this university, it was a decrease from the previous year (University of Oregon Libraries Assessment Team Report, 2008). Just as comparison, Neill Public Library, located in the same town as Washington State University, has “over 310,000” (Neill Public Library, 2010) transactions each year.

The professional plays the most important part in affecting the outlet in securing funding. This can mean writing grants and asking for donations. Grant writing, especially at universities is a part of a professional’s life. There are many different grants that are available for the university. At Washington State University there is even the “Office of Grant and Research Development” (WSU, 2010). By gaining funding and donations, these monies can go for anything that could help the organization whether that is more staff or different acquisitions.

Switching gears, it is now to discuss what the professional can contribute to the organization. As written above, the professional can bring in funds which can lead to different things. The professional, may have an area of knowledge of an area that is not is not part of the library, which can give the library a notoriety that it may have not had before. This in turn, can bring in more people to the library, more checkouts, and the need for more money. In hiring somebody with a specialization in an area means that you can offer that service to others as well. Many librarians specialize in more than one area, especially in an area that is rural. For a library like Washington State University, each subject is listed on a page, with a name of a librarian who you can contact for research and reference questions.

One of the main contributions that an archivist would contribute to a library would be the maintenance of the archival records. And not just maintenance but preservation as well. Many materials and items in an archive are quite fragile and can be unstable. So steps need to be taken to make sure that these items are kept in well condition and if necessary being able to be seen by people. Many archives are now digitizing their collections and many archivists nee dot both understand that process and embrace it. “Assuring that the integrity of object is reliably maintained is an important component of digital preservation” (OCLC, 2006).

Another contribution of an archivist is to help acquire materials for the collection. In most university libraries, the material in the collections comes from several places. One of these places is donations. This is the most common method. When people die, their written (and sometimes digital) collections of papers and the like. For example, Washington State University Archives holds the entire collection of Virginia and Leonard Woolf that was donated to them. Some of the books even have notes from both authors. Other archives do buy items for collections but most of them rely on estates and people to donate to them. “Many archival collections policies are determined by the mission, work, and needs of a parent company, organization, educational institution, or governmental agency” (Behrnd-Klodt, 2008, p. 40). Washington State University, because it is an state university, there are many items in its archival collection from the university such as masters and PhD thesises, commencement programs, and programs relating to its football program.

One last major contribution that archivists are protecting the collection in terms of copyright issues as well as from forgery. “The purpose and character of the use [fair use], including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purpose” (Warwick, 2002, p. 244). Being able to allow all users access to collection is a current issue in the professional of archivists. The idea of fair use comes into play. On the other side, an archivist needs to be able to protect the collection, the organization, and society in general from forgery of records. “Exposing forgery of records, particularly by protecting the integrity of recordkeeping system,” (Gracy II, 2002, p. 247).

 As a new masters in Library science graduate, it is important to understand how much on average someone is being paid, what type of benefits they are receiving, and it is even important to talk to someone who is already working in the field. This research and conversations can give a graduate a better understanding of what they are worth in terms of salary and benefits. It is also important to understand an organization’s output and how that output is measured. If it’s a public library, are more people who use the public library’s service, are they getting jobs because of it? If it’s a school library, are the test scores getting higher because there is a professional librarian in the library? And if it is an archival repository, are they keeping up with standards set by a parent organization and are they promoting the materials within? These are all different things to look at with researching an organization’s outputs. Finally, it is also important to understand what contributions the graduate will make to an organization. For an archivist, this includes knowing how to maintain and protect a collection, how to acquire more items for that collection, and how to give access to the right people.

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