

Where Will You Work? A Five-Year Statistical Analysis of AALL Job Placement Listings*

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Information from the AALL Job Placement Listings from October 2002 through October 2007 is analyzed to find out where the jobs are, who the employers are, and what kind of jobs are posted. In addition, the number of job listings are compared with population and numbers of attorneys per state.

Introduction

¶1 During a quest for professional advancement in the Pacific Northwest, the dearth of advertised positions in that region led to curiosity about the big picture on the location and types of jobs and employers for law librarians. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) web site provides such information for the library profession generally.¹ The web site lists numbers of librarians by industry, including elementary and secondary schools, local government, colleges, universities and professional schools, junior colleges, and other information services. The BLS web site provides numerous Excel spreadsheets showing detailed data on numbers of librarians employed by state, metropolitan, and nonmetropolitan areas.² No data was available specifically for law librarians. What was available, however, were the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Job Placement Hotline postings.

¶2 When data collection began, there were five years of position announcement postings, dating back to August 16, 2002, on the AALL Job Placement Hotline web site.³ During the course of gathering information, however, all of the postings except for the most current months were removed. Upon request, the webmasters replaced the data for a few weeks so that a five-year data set could be completed. Thus, the data collected in the course of this project has been preserved, and current job listings continue to be tracked and printed in order to preserve the record and allow for further analysis of employment trends.

¶3 Understanding trends relating to the growth of the profession, including location and types of jobs and employers, can help inform decisions for those

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1. U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2006, Librarians, <http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes254021.htm>.
2. U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Download Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_dl.htm (last visited Apr. 16, 2008).
3. AALL Job Hotline, <http://www.aallnet.org/hotline/hotline.asp> (last visited Apr. 16, 2008).

entering the profession, law librarians seeking career advancement, and employers seeking guidance on position descriptions and marketing strategies.

Fast Facts from the 2002–2007 AALL Job Placement Listings

¶4 If working at a reference desk in a city near sunny beaches or the Golden Gate Bridge appeals to you, there is a good chance you will find the job of your dreams. If, however, you long to work with government documents within driving distance of the Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, you may have a long wait. Those are just a couple of conclusions from an analysis of the AALL Job Placement Listings from 2002 to 2007. The conclusions stem from the numerous job listings in California and none in South Dakota over the five-year period. Other facts from the survey are as follows:

- 1148 job postings for the United States, District of Columbia, and Canada between October 29, 2002, and October 29, 2007.
- One posting each for five foreign countries; ten postings for Canada.
- 173: Highest number of postings—in California over five years.
- 0: Lowest number of postings—in South Dakota.
- Top three states/jurisdictions (California, New York, Washington, D.C.) represent more than one-third of total jobs.
- Ten states represent nearly two-thirds of jobs.
- Region with the most jobs is the South.
- Missouri, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin have the lowest ratio of jobs to population and attorneys.
- District of Columbia, Louisiana, and Nevada have the highest ratio of jobs to population and number of attorneys.
- Academic jobs are more than 59% of all jobs.
- Law firm jobs are approximately 24% of all jobs.
- More than half of all job announcements are in public services.
- Government documents is the individual job category with the lowest number of jobs.
- Director positions grew from 2002 through 2006 and dropped in 2007.

Data Set

¶5 Job listings from August 16, 2002, were available on the AALL Job Placement Listings web site. However, links from the listings did not connect consistently to the job descriptions until approximately October 28, 2002. In order to assure more accurate data and encompass a complete five-year data set, information was gathered from listings from October 29, 2002, to October 29, 2007.

¶6 Data was not captured from chapter web sites. Some chapter web sites did not list jobs, and none of the chapter web sites listing jobs covered more than seven

to eight months. Anecdotally, and from a quick perusal of chapter web sites, it appeared that academic positions tended to be posted to the AALL Job Placement Listings consistently, whereas law firm and local court library positions posted on chapter web sites were not always found on the AALL Job Placement Listings.

¶7 In addition, listservs were not included in job listing counts. Such an omission may exclude positions, particularly in the technical services area. Thus, the data does not represent complete job listing coverage for the past five years and is most likely over representative of public service, academic law library positions.

Duplicates

¶8 Every effort was made to eliminate duplicates of job listings. Listings that were reposted up to six months after the original posting were considered duplicative. Listings reposted more than six months after the original posting were not considered duplicative due to the possibility that the position had been filled and vacated within that time. Though such a situation was unlikely, the decision was made to err on the side of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness in order to obtain all possible data.

¶9 In some cases a determination could not be made as to whether a listing was duplicative or new. For instance, a position for Head of Electronic Services at University X could have gone unfilled and been retitled and reposted as Head of Emerging Technology even though the job description remained the same. Conversely, University X may have filled the Head of Electronic Services, then created a new position for a Head of Emerging Technology. In this example it would be very difficult to know whether the Head of Emerging Technology listing was duplicative or new. In these instances, as good a determination as possible was made based on the job description provided.

¶10 Table 1 provides the number of jobs per state for the five-year period from October 29, 2002, to October 29, 2007, organized from highest to lowest number of jobs listed. Table 2 provides the number of jobs per year. Table 3 provides the number of jobs by region, as defined by the 2007 AALL Salary Survey Geographic Regions described in the Introduction to Salary Survey Data.⁴

4. THE AALL BIENNIAL SALARY SURVEY & ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (2007) at 8, available at http://www.aallnet.org/members/pub_salary07.asp (online version available to AALL members only).

Table 1*Number of Job Listings by State*

State	Number of Jobs	State	Number of Jobs
California	173	Iowa	8
New York	125	Missouri	8
Washington, D.C.	100	Utah	7
Illinois	65	Arkansas	6
Florida	59	Nebraska	6
Texas	59	Kansas	5
North Carolina	48	Oklahoma	5
Massachusetts	41	West Virginia	5
Georgia	38	Oregon	4
Pennsylvania	38	Vermont	4
Ohio	29	Wisconsin	4
Virginia	29	Alaska	3
Michigan	25	Delaware	3
Louisiana	24	Hawaii	3
Maryland	21	Maine	3
New Jersey	19	Idaho	1
Arizona	18	Mississippi	1
Kentucky	17	Montana	1
Minnesota	17	New Hampshire	1
Tennessee	14	North Dakota	1
Connecticut	13	Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	13	Wyoming	1
Colorado	12	South Dakota	0
Indiana	12	Afghanistan	1
Alabama	11	Egypt	1
Nevada	11	Germany	1
Washington	11	Guam	1
Canada	10	Switzerland	1
New Mexico	10		
		TOTAL	1148

Table 2
Number of Job Listings by Year

Year	Number of Jobs
10/29/02–10/29/03	173
10/30/03–10/29/04	202
10/30/04–10/29/05	232
10/30/05–10/29/06	240
10/30/06–10/29/07	301
TOTAL	1148

Table 3
Number of Job Listings by Region

South		West		Northeast		Midwest	
Alabama	11	Alaska	3	Connecticut	13	Illinois	65
Delaware	3	Arizona	18	Maine	3	Indiana	12
D.C.	100	California	173	Massachusetts	41	Iowa	8
Florida	59	Colorado	12	New Hampshire	1	Kansas	5
Georgia	38	Hawaii	3	New Jersey	19	Michigan	25
Kentucky	17	Idaho	1	New York	125	Minnesota	17
Louisiana	24	Montana	1	Pennsylvania	38	Missouri	8
Maryland	21	Nevada	11	Rhode Island	1	Nebraska	6
Mississippi	1	N. Mexico	10	Vermont	4	N. Dakota	1
N. Carolina	48	Oregon	4			Ohio	29
Oklahoma	5	Utah	7			S. Dakota	0
S. Carolina	13	Washington	11			Wisconsin	4
Tennessee	14	Wyoming	1				
Texas	59						
Virginia	29						
W. Virginia	5						
TOTAL	453	TOTAL	255	TOTAL	245	TOTAL	180

Employer Institutions

¶11 The institutions for each listing were not provided on the AALL Job Placement Listing home page until June 22, 2007. To gather information about the type of employer institution before that date, each listing was accessed and evaluated. Though an effort was made to classify employers accurately, the information was not always available. This was particularly true if the job was posted by an agency or appeared to be for a nonprofit organization. Where an employer's institution could not be determined, it was listed as Other. Table 4 provides the number of jobs by type of employer.

Table 4

Number of Job Listings by Type of Employer

Type of Employer	Number of Jobs	Percentage of Total Jobs
Academic	682	59%
Law Firm	275	24%
County	38	3%
State	35	3%
Federal	52	4.50%
Publisher/Vendor	16	1.40%
Agency	9	0.80%
Foreign Country	15	1.30%
Corporation	12	1%
Other*	14	1%
<small>*Nonprofit organizations, nonlaw firms, unidentified</small>		
TOTAL	1148	

Job Categories

¶12 Each job was assigned to a category based on the AALL job titles used in the annual salary survey. In order to organize an unwieldy number of unique titles into the categories and thus present a broader picture of the job market, unique and infrequently used job descriptions were classed in larger categories. For instance, titles such as Content Specialist, Knowledge Manager, and Web Architect were assigned to the Electronic Services category. Additionally, frequent listings were grouped together so that titles such as Research Librarian, Reference Librarian, Law Librarian, and Librarian were assigned to Public Services. Jobs classed in Public Services include private sector positions even though they are not technically public.

¶13 Some categories were doubled up in order to reflect accurately the job descriptions. For instance, a Government Documents/Reference Librarian is designated as a G/P to represent both the Government Documents and Public Services categories. As in the case of employer institutions, an Other category was created to capture categories that were not listed on the survey. Table 5 provides a list of job types and the number of jobs for each type. Table 6 provides the number of director listings by year.

Table 5*Number of Job Listings by Category*

Job Categories	No. of Jobs
A: Associate Director/Branch Manager/Supervisor/Head/Administrator	71
A/E: A+ Electronic Services (see E)	7
A/E/P: A+E+Public Services (see P)	2
A/P: A+P	59
A/P/T: A+P+Technical Services (see T)	1
A/T: A+T	28
D: Director/Dean/Chief/Manager	130
E: Electronic Services: systems, computer, content specialist, digital, webmaster/ architect/design, KM, instructional/educational/technology design	46
E/P: E+P	40
E/T: E+T	5
F: Foreign, International, Comparative Law	21
G: Government documents, legislative information	6
G/P: G+P	1
G/T: G+T	2
O: Other: IT, account manager, publishing, conflicts, sales, project manager, package plan administrator, not identified	33
P: Public Services: education, training, teaching, instruction, access services, librarian, law librarian, rare books, information specialist, faculty services, circulation, ILL, reference, researcher	548
P/T: P+T	8
T: Technical Services: acquisitions, bibliographic services, collection development, serials, catalog, preservation, records	140
TOTAL	1148

Table 6*Number of Director Listings by Year*

Year	No. of Jobs
2002	5
2003	20
2004	22
2005	29
2006	31
2007	23
TOTAL	130

Ratio of Job Listings Compared to Population and Attorneys per State

¶14 The number of job listings per state over the five-year period was compared to the population and number of attorneys for each state. The job listings, population, and number of attorneys were each ranked in order, with the first position being the highest number of each. Because 2006 was the most current year for U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, the American Bar Association numbers for resident and active attorneys for 2006 were used for comparison.

¶15 Theoretically, the rank for the number of job listings per state should be analogous to the rank for population and number of attorneys. While no state had all three rankings exactly the same, many states had similar rankings of the three measurements. For example, California ranked first in population and number of job listings and second for number of attorneys. Another example is Montana, which ranked 44 in population, 45 in number of attorneys, and tied with six other states for rank 45 for number of job listings.

Table 7*State Rankings by Population, Number of Job Listings, and Number of Attorneys*

State	Population Rank*	Rank # Jobs	Rank # Attorneys**	No. of Attorneys**
California	1	1	2	141,030
Texas	2	5	3	69,762
New York	3	2	1	144,599
Florida	4	5	5	58,237
Illinois	5	4	4	61,130

*Estimate as of 7-1-06 ** Attorneys resident and active 2006

State	Population Rank*	Rank # Jobs	Rank # Attorneys**	No. of Attorneys**
Pennsylvania	6	9	7	45,415
Ohio	7	11	10	34,421
Michigan	8	13	11	31,432
Georgia	9	9	12	25,632
North Carolina	10	7	20	17,717
New Jersey	11	16	9	38,466
Virginia	12	11	15	21,391
Massachusetts	13	8	6	49,837
Washington	14	25	13	22,678
Indiana	15	23	24	13,069
Arizona	16	17	26	12,172
Tennessee	17	20	22	14,470
Missouri	18	30	14	21,688
Maryland	19	15	16	20,510
Wisconsin	20	38	23	14,354
Minnesota	21	18	17	20,177
Colorado	22	23	19	18,449
Alabama	23	25	25	12,625
South Carolina	24	21	30	8,823
Louisiana	25	14	21	16,955
Kentucky	26	18	28	11,336
Oregon	27	38	29	10,887
Oklahoma	28	35	27	12,002
Connecticut	29	21	18	18,578
Iowa	30	30	32	6,896
Mississippi	31	45	33	6,641
Arkansas	32	33	36	5,500
Kansas	33	35	31	7,666
Utah	34	32	34	6,041
Nevada	35	25	35	5,580
New Mexico	36	28	37	5,091
West Virginia	37	35	39	4,497
Nebraska	38	33	38	5,037
Idaho	39	45	44	3,166
Maine	40	41	42	3,512
New Hampshire	41	45	43	3,245

*Estimate as of 7-1-06 ** Attorneys resident and active 2006

State	Population Rank*	Rank # Jobs	Rank # Attorneys**	No. of Attorneys**
Hawaii	42	41	40	4,016
Rhode Island	43	45	41	3,951
Montana	44	45	45	2,706
Delaware	45	41	46	2,391
South Dakota	46	52	49	1,715
Alaska	47	41	47	2,318
North Dakota	48	45	52	1,368
Vermont	49	38	48	2,229
Washington, D.C.	50	3	8	43,445
Wyoming	51	45	50	1,473

*Estimate as of 7-1-06 ** Attorneys resident and active 2006

¶16 While many states had rankings within a few places of each measurement, seven states stood out as having a gap of ten places or more between the job listings and the other two measurements. A high ranking for number of jobs compared to population and attorney numbers may indicate turnover or creation of new jobs due to new schools, disaster, or increased business. Thus, the fact that Louisiana was one of the states in this category may have been due in part to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Table 8 shows the states in the high job listing compared to population and attorney category.

¶17 States with a lower number of job listings than population and attorney numbers may indicate low turnover or slow job growth. Table 9 shows the state rankings in this category.

Table 8

States with Highest Ranking Number of Job Listings Compared to Population and Number of Attorneys

State	Population Rank	Job Listings Rank	Attorney Rank
D.C.	50	3	8
Louisiana	25	14	21
Nevada	35	25	35

Table 9

*States with Lowest Ranking Number of Job Listings
Compared to Population and Number of Attorneys*

State	Population Rank	Job Listings Rank	Attorney Rank
Missouri	18	30	14
Oregon	27	38	29
Washington	14	25	13
Wisconsin	20	38	23

Conclusion

¶18 The AALL Job Placement Listings have grown by nearly 75% over the past five years. This growth does not include jobs posted on chapter web sites, listservs, and nonlaw-library-related web sites and listservs. Nearly 40% of jobs were in the South; approximately 22% of jobs were in the West and Northeast each; nearly 16% of jobs were in the Midwest. Removing the states representing the highest number of job listings from each region changes the mix considerably. While the South at 31% remains where the highest percentage of jobs are listed, the West without California is home to only 7% of job listings. The Northeast and Midwest are nearly tied for listings at 11% and 10%, respectively. Thus, best bets regionally for job hunters are in the South and California. Worst bets are in the West if one does not wish to live in California. By state or jurisdiction, two-thirds of jobs were represented by California, New York, Washington, D.C., Illinois, Florida, Texas, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.

¶19 While all job areas are represented, most job listings on the AALL Job Placement Listings are in academia (approximately 59%) and law firms (approximately 24%). As noted, the listings may be over-representative of academic positions. The listings were also over-representative of public service job listings (approximately 48%); however, technical services positions (approximately 12%) and director positions (approximately 11%) were the second and third largest categories, respectfully. Steady growth in director positions from 2002 through 2006 slacked off in 2007.