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CARLI Contact: Margaret Chambers
mchamber@uillinois.edu

CARLI Announces Recipients of Building Diversity Graduate Assistantships

The Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) is pleased to announce that Elizabeth Ayorinde and Victor Lopez are the recipients of the Building Diversity Graduate Assistantships for the 2023/2024 academic year. The assistantships will provide experience, mentoring, and networking to participants with the goal of increasing the number staff members from underrepresented groups at Illinois' two and four-year public and private college and university libraries.

CARLI's Building Diversity Assistantship Program (BDGAP) seeks to improve equity, diversity, and inclusion in Illinois academic libraries by supporting persons from traditionally underrepresented minority groups who are enrolled in the master's degree program in Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with positions at CARLI member libraries. The assistantships, being awarded for just the second time this year, provide a small stipend and tuition.

"I am more than grateful to have been chosen to participate in this program! This opportunity changes the trajectory of my professional career a multitude of ways, stated recipient Elizabeth Ayorinde. "I am so excited to work, with both of my host libraries, to foster my leadership skills and to gain valuable experience within a sector of academic librarianship that I am especially passionate about!"

Recipient Victor Lopez stated, "I felt so many emotions when I was selected for the CARLI Building Diversity assistantship. Being able to apply for this assistantship and be accepted has left me overjoyed and excited for the work that comes with this opportunity. I am grateful to have my journey in the MLIS program start with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience and develop a solid connection to the professionals in my field of study. I will work my hardest to uphold the expectations and goals of the CARLI BDGAP!"

Funding for the program for academic year 2023/2024 is provided by CARLI and the University of Illinois System. CARLI member libraries hosting graduate assistants for the 2023/2024 academic year are Columbia College Chicago, North Park University, Southern Illinois University College of Medicine, and the University of Illinois Springfield.

Matt Ostercamp, Director at North Park's Brandel Library, added "North Park is honored to be selected as a 2023/24 host of a BDGAP award winner. We are excited about the work that Victor will get to do with our students and happy to be able to contribute to the broader goal of a more representative community of academic librarians in Illinois."

Anne Craig, CARLI Senior Director noted "I am thrilled that CARLI and the University of Illinois System Office can support the second year of this program. We are incredibly grateful to the four member libraries hosting the graduate assistants beginning in the fall, and we are confident that these two exceptional students will value this opportunity for learning, growth, and exploration of the profession."

Ayorinde and Lopez were selected through an application process that included a description of how their underrepresented status influenced personal and academic development, an overview of their personal and professional goals, and a video interview with the search team comprising library directors from the host libraries and members of CARLI's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force.

For more information about the Building Diversity Graduate Assistantship Program, visit the CARLI web site at <https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/prof-devel/carli-building-diversity-graduate-assistantship-program>

About the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois

The Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) provides library services, resources, and support to 128 Illinois public universities, community colleges, private colleges and universities, and special libraries. CARLI empowers Illinois academic and research libraries to build and sustain an accessible, diverse, and responsive knowledge environment that promotes excellence and innovation in teaching, learning, and research. CARLI adds value for all member libraries by sharing costs, collections, expertise, programs, products, and services. CARLI is a unit of the University of Illinois System, <https://www.uillinois.edu/>.

For more information, visit <http://www.carli.illinois.edu>.