Welcome to our breakout session racial justice and racial libraries.

I am your host Kirsten Giotto. Zoom does have some limitation we have a live caption via Archie caption. I dropped the link in the chat follow that to another browser. If you need any technical assistance at any time, let us know see at chat feature. A portion of this session will be recorded today.

We will record the presentation but pause discussion so you can speak freely.

Let's see here. We will hit record now. And finally please adhere to the code of conduct. You can follow the URL for the full text of the code of conduct. Now it is time to introduce our speakers. Our speakers are Christine Wolff-Eisenbry manager of research at I ITHAKA. Trevor Dawes at May Morris at the university of Delaware and Curtis Kendrick. On be half of all of us at LYRASIS thank you for being here. Christine, Trevor and Curtis thank you for presenting. Feel free to unmute your lines and begin our session. Christine, I will stop sharing my screen.

>> Wonderful. Thanks, Kirsten. How does that look? As intended?

>> Looks good.

>> Cool, cool. Thanks, Kirsten for the really warm introduction. Curtis and I are glad to be speaking with you all -- [echo]

>> For those of you not speaking right now if you could go ahead and mute your lines, that might help with some of the echo. Thank you.

>> Thanks, Kirsten. So we are really glad to be speaking with you all today about libraries and leadership and justice introductions. We are hoping to keep the session fairly interactive. We will have questions for you. I hope that you will have some questions for us and we will some questions for Curtis and Trevor. This is our overview for today's session. First I am going to kick us off with framing. I will share high level findings from our library director survey that we have fielded in fall 2020. And then I will share a little bittanty-racism management audit to pilot this year. Then we will move into Q&A. First I will have some questions to ask Trevor and curtis then we will open it up to the audience Q&A.

So first -- and thanks, Kirsten for dropping a link into the chat. I will share a little bit about our library director survey at ITHAKA. As some of you might know this is a project that we fielded every 3 years to track the kinds of strategies and challenges and opportunities facing academic libraries in the United States.

Our tri annual cycle hit in fall 2019. By spring slash summer 2020 it was clear that we were going to need to field a special edition of this survey to capture changes brought about not only by the pandemic but movements for racial justice which will be really important to talk about during our discussion today.

I'm not going to get into all of the nitty-gritty information about the project's methodology. There is a whole report you can read about that, but just at a high level we fielded this September through October 2020. We were so fortunate to get a response rate of 43%. We heard from nearly half of the library directors at 4-year institution as cross the country.

We are really fortunate to have all of these responses aggregated into one place. As I said there is Ray whole report on the findings. Today I am going to hit on 3 key findings that I think are really relevant for setting up why an anti-racism talent management audit is so needed. Library directors more highly value leadership capacities to foster up conclusion that are they did. I will show you data to back up that claim. We asked library directors in fall 2020 which of the following knowledge, skills, abilities and competences have been most valuable for you in your current position.

They could select up to 3 of these. Here we are seeing the results over time from 2019 to 2020.

There are some significant movement going on across some of those items. What I really want to draw attention to is this fourth from the bottom item the ability to foster equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

We see that the most notable change over time happened within that time. The share of directors that indicated that that skill was highly important tripled between 2019 and 2020. And we see this both as a real -- a real recognition of the value of these skills but we also see this -- it's worth noting that it is still fourth from the bottom. It is one of these lesser or middle valued areas of competency.

We also see that library directors are less confident in their personnel strategies related equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility over time.

So here are a number of statements that we gave to our survey respond he is not and then we asked them how strongly they agreed or disagreed. These are the shares that strongly agreed with each statement. There are 2 things that I want to draw attention to with these statements. The first generally speaking is only about a third of library directors feel confident in a variety of personnel strategies, all of these statements relate to personnel strategies around some facet of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility and/or antiracism.

And the second thing that I want to draw attention to is related this last item here where the share of library directors that reported feeling confident in institution-wide policies for staff has gone down nearly 10% age points since 2019 between the 2019 and 2020 cycles. And the third and final key finding that I want to share today from this study was that most library directors did not expect that employees of color would be disproportionately affected by -- my screen is cutting off. By cuts due to COVID-19. However, job types with relatively greater percentages of employees of color were more impacted by recent furloughs and role eliminations. There is a lot packed into this that I will unpack.

We first ask library directors if they were concerned that COVID-19 budget cuts might disproportionately impact employees of color. Only 16% strongly agreed with that concern. They held that concern strongly. We also asked library directors where they made a variety of changes. Sometimes changes in their control, sometimes changes that were made in collaboration with others. Sometimes changes that were made by others entirely around furloughs hour reductions currently vacant positions and currently filled positions. These are the job types that tended to be relatively more impacted the ones at the top were most impacted. The one towards the bottom were relatively less impacted.

And then we -- I'm using we loosely here. The credit goes to my colleague Jennifer Frederick who led this analysis, analyzes the demographic composition of each of these job types from ARL institution that's we collected a couple of years ago.

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>> We tagged with an asterisk the categories where there is a greater than average of employees of color at least at ARL institutions.

It becomes pretty easy to see that the top most affected roles let's look at the top 5 most affected roles it includes 4 roles that are disproportionately people of color. It is pretty easy to see how the impact has been disproportionate a the ARL institutions and we could pretty easily draw the connection to other institution types overall.

So really taken altogether these key findings start to paint a picture of both an acknowledgment of how much more the field needs to be doing also a lack of awareness for how bad the last year -- these are long-standing issues as well, has been particularly for people of color.

And so with that, I want to put a question to the audience to everyone attending here and also Trevor and Curtis I would love to hear what if anything surprised you about these survey findings if something surprised you why, and if nothing surprised you why might that be.

>> You want a response now. I got one. It seems like prior to the past year, equity, diversity inclusion, accessibility issues were really not on the radar of very many library directors at all. They weren't paying attention to it in their libraries. They weren't paying attention to it at the institution level. When they did finally start paying attention at the institution level institutions are not doing a whole lot.

It is not that surprising about their views about how COVID might affect people disproportionately. It shouldn't have been a surprise to them because if you think about it, when something bad happens at a mass scale, when aren't BIPOC people affected in a negative way. That is just the way things happen. Why would you think otherwise for this or maybe they never think about it at all.

I guess not surprised, maybe disappointed.

>> Thanks, Curtis. Curtis, anything to add. Folks, just put in the chat things you are reflecting on.

>> I would simply echo what Curtis said. It wasn't terribly surprising that people of color in our spaces would be more disproportionately affected. I think we have seen this whenever we have seen an economic down turn as is the case that was resulting from the pandemic and many of our institutions.

So we talk a lot about, equity, inclusion access bit, our actions often don't seem to to support the language that we are using in our spaces.

So we do have have to be a lot more intentional about what we do that supports the claims that we make especially related our values that have.

>> Thank you both. I am not seeing -- I see one comment in the chat. Disappointed and frustrated but not surprised that DEI skills still rank so low as a priority for directors along with general management skills and competency. Leadership struggles to put others

shoes. There are some demographic that's we could pull up from the bank of survey respond he is not that would certainly support that. Someone is make a nye tie into the key note. I appreciate it. Thanks, everyone, for chiming in. Thank you, Curtis and Trevor. I am going to speak for another minute or two and be quiet for a little while so we can hear more from Trevor and Curtis.

I am going to queue up against the backdrop we have talked about recent research that honestly represents much longer standing issues. Against that backdrop that we have just discussed I want to share a little bit about the ant I racism talent management audit that we are launching this year.

It is an inventory of current practices and perspectives and outcomes. We are going to hit on many facets of the -- what is known as the talent life cycle. So from existing organizational structures to hiring to separation processes and we are doing so with a strong focus as I am sure you can tell from the title of this. With a strong focus on race and racial justice

We are going to be completing the steps that make up the audit in about 12 months or so. But the intention is really for many of those efforts to from there be ongoing. It is not like where you can check a box and it be done.

So over the next year there's a number of phases that we are going to work through together. By we I mean those of us in this session, but a number of others as well. So my colleague Jennifer Frederick who is leading them at Ithica. The university of Delaware and Nancy at binge I am ton we are regularly meeting over the course of this year to develop protocols for first examining demographics from human resource information systems. Currently we are working on conducting a climant survey with a special emphasis on race and justice and equity.

After that we will move into a phase where we will be interviews staff and consulting strategic plans on current practices and the ways values, the way that values have been operationallized. And then set goals for moving forward this last step feels so foundational to this work. I think Dr. Newkirk said it well earlier talking about actually intervening, holding managers accountable that's a lot of what we want to bake into here as well.

Our intention is to engage with staff with different methodologies. These issues are very complicated. We know that not just one of these steps alone is going to get us the insights that we immediate to ensure that change takes place.

I'll say for myself I expect to learn a lot in the next year doing this work at which point we may be able to think about partnering with additional institutions to work on a similar kind of set of actions.

With that I talked for far too long already. I want to move us into some Q&A with Trevor and Curtis. I have some questions for them. But please put your questions in the chat and we will get to them momentarily.

So first, Curtis, Trevor, why the audit? What prompted the need and the opportunity for antiracism audit and why now in particular?

>> I guess the why now has to do with really the combination of historical, social events now are creating an opportunity. I think that opportunity largely has to do with an

openness now for white people to hear the message that in order for there to be progress along the lines of racial justice, that white people really need to engage with the topic. People of color are often typically at the forfront of movements for racial justice. This is kind of ironic. For the necessary change to occur, the impetus for change rests with the white community. Maybe in this moment of where our society is, there is a window of opportunity where white people are open to hearing that message.

So that is in part why now. I think another message that I'm hopeful to hearing is that we've been struggling with the issues of lack of representation in the profession for a really long time. I remember going to my first diversity in higher ed meeting in the late 1980s. And the big topic at that conference was the pipeline problem. Here it is 2021, and we are still talking about the pipeline problem. So we're not really getting too far in terms of making progress. So I think another theme about why now, maybe it is time we look at what we have been trying and think about, is it really working? If not perhaps there is something else we can be trying.

>> thank you, Curtis. Trevor, anything to add?

>> Yeah, I don't think I have anything to add that. Curtis really covered that effectively. But I would amp fight really the fact that it is time to sees this opportunity as Curtis said there is a lot of conversation around social justice and anti-racism not just in the library profession or in higher education more broadly. So there does seem to be more openness to the kinds of actions that we're taking. So if we did not take advantage of this particular moment, then I think we would be doing ourselves a disservice from moving forward with really trying to create the kinds of organizations that we said we wanted to see for the last 30 plus years. But have only been making very increment if any changes at all.

>> Thank you both. Trevor, I will give this one to you first. So the next question that I have is why the focus on race instead of issues of equity, diversity and inclusion more broadly.

>> So we have been using the language of equity diversity and inclusion that really broad language for some time. When we use that language, I think we find that by become even more fashioned because equity diversity and inclusion means are we talking about race, are we talking about gender, are we talking about religion or disability status? We could go on and on with a rather long list of people that have been marginalized in some way or another in our library spaces or in other spaces as well. By focusing on race we are really focusing on all of those marginalized populations. I think you asked me to respond first because you heard me tell the story about the desegregation of pools, of public swimming polls in Alabama. At the time that the pools in Alabama were desegregated. Many of the white people in Alabama decided to close their pools. So not only were the public swimming pools not available to the black children who needed a place to have some recreation

particularly in the summer, but the white kids who also took advantage of those pools no longer had access to those resources either.

So by focusing on race, it may appear that we are focusing on a particular group a particular disenfranchised group. But we are actually looking at the benefits of all of the people that use our services, programs and spaces.

>> I think Trevor pretty well covered that. I would only add specifically in our conversations on race that we need to specifically have a conversation about whiteness in libraries. This is something that is never really interrogated much. It is almost like the cardinal rule the essential priority is never talk about the whiteness it will all be fine as long as we don't talk about it.

I think what we're finding is that the invisibility is part of the power. We really do need to actually be able to come forward and discuss that and have conversations about the locations of that.

So I'm not sure if we are there yet. But we need to get there.

>> Thank you both. So the next question is kind of a big one. What do you expect to achieve through the audit in the library, in your parent institution, in the field, potentially rippling outward beyond your institution? What are some of the outcomes that you will be looking to achieve?

>> Well, initially in our library we wanted to address systemic racism within a library. As a predominantly white institution we are fairly certain it is there. We hope we can recognize it when we see it. We would like to develop a baseline qualitative quantitative measure the degree that our library may qualify as antiracist. Then look to the future to tell if we are making progress towards become ago more anti-racist. How do we know if we are more anti-racist next year than we are this year?

As far as our institution, Binghamton is really starting to engage with some of these issues. We have established a truth and reconciliation commission which is taking testimony from stakeholders at the university, faculty, students and others, just to hear what their experiences have been regarding race at the university and then to come forward with recommendations for things that can change.

So I think the work in the library is part of a bigger trend at the university. We have also just hired recently a vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion. So that whole office has been elevated.

So there is work at the library in the university and expanding out. Since we have launched this initiative, we have had many, many expressions of interest in how can we get involved through our library. There are a lot of institutions clearly that are grappling with the same issues that we are.

I'm pretty certain that the results of the audit for Binghamton are going to be pretty bad. I don't think that we're an out lyer in that. You could audit others and get equally bad results. I think it is something that will give us a place to grow on in the future.

These are the things that we are hoping to get out of the audit.

>> Curtis, if you don't mind if I could ask you a follow up question. You mentioned about wanting to measure change or measure some baseline, get some baseline metric. Over time and what you might find at other institutions for their baseline data as well in that it might not be terribly positive. I wonder if you could reflect about the importance of doing benchmarking with this work versus trying to measure your own change within an organization as opposed to kind of looking to other peer institutions and benchmarking how well your results might align. I know the 3 of us have had a couple of conversations

about this tension.

>> I'm really concerned about the whole benchmarking situation. It is just a really overriding interest in data and being able to look at how we are doing relative to other institutions. This exists within the library community. In this case perhaps more importantly among senior administrators at universities who might not have the level of detail to understand all of what the numbers might mean. I am really concerned about there being these indexes. Binghamton is 19.7% in their libraries. Delaware is 24.7% diverse. Getting to these absurd comparisons. The benchmarking, let's fix some stuff before before we start comparing ourselves to other people. Let's get our own houses in order.

>> Thanks, Curtis. Trevor, what are you hoping to expect or expecting to achieve? Oh, my goodness.

>> Understood. I think much Mike Curtis, we want to make our organization both the library and museum and also the broader institution the university of Delaware, initially I will say more antirash racist. To say that we want to eliminate racism, sure, absolutely. I think we can at least start be being more antirash racist. At so many of our institutions are working through these conversations or actions at this moment. We do have the university of Delaware anti-racism initial initiative. We are looking at building names and co-policies and structural issues in our student services, in the student life cycle. Looking at graduation and retention rates across different populations and really focusing more on some of these issues that perhaps we weren't paying as much attention to even though we said we were prior to now.

So I think the social climate in the country in general has really enabled not just the work that we are doing in the library, to take place but I think it's really putting our institution and other institutions on notice that we are being more carefully scrutinized now around what we do relative to race relations and social justice on our campus.

I happen to be -- I took a day trip yesterday to Washington DC and I'm sure you have all seen photos of the black lives matter plaza just opposite the white house on black lives matter plaza with the sign and took a photo of the AFL-CIO building. They have a 2-sided banner a wrap around that says the AFL-CIO supports black lives matter. I took a photo and sent it to the library's communications photo. We could have a banner like this around the library. Yes, it is a banner, but it is symbolic.

It really does make a statement about the work that we're doing. Of course one of the thoughts that I had in my mind was there are a bunch of people whose windows are being blacked by that banner right now. Even more symbolic for the people -- they are probably not working in their offices right now. Even more symbolic those spaces are being blocked. Whether it is a symbolic action like that or the work we are doing in the library across the campus, I think we need to continue this work and those symbolic as well as real statements and actions.

>> Trevor you have hit on this a little bit what else is on the horizon other facets of your library that you are looking to. Curtis, Trevor, what else is on the horizon for you in fostering a more anti-racist organization? I know you have other initiatives right now.

>> We are starting with the talent management audit. We plan to look at other aspects of

the work that we do as well through this antiracism lens and although the work is not going to be sequential or linear, they can can happen dantum. We will look at how they support the occur I can limb and how they can support an anti-racist curriculum across the organization. We will be looking at our communication. So things like the banner for example as one form of communication.

What are the images that we use to represent ourselves on our websites, publications et cetera? How do we speak when we speak publicly and privately about the university of Delaware's library.

looking at everything we do and looking at it through the lens of anti-racism so we can be more anti-racist each day.

>> We plan to do some of the same things that Trevor just mentioned. I think I would add that we want to have a more intentional series of outreach initiatives to some of the student groups that are focused around ethnic identities. So the black student organization, Asian American organization and so forth, those kind of groups to get a sense from the students what it would take for them to feel like our library is their space. So we want them to feel like this is a place that kind of is their place or where they feel at home like they own the space in a sense. That would be something else that we are looking at getting involved in.

>> Well thank you both so much. I think we have got -- the amount of time that we intended to have for our audience Q&A which is always a good thing. We will move into audience Q&A now. I am going stop sharing my screen in a second just so I can access the chat a little bit more easily. If you do have any other questions after the session, I think I can speak for all of us when I say we would be happy to continue the conversation after the session I will leave our contact up here, contact information up here just as a stop sharing my screen.

>> As we open up into Q&A, just a note I am going to pause the recording for this part of the session. As a reminder we have until 1:05 here.

>> I did see a few questions in the chat as we were going through. Are academic libraries changing their recruiting practices as mentioned prior by reaching out to new networks.

>> I certainly can answer that for academic libraries in general. Certainly at the university of Delaware we have been at least for the time I have been there. But I think before been reaching out to different networks. So the library has become a life member of each of the ethnic a fill essence of the library affiliations that have life memberships. 4 out of the 5 do. For sum total of less than $2000 become life members of those 4 organizations which allows us at minimum to send messages to the Listservs.

Then we will also our personal networks and the personal networks is equally important perhaps more important in recruiting than posting messages to Listservs. Then you have somebody who is working in the organization who can talk about the climant the organizational climate, organizational culture what we have been doing and what we hope to a chief. So those networks make a difference. We are probably not doing that at the extent to which we should be in order to achieve the kinds of representational diversity that we want to see or we say we want to see in our spaces.

>> As far as looking to the future and changes, I think the biggest change so far that we are contemplating has to do with our professional staff as the librarian staff. When we recruit for librarians we recruit nationally, globally I guess. But when we recruit for professional staff that is done in the local area.

Binghamton is located in upstate New York which is very much a predominantly white area. Consequently we are pulling from a poll that is predominantly white. When we hire professional staff it is rare that we will have an opportunity to interview someone that is BIPOC. What are the implications if we extend recruitment for professional staff as well to a national base to draw a greater diversity.

So there are HR, cost implications and so forth. That is one of the direction that's we are looking at going into.

>> I guess I'll just add that I think there are plenty of institutions right now who are thinking about where to advertise and thinking about other strategies being really clear what minimum and desired requirements are for particular roles posting salary ranges more transparently, getting data on candidate pools to ensure sufficient levels of diversity at different steps, thinking about not just hiring but retention. There is a whole suite of category or a whole suite of strategy that's we might put in this bucket that are worth thinking about in addition to reaching out to other networks for advertising roles thinking about the selection criteria as well.

>> Thank you all. A related question that came in earlier around this is I would love to know how much of this work is being done in collaboration with MILS programs and work to recruit more people of color, students into these programs similar to the work that melon is doing to support a more diverse workforce in museums at the student internship level. If any can speak to that, that would be great.

>> So I think there is a lot of work that's already happening in terms of recruiting students of color to the profession. I'm not familiar with all of the programs, but certainly there is program. It was the initiative to recruit a diverse workforce. There is the spectrum program at ALA, knowledge river at the university of Arizona to name 3 with which I am familiar.

So there are programs that recruit students to library programs. The issue then is the recruitment to jobs and recruitment and retention to jobs. So some of the issues that we just talked about where are we recruiting? Christine also made reference to posting salaries and more organizational culture and minimum requirements for positions. So the pipeline issue that so many of us I think talk about when we say we cannot find people of color to field positions in our organizations I think is really more reflective of us not looking in the places where the people of color are. But these people do exist and they are certainly qualified for many of the positions that we have available. We just need to seek them out.