

3rd Quarterly Report January 2007

For the Period Covering September – December 2006

Introduction

Project activities in this quarterly report focused on disseminating information about the project during planned conference presentations and planning the creation of a custom HBCU digital collection interface. We conducted several activities related to starting a closeout procedure for the grant project. Requirements for a second Cornell University - HBCU Library Alliance grant project were developed and we began the development of a proposal to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a continuation of the project involving ten new HBCU partner institutions.

Emory University Robert W. Woodruff Library Sustaining Digital Libraries Symposium

On October 6th, Ira Revels, Janice Franklin, and Gail McClenney attended a symposium titled Sustaining Digital Libraries. The day-long event was sponsored by the Robert W. Woodruff Library at Emory University and about 40 library and information professionals and luminaries in the field attended. Nationally recognized leaders in the field of digital libraries discussed the potential impact of sustainability on digital library initiatives across the country. Throughout the presentations it became clear that no one had figured out the problem of sustainability and that no one was able to provide the perfect answer. Several presenters, however, laid out a series of issues and concerns that have arisen from their involvement with their projects. Several ideas resulted from Ms. Revels and Dr. Franklin's attendance at the event including institutionalizing goals for sustaining a digital library and partnering with various representatives in attendance at the symposium on future projects.

2nd Meeting of the HBCU Library Alliance

Ira Revels gave a presentation to attendees of the 2nd HBCU Library Alliance Membership Meeting held on October 29-31 in sunny Savannah, Georgia at the Marriott Riverwalk Hotel. The goal of the presentation was to inform meeting attendees about the purpose and status of the current training and digital image production initiative and to update meeting attendees about the new grant proposal.

Meeting participants raised several questions about the proposed project. Key among them were the requirements of participation and the role of the HBCU Library Alliance to provide guidance for handling requests from commercial businesses for access to HBCU archival images. Ms. Revels and Janice Franklin assured attendees that questions regarding requirements for participating in the next grant project would be addressed in a future call for participation in the project. Related to guidance on licensing issues, Loretta

Parham suggested to attendees that guidance could become an agenda item for the next digital project Advisory Committee to discuss.

During the meeting, several people expressed their interest in applying for participation in the next project. The meeting was also a great opportunity for Ms. Revels to learn more about HBCU library directors activities and interests related to digital projects. For instance, at least two library directors described similar efforts to digitize their cultural heritage materials involving a consortium of colleges and universities in their home states. They included HBCUs in North Carolina and Pennsylvania. Ira plans to follow-up with the library directors to learn more about those initiatives.

Joint Conference of Librarians of Color

A panel presentation of contributing partners was held at the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color on October 11-16, 2006. The five ethnic caucuses of the American Library Association held their first-ever joint conference at the Adams Mark Hotel in Dallas, Texas. The conference was attended by over 1,000 people.

The panel was a wonderful learning experience for everyone who participated and the audience members shared lots of questions. The panel presentation involved three project liaisons who spoke on behalf of their contributing partner institutions: Andrea Jackson, Curator of Manuscripts and Archives of the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center (RWL); Cedric Davis, Systems Coordinator of the Alabama State University Library (ASU); and Lucious Edwards, University Archivist at Virginia State University (VSU).

Each presenter described the types of materials they selected for digitization and why; the workflow processes they determined were necessary for preparing and scanning their materials; and finally, the challenges and successes they faced in managing the project overall. Andrea Jackson shared that because of RWLs mission to service Clark Atlanta University, Interdenominational Theological College, Morehouse College, and Spelman College; the RWL was in a unique position to scan and make available the archives of several distinct collections. Lucious Edwards described how Virginia State University had gone through several name changes over the years and that his interest was in demonstrating those changes through VSUs digitized collection. Finally, Cedric Davis described how important it was for ASU to establish a safe workflow practice that enabled collection materials to be safely removed and returned to the archives.

Customizing HBCU Digital Collection

Beginning in late November, Ira Revels and Lillian Lewis held a series of discussions with Alliance board members, Gail McClenney, and a web programmer about customizing the web templates in CONTENTdm for the HBCU digital collection. Ira drafted several designs for the home page of the collection and members of the Alliance board were invited to give her feedback on which design and design elements appealed most to them. Once the designs were narrowed down, one design was chosen.

Lillian, Gail, Chris, and Ira discussed the choice to use a test environment in which to develop the interface and customize the browse, advanced search, my favorites, and help templates in CONTENTdm. The group agreed to work towards developing a fully functional model by the end of March 2007 in advance of starting the new grant project on April 1.

A link to the test environment that displays the home page of the collection is online at: <<http://contentdm.auctr.edu/cdm4-template-test/index.html>> We made plans to send a memo to contributing partners describing our plans for customization, partner expectations for the enhancement of metadata in order to search the collection, the potential for server down time, and how partners can customize their own institutional collections.

Grant Administration

Two distinct activities took place during this quarter related to grant administration. First, Cornell University clarified the end date of the project and contributing partners were given until March 31 to complete project activities. Second, Cornell and the HBCU Library Alliance Board began preparing a grant proposal to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the continuation of the project involving ten new partners.

In November members of the Alliance Board of Directors were asked to describe their requirements and expectations of ten new participants in the continuation of the digitization initiative. Using this feedback, Ms. Revels drafted a list of partner administrative and technical recommendations. Lillian Lewis and Ira Revels drafted a letter to HBCU library deans and directors inviting their participation in the new grant project. Ms. Lewis forwarded the letter in an email correspondence to library deans and directors using the HBCU Library Alliance Deans and Directors electronic mailing list. The results of the call for participation will be reported in the next quarterly report. The grant proposal is due on February 15, 2007 and if funded, the new project will begin on April 1.

News

The November/December issue of CRISIS Magazine featured an article about the digitization initiative titled HBCUs Digitize Black Experience. The article is featured in the Up Front section of the magazine, which highlights important newsworthy activities within black higher education. On Thanksgiving, Ira Revels was interviewed on the radio program Out of Bounds with Tish Perlman. The interview was broadcast on WEOS (89.7 and 90.3 in Geneva, NY and 88.1 in Ithaca, NY). During the interview, Ms. Revels described the initiative and other activities in which she is involved.