

HBCU Library Alliance—Cornell University Library Digitization Initiative Update

2006

Facts about the Initiative:

- The goal of the Initiative is to train a cadre of HBCU librarians and archivists in collaborative digital collection building.
- Ten HBCU libraries have been selected for participation in this initial project.
- The collaborative partnership includes training, digitization and storage, collection management and access, and assessment.

Cornell University Library and HBCU Library Alliance awarded collaborative Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant to create digital library

Ithaca, NY—With a \$400,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Cornell University Library is partnering with the Historically Black College and Universities Library Alliance in a digital collections initiative that will lay the foundation for a future HBCU digital library.

In November, Cornell librarians led a training program in digital imaging techniques for archivists and librarians from ten historically black institutions. The Cornell staff is also helping them develop management strategies and policies for a collaborative digital library. In February HBCU participants, with the assistance of project manager Ira Revels, began implementing their training by digitizing a wide variety of records reflecting the history of HBCUs.

To put their new knowledge and skills into practice, the participants are digitizing a wide variety of records documenting the history of HBCUs and plans are underway to make them available on their own institutional Web sites.

The participating institutions are Alabama State University, Atlanta University Center, Bennett College for Women, Fisk University,

Grambling State University, Hampton University, Southern University, Tuskegee University, Tennessee State University, and Virginia State University. They were selected based upon a combination of institutional commitment to the project, the richness of their holdings that speak to the legacy of HBCUs, previous participation in the HBCU Archives Institute, and geographical and institutional diversity.

Cornell University Librarian Sarah E. Thomas commented: "This program enables the Cornell University Library to share its digital library experience with the HBCU Alliance librarians
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Sharon Hull Smith of Tennessee State University scans a photograph. Funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation provided each participating HBCU Library a scanner and computer workstation.

HBCU librarians learn how to digitize select holdings for research and scholarship

Atlanta, GA—Scholars and researchers will gain increased access to historically black college and university (HBCU) archival materials through the HBCU-CUL Digitization Initiative.

The 18-month project began with a training seminar on digital imaging held November 14-18, 2005 at the Georgia Archives in Morrow, Ga. In a series of hands-on labs utilizing \$70,000-worth of grant-funded equipment, the seminar included best practices, models of digital imaging, discussion of various hardware, software and copyright issues and how to protect digitized collections through policy development.

Sessions for the digital imaging workshop were based on the Cornell University Library's (CUL) award-winning tutorial *Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives* and were taught by CUL staff: Anne Kenney, Peter Hirtle and Ira Revels.

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Cornell University
Library



Clark Atlanta University • Interdenominational Theological Center • Morehouse College • Spelman College

Grant

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and to build on the foundation that Anne Kenney, Associate University Librarian, and others have laid in digital imaging and preservation workshops. We are pleased to have the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to extend the knowledge of best practices into the larger community.”

Loretta Parham, Chair of the HBCU Library Alliance Board of Directors, noted, “This grant and the partnerships fostered by it complement the purpose of the Alliance and, most importantly, build upon the strengths and legacies of HBCU institutions. It’s another step forward for all involved.”

The HBCU Library Alliance is a consortium that supports the collaboration of institutions dedicated to providing an array of resources designed to strengthen the libraries of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their constituents. The purpose of the HBCU Alliance is to ensure the excellence in HBCU Libraries and the development, coordination and promotion of programs and activities to enhance member libraries.

Cornell University Library has a long history of success in digital library development and in providing continuing education programs. With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the library has produced and made available in three languages a tutorial on digital imaging <www.library.cornell.edu/preservation/tutorial/>, and also offers workshops on digital preservation management <www.library.cornell.edu/iris/dpworkshop>.

Other partners in the project are the Southeastern Library Network and the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center. Both work with the Cornell University Library to provide administrative, staffing, and logistical support for the initiative.



HBCU librarians and project leaders at a November 2005 digital imaging workshop conducted by Cornell University Library staff at the Georgia State Archives in Morrow, Ga.

HBCU librarians

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Geri Ingram, Customer Service Specialist from DiMeMa, Inc., taught a full day on CONTENTdm digital collections management software, the content management solution that is being used by the HBCUs.

The HBCU Library Alliance and Cornell University Library Digitization Initiative, "Building Collections, Building Services, and Building Sustainability: A Collaborative Model for the HBCU Library Alliance" is a collaboration between Cornell University Library, The HBCU Library Alliance, SOLINET, and the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center.

Mark Your Calendars

Presentations during the 2006 ALA Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA

HBCUs and Libraries: Preserving and Strengthening Bonds

Sunday, June 25

1:30–3:30pm

Mark Morial Convention Center, Rm 356-357

Speakers: Brenda Billips Square, Director of Archives and Library, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University; Ira Revels, Cornell University Library; Emma Bradford Perry, Professor and Dean of Libraries, Southern University and A&M College; Janice Franklin, University Librarian, Alabama State University. Moderator, Thomas Weissinger, Afro-American Studies Bibliographer, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Panel Topic: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) require libraries which are effectively integrated into their institutions' teaching and learning missions. As a result of the work of the HBCU Library Alliance, these libraries find themselves at the center of collaborations involving traditional constituents as well as non-HBCU academic libraries. Our four panelists will discuss how bonds between HBCUs, traditional constituents, and other academic libraries are strengthening collection development, digital projects and services, and staff development programs.

Building Collections, Building Services, & Building Sustainability: A Collaborative Model for the HBCU Library Alliance

Monday, June 26

10:30–Noon

Lowes Hotel, Feliciana West Room

Speakers: Cedric Davis, Computer Systems Network Coordinator, Alabama State University; Cecilia Iwala, Assistant Professor & Systems Librarian, Grambling State University; Gail McClenney, Deputy Director, Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center; and Angela Proctor, Southern University and A&M College. Moderator: Ira Revels, Cornell University Library

Panel Topic: Historically black college and university (HBCU) librarians will share their experiences working on a collaborative digitization project with Cornell University Library. This first time panel discussion will focus on the training, the project goals, and progress on their individual campuses. Panelists will provide insight on the challenging task of balancing the cultural integrity of their collections, while providing shared access in the digital format.

2006 Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC), Adams Mark Hotel Dallas, TX October 12-15

Reflections on Building a Collaborative Model for the HBCU Library Alliance

Monday, October 14

2:00–3:30pm

Panel Topic: Panelists will reflect on their experience, discuss plans for a collaborative digital library, and answer questions. Attendees should gain knowledge about the issues involved in planning and implementing a collaborative digitization initiative at individual HBCU libraries.

Advisory Board

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Joan Williams, PhD
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Bennett College
for Women

Recent Accomplishments:

- In January, Gail McClenney and staff at the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center installed a server and CONTENTdm—a commercial digital library content management software.
- During its first meeting, the project Advisory Committee agreed to scan and make available online founding documents that speak to the cultural legacy of HBCUs.
- Beginning in February, HBCU librarians and archivists began hiring scanning technicians, producing digital archival images, and creating metadata.
- In April, project manager Ira Revels began conducting site visits with HBCU libraries. Thus far, she has visited Fisk University and Tennessee State University in Nashville, Tennessee; Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge and Grambling State University in Grambling, Louisiana.



Cecilia Iwala of Grambling State University scans a document for the Grambling "Black and Gold Collection" in CONTENTdm.

We're on the Web!

<http://www.hbculibraries.org/html/programs.html>

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