

HBCU LA Board Report  
HBCU LA – CUL Digital Initiative  
03-18-2011

### **Grant Administration**

CUL received a request from Elizabeth Gail McClenney at the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center to allocate funds from the grant for a video server to purchase a newer CONTENTdm server, which is over three years old now. Ira Revels has asked Gail to purchase the server as long as its cost does not exceed the budgeted amount for the video server. After reviewing the budget, the cost of the server Gail requested is below the amount in the budget.

CUL is requesting an amendment to the HBCU LA subcontract for the purpose of increasing funding in the HBCU LA subcontract and to extend the period of performance. Specifically, the HBCU LA will hire a Digital Connections Program Curator at 25% time. The first of several advances on the budgeted amount for this position was wired to the HBCU LA early in March.

### **Digital Service Center Meetings**

In January Ira Revels facilitated a meeting of the Dean of the Library and staff at Virginia State University. The purpose of the meeting was to lay the foundation for developing a digital service center at the Library. Cornell University Library staff: Liz Muller from the CUL Metadata Group and Danielle Mericle and Fiona Patrick who are project staffs participated in that meeting by phone and video. The results of the meeting are as follows:

- Development of a business prospectus, which outlines the goals, objectives, costs, and timeline for establishing the service center.
- VSU staff will reach out to Norfolk State University and Virginia Union University to assist their library staff with contributing to the digital collection once the metadata in the collection has been edited.
- VSU staff asked questions of CUL staff about metadata services for developing a digital service center.

The second meeting Ira held was in March with Loretta Parham and Elizabeth Gail McClenney. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a business prospectus for the Robert W. Woodruff Library's digitization services. Next steps are for Ira to draft a prospectus for the Library. Library staff will investigate digital image lifecycle costs to determine the overall costs of preserving digital images at the Library.

Related to establishing digital service centers all partners: Alabama State University, the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, and Virginia State University have been asked to do the following:

- Establish a recharge account for digital service center operations
- Communicate new service to constituents

- Make the case to your campus constituents

In addition several documents key to establishing the centers were shared with the library directors on the Teamwork Project Management website and over email. These are documents that Danielle and Fiona developed at Cornell University Library Digital Consultation and Production Service to manage the daily operations of the CUL campus service center. The files that have been shared are as follows:

1. Digital Connections Program Checklist
2. Digital Service Center Checklist
3. Internal Price Order Form
4. Project Estimate Template
5. Time Tracking Template
6. Sustainability Exercise 1&2
7. Establishing a Digital Service Center Planning Outline

### **Project Closeout Meetings**

In March a project closeout meeting was held at the Robert W. Woodruff Library in Atlanta. The purpose of the meeting was to check in with all project staff/team members, complete tasks, and lay the groundwork for the digital service centers and Digital Connections Program, which is scheduled to begin when the current project ends on June 26, 2011. Results from the meeting included:

- The development of policy documents for the Digital Connections Program
- Reports from Library directors on their progress establishing a digital service center
- Decision to have a final face-to-face meeting at Cornell in Ithaca in April.
- Shared a file: "Lifecycle of digital preservation processes and costs"

The day following the meeting, Ira held a separate meeting with Sandra Phoenix to discuss closeout procedures and answer Sandra's questions about the project moving forward.

### **New Partners**

Efforts to add new partner digital collections are ongoing, however, existing partners have slowed down on adding new images and metadata to the digital collection. This lull in activity will enable the HBCU LA to clean up the digital collection metadata and website for additional objects. The goal is to empower new partners to scan anywhere from 25-50 founding documents so that they are ready for upload to the digital collection once the HBCU LA is ready to begin accepting digital images again. Thus far, Ira has received feedback from the following Libraries that they are scanning images for the digital collection:

- Bowie State University
- Hinds Community College
- Langston University

### **Preserving Ancient African Manuscripts Conference**

On December 17-19, Ira Revels participated in the International Conference on Preserving Ancient Manuscripts in Africa. The Conference was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and hosted representatives from 45 different African countries. Revels delivered a paper titled, "Issues and Challenges in Building a Collaborative Black Digital Library" at a panel on "Sustainable Institutional and Financial Capacity Building" where participants explored ways to sustain efforts that utilize ancient knowledge. Results of strategy sessions, which followed the presentations, included calls for the following:

- More digitization training and support
- The need to highlight the historic context of African Women in the preservation of Ancient African manuscripts
- Calls for the restitution of Ancient African manuscripts

The conference ended with unanimous agreement among representatives who attended from the 45 African countries to develop AFRILIN – an African resources and information and learning network. The purpose of AFRILIN is to facilitate broader cooperation for preservation and digitization of Ancient African manuscripts at a pan-African level.

Ira's goal for participating in the Conference was to generate opportunities for the HBCU LA to collaborate with African curators on digital projects. She recommends a meeting to determine who are the potential collaborators.

### **Next Steps**

Danielle, Fiona, and Ira will schedule two 1-hour online trainings with Digital Committee members to address digital preservation and sustainability.

Ira, and Danielle, and Fiona will continue to draft policy and procedural documents for the digital service centers and the Digital Connections Program and share these with the Digital Committee. Thus far, a collection development policy, digital preservation policy, and memorandum of understanding between the service centers and the HBCU LA have been drafted.

Gail McClenney will purchase and install a new CONTENTdm server for HBCU LA digital collections.

Ira will continue to follow-up with new project partners and answer their questions about contributing digital collections.