Before Little Rock: Successful Arkansas School Integration

To celebrate the positive strides taken toward integration in Arkansas before 1957, the University of Arkansas Libraries hosted a series of three events in September collectively titled “Before Little Rock: Successful Arkansas School Integration.” The events focused on the successful integration of the UA Schools of Law and Medicine in 1948, the 1954 integration of Fayetteville and Charleston public schools (the first public school integration below the Mason-Dixon Line), and the 1955 integration of Hoxie public schools.

The first event, “Pioneering in the Professions: Integrating the University of Arkansas Schools of Law and Medicine,” recalled the integration of the Law and Medical Schools in 1948. Calvin Smith, retired professor of history at Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, moderated a panel comprised of George W. B. Haley and Christopher C. Mercer, two of the six African-American “pioneers” who attended the UA School of Law, and Edith Irby Jones, the first African-American to be admitted to the UA School of Medicine in Little Rock in 1948. The Libraries partnered with the UA School of Law for the event, which was held in the UA Law School Courtroom.

The second event, “‘Right in the Sight of God’: Integrating Hoxie & Charleston Public Schools,” introduced the integration events of Charleston and Hoxie schools, and consisted of a screening of the documentary films Hoxie: The First Stand (PBS Documentary, 2003) and Doing What Was Right (TeleVision for Arkansas, 2004). A question and answer session followed the screenings. Gerald Jordan, UA associate professor of journalism, introduced the films in Giffels Auditorium in Old Main.

The third event, “Quick and Quiet: Integrating the Fayetteville Public Schools,” commemorated the integration of Fayetteville High School in 1954. Historian Andrew Brill led a panel of seven participants in the Fayetteville integration: Feriba McNair, a Fayetteville High School physical education teacher in 1954 and later a member of the Fayetteville School Board; Harry Vandergriff, the Fayetteville High School football coach in 1954 and later principal and school administrator; Peggy Taylor Lewis, one of seven African-American students to integrate in 1954 and one of two to graduate in 1956 (the first graduates from a formerly segregated school in the entire South); Roberta Lackey Morgan, another of the seven African-American students to integrate; Nancy Cole Mays, Glenn Sowder, and Springdale mayor Jerry Van Hoose, members of the first integrated class. Fayetteville mayor Dan Coody led off the event by praising the honorees for their courage. The event was held in the Fayetteville High School Auditorium.
The Libraries have named Tony Stankus as the new Life Sciences Librarian. Stankus is widely recognized in the library field as an outstanding science reference librarian.

A native of Worcester, Massachusetts, Stankus grew up poor in foster homes. The nuns at the parochial schools Stankus attended recognized his intelligence and encouraged him to excel. He won acceptance to the College of the Holy Cross in his hometown, arriving with all his possessions in cardboard boxes.

Stankus flourished at Holy Cross where he majored in languages, graduating with summa cum laude honors in 1973. He immediately entered the Graduate School of Library & Information Studies at the University of Rhode Island, earning a graduate library degree. Stankus returned to Holy Cross to take his first job as a science librarian. He stayed at Holy Cross for the next thirty-four years—building a reputation as an extraordinary librarian.

The author or editor of ten books and more than 100 articles, Stankus has been one of the most published librarians in the nation. He has written scores of articles for various scholarly library journals, including *Information Outlook, Reference and User Services Quarterly, The Serials Librarian*, and he is the most published author in the key journal in his field, *Science & Technology Libraries*.

With such a productive record, it is not surprising that Stankus has received a number of distinguished awards and honors. In 2005 he was honored as North America’s best mentoring librarian by the Special Libraries Association (SLA) at its annual convention in Toronto. In addition, the Rhode Island Chapter of the SLA named him the “Special Librarian of 2007.” Last year the SLA selected Stankus for a special member profile, which concluded: “He has helped to shape the future...by being a living example of everything an information professional should be.”

In addition to his heavy work load at Holy Cross, Stankus served as adjunct professor at the University of Rhode Island library school. He now holds the distinction of being the longest serving faculty member at that school, with a record of twenty-five years.

Stankus is excited about the University of Arkansas and Fayetteville. Though he has spent his entire life in New England, he and his wife, Christine Soutter, are adjusting well to their new home. “I feel like I got selected for the All-Star team,” Stankus recently said, “and am so thrilled I want to collect all their autographs—even if that is surely the sign of being ‘the new kid.’”

The Libraries were fortunate to hire Megan Perez in November as the first participant in a newly established Residency Program. The Program is designed not only to support the University’s and Libraries’ goal of achieving a more diverse faculty, but to offer young librarians—fresh from graduate school—a two- or three-year jumpstart that will give them a competitive advantage in the search for future professional positions.

Megan Perez is a recent graduate from the library school at the University of North Carolina. Although new to the profession, he already has some impressive accomplishments under his belt within the library field. For example, he was president of the library Student Association and a Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) intern while at the University of North Carolina. He coordinated a series of professional development workshops at the UNC library, represented student interests at faculty meetings, coordinated a mentor program for incoming students, and oversaw a volunteer staff of seven library graduate students. He was a member of a UNC library Diversity Task Force and coordinated translation of library information Web pages into Spanish and Chinese. He also won numerous honors and awards as a student and had previous library experience at Duke University, Cornell University, and Boston College. While here in the Libraries, he will have special concentration in human resources and diversity.

“Someone once told me,” Megan remarked, “always to go where there are good people. Thus far, the faculty and staff of the Libraries have been exactly that: warm, welcoming, talented, and hospitable people. I’m very fortunate to be here, and I am looking forward to working with them.”
The Special Collections Department recently opened the papers of the Arkansas Chapter of the Partners of the Americas (POA), a private sector volunteer organization that promotes economic and social development throughout the Western Hemisphere. POA–Arkansas generously donated these papers covering its activities from 1973 to 2002, along with funds to pay for their processing.

POA was inspired by President John F. Kennedy, who in 1963 launched the Alliance of Progress, a program of government-to-government economic cooperation across the western hemisphere. At the time, Kennedy called for a “people-to-people alliance” that would complement the Alliance of Progress, enabling private citizens to work together for the good of the Americas. The POA was established in 1964 by Foreign Service officer Jim Boren in response to President John F. Kennedy’s vision. Initially founded as part of the United States Agency for International Development, it soon shifted to the private sector and began working to unite volunteers in the U.S. with their counterparts in countries or regions of Latin America.

Russell H. Matson, Jr., a moderate member of the Little Rock school board during the Central High crisis in 1957-1959, founded the Arkansas POA chapter in 1965. With membership initially concentrated in Central Arkansas, POA–Arkansas partnered with concerned people in East Bolivia, emphasizing medical aid. In recent years its membership has increased in Northwest Arkansas, and the Arkansas chapter has been active in democratic initiatives, social and cultural programs, special education, a new sports initiative, as well as community health initiatives and radio communications.

The collection includes: correspondence and records of the organization; information on various projects of the Arkansas chapter and on Arkansas and Bolivian volunteers; materials from state, national, and international POA conventions; and periodicals put out by the national organization. Letters from President Bill Clinton, both as president of the United States and governor of Arkansas, are included in the collection. Photographs and slides feature Bolivian scenery and pictures of members at various events.

Significant portions of the collection are in Spanish, the official language of Bolivia, and one manuscript even contains a Spanish-language dictionary of the Quichuas, the largest indigenous tribe in the Amazons. Children’s drawings collected through an exchange program between Our Lady of the Holy Souls School in Little Rock with Colegia Santa Ana in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, add a colorful splash of whimsy to the collection.

D. W.
New Chemistry & Biochemistry Library Open House

A major improvement this year was the remodeling/renovation of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Library. More computers, seating, and public services are now available to faculty and students in the Chemistry and Biochemistry building. Because the building is on the National Register of Historic Places, renovations involved restoring the appearance of the original WPA-era building, including wood trim and terrazzo flooring, which add to the beauty of the facility.

The Chemistry and Biochemistry Library is staffed by Luti Salisbury, University Professor/Librarian and head of the library, (lsalisbu@uark.edu), Jeremy Smith, Library Academic Technician III, and Josef Laincz, Graduate Assistant.

Among the facilities and services offered are a collection of 15,500 volumes, study areas, computer access to online databases, reference services, general orientation, instruction aligned to the curriculum and information literacy instruction, and individual research consultations.

The Libraries hosted an open house on August 28 to give students and faculty the opportunity to tour the new facility, learn about the new services and equipment, and to meet the new staff.

Special Collections Celebrates a Happy 40th Anniversary

The Special Collections Department hosted two workshops and an open house during American Archives Month in October. The Department was also celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Archives Month is celebrated annually nationwide to promote public awareness of the value of historical records and the importance of the archival profession in preserving artifacts of our national heritage.

Two family history workshops were presented on October 20 at the Fayetteville Public Library by faculty and staff of Special Collections. Tom Dillard, Andrea Cantrell, and Tim Nutt presented training sessions to workshop attendees on the natural enemies of historic documents and photos, such as sunlight, water, and insects, and described the archivist’s basic tools to combat those enemies, including acid-free containers and non-metal fasteners. The afternoon workshop presented by Tom Dillard, Felicia Thomas, Harriet Jansma, and James Defibaugh described the process of planning and conducting an oral history interview, basic tools and equipment used for an interview, and the use of oral histories as a family history resource.

A 40th anniversary open house was held on October 25 in Special Collections. A reception was followed by reminiscences from individuals who had worked in the Special Collections Department during its early years, including Ethel Simpson, Ellen Compton, and Bob Besom. The open house concluded with an Arkansas trivia contest based on the popular TV game show “Jeopardy.”

In attendance at the Open House are left to right: Ryan Thurman, graduate student, Luti Salisbury, head of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Library, Frank Millet, Alberta Bailey, the Libraries’ director for Public Services, Bill Durham, chair of the Chemistry Department, Charles Wilkins, and Neil Allison, vice-chair of the Chemistry Department.

The first panel of contestants in the Arkansas Jeopardy game were Jane Gearhart, Angela Hand, and Blake Wintory. Moderator was Tom Dillard, technical advisor was Tim Nutt, and time keeper was Scott Lunsford.

Tom Dillard conducts a workshop on preservation of family history documents at the Fayetteville Public Library. Attendees were each given their own acid-free archival box for preservation of documents and photos. Photo by Tim Nutt.
No Two Alike: Art Exhibits Feature Many Artists

Mullins Library displayed a pleasing variety of art and handiworks throughout the summer and fall from groups of artists and a documentary photographer.

In the summer, faculty and staff of the Libraries collaborated on a delightful exhibit of hand-made arts and crafts ranging from paintings to photographs, from chainmail to long stitch, from pottery to jewelry. Eighteen individuals contributed fifty-three pieces to the exhibit, which displayed the remarkable range of talents, skills, and interests of the University of Arkansas Libraries’ staff and faculty.

At the beginning of the fall semester, an exhibit featured a selection of works by world-class artists from the private collection of Tim and Connie Kral. “Flights of the Imagination” consisted of serigraphs, lithographs, and paintings in watercolor and oil by European artists Henri Matisse, Salvador Dali, Joan Miro, Alvar Sunol Munoz-Ramos, Anatole Krasnyansky, Michel Delacroix, and Patricia Govezensky, along with American artists Jane Wooster Scott, Jim Buckels, Vincent Fleming, and Gary Delamatre. The pieces exhibited a wide range of styles, from modernism to fantasy art.

The Libraries joined with the Honors Film Studies Association (HFSA) and the University of Arkansas Native American Symposium for a student-led project and exhibit in the late fall. Students from the HFSA selected twenty images from Edward S. Curtis’s *The North American Indian* housed in the rare books collection in Special Collections. The Libraries then digitized and reproduced those images for an exhibit in November in celebration of American Indian Heritage Month. The Symposium held its opening ceremony in Mullins Library on November 6 that concluded with a tour of the art exhibit and the Special Collections Department, including a peek at the Curtis volumes and portfolios.
Strategic Planning for the Next Three Years

In late May, library department heads, faculty, members of the Librarians’ Program Steering Committee, and selected staff packed their bags and headed south through the Arkansas hills to the beautiful setting of the Rockefeller Conference Center at Petit Jean Mountain, Arkansas. But besides enjoying the pastoral surroundings, these sixty library employees knew they had a job to do. The goal of the retreat was to give library personnel the chance to review progress, identify contemporary trends in libraries, discuss the current teaching and research needs of students and faculty, and look for ways to “recreate” the Libraries within the next three to five years.

After discussion and brainstorming, the attendees crafted a new mission statement and recommended new strategic goals and objectives. Since then, the Libraries’ dean, directors, and Program Steering Committee have been working to refine the goals and objectives and to assign the right personnel to the various tasks needed to make the goals a reality.

Responses of those who attended the retreat were very positive; everyone seemed to appreciate the opportunity to put forth their useful ideas, get to know their colleagues better, and to have a little fun away from “home,” to boot.

Since the retreat, the Libraries have established a clear set of strategic goals through 2010, which include plans to expand and renovate the main library building, to develop an assessment plan for collections and services, to design a cohesive instructional plan, to create a marketing plan, to increase the Libraries’ endowment, and to develop an employee recruitment and retention plan.

My America Project

The University Libraries joined the Office of Student Affairs to promote the first annual My America Project: Exploring Southern Music and Culture. The Project, targeted to University of Arkansas students, seeks to integrate the presentation of artists at the Walton Arts Center with the educational and social environments of students. The goals for the UA are to promote the Walton Arts Center as a performing arts destination for students, to provide opportunities for students to learn about Southern music and culture, and to involve campus constituencies in the planning and coordination of My America activities at the University.

The theme for this year’s My America Project was American blues music and culture. Blues performers appearing at the Walton Arts Center included Solid Blues, Gloryland with Anonymous 4, Cherryholmes, and Guy Davis. On-campus activities included lectures on blues music by faculty, interviews with and features of musicians on KXUA, UATV, and the Traveler, blues performances, readings on Southern culture, displays in the Anne Kittrell Gallery in the Arkansas Student Union on Southern music and culture, and a Resident’s Interhall Congress Blues and Barbecue event.

In October, Special Collections mounted an exhibit in the Helen Walton Reading Room featuring selected original materials about the blues in Arkansas. Items exhibited included photos of the King Biscuit Time radio show performers and other blues artists, sheet music from the Mary Hudgins Arkansas Music Collection (MC 534), class reports by students on blues topics from the Mary Parler Collection (MC 1501), and examples of blues CDs, LPs, and a video from the Libraries’ Performing Arts & Media collections.

In January and February of 2008, an exhibit by Memphis artist George Hunt, who creates the artwork used to promote the popular Memphis in May festival each year, will further expand students’ exposure to art that springs from or complements the blues. Hunt will make two appearances in Mullins Library on Friday, February 8, conducting walk-throughs of his exhibit to discuss his art with students and interested patrons.
New & Cool High-Tech Novelties

Students can now use an array of new hi-tech features that give them easy and portable access to information that will make their research more informed and more convenient. For example, a series of brief audio/visual tutorials is now available for students and faculty to view through the Libraries’ home page under “Guides and Tutorials.” Subjects covered include ways to search the online catalog, requesting interlibrary loan materials, how to distinguish between a scholarly journal and a popular magazine, and how to use the FindIt! feature within a research database, which helps students and faculty find the full text of articles for which they are searching.

A novelty feature recently added to InfoLinks, the online catalog, is a little button within each record that students and faculty can click on to send the record to their cell phones via a text message. The information sent via text includes the location and call number of the item, so they can have that information at their fingertips when the time comes to look for a book, video, or CD on the shelves.

Yet another recently added novelty is the widget function in Google that gives students and faculty the ability to add an InfoLinks search box to the toolbar on their Internet browser. This enables them to search the online catalog directly from any Web page they visit instead of having to navigate to the Libraries’ Web site to search.

Head of Automated Systems Deployed to Iraq

George Fowler, head of Automated Systems at the Libraries, is also a 1st Lieutenant with the 1123rd Transportation Company based in Little Rock and was called to active duty on October 1, 2007. The 1123rd company is attached to the 39th Infantry Brigade that is mobilizing to deploy 3,200 soldiers to Iraq in early 2008.

Fowler is currently serving as a platoon leader in charge of thirty-eight soldiers. The company will leave Little Rock around the 4th of January for Camp Shelby, Mississippi, where they will train for two to three months. Then they will be deployed in Taji, Iraq, where the 1123rd Transportation Company will perform “force protection” for troops deployed in the area.

The company’s return to the United States is currently scheduled for January 2009. Fowler will return to work at the Libraries at the completion of his tour of duty.

China Focus of Gift Collection

Thanks to the generosity of Samuel Kupper, a former resident of Fayetteville, the Libraries received a gift of more than one thousand volumes on Chinese history, politics, and current affairs. This collection includes both English and Chinese language materials—many of which are rare. Kupper is an associate professor emeritus of Chinese history from California State University, Fullerton, and is currently working as a legal counsel and as a consultant in international trade.

Paperback Book Exchange

The Paperback Book Exchange, a program designed to promote pleasure reading through the recycling of paperback books, has been a big hit. Available books can be browsed by anyone in the West Entry vestibule of Mullins Library. All books in the program are registered with BookCrossing.com, a Web site dedicated to the free circulation of books throughout the world. Bookplates and bookmarks were designed to notify readers of participation in the program and to encourage their participation.

The Libraries adopted the Paperback Book Exchange as a customer-friendly method of distributing donated paperback books that are duplicate copies or that cannot be accepted into the collections for other reasons. In the first six months of the program, over five hundred books were distributed.
Special Collections Screens 1960 Little Rock Film

The University Libraries hosted a screening of the 1960 promotional film on Little Rock entitled *Take A Giant Step* on November 13 at the Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock.

The history of the film began when the Greater Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs decided to take advantage of a program sponsored by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation of Atlanta. The Foundation’s Home and Neighborhood Development Sponsors (HANDS) offered $500 for local clubs to encourage citizen participation in community beautification. President Nell Ritchie and vice-president Billye Stockton of the Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs jumped at the chance to create a better public perception of Little Rock, both at home and throughout the region. In 1960 Little Rock was recuperating from the negative national publicity associated with the 1957 Central High School Integration Crisis.

Stockton, who was named the chairman of the local HANDS, was encouraged by W.C. Greenway, director of the national HANDS, to do “something more creative” than “little planting projects.” Stockton believed that educating the citizens of Little Rock about the need for community improvement was a necessary first step. She was inspired to create a short documentary film for that purpose while on a bus tour of downtown Little Rock sponsored by the city director for Urban Progress. She collaborated with Irving Skipper of Videotone, Inc., a local movie producer; Jason Rouby, the director of Urban Progress for the city of Little Rock; and John Pounders, program director for Channel 11, the CBS affiliate in Little Rock, to create the film.

To create interest in and support for the project, Stockton appointed chairmen to head up contests throughout the city—in schools, churches, businesses and homes—including beautification contests, litter-bug programs, and a “Clean-up, Paint-Up, Fix-Up” campaign in conjunction with the City Beautiful Commission. She then scripted a twenty-minute film featuring the results of these and other programs focusing on community development and urban progress.

The film was shown not only in Little Rock, but in other areas of the country as well, including a regional garden club meeting in New Orleans attended by James Worthy, president of the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, who praised the film.

Useful in 1960 as a positive film to promote a city with a stained national character due to the Central High Integration Crisis, Stockton’s film *Take a Giant Step* is a valuable glimpse into post-crises Little Rock as it boldly pushed forward, hoping to create a better future for its citizens.

Stockton donated the reel of film to the archives in Special Collections, which in turn digitized the original film and presented copies on DVD to the Little Rock area libraries for their collections.

The film screening was attended by approximately 150 persons, including the Honorable Mark Stodola, mayor of Little Rock.

GIS Day Open House Held in New J. B. Hunt Center

The University Libraries and the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (CAST) hosted an open house to recognize Geographic Information Systems Day on November 14. GIS Day is an international event designed to showcase real-world applications of GIS technology. The open house took place on the second floor atrium area of the J.B. Hunt Transport Services Inc. Center for Academic Excellence.

Presenters from throughout the state demonstrated information and techniques designed to improve the use of GIS technology, including mapping with the Airborne Camera System, the generation of high resolution digital elevation models (DEMs) from field-gathered total station data, dental topography in the genus pan, and the extension of a natural language interface with geospatial queries. Presenters also gave an overview of the Arkansas Watershed Information System and GIS in fieldwork on the island of Dominica.

Presenters demonstrated local GIS services and technologies, including the city of Fayetteville Geographic Information Systems and Interactive Maps, the Arkansas GeoStor, and Picture Arkansas.

Attendees browsed poster presentations in the atrium providing examples of real-world projects, such as GIS in Arkansas Archeological Survey projects, the Ozarks Rivers Program, CORONA satellite imagery in Middle Eastern archeology, and the ground water Potentiometric surface project.

Andrew Ashlock (REU student, Geosciences) with his presentation: “Visualizing Dominica: Creating a 3-D Model” at the GIS Day Open House.
A Note of Thanks!

Students, teachers, and libraries are not alone in advancing learning and knowledge at the University of Arkansas. The role of our donors is crucial. Their contributions have made a significant impact in improving our collections and services. The University Libraries gratefully list below the names of generous donors who have donated gifts during fiscal year July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2007.

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