

Review

A Decade of Achievement, a Call to Excellence: The History and Contributions of the HBCU Library Alliance

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Many contemporary philosophers, educators, academics, and other thinkers have begun speculating upon possible consequences of the “digital divide,” the term used to denote the division between people who have consistent access to technology and those who do not. As technology continues to transform the way we live our contemporary existences, we must also stop and think about how it can affect our relationships with the past. Artifacts and documents that tell important stories about our histories can be lost forever without due diligence in properly preserving these items. Libraries play weighty roles as preservers of relics from the past and providers of information literacy training. Yet, despite playing these essential roles in America today, many libraries are threatened as state and federal governments have decreased financial support and slashed budgets for purchasing books, computers, and other resources. The libraries associated with the United States’ 105 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have been especially hard-hit in these areas for a number of reasons. Increasing numbers of African American students opt to attend predominantly or traditionally white institutions with the opening up of new educational opportunities; many students also find it difficult to afford the tuition costs to attend private HBCUs and instead must select less expensive colleges or opt not to attend college at all.

Key Words: Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs); HBCU libraries; African Americans; colleges; universities; preservation; digitization; photographic preservation; training; librarians; students; faculty; information literacy

The library is a pathway—enhancing, extending, and supporting the academic life of an institution. It is a catalyst in the learning process, the essential link in scholarship and information of endless variety.

Geoffrey T. Freeman (2000).

HBCU libraries serve the unique and indispensable role as gatekeepers of history, culture, and the African-American experience.

HBCU Library Alliance

INTRODUCTION

These socioeconomic changes have caused many to assume that HBCUs lack relevance in America’s

seemingly “post-racial” era. Many HBCU libraries face challenges in serving out their missions to collect and

Table 1. Creators of the HBCULA

Creators of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance (HBCULA)	
Loretta Parham	CEO and Director of the Robert Woodruff library of the Atlanta University Center
Janice R. Franklin	Dean of the Library at Alabama State University
Kate Nevins	Executive Director of SOLINET

preserve African American cultural resources and artifacts, forcing them to devise new ways to maintain their significance and keep up with the changing face of the American, and global, academic landscape. Even though HBCU libraries serve as guardians of African American cultural heritage and educators of generations of African American students, especially in the area of information literacy, unfortunately, there has been a lack of scholarly attention given to the vital role that these libraries play both at their respective institutions and in academia at large.

This article, therefore, is designed to highlight the accomplishments of one organization, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance (HBCULA). It has taken on multifaceted challenges facing contemporary HBCU libraries in the rapidly changing contemporary technological and academic landscape, as well as the adapted roles that libraries must play to stay current in these new environments. In the decade since the organization was created in 2002 in collaboration with other groups that have assisted the HBCULA with its work, the alliance has made various accomplishments that have greatly impacted key areas in the fields of library science, archival management, information literacy, and the profession of librarianship in important ways. This article, therefore, will celebrate the HBCULA's achievements by relating the history of the organization's founding and outlining its activities in preservation and conservation, training, and research that make the HBCULA a significant leader in the library world and an agent of transformation for HBCU libraries overall.

“No Existing Organization”: The History and Development of the HBCULA

In an article entitled “The HBCU Library Alliance and SOLINET: Partners in Inclusion,” Loretta Parham, Janice

R. Franklin, and Kate Nevins, who were all intimately involved with the creation of the HBCULA, state that before the creation of the alliance, “No existing organization or committee offered an agenda or venue on behalf of all of the libraries on the designated White House HBCU Initiative; not in the American Library Association (ALA), not in the Black Caucus of the ALA (BCALA), not in the National Association for the Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), and not in the United Negro College Fund (Parham, Franklin, and Nevins, 2006).”¹ Parham, former director of Hampton University’s library, and now CEO and Director of the Robert Woodruff library of the Atlanta University Center, and Franklin, Dean of the Library at Alabama State University, also noticed that African Americans were not well represented in the leadership of other library organizations such as the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET), where Franklin and Parham served as the only two African American board members from 2000 to 2004. Parham and Franklin “recognized the need for a forearm for HBCUs” and helped bring this deficit to the attention of the SOLINET board, especially Nevins, who was serving as Executive Director.² Because SOLINET’s geographic service area, the southeastern part of the United States and the Caribbean, included the states where 72 percent of HBCUs are located, it was the organization that was in the best position to support the creation of an association dedicated to assist HBCU libraries.³In May 2001, HBCU library deans and directors representing 103 of the 105 HBCUs in the U.S. met informally to discuss the possibility of creating a formal organization to meet the unique needs of HBCU libraries, a response that signified the perceived need for an alliance of this sort. By November 2001, these deans and directors had inaugurated an electronic discussion list to foster communication and share ideas amongst institutions. Table 1.

Another crucial step to the alliance’s creation was made when a steering committee was formulated,

consisting not only of Parham and Franklin, but also Emma Bradford Perry, Elsie Stephens Weatherington, Tommy Holton, Merryll Penson, Jennifer Bliss, and Kate Nevins. This committee formed in January 2002 and began soliciting support from HBCU land grant institutions and encouraging their participation in the formation of the HBCU Library Alliance. The committee made another important achievement when it launched the HBCU libraries website (www.hbculibraries.org) in February 2002. That same year, the alliance acquired support from the Council on Libraries and Information Resources (CLIR) and SOLINET, later known as LYRASIS.⁴ Support from SOLINET/LYRASIS was especially instrumental in helping the alliance to achieve its aims, as, with the help of Kate Nevins and the LYRASIS Board of Trustees, the organization was able to hire Jennifer Bliss to serve as Project Coordinator for the HBCULA as it commenced its work. Bliss coordinated the inaugural meeting of the HBCULA held in October 2002 in Atlanta, Georgia, and LYRASIS also provided most of the funding to support the meeting. Once again, library directors and deans from 103 HBCUs gathered at the meeting to discuss the unique challenges faced by their institutions and brainstorm how they might collaborate on mutually beneficial projects that would strengthen library programs and services, as well as bolster their presence and visibility on their campuses.⁵

By 2003, the alliance had created and passed bylaws and established the first official list of HBCU libraries, deans, and directors, and the group officially adopted the name "HBCU Library Alliance." The organization, in collaboration with LYRASIS, also received a grant in the amount of \$160,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to conduct a needs assessment and develop programs. The HBCULA was also able to hire its first Program Officer, Lillian Lewis, former Deputy Executive Director of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) and the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of the American Library Association. Lewis provided the administrative support and management necessary for the organization's programs in digitization, leadership, and marketing. In 2005, the Alliance was incorporated as a 501(c)(3), which then positioned the organization for the direct receipt of funding. In 2003, the first Board of Directors was elected by the body: Janice R. Franklin (Alabama State University); Tommy Holton (Dillard University); Loretta Parham (AUC Woodruff Library); Emma Bradford Perry (Southern University and A&M College); Elsie Stephens Weatherington (Virginia State University); Yildiz Brinkley (Tennessee State University); Zenobia Blackmon (H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College); Karen McDaniel (Kentucky State University); and Anita Moore (Rust College). The initial roster of officers for the Alliance was also selected. These efforts

and successes in securing funding then allowed the HBCULA to create numerous projects that have had real impact upon the individual libraries and colleges and universities associated with the libraries, as well as faculty, library staff, students, and scholars conducting research and using information resources and African American primary resources. A final significant moment for the HBCULA occurred with the creation of the "Preserving the Story" project. This project demonstrated the Alliance's internal capacity to manage a proposal.

Activities in Digitization and Preservation

In its inaugural meeting held in October 2002, the HBCU Library Alliance drafted a document called "A Call for Cooperation among HBCU Libraries: Opportunities for Consideration," which served as a manifesto that would guide how the organization would proceed from that moment in fulfilling its purpose of strengthening programs and services at HBCU libraries. One strategic charge that this document placed on the Alliance was to focus its collaborative work in the areas of preserving and providing wider access to the culturally relevant materials collected and held at HBCU libraries. Acknowledging that "HBCU libraries hold rich collections of books, photographs, pamphlets, newspapers, letters, and other cultural materials" that are "of significant value to faculty, researchers, students, and society as a whole,"⁶ the Alliance then began devising projects that would preserve and conserve these materials, as well as make them more easily accessible both physically and digitally. To that end, the HBCULA formed a partnership with the Cornell University Library, which had received a grant of \$400,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to help train HBCU archivists, librarians, and other library staff to digitize their collections and produce web-based searchable databases of these materials that would be of great value to researchers. This partnership, the HBCU-Cornell University Library (HBCU-CUL) Digitization Initiative, was an eighteen-month nationwide program that provided participants with a digital imaging training workshop and sessions that addressed concerns about hardware and software and copyright issues, offering information on how best to preserve collections once they were digitized.⁷ Through the HBCU-CUL Digitization project, the HBCULA also created a website for hosting project documents and an email list to serve as a communications tool for project members.

Through a competitive application process, ten HBCU libraries were selected as participants based on a number of factors, including the commitment their institutions were willing to make to the project, the richness of their institutional holdings, and the assurance of diversity in representation of types and geographical

locations of the libraries.⁸The institutions selected to become part of the initiative were Alabama State University, Bennett College for Women, Fisk University, Grambling State University, Hampton University, the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, representing the consortium of Atlanta HBCUs (where the server for hosting the digital collection is located), Southern University A&M College-Baton Rouge, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University, and Virginia State University. Production of the initial digital collection began in 2006 and was completed by 2007, by which time 3,519 items had been digitized (Cornell University Library, 2007).⁹

Perhaps what was most unique about this project was the Alliance's efforts to promote and publicize its work in the mainstream media. A press release about the initiative generated by Cornell University Library staff reached BlackPR.com, and details about the project spread to 150 African American media outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television. In September 2005, Ira Revels, a Cornell University librarian who was intimately involved with the HBCULA-CUL Digitization project, was a guest on a national program on XM Satellite Radio, "Mind Yo Business," where she was able to discuss the project to radio listeners. Furthermore, *The Crisis* magazine published an article titled "HBCUs Digitize Black Experience" in its November/December 2006 issue (Cornell University Library, 2007).¹⁰ The media interest in the HBCULA-CUL Digitization Initiative illustrates the positive nature of the work of the Alliance and the essential work it is doing to preserve the African American cultural heritage for future generations.

While digitization efforts like the HBCU-CUL Digitization project utilize new technologies to ensure continued access to historical materials and make them accessible to a global audience, physical preservation of the original materials that have been digitized or of those items that are too fragile to be preserved in this way is also essential to ensure the photographs' long-term survival. Photographs in particular seem to be highly vulnerable to destruction when not properly cared for. To that end, in 2007, the Alliance formed a partnership with the Art Conservation Department of the University of Delaware Library, the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA), the Image Permanence Institute (IPI), and LYRASIS in a project aimed particularly at safeguarding the unique photographic materials held at HBCU libraries. Prior to the beginning of this undertaking, only 22 percent of all HBCU libraries had performed conservation assessments of their photographic collections, an essential step in determining both the short- and long-term conservation needs of their collections.¹¹ Thus this project was vital in assisting HBCU libraries with taking the necessary steps needed to bring their photographic preservation efforts up to date so

that they could better manage, as LYRASIS Executive Director Kate Nevins expressed, the collections that "document the visual and institutional history and legacy of HBCUs and form a core of primary research material for the study of African American history (L. Parham, personal communication 2011).

The endeavor, which was called the "Preservation of Photographic Collections at Historically Black Colleges and Universities Project," began with a training session for thirty HBCU archivists and librarians and three staff members held at the University of Delaware in 2007 (HBCU Library Alliance, 2006).¹² In this workshop, participants received training not only on photographic preservation, but they also received onsite collection assessments and information about environmental monitoring to ensure the longevity of their photographic collections. Additionally, these archivists and librarians received information on how to apply for funding to assist in their preservation efforts. In the second phase of this project, a team of five conservation experts from the University of Delaware and the CCAHA served as consultants and visited 10 HBCU libraries to provide advice and help libraries understand their most pressing conservation needs and priorities. These consultations then aided the libraries when they pursued support for collection projects from the project's HBCULA Preservation Steering Committee.¹³ From these requests, the steering committee selected projects from ten libraries for implementation during phase three of the project.

The outcomes of this Photographic Preservation project have been impressive and will have far-reaching consequences for the future. As the individual institutions began examining their collections, they found hidden treasures in their midst that have generated renewed interest in their libraries on their campuses. For instance, Hampton University's library noted that, as a result of their participation in this project, there has been a renewal of "considerable interdisciplinary interest across the campus," with several departments implementing an oral history series to help expand the collection. Lincoln University's library found that their project has increased the appeal of their photographic collection to genealogists (Cornell University Library, 2007).¹⁴ As with the HBCU-CUL Digitization Initiative, the Alliance also made outreach efforts to publicize their work to a wider audience than the institutions that participated in the project. In 2009, Alliance members gave a panel presentation at the 2009 HBCU Week conference, sponsored by the White House Initiative on HBCUs, which allowed them the opportunity to target top-level administrators and raise an awareness of the preservation needs at HBCU libraries, archives, and museums. The project was a great success, as by its culmination in 2009, 31,675 photographs were rehoused

and the Photographic Project's collection had grown by 66% from its start. The participants in the project also noted other benefits of their work in this area, which included an increase in their confidence in the principles of archival management, ability to identify photographic format and projects, and an increasing knowledge of best practices for housing and exhibiting photographic materials (Cornell University Library, 2007).¹⁵

Impacting Librarianship through Training

In addition to executing these valuable projects in digitization and conservation, perhaps the area where the HBCULA has made its greatest accomplishments has been in training. At the outset of the creation of the Alliance, many HBCU librarians, as Loretta Parham and Janice Franklin recount, often encountered the message from other librarians that HBCUs were not professional places to work. To counter this negative stereotype, the HBCULA felt that it was imperative to put in place programs that would help develop strong leaders for HBCU libraries who would in turn change these adverse perceptions and entice talented staff to consider careers at their institutions.¹⁶ The Alliance learned that many librarians working at HBCUs often did not attend professional meetings of organizations such as the ALA (American Library Association) or ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries) because of limited resources. Therefore, the HBCULA devised a series of leadership institutes designed to provide both theoretical and practical training for these librarians and library directors. Commencing in 2005 in partnership with SOLINET and funded by a two-year grant of \$500,000 from the Mellon Foundation, these leadership institutes were created with the goal of imparting valuable resources to participants and encouraging library staff to develop their capacities for leadership on their respective campuses, the larger HBCU library community, and the field of librarianship in general. The Alliance also hoped that the institutes would give participants assistance with strategies to more fully integrate information literacy and library services into existing teaching and learning activities and courses on their campuses.¹⁷ Offering these opportunities in the "backyards" of so many HBCU campuses contributed significantly to the overall success of the program.

Twenty-three libraries joined in the first leadership institute, which was held in 2005, and was comprised of face-to-face training sessions, a librarian exchange program, site visits, and training on mentorship, networking, and advocacy over the course of two years. All participants were required to create projects that they would work on as part of their participation in the institute; in 2006, the twenty-three library directors reconvened to share the results of these projects with each other. With

the assistance of subsequent grants from the Mellon Foundation, the leadership institutes have continued since 2005, with participants creating projects each year that illustrate the very real impact that the institutes have had on their individual libraries. The knowledge, skills, and motivation the librarians receive from the institutes have led them to develop ingenious ways to increase their libraries' relevance in the lives of their students, faculty, and campus administrators in today's changing academic landscape. For example, librarians at Langston University founded a Family Literacy program to assist student parents with managing their time and resources to better balance their educational and family commitments. This project takes serious consideration of how much the background of the "typical" American college student has changed. Other librarians reported increasing their campus visibility by partnering with faculty or other campus organizations for instructional purposes, for humanities programming, and for initiatives to improve institutional rates for recruitment and retention of students and faculty. Not only have these staff members noticed how perceptions of their libraries have changed on their campuses, but they have also felt the leadership institutes' impact upon their personal careers. Dawn Kight, manager of library systems and technology at Southern University and A&M College of Baton Rouge, related that the institute taught her to utilize networking more effectively and has enhanced the performance and visibility of her library team at her institution.¹⁸

In addition to the leadership institutes, the Alliance has also created other training opportunities that will have an impact on the field of librarianship in the future. Its exchange program, for instance, provided opportunities for HBCU librarians to spend time at academic libraries located at predominantly white institutions (PWI) and test their ideas to help foster programs or to change the methods of providing services at their home institutions. Morgan Montgomery, a librarian at Claflin University, credits the time she spent at East Carolina University library in Greenville, North Carolina, with assisting her in gaining knowledge on how to create an Information Literacy Program and how to use Skype as an effective virtual delivery tool for reference services at Claflin (Brooks-Tatum, 2013).¹⁹

The HBCULA has also instituted training designed to attract college students to the library and archival professions. For instance, in the second phase of the HBCULA-University of Delaware Photographic Preservation Project, student interns participated in a one-week summer institute in photographic preservation at the University of Delaware. The interns received training on the value and significance of photography; nineteenth-century photographic print materials; cyanotype print production; and several other pertinent topics. This training may, in turn, lead these students to

seek careers in librarianship or archival work in the future, possibly leading to new generations of leaders for HBCU libraries.

Research, Conferences, and Outreach Efforts and Collaborations

A key area of the Alliance's work has been focused on research because, as mentioned above, scholarship on HBCU libraries has not been robust. In partnership with LYRASIS and with additional funding provided by the Mellon Foundation, the HBCULA undertook research to analyze the challenges faced by HBCU libraries, producing two reports in 2005 and 2011, entitled "State of HBCU Libraries," documenting its findings. Utilizing data collected from 193 academic libraries, 93 of which were HBCUs, gathered by the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and the National Center for Educational Statistics, the reports compared how HBCU libraries stood in comparison to non-HBCU libraries on issues such as number of library staff, staff salaries, budgets, funding, and expenditures. Compiling this data and making these comparisons, the Alliance believed, would allow members to "take action to strengthen support of their libraries, individually and as a group" (Nyberg and Idelman, 2005).

The findings promulgated by both the 2005 and 2011 "State of HBCU Libraries" reports have had and will continue to have long-reaching consequences for HBCU libraries, for they illustrate both what HBCU libraries are doing well and the real deficits and challenges that these libraries face in comparison with their peer institutions. For instance, the reports show that while HBCU libraries had a higher average number of library staff who hold MLS degrees per 100 full-time students than non-HBCU libraries, the average annual salaries for professional library staff, both those with and without the MLS degree, was \$7,885 less than the average salary for similar staff at the non-HBCUs in the study. Additionally, while libraries across the board have suffered significantly from budget cuts because of reductions of state and federal funding, non-HBCU libraries were able to expend almost double the amount of money on library acquisitions (\$2,870,352) than HBCU libraries (\$1,411,7911) were (Askew and Phoenix, 2011).²⁰ The research conducted to compile these two reports has provided essential evidence for HBCU libraries to advocate for increased funding and support from their institutions. Mary Jo Fayoyin, Library Dean at Savannah State University, and her staff attest that they were able to receive additional financial and institutional assistance for the Asa Gordon Library from sharing the report's findings with university administrators.

In addition to the promotion of research on HBCU

libraries through the "State of HBCU Libraries" reports, the HBCULA has also successfully marketed its ten-year accomplishments through a Mellon-funded project called *Preserving The Story*. This project is designed to highlight the various successes of the member institution libraries. Looking at the stories published as part of this series, one can conclude that these libraries have transformed the way they conduct their work and interact with students and faculty on their campuses, transformations that are, in part, the result of key initiatives in digitization, preservation and conservation, leadership development, and information literacy that were fomented by the HBCULA. Nine of the libraries' stories were also published in the journals *American Libraries*²¹ and *Against the Grain* (O'Brien and Franklin, 2004).

Other ways the Alliance positively impacts the profession has been through continuous meetings and collaborations that allow the member institutions frequent opportunities to interact with each other, share updates and celebrate their progress with various projects, and brainstorm on the future direction of the organization. The 100 libraries that comprise the HBCULA have met on a biennial basis since 2006. In homage to its African American cultural background, the Alliance has instituted a tradition where membership meetings begin with a roll call in which institutions are announced and their library staff stand in recognition in order of the institutions' founding date, all done with an accompanying background of djembe drumming to promote a sense of kinship and identity amongst members. The Alliance uses its biennial meetings to conduct HBCULA-sponsored workshops, mini-training sessions, and share updates on projects such as those involving preservation and digitization projects. All in all, these meetings provide vital opportunities for the members to communicate with each other and to share knowledge, skills, and professional insights that members can incorporate into operations at their respective campuses.

Impact of the HCBCULA: Looking Toward the Future

In just over a decade, the HBCULA has made real, impactful achievements that have changed the way that libraries at these institutions have functioned and has had significant effects on the students, faculty, and researchers that these libraries serve. The Alliance has become a strong voice for HBCU institutions and has formed significant partnerships with other organizations, such as LYRASIS, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the University of Delaware, the HBCU Faculty Development Network, and the White House Initiative on HBCUs. The HBCULA's work has increased the connectivity its

libraries have with the larger HBCU community and, through its successful marketing efforts, improved the visibility of HBCUs both nationally and globally. Many of these accomplishments are recorded in the *Preserving The Story* project, illustrating how the member libraries have made changes in the key areas that were identified as crucial in the HBCULA's document "Call for Cooperation among HBCU Libraries."

Looking at some of the stories illustrates how successful members have been in achieving these aims. The Alliance's leadership institutes have been instrumental in

Table 2. Timetable of the HBCULA.

2002	Founding of Steering committee Launching of website
2003	Bylaws adopted First Board of Directors elected
2004	Strengthening Libraries at HBCUs Planning Project created
2005	HBCU-Cornell University Library Digital Initiative created Phase 1 HBCU Library Alliance Leadership Program begins State of HBCU Libraries at HBCUs report produced
2006	Incorporated as a 501c3
2007	Begins Phase II of the HBCU Library Alliance Leadership Program Preservation of Photographic Collections in HBCUs project commences Phase II of the HBCU-Cornell University Library Digital Initiative launches
2010	Preserving the Story project inaugurated
2011	Phase IV HBCU Library Alliance Leadership Program starts Updated "State of HBCU Libraries at HBCUs" report released Round 2 of the Preservation of Photographic Collections project commences
2013	Expanding Library Support for Faculty Research in HBCUs project initiated

aiding in the promotions of several librarians from within the HBCU network to the position of library director. Kentucky State University library reported that it has incorporated QR codes into its catalog, thereby becoming a leader in the state of Kentucky in incorporating this leading technology as a new method of user access. In

keeping with the alliance's emphasis upon preservation, Elizabeth City State University's library successfully applied for and received several grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to preserve its university archives. Along those same lines, Fisk University is making a major promotional push to publicize their organization and preservation of its important "Julius Rosenwald Rural Negro Schools" archives, a collection that highlights a significant aspect of African American educational history in the United States. Other libraries have made strides in information literacy training, such as Tennessee State University's initiatives to train both low-income youth and public librarians in internet usage and Johnson C. Smith's PALS (Promoting Active Library Services) program that incorporates Web 2.0 technology and library technology to attract new users to the library.

Under the current leadership of Sandra Phoenix, who serves as Executive Director of the HBCULA, the Alliance has devised new projects that continue its previous work. The Alliance received its second direct grant award from the Andrew W. Mellon foundation for a project entitled "Expanding Library Support for Faculty Research in HBCUs." Working in partnership with the HBCU Faculty Development Network, the Alliance will use the funding from this grant to assess and strengthen library services to support faculty research at HBCUs. This project is designed to foster improved library services on the individual campuses of HBCUs and develop collaborative approaches to expand library support for faculty research. In keeping with its emphasis upon training and attracting new talent to the library profession, the Alliance has also formed a partnership with Wayne State University for a program called "Librarians for the 21st Century." The purpose of this project is to construct an online Master of Library Science (MLS) program to educate students from underrepresented groups to increase diversity in the library profession. The HBCULA's role in the project is to recruit qualified applicants for the online MLS program from a pool of both undergraduates attending HBCU institutions and library paraprofessionals who are currently employed at HBCU libraries. The Alliance will also select senior librarians who have participated in its own leadership program to serve as mentors for the students. In this way, the HBCULA hopes to continue to have significant impact upon programs, services, and training offered at member institutions and to change the profession of librarianship at large, countering negative stereotypes about the professionalism of these institutions (L. Parham, personal communication, 2011).²²

Looking back at the HBCULA's decade of accomplishments, its achievements in narrowing the digital divide that separates the rich and the poor in this country should be celebrated. Yet its positive impact and

groundbreaking work is not without continuing challenges. As the faculty at the nation's 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities face shifting paradigms in the way they conduct both their teaching and their research, libraries and librarians must devise new ways to support the faculty's work, as well as the broader research agendas that many academic institutions are forming. Preservation of historical artifacts associated with HBCUs has become much more of an essential aspect of library and archival work as HBCUs become threatened with either closure or the possibilities of merging with other colleges as part of cost-saving efforts. As the only library organization that is uniquely dedicated to serving HBCUs, the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance more than ever will find that it has an important and essential role to play in the academic landscape as it advances its mission to educate future generations and serve as a repository for the rich cultural and historical heritage of people of African descent in the United States and the Caribbean. Table 2

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- ⁵"A Call for Cooperation among HBCU Libraries," <http://www.hbculibraries.org/html/cooperation.html>
- ⁶Ibid.
- ⁷The HBCU-CUL Digital Imaging Workshop was held at the Georgia State Archives in Morrow, Georgia, from November 13-18, 2005. Based on Cornell University Library's award-winning tutorial *Moving Theory into Practice: Digital Imaging for Libraries and Archives*, the seminar was conducted by Cornell University Library staff members Anne Kenney, Peter Hirtle, and Ira Revels.
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- ⁹"Final Report to the Mellon Foundation," 9.
- ¹⁰"Final Report to the Mellon Foundation," 11.
- ¹¹HBCU Library Alliance, Press Release accessed http://hbculibraries.org/images/SOLINET_Mellon.pdf
- ¹²HBCU Library Alliance, accessed February 17, 2012, www.hbculibraries.org.
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- ¹⁶Statement from Loretta Parham, December 2013.
- ¹⁷HBCU Library Alliance, Press Release, accessed <http://hbculibraries.org/docs/solinet.pdf>
- ¹⁸"Leadership Program," <http://www.hbculibraries.org/html/leadership.html>.
- ¹⁹"Claflin University Implements Information Literacy," 14.
- ²⁰Askew and Phoenix, "Executive Summary: The State of Libraries at Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 2011.
- ²¹*American Libraries*, Jan. 2012.
- ²²Nevins interview.

¹Parham, Franklin, and Nevins, "HBCU Library Alliance," 182-83.

²Nevins interview.

³Ibid., 182.