



Naming the Research Center Special Collections / University Archives

Background

As a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) the University of Louisville Libraries upholds the principal that the unique resources and programs of special collections and archives play fundamental roles within a research library. The ARL member document "Special Collections: Statement of Principles, Research Libraries and the Commitment to Special Collections," (<http://www.arl.org/rtl/speccoll/speccollprinciples.shtml>) outlines expectations for ARL Libraries and their special collections, including security, staffing, and provision of functional, welcoming space for the use of these collections.

Toward this end, two units of the Libraries, University Archives and Special Collections have collaborated to identify solutions to maximize resources and provide the most effective access to collections, including the dynamic new program of Digital Initiatives. A number of U of L benchmark libraries have adapted the concept of a named center, sometimes in a separate building, such as the Harry Ransom Center at University of Texas or the Beinecke Library at Yale, to highlight their unique and valuable holdings. The successes of the Howard Gottlieb Research Center at Boston University, the Mandeville Special Collections Library at University of California San Diego, the Louis Round Wilson Library at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the Reynolds Historical Library at University of Alabama at Birmingham, all demonstrate the benefits of named research centers for researchers, as well as the institutions and their benefactors.

Program

The project will consolidate the collections, programs, staffing, and public services of University Archives and Special Collections into a named Research Center in a new, separate facility or on one floor of Ekstrom Library. The center will celebrate the unique cultural heritage resources and treasures held by the University of Louisville, promote research and teaching across disciplines, arrange, describe and preserve materials in a variety of formats, enhance the prestige of the University among its benchmarks and other research institutions, and provide a single point of reference for researchers from the university and region to the wider, international community of scholars. Key features of the Research Center will include:

- Highly visible reception area, highlighting the donor and significant collections
- Secure, high-density archival storage in a climate-controlled area
- Secure reference and research areas, ADA compliant, and compatible with a full range of formats
- Flexible teaching/special program space
- Secure, ADA compliant exhibition galleries
- Common archival processing area, with quarantine space for incoming collections
- Oral History Center recording and listening areas
- Digital Initiatives laboratory and equipment

Benefits

- Promote the preservation of and access to the University's unique treasures
- Enhance the University's ability to attract and appropriately house significant gifts of rare archives, books, manuscripts, maps, and other artifacts
- Establish a prestigious new cultural center, named for the donor or according to the donor's wishes

Cost

The total investment required for this project is \$8,000,000. This includes \$6,000,000 for a building/renovation, a materials endowment of \$1,000,000, and equipment and staffing for \$1,000,000.

How to Get Involved

Outright donors, individuals, groups, companies and others can work together to create collaborative support and naming rights. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Cheryl Crane with the University of Louisville at 502-852-3523 or cheryl.crane@louisville.edu.