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The Foundation of and Future Directions for JEDI @ University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries

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Chapter 9

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ABSTRACT

This chapter per the authors provides an in-depth overview of how the University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries has leveraged historical connections and special collections to provide a robust foundation for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion programming and initiatives on campus, in the community, and worldwide. Readers will be provided with examples that will inform conversations about JEDI efforts at their own libraries and on their own campuses, as well as insights gleaned during the process of doing this work at University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

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INTRODUCTION

The focus on justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion (JEDI) efforts in libraries predates the public murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, though that event became a clear turning point in the attention paid to the systemic inequities inherent in the United States of America. Americans were unable to look away from what the writer Wendell Berry (1970) described as a “hidden wound” in his deeply personal book of that title, and concepts like institutional racism and white privilege became regular topics of discussion among the American populace. In addition, institutions of all sorts, from private companies to public libraries, scrambled to affirm their support for Black lives and to acknowledge the need for real, substantive changes to occur both internally and across American society.

Now, several years past the immediate reactions to Floyd’s murder, it is possible to reflect on the ways such reactions have played out in academic libraries and to understand the scholarly and intellectual foundations upon which they were built. This chapter will focus on the ongoing work at the University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, including the work of the W. E. B. Du Bois Center, whose mission is to carry on the critical inquiry pioneered by Du Bois himself, and to apply that lens to the ongoing challenges of our time.

ABOUT THE UMASS AMHERST LIBRARIES

The UMass Amherst Libraries are the largest publicly supported academic research library in New England, with a budget of \$20 million (plus endowments and gift funds), and over 100 staff. With more than 8 million physical and digital items, the Libraries include the W. E. B. Du Bois Center and the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center (SCUA), which contains the papers and memoirs of W. E. B. Du Bois, Horace Mann Bond, Daniel Ellsberg, Kenneth R. Feinberg, the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive, and hundreds of other collections documenting the lives and work of activists, innovators, political figures, spiritual leaders, writers, and more.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst acknowledges that it was founded and built on the unceded homelands of the Pocumtuc Nation on the land of the Norrwutuck community.

We begin with gratitude for nearby waters and lands, including the Kwinitewk – the southern portion of what’s now called the Connecticut River. We recognize these lands and waters as important Relations with which we are all interconnected and depend on to sustain life and wellbeing.

The Norrwutuck community was one of many Pocumtuc Indian towns, including the Tribal seat at Pocumtuc (in present day Deerfield), Agawam (Springfield), and Woronoco (Westfield) to name just a few. The Pocumtuc, who had connections with these lands for millennia, are part of a vast expanse of Algonquian relations. Over 400 years of colonization, Pocumtuc Peoples were displaced. Many joined their Algonquian relatives to the east, south, west and north— extant communities of Wampanoag, including Aquinnah, Herring Pond, and Mashpee, Massachusetts; the Nipmuc with a reservation at Grafton/Hassanamisco, Massachusetts; the Narragansett in Kingstown, Rhode Island; Schagticoke, Mohegan and Pequot Peoples in Connecticut; the Abenaki and other Nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy extending northward into Canada; and the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican of New York and Massachusetts, who were removed to Wisconsin in the 19th century. Over hundreds of years of removal, members of Southern New England Tribes would make the journey home to tend important places and renew their connections to their ancestral lands. Such care and connection to land and waters continues to the present day.

Today, Indigenous Nations in southern New England continue to employ diverse strategies to resist ongoing colonization, genocide, and erasure begun by the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese and other European Nations, and that continued when Tribal homelands became part of the United States. Native Americans from Tribal Nations across the U.S. and Indigenous peoples from around the world also travel into these Pocumtuc homelands to live and work. This land has always been and always will be, Native Land.

We also acknowledge that the University of Massachusetts Amherst is a Land Grant University. As part of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, Tribal lands from 82 Native Nations west of the Mississippi were sold to provide the resources to found and build this university.

This Land Acknowledgement is the first step in the university's commitment to practice intellectual humility whilst working with Tribal Nations toward a better shared future on Turtle Island. We aim to foster understanding, deep respect, and honor for sovereign Tribal Nations; to develop relationships of reciprocity; and to be inclusive of Native perspectives and thriving Native Nations far into the future. Members of Massachusetts-based Tribal Nations who are kin to the historic Pocumtuc contributed their insights in composing this acknowledgement – namely Tribal representatives from Mashpee, Aquinnah, and Stockbridge Munsee. As an active first step toward decolonization, we encourage you to learn more about the Indigenous peoples on whose homelands UMass Amherst now resides on and the Indigenous homelands on which you live and work.

Why Du Bois?

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, a small town in western Massachusetts, on February 23, 1868.

In 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois published *The Souls of Black Folk*, a collection of essays that transcends any academic field or literary genre to present a stirring, poetic, honest, and profoundly modern portrait of the history of Black America and the continuing problem of the color line. The book was an immediate sensation and still ranks as one of the seminal works in American literature. In this book, Du Bois departed from the strictures of academic writing to present his readers with fiction that was used to illustrate fact, an accompanying 'soundtrack' of sorrow songs and other musical pieces, snatches of memoir that force the reader to see with Du Bois's own eyes, and a host of indelible images all drawn in magisterial and sweeping language.

The Souls of Black Folk brought Du Bois national acclaim; it also laid him open to criticism from a variety of quarters. There was the predictable racist backlash from white supremacist writers, including Thomas Nelson Page, but there was also a sizeable amount of condemnation from those who also strove for Black liberation and civil rights yet took different approaches. Most notable among these voices was the by now world-famous Booker T. Washington, a man whom Du Bois had not been afraid to criticize in the book. The disagreement between Du Bois and Washington was one which would continue until the latter's death in 1915 and has been intensely studied and debated by scholars ever since.

The realization that the Du Bois archive would have enormous value to scholars, researchers and, indeed, the public came while Du Bois was still alive. The effort to collect and organize these papers was begun by the man himself, encouraged by Shirley Graham and comrades like Herbert Aptheker. When Du Bois died the bulk of the papers stayed with Shirley, but no institution had yet emerged as a place for them to reside. This changed when Randolph Bromery, the first Black person to serve as Chancellor of UMass Amherst, led the effort to bring the papers back to Du Bois's home state. The University

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acquired the papers in 1973 and they were opened to the public in 1980. At the dedication ceremony, in his keynote address, Lerone Bennett Jr. (1980) said that “no one can understand Massachusetts or the United States of America without some understanding of the man who turns and twists and challenges and dreams in the papers collected here” (p. 2).

The Du Bois collection, housed in the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, consists of 294 boxes and nearly 100,000 individual items. This trove of letters, manuscripts, speeches, photographs and realia is the centerpiece represents the bulk of the archival legacy of one of the defining intellects of the 20th Century, a thinker whose work set the stage for addressing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in American society.

A Brief History of the Du Bois Center

As early as 1974, the aforementioned Chancellor Randolph Bromery was advocating for the foundation of a “W. E. B. Du Bois Center for Intellectual Leadership” as “a fitting tribute to America’s foremost Black scholar” and as a “catalyst to start a more reasoned and effective approach to solving some of the mounting social, economic, and political problems of the country.” Du Bois Center Scholar-in-Residence Phillip Luke Sinitiere writes that Bromery was “both perpetually intellectually curious and historically minded. His commitment to the life of the mind prompted him to puzzle out ways to activate the Du Bois manuscripts for maximum intellectual production and to find ways for them to impact the community beyond the university” (P. L. Sinitiere, personal communication, December 20, 2022).

Bromery’s lofty ambitions would not be realized for decades, but the objectives set down by Bromery have informed the work of the Du Bois Center since its founding in 2009. The responsibilities of the Center in its early years were primarily to support the activities of a small number of visiting research fellows and to organize the annual W. E. B. Du Bois Lecture. It continued to grow, occupying a larger footprint within the building, and adding book giveaways and student events to its range of activities.

In 2016 the Center’s director successfully applied for a major grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that led to a dramatic expansion of the Center’s work. This influx of funding allowed the Center to justify the hiring of a full-time Program Manager in 2018; due to the increased volume of work and outreach conducted by the Center’s staff, this position has been reclassified as Assistant Director. Even before this increase in staffing, the Center was running a fuller range of programs, including day-long workshops for local community college students. It was also able to increase the number of research fellows and include graduate students from UMass Amherst in the fellowship program for the first time. As a complement to the Center’s work, an accessible timeline of Du Bois’s life has been installed in the Center’s primary space. It includes text and physical and digital objects and images, so that visitors to the Du Bois Center will be able to move through a brief history of his remarkable achievements at their own pace.

Since its inception, the Center has striven not only to provide access to the work of Du Bois and his archive, but also to be a space of knowledge production and one that applies Du Bois’s work to contemporary issues. These ideals form the basis of the Center’s longest-standing and most impactful program, the weekly “Breakfast with Du Bois.”

Breakfast With Du Bois

The idea for a weekly, Du Bois-focused reading group was first suggested by a Du Bois Center graduate fellow studying political science, Benjamin Nolan, in late 2018. Ben proposed the format and came up with the title, “Breakfast with Du Bois,” while the Center arranged for UMass catering to deliver weekly consignments of coffee, fruit and muffins to the 22nd floor. He recalls that “the idea for the Breakfasts was inspired by the director telling the fellows about her practice of trying to read one short Du Bois text per day as a kind of personal practice that wasn’t narrowly scholarly, but rather prioritized the cultivation of a broader and personal connection. I was in a liminal moment in my graduate studies, transitioning to the intense solitude of dissertation research and writing, and thought it would be amazing if we could come up with a way to develop a kind of community ritual in the same spirit” (B. Nolan, personal communication, December 19, 2022).

The first Du Bois Breakfast took place on Monday, February 4, 2019, and was attended by nine people, mostly other graduate students. The group read aloud a speech which Du Bois gave in 1890 as his baccalaureate disquisition at Harvard, “Jefferson Davis as a Representative of Civilization.” The digitized version of the text came from the Du Bois papers and a copy was printed for each member of the group. The reading was followed by an open-ended and spirited discussion which covered topics ranging from Du Bois’s early and excellent use of rhetoric and logic to persuade his audience of the validity of his point, the ways in which American society embraces the myth of the “strong man,” and the racist distortions of American history in Du Bois’s time and our own. It was agreed by all in attendance that this short text from the end of the nineteenth century had a tremendous amount of resonance in 2019. Upon the session’s conclusion it was agreed that the breakfasts would continue on a weekly basis, meeting every Monday.

At the next session, the group read Martin Luther King’s speech, “Honoring Dr. Du Bois,” an address he gave on what would have been Du Bois’s 100th birthday, and one of the last public speeches he would ever make. In the speech, King praised Du Bois’s achievements as a scholar and civil rights leader, while paying particular attention to his work on Reconstruction. Again a handsome, digital copy of the text was taken from the Du Bois papers and printed out for the attendees. At a dozen pages, it was nearly twice as long as the previous week’s text, but there was still ample time for discussion when the reading concluded. Texts of about this length have since proved to be the most effective for the Breakfast with Du Bois format as they allow the session to be almost evenly split between reading and discussion. A slightly larger group was in attendance for this second breakfast and a mailing list was started. Flyers were distributed via email and printed for display on campus notice boards to encourage others to join the group the following Monday.

The breakfasts continued on a weekly basis for the remainder of the academic year and grew in popularity, attracting undergraduate students, faculty members, and library staff. The format which had worked so well in the first two sessions was codified during these months and has stayed the same ever since. An email would be sent out each Friday by Ben, which introduced the text to be read the following Monday and included a PDF for people to read ahead of time if they felt so inclined. The group would then meet in the Du Bois Center on Monday morning and help themselves to coffee and breakfast snacks, taking this opportunity to catch up with other members of the group. Chairs and tables would be arranged so that the group could sit in a rough circle and face one another. After this brief fellowship, the reading would begin, with the convener reading the first paragraph or two and then passing to the next person, who would in turn read as much as they felt comfortable with before passing on to their

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neighbor. The text would make itself round the table until it was concluded. A discussion would then follow which, facilitated – but not necessarily *lead* – by the convener. The group was always encouraged to take the discussion in whichever direction they wished, and this led to many stimulating conversations on a host of topics.

It was decided by a unanimous vote of breakfast attendees on the last Monday of the spring semester to keep up the breakfasts through June, July, and August of 2019, especially as so many local community members and library staff were now involved who would be in Amherst throughout the summer break. Between July and August that year's cohort of postdoctoral Du Bois Center fellows also joined many of the breakfasts and brought exciting new perspectives based on their research in the archives. Phillip Luke Sinitiere, now scholar-in-residence at the Center, found a copy and recording of the keynote speech given by Lerone Bennett at the dedication of the Du Bois papers in 1980. The breakfast group listened to, and read along with, the recording on July 21, 2019, and provided a second "audience," so to speak, for Bennett nearly forty years after the speech was originally given.

Ben received a fellowship to study in South Africa for the 2019-2020 academic year and another graduate fellow, Aaron Yates from the sociology department, stepped into the role as facilitator of the reading group. Aaron led the breakfast club into the new semester with aplomb, drawing on his own academic background to introduce new writings, both by Du Bois and scholars drawing on his work. A new group of friends and associates from the sociology department and others also joined the group that semester making up for the loss of the postdoctoral fellows, who had by then returned to their own institutions. New archival treasures were unearthed for the group to enjoy, including original speeches from the dedication ceremony for the Du Bois Boyhood Homesite in Great Barrington in 1969, which the group read and listened to on the fiftieth anniversary of that event.

The final in-person Breakfast with Du Bois for spring of 2020 took place on March 9, 2020. A week later all staff, students, and faculty at UMass Amherst were sent home, and campus closed. The pandemic forced a total change of plans for the Du Bois Center, the activities of which were, for the foreseeable future, to be run from the assistant director's kitchen table. The first virtual breakfast took place on April 12, 2020, and the weekly gatherings on Zoom have continued ever since. A major reason for the preservation of the online format has been that moving the breakfasts online has allowed people to join from beyond Amherst. Breakfasters have dialed in from all over the United States and from countries including Angola, Canada, South Africa, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. Although the food provided by UMass catering has disappeared, the format has remained the same. A volunteer puts themselves forward as the first reader then nominates the next person and the text makes its way around the group.

During the lonely and uncertain early days of the pandemic, the breakfasts with Du Bois proved an invaluable way for the community around the Center to keep in touch, share personal updates, and discuss the unprecedented times being lived through. The murder of George Floyd by police in the spring of 2020 brought an increase in attendance at the breakfasts as people began to feel a greater sense of urgency around questions of racist violence and anti-Blackness in America and around the world. Reading and discussing Du Bois together helped the attendees at the breakfasts to not just learn more about the long historical roots of the current crisis, but also to form bonds of solidarity and express collective feelings in a moment of extreme stress. In the summer of 2020, Aaron Yates stepped back from facilitating the breakfasts and handed over to Adam Holmes, the Center's assistant director, who has led the group since and always tried to find texts from Du Bois's canon that meet the moment. Fortunately, given the vastness and richness of Du Bois's written record, this has never been a challenge.

Whether in person or online, Breakfast with Du Bois has been the most effective way of introducing a wide range of people to the written words of W. E. B. Du Bois and interpretations of them. An attendee who joins the group over a dozen times will have read somewhere in the region of 150 pages of Du Bois's work from a range of sources. Someone who regularly attends the sessions for a year or more will have read the equivalent of an entire book. Only serious Du Bois scholars have spent a comparable amount of time with archival materials from the Du Bois papers as the breakfast club. Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, a regular attendee and professor of sociology at Colby College, states that, "The breakfasts have made it possible for me to be exposed to documents beyond my own narrow interests in a scholar who produced a vast published literature. Reading unpublished documents in a shared setting has been absolutely critical for providing a larger context to my own work" (C. T. Gilkes, personal communication, December 18, 2022).

The breakfasts demonstrate the value in the Libraries' decision to democratize access to the Du Bois papers, which are available to anyone with an internet connection or the ability to come to UMass Amherst and make their way to the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center on the 25th floor. The breakfasts have provided a free, inclusive, constantly evolving, yet structured way for people to study and learn from Du Bois and deepen their familiarity with a body of work that can feel intimidatingly vast. Ben states that it was always vital to him that the breakfasts be in the spirit of Du Bois and democratic. "That is accessible, empowering of each voice to be heard, and guided principally by the conversations it cultivated rather than by any given programmer. A big part of this democratic accessibility to me was to make sure that it never required homework, and that food would be involved. I forget how we came up with the idea of reading the texts aloud, but to me the significance of it is that it makes sure that everyone's voice is literally heard even before the open conversation begins. Moreover, it turns reading itself, which for me at least had become an overwhelmingly solitary practice, into a communal one, prompting each of us to engage with the text through the eyes and ears of every other reader in the circle" (B. Nolan, personal communication, December 19, 2022).

The experience of reading Du Bois aloud as a group is indeed a profound one. Cheryl Townsend Gilkes says that "Du Bois writes to be understood but so richly that skimming does him a great disservice. Every word matters and reading aloud makes us recognize that" (C. T. Gilkes, personal communication, December 18, 2022).

The poetic lyricism and rhetorical thrust of Du Bois's use of English are a pleasure to experience, but also give the texts a vividness and immediacy that is difficult to find in writers not blessed with Du Bois's talents. Reading aloud, and actively listening to others do so, is both an intimate and meaningful experience but it also opens up a text, revealing its many hidden subtleties. Du Bois, except when working on the most academic of his scholarly works, always intended his literature to be accessible, and to carry a message. In 1926, Du Bois wrote that "whatever art I have for writing has been used always for propaganda for gaining the right of black folk to love and enjoy" (p. 296). The experience of 181 (at the time of writing) Du Bois breakfasts has demonstrated the truth of this statement.

There is seldom a week that goes by where a member of the breakfast club does not remark on either the power of Du Bois's writing, the almost eerie relevance to our own moment, or both. As Phillip writes, "I have realized how relevant Du Bois's writings and ideas remain. There's always something in his writings that connects to contemporary history and current events. His observations often anticipated future trends or from the vantage point of the present provide insight into current political or cultural conditions. To sum it up: the Du Bois breakfast gatherings have demonstrated to me how durable Du Bois's thoughts and ideas are" (P. L. Sinitiere, personal communication, December 20, 2022).

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People can rightly become exasperated by the fact that so many of the issues Du Bois elucidated in his writings of a hundred years ago have continued without abatement well into the 21st Century. More often than not, however, the sheer brilliance of Du Bois's arguments and formulations fortify the breakfasters, who gain not just insight, but have developed a moral, rhetorical, and intellectual framework based on the work of Du Bois for approaching issues related to racial and social justice. This was precisely Du Bois's own intention for his own audiences when he set his words down in print, and a large reason why he kept such a meticulous archive and worked to ensure its survival. He wanted his words and thoughts to echo beyond his lifetime and continue to do their work. They do precisely that every Monday morning on the 22nd floor of the library that bears his name.

Perhaps the most profound thing about the breakfasts, however, is not the work of Du Bois but the community that has grown around them. Laura Richards, who graduated from Smith College in 2022, is a regular breakfast attendee and says that “[e]veryone feels welcome and I think everyone can find something new in Du Bois’s writing...Breakfast with Du Bois is inspiring and an opportunity to sit down and read Du Bois’s work weekly with people whose knowledge enriches the experience. I get much more out of his work in this group setting, listening to his words read aloud, than I would reading Du Bois silently on my own” (L. Richards, personal communication, December 16, 2022).

The shared excitement about Du Bois, the affection and enthusiasm the group has for one another, and the collective dedication to pursuing justice is beyond inspiring. It shows what can be done when people are regularly gathered together to examine significant issues, and it underscores that other great theme of Du Bois's life - the importance of organizing groups dedicated to change. This community has coalesced not just around the Monday reading group but the many other activities of the Du Bois Center.

After Breakfast: Other Initiatives of the W. E. B. Du Bois Center

One of the Center's key functions from its earliest days has been the production of scholarship based on the archival collection. Archives like those of Du Bois do their greatest work when being explored by scholars making new discoveries and connections. The Center helps give scholars access to this collection through its fellowship program, which has not just produced a host of important books and articles on Du Bois but has also ensured that the Center's own approach to “teaching” Du Bois is in line with current scholarship. Huge national figures like Du Bois are in danger of having values projected onto them by audiences and institutions if the appropriate care is not taken. The Fellows help ensure that, through the papers, Du Bois's own values are reflected by the Center. Ben writes that “being part of the fellowship has transformed my academic work, validating my own commitment to internationalism and history as necessary to politically useful scholarship, and illuminating a wide variety of pathways by which to bring this commitment to bear. It also put me into a position to engage with questions of race in spaces that are not dominated by white voices, assumptions, and expectations” (B. Nolan, personal communication, December 19, 2022).

As part of the fellowship program, each scholar also agrees to return to UMass during the school year to give a public talk on their work at the Center. These lectures combine with talks by Du Bois Center staff and affiliated faculty and graduate students, not to mention the Annual Du Bois Lecture traditionally held around the time of Du Bois's birthday, to ensure that there is a year-round series of opportunities for people to learn about Du Bois at the Center. These lectures are all recorded and posted online to make sure they reach the widest possible audience. The last two annual lectures were also live streamed and watched live by hundreds online. In fact, the Du Bois Center became something of a hub of video

production during the first year of the pandemic, with a mini-documentary on the history of the papers garnering nearly 1,000 views on YouTube. Even more successful was a video featuring different voices reading out Du Bois quotes which has since been watched over 4,000 times.

The Du Bois Center works closely with local schools and community colleges and organizes visits to the library for students and educators. As part of these visits the groups are introduced to the life and times of Du Bois in the Center before being led up to the 25th floors to visit the archives and handle original artifacts. These visits have a range of benefits for students, providing them with knowledge and information to support courses in history, Black studies, sociology, literature, civics, and other social sciences, as well as the experience of working with primary sources and the opportunity to learn about the functions of an archive and research library. For students from Massachusetts, these visits are also a reminder that local history is not just confined to the pilgrim fathers and the Revolutionary War.

In partnership with the Libraries' Digital Media Lab, the Du Bois Center created a resource specifically for younger audiences, examples of which have made their way to five schools across the state. The Du Bois "Museum in a Box" presents a selection of facsimiles from the papers and 3D-printed replicas of artifacts found at the Du Bois Boyhood Homesite in Great Barrington. Each object is affixed with an RFID contact sticker that plays an audio caption when held near a speaker. The resource is an accessible, tactile and, importantly, fun way for younger learners to get information on Du Bois and explore the wonders of the archive.

The Du Bois Center's approach to the Museum in a Box is informed by the same ethical commitment that it applies to all of its work. The Center is dedicated to always presenting a truthful and honest view of Du Bois as a historical figure and of his work. As stewards of his legacy and the first contact many people have with Du Bois, the Center has never, and must never, be guilty of whitewashing or romanticizing Du Bois and recognize the pain and violence that is present in his work. As a predominantly white institution, and a land grant college, UMass Amherst must also recognize its own institutional role in perpetuating unequal structures of power and supporting white supremacy and seek to make amends. One way it can do this is not falling into the trap of basking in the reflected glory of Du Bois's presence, but humbly allowing his work and those of the scholars and activists who draw on it to exist in the world without interference and with the maximum of support.

The Du Bois Center, formed to steward its namesake's legacy and stimulate scholarship in his spirit, has spun off many JEDI-focused activities. Within the constellations of Libraries JEDI programming, Du Bois events have the greatest depth and breadth, with a parallel narrative of continual audience expansion.

The longest-running activity is the annual Du Bois Lecture, during which, for the past 28 years, researchers have presented new scholarship on Du Bois to an audience of students and scholars. Until 2019, the event had been in person, open to all, and filmed for later sharing and viewing. The audience was primarily graduate students and faculty interested in the subject, rounded out by undergraduate students, independent researchers, and members of the campus and local community.

As the Du Bois Fellows program has grown—from two visiting fellows per year to more than 10 visiting graduates and posts-docs from 2017 on, and with engagement from an increasing number of academic disciplines—scholarly talks by returning fellows increased in frequency, to several each semester. The expansion of opportunities broadened audiences in size and scope and extended our reach into the home institutions and academic communities of visiting fellows.

With a goal to introduce every UMass student to Du Bois, the Du Bois Center has, since its inception in 2009, sought opportunities to increase engagement. Out of this came the annual Du Bois Birthday celebration open to every member of campus ("You're invited to stop by the library lobby for a cupcake,

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a free copy of *The Souls of Black Folk*, and to learn about Du Bois!’’), a low-barrier entry to finding out about the life and work of the sociologist, activist, and author. Yet, despite Du Bois’s birthdate of February 23, the Libraries sought to avoid relying on Black History Month to anchor JEDI efforts. Recognizing that Black history is American history, we continue to offer introductory events all year long.

During the same time period, the Libraries’ collaborations with campus and community partners who were interested in Du Bois increased, such as the *Du Bois in Our Time* exhibit held from September 10 - December 8, 2013, a partnership between the libraries and the Fine Arts Center, and in 2020, a *film* celebrating the 40th anniversary of the papers coming to UMass, weaving together reflections from diverse Du Bois scholars. We worked with community members, librarians, and lawmakers to host a traveling Du Bois exhibit, which has been shown across the Commonwealth from Great Barrington Public Library to Boston City Hall. These collaborations have been invaluable in understanding what was important to the communities we serve and those with whom we seek to partner.

While many of these activities have increased our engagement with an ever-wider variety of audiences, they have largely been developed by the libraries in response to campus goals. To truly break down barriers, we need to be both more intentional and more collaborative with the audiences we want to engage—not just with Du Bois, but also JEDI programming for other spaces, resources, and services.

JEDI Collection Development, Access, and Assessment

In keeping with the intellectual legacy of Du Bois, the UMass Libraries work to develop collections that reflect the commitment to both the social justice mission and to the campus community. Students and faculty that see themselves represented in a respectful way in the libraries collections are more likely to be connected to the campus community and feel a sense of belonging.

Since the creation of the Collections Strategies Group in 2018, the libraries have prioritized adding materials to the collection that represent diversity regionally, nationally, and on a global scale, such as *History Vault: Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century*, *Historical Jerusalem Post*, *Shen Bao*, and *Early Arabic Books*. The libraries add materials in all formats and incorporate individual titles throughout the year as academic liaisons identify new resources to add to the collections.

In one specific example of our responsiveness to patron-driven requests, the Libraries recently added the movie *Powerlands* to support a campus viewing event focused on Indigenous peoples who have been displaced from their native lands by corporate America. In addition, the Libraries have also recently added *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* to our collections to support a spring reading event for our School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. In reviewing available platforms, Libraries staff determined that OverDrive was the best platform for this resource, as it would provide the broadest access for our community. OverDrive also includes JEDI in its indexing, making it easy to search and locate available titles on this platform, and offers over 100 titles as part of its own JEDI collection. In recent months, a small group of UMass Libraries staff has curated a UMass-specific JEDI collection on the OverDrive platform and has selected titles tailored for UMass users’ needs and available in easily accessed e-book form.

Though representing the UMass Amherst community in library collections is important, it is equally important to make sure that collections are easy to locate and accessible, while also taking into account the manner in which classifications might display epistemological prejudices inherent in the minds of their creators. For example, in direct response to questions and concerns raised by members of the UMass queer community, the Libraries attention was drawn to the fact that subject headings for incest, child

sexual abuse, and similar topics under call number HQ72 had been historically classed next to those for queer theory, suggesting an affiliation between these topics that sustains a long-standing rhetorical feint used to demean and diminish queer people and to portray queerness as a danger to families, communities, and children. In response to this input from the community, UMass metadata librarians have determined that HQ72 is not commonly in use, and so no recent books are being classed into this call number, while books from the 1970s, 1980s and a few from the early 1990s are being reclassified into the currently used call number areas, which are not shelved next to queer theory, and are instead predominantly in the HV or R schedules. New call numbers and any new subject headings identified during subject analysis are added to the WorldCat record for any future libraries to use or update their records. The UMass librarians involved in the project hope that this will allow these changes to have the maximum impact possible.

In addition to acquiring and making JEDI collections available, the Libraries are mindful of how patrons are represented in library systems. In early 2019, we began supporting the use of patrons' preferred names. By the end of 2020, as the Libraries approached full implementation of a new open-source library services platform (FOLIO), Libraries staff began integrating preferred names into library systems. By end of spring semester 2021, all edits were complete so that patrons who use their preferred names will see themselves properly represented in communications generated by most of the Libraries systems. As of this writing, patrons still have to manually update their name in the interlibrary loan system until there are appropriate systems connects, though this project is underway. The Libraries are not unique on campus in the need to integrate system interoperability to reflect preferred names, and it is an ongoing technological challenge, but it is a priority and will remain one in the future.

Overall, The Libraries are taking the necessary steps to represent JEDI across collections, though there is a goal to conduct a complete collection assessment to determine how collections reflect JEDI, where there are gaps, and how those gaps will be addressed. This will be a significant undertaking, but one that is critical to the Libraries commitment to the community.

FURTHERING LIBRARY JEDI EFFORTS THROUGH PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

A Solid Foundation

The Libraries have a long history of producing programming in physical and digital spaces related to the topics of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. With the W. E. B. Du Bois Papers as the cornerstone, the Special Collections are most intentionally comprehensive and interconnected in the area of social justice. This concentration of resources has provided focus for JEDI events and programs.

UMass Amherst Libraries' social change collections have inspired events through the years, including colloquia on topics ranging from de-incarceration and communal living to Vietnam War activism, Quaker abolitionists, and disability rights. Likewise, issues of environmental equity have periodically been the focus for events and programs supported by the Libraries' Sustainability Fund, underwritten by alumni and friends. The Libraries' commitment to open access and the promotion of open scholarship have spawned JEDI-focused events, at times in partnership with student groups such as the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group and the Student Government Association, since students directly benefit from access to free and low-cost academic resources, especially for learners from first-generation or from underrepresented populations.

New Strategic Directions

Prioritizing JEDI efforts means intentionally taking a new approach. The programming described above, while data-driven and effective, has been developed in response to library goals (e.g., providing support for students and faculty in sustainability research and practice, and communication with donors who support the Libraries sustainability fund about the good things they help make happen) or reactionary (e.g., a donor funds a collection which is highlighted and used toward shared goals). While these efforts have been well-intentioned, they lacked an underpinning of intent that invited audiences to actively help the Libraries change and grow. The Libraries Leadership Team is working to set strategy for a JEDI-informed communications approach to reach all stakeholders.

In one example of what this might look like, the Libraries' student success and engagement team has been charged with co-creating programming in dialog with our diverse audiences. We want to launch all efforts by inviting input: asking what audiences need and want and then incorporating those ideas into subsequent programming. The Libraries are also focusing on discovering what audiences view as barriers and then removing them whenever possible.

For the annual Du Bois Lecture in 2023, this new approach means focusing on the widest possible audience; for example, live-streaming the lecture across platforms and captioning it to be freely accessible, to allow for maximum participation.

In the early stages of adopting a co-creative framework for JEDI programming, The Library Leadership Team worked with librarians and staff to find partners for JEDI initiatives. We researched what was already going on within communities, finding out what was already being planned and in need of broader support. Among the initial efforts included sponsoring the film *Powerlands* for Indigenous People's Month (as noted earlier in the chapter) and a dance lesson during Latinx Heritage Month, using our sponsorship to broaden the audience for the events and helping to remove financial barriers.

The Libraries' Outreach Series

The Libraries' Outreach Series and corresponding RECESS space (Recharge, Engage, Connect, Energize, Support, Succeed) has been established as the format in which the UMass student communities will partner with the Libraries for co-creating programming going forward.

The Libraries have long been focused on how to feel welcoming to all students, including finding creative ways to bring them through the doors. Before the pandemic, the Libraries offered Finals Fun with snacks and arts and crafts to de-stress and partnered with peer health educators on campus to provide canine companionship twice a semester in the W. E. B. Du Bois Library lobby with Bright Spot Therapy Dogs.

During the first pandemic phase of remote learning, connecting with students became even more important. The Libraries' hosted its first virtual Get Your Game On board game night. More than 70 students joined via Zoom and spent nearly two hours playing bingo, trivia, Pictionary, and Scattergories. As the event wrapped up, a number of attendees asked for more events like it.

In response to input from students craving opportunities for connection, the Libraries' Outreach Librarian and the Associate Editor for Digital Content formed the Library Outreach Team and collaborated to build out a bimonthly virtual game night series for the rest of the semester. The success of those events led to the development of the Libraries Outreach Series, which, in addition to games, offered weekly activities such as yoga, virtual concerts, open mic night, and online visits with the therapy dogs.

For the 2021–2022 school year, which saw the return of students to our residential campus, the Outreach Series moved to in-person, which allowed for even more types of events, including arts and crafts activities and an improv workshop.

Throughout the evolution of the Outreach Series, the act of co-creation with students as full partners has been key to this work. For the Libraries, this has taken the form of paper-based surveys, white boards with prompts for students to respond to at will, and a trial participatory design initiative involving first-generation students that will inform the co-creative efforts going forward.

Co-creating virtual and physical spaces where students feel they belong is an essential aspect of supporting student success. Feeling like they belong in the Libraries and on campus helps students make connections, which directly supports their mental health and their academic journey.

Equipped with survey data proving the impact of the Libraries’ focus on well-being, and the types of events students favored, the Library Outreach Team proposed converting an underutilized room in the Du Bois Library into a study break space with games, crafts, and opportunities for connection; this space also provides a central and easily accessible venue for events held as part of the Libraries Outreach Series.

Of the more than 300 attendees initially surveyed, every student indicated the Libraries Outreach Series events helped with a combination of well-being, making connections, relaxing, and recharging. Many commented that they appreciated “being able to wind down and take my mind off things,” “meeting new people, the chill environment,” and “[relaxing] with friends in a space big enough for all of us.” By creating a space **for** students, **by** students, and **with** students, the Libraries’ goals were met, too: More than 90 percent of students surveyed said they would be more likely to use library services and resources after attending an Outreach Series event.

Having established this strong foundation for student interaction with library programming, the next phase that will be undertaken is focused on finding how best to incorporate diverse student voices into library planning. As educators and advocates, serving students must be at the center of the campus’s planning, says Pearson, the monomial director of New Student Orientation and Transitions at UMass Amherst.

The creation of this library space is a testament to putting students first. The Libraries should be a liberating, inclusive environment where students can feel intimately connected and cared for, and that is what the creation of RECESS has done. Many incoming students have a limited perspective of what a library can provide. Student success, student well-being, and student belonging must be integrated, collaborative work from our entire campus. The Libraries’ creation of RECESS demonstrates their commitment to student success, and to listening to the campus and institutional student needs.

Using Participatory Design

In line with educational institutions’ emphasis on student well-being, many academic libraries, like the UMass Amherst Libraries, have been creating their own wellness initiatives. The growing involvement of libraries in supporting well-being on campuses has been identified as one of the 2020 top trends in academic libraries by the Association of College and Research Libraries (Research and Review Committee, 2020).

The emerging interest in developing library services, programs, and spaces that facilitate student wellness is an example of a social turn in library innovation, or a shift from collection-based to com-

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munity-oriented service models. In this new framework, libraries take a holistic approach to the student experience, actively seeking partners and collaborators within and beyond the institution.

During the Fall semester 2022, the UMass Libraries Outreach Librarian collaborated with the Library Data Analyst to pilot a participatory design project involving first-generation students. The goal was for a small group to work together with Libraries staff over the course of eight meetings to create materials or messages that would assist other first-generation students in gaining familiarity with the Libraries' resources and services. The students were offered lunch and a stipend for their time. The students produced social media messages relevant to first-gen students and others who were new to academic library spaces and resources.

The first iteration of this effort produced other results that, while unexpected, have proven beneficial to planning future efforts of this sort. For example, the Libraries learned that student feedback groups need time to feel comfortable with each other, so having a semester-long cohort worked; convening the group over lunch, however, was not as successful, so future meetings will be in the afternoon with snacks instead of a meal. Compensation was the reason students were attracted to the opportunity to offer feedback to the Libraries; they continued to participate, however, because of the sense of importance and belonging they felt as part of the group's work.

Based on these results, the Libraries will engage a new set of students next year to provide input and feedback into events and programming. Specifically, students will be asked to share their ideas about an awards program the Libraries are planning that will showcase undergraduate projects and experiences. Libraries staff also ask students to provide input on the RECESS space, the Outreach Series, and potential pop-up ideas for marketing library services.

Connecting Library Expertise with Students: The Libraries Workshop Series

The Libraries Workshops Series has been a way for staff in the Libraries to offer short sessions on topics within their areas of expertise. In Fall 2020, when the campus was primarily remote, a small organizing group within the Libraries focused on pivoting the Libraries workshop series from in-person to online. This pivot was quite successful for the Libraries, both for increasing accessibility for patrons within and beyond the UMass Amherst community and encouraging more staff within the Libraries to develop workshops in their areas of expertise. Each academic year, the number of workshops offered has grown by semester, with 2020-2021 seeing 31 workshops in the fall, and 35 in the spring. The 2021-2022 series featured 47 workshops in the fall semester, and a significant increase to 87 in the spring, with the annual total more than doubling from 66 in 2020-2021 to 134 in 2021-2022. This growth seems to be holding steady, with 85 workshops offered in the fall semester of 2022 alone. When the Libraries returned to in-person services in Fall 2021, the workshops remained primarily online, though subsequent years have seen a hybrid approach to workshop offerings; this allows for workshops to be accessible to members of the community regardless of their location.

The organizing group worked closely with Development and Communications to improve the marketing of workshops. Analysis shows that people have registered from across all colleges and schools at UMass Amherst. There is often at least one registrant from each of the departments within a college or school. The workshops also have a broad reach across other departments and areas at UMass, including entities such as Foundation Relations, Information Technology, Office of Research Development, Student Affairs and Campus Life, UMass Cranberry Station, UMass Donahue Institute, University Health Services, and more.

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Over time, the breadth of topics of the series has dramatically increased. Previous workshops were focused primarily on basic topics within information literacy. Each semester, more people within the Libraries taught within the program after they heard about their colleague's experiences and the positive feedback and suggestions for other topics from workshop participants. Topic areas now include area studies research methods, citation managers, citizen science, contemplative pedagogies, data services, literature reviews, open educational resources, open scholarship and managing one's researcher profiles, patents, science fun nights, software, technologies, and introductions to the libraries for different audiences such as first-generation students. These sessions help build connections with the community and the Libraries consistently receive feedback about the willingness of instructors to create a welcoming learning environment; e.g., "Sometimes it isn't just about the content of the workshop, but the feelings of camaraderie it helps to generate." Expanding the topics we teach is important for connection and belonging. We want our students and community to see the Libraries as a welcoming place to ask questions even if they are outside what people traditionally see as the bailiwick of libraries. The Libraries will continue to widen the breadth of topics within this series and use the evidence generated from consistent survey practices to further the program's reach. In the future, The Libraries envision inviting campus partners to teach workshops within the program as part of the goal to increase collaborations with the Libraries.

Portfolio Project

The Libraries have been exploring the relation of library usage to student success through the Portfolio Project, led by Libraries Assessment & Planning staff. This effort followed the class of 2021 from their freshman year through graduation by tracking their use of library services, such as use of physical materials, participation in library instruction and use of reservable library rooms. The results of the project suggest that the use of different library services correlates with higher graduate rates within four years and higher retention rates. The retention rate to the second year was 17% higher for students who had library instruction than students who did not. Graduation rates within four years were 63% higher for students who had library instruction versus students who did not. For students who checked out physical library materials, they had graduation rates (within four years) that were 10% higher than those who did not. Students using reservable library rooms graduated in four years 16% more than students who did not use the rooms. In the future, the Libraries would like to develop closer relationships with the entities on campus focused on student success to explore expanding this type of research and incorporating library services into student success measurements across campus.

Reconfiguration of Student Success and Engagement Department

The UMass Amherst Libraries experienced the same circumstances during the pandemic as others, including a high number of vacancies due to retirements and shifts in career focus. This opened the opportunity to re-imagine the Student Success & Engagement (SSE) department, which had previously focused on staffing the Learning Commons and included the Digital Media Lab. The newly revised department will instead partner with the departments and groups on campus that support student success and focus on connection and belonging, such as the UMass JEDI Collaborative, the Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success, Disability Services, New Students Orientation and Transitions, Off Campus Student Life, the Office of Equity and Inclusion, the Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Engagement, Residential Life Residence Education, Student Engagement and Leadership, and Student

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Success. Staffed by a department head, two student success librarians, and the peer research consultant program supervisor, the department will not only collaborate with the aforementioned areas but, more importantly, will partner with students and student groups to help all areas of the Libraries enhance existing programs and services and develop new programs and services based upon their experiences and feedback.

The Peer Research Consultant program, a key initiative to increase inclusion among students who make use of the Libraries, had been a resounding success for the Libraries prior to the pandemic. Students in this program were stationed at the Learning Commons desk, where they answered or triaged reference questions, including those that came via email and chat, and were available for peer research consultations. Peer research consultants were taught the basics of research assistance, including reference interviews, as well as friendly customer service methods. They met weekly as a group and were continually trained in different resources and approaches. Librarians who previously staffed the desk were impressed by the dedication, curiosity, and competence of the student consultants. Anecdotally, it seemed that students were more likely to approach the desk and actually ask questions when the peer research consultants were present. Unfortunately, the previous peer research consultants graduated while the campus was closed for 18 months during the pandemic.

The program was resurrected in Fall 2022 upon the return to a primarily in-person campus experience, which concurred with the hiring of a new program supervisor. Under the guidance of this new staff member, training for peer research consultants has already been expanded to include more hands-on experience with services offered within the main library building by the Libraries, services offered within the building from other campus departments, as well as services and spaces at the branch Science & Engineering Library. The new department will work with the other peer consultant programs on campus, such as the Tutoring Center and the Writing Center, to explore opportunities for cross-training and cross-promotion of services rather than having each service operate in silos with only vague knowledge of each other. The Libraries' student success staff will also seek partnerships with Student Affairs and Campus Life to offer peer research assistance outside the Libraries that will reach students in the places where they gather to eat and socialize.

Open Educational Resource Efforts

UMass Amherst recognizes that that Open Educational Resources (OERs) represent an opportunity to address the financial challenge of ever-increasing textbook and material costs; it is a clear way to be inclusive and equitable for students who may not otherwise have easy access to high-quality course materials, or who may be disinclined to pursue particular educational paths due to cost. However, the Libraries have also faced challenges when trying to engage faculty in the process of developing OERs – a challenge better represented as benign disinterest rather than outright disdain on the UMass Amherst campus. The Libraries initial approach involved liaison librarians evangelizing broadly about the benefits of OER and trying to convince faculty of their value, which was admittedly unsuccessful in part due to a lack of targeted coordination and clear solid goals.

Currently the Libraries are focused on two efforts: the Open Education Initiative (OEI) Grant and strategic planning through participation in the 2022-2023 Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Institute on Open Educational Resources. The OEI grant is a collaboration with the Provost's Office that is coordinated by the Libraries, and which provides funding for instructors to adopt, adapt, or create OER. Grant recipients are selected by a cross-campus committee comprised of staff from the

Libraries, Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and Instructional Design, Engagement, and Support (IDEAS). In 2022, the committee focused on prioritizing projects that would impact large numbers of students, preferably in a General Education course. We will assess the changes to process in this year's grant cycle, along with the effectiveness of the grant to encourage faculty to engage with OER and creating a promotion plan for completed projects funded by the grant.

The AAC&U Institute on Open Education Resources has been an excellent opportunity for the Libraries to develop strategic goals for OER awareness and adoption in collaboration with other campus partners invested in OER. The team includes the Open Education Librarian, Peer Research Consultant Program Supervisor, and Associate Dean for Research & Learning from the Libraries, the Lead Instructional Designer and Faculty Support Coordinator from the IDEAS group, and the Student Services Coordinator from University Without Walls, a primarily online program for students returning to higher education to complete their bachelor's degrees. The Libraries participation in the Institute is helping to develop scaffolded realistic goals and a focused action plan for increasing awareness and usage of OERs to decrease barriers to education on campus. The first goal is to step back and assess the current landscape of OER use on campus. Once staff understand the current landscape, the group will focus on developing strategies to implement course marking in the course system, determine the feasibility and action plan for creating support structures across the Libraries, CTL and IDEAS to increase faculty adoption of open pedagogical approaches, and the most effective ways to engage students in understanding, promoting and possibly creating content for OER and co-creating strategies with the Libraries.

Addressing JEDI Through the Lens of Special Collections

The guiding principles for developing a robust set of special collections to support research, teaching, and learning will vary widely from institution to institution, informed as they are by the way each university defines its mission and decides to interact with the world. However, regardless of these differences, the aforementioned guiding principles are also a natural place to examine the philosophical approach of an institution to JEDI initiatives. The Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center (SCUA) at UMass Amherst has been guided by the principle of documenting social change, with additional focuses on entrepreneurship and the local history of Western Massachusetts. As noted in the opening of this chapter, among the collections already contained in SCUA are the papers of W. E. B. Du Bois, whose importance as a multidisciplinary Black scholar and author cannot be overstated; as well as those of Horace Mann Bond, an influential scholar and educator who served in leadership roles at a number of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and wrote extensively on subjects involving race and education; and the "Visibility for Disability" set of collections, which document the history of individuals and groups engaged in the (ongoing) fight for disability rights protections. There are a great number of other SCUA collections and resources that intersect with or touch on the principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as well.

The existence of these collections, however, simply isn't sufficient to say that SCUA – or the UMass Libraries as a whole – is engaged in the necessary work of promoting JEDI at UMass Amherst; it is critical for these collections to be activated in the curriculum, where students and faculty may connect with – and be inspired by – the work and writing of those who grappled with questions of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion prior to the present moment, and where researchers of today may encounter ideas and insights that have informed the global discourse. In both cases, the potential exists for a deepening

and a broadening of the JEDI conversation, on campus and beyond, but only if approached through the active and deliberate use of a JEDI lens.

In a practical sense, this means reviewing any extant collection development policy or guidelines for SCUA to identify what may already exist in terms of JEDI focus and revising the policy or guidelines as appropriate to provide a framework enabling both the current and future staff to include consideration of how particular gifts or strategic acquisitions would further the essential commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. This is not to say that such a framework would become a rubric for turning away collections; rather, it would be used to evaluate where new or proposed accessions would fit in the larger context of the overall collections, to understand what gaps or omissions still exist in the growth and development of SCUA's holdings, and to set strategic priorities for addressing such omissions.

Expanding the Archive of Social Change

“There must come vast social change in the United States; a change not violent, but by the will of the people certain and inexorable; carried out ‘with malice toward none but charity for all’; with meticulous justice to the rich and complete sympathy for the poor, the sick and the ignorant; with freedom and democracy for America, and on earth Peace, Good Will toward men.”

W. E. B. Du Bois, Chicago, June 29, 1951

For more than a decade, the UMass Amherst Libraries' Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives has intentionally focused collecting efforts on materials related to social change. The W. E. B. Du Bois Papers—the most-used collection within its care, 100,000 items documenting the life and work of the activist, author, and sociologist—serve as keystone.

Drawing upon the philosophy of Du Bois, the Libraries' collects original materials documenting the histories and experiences of social change in America and the organizational, intellectual, and individual ties that unite struggles for social justice, human dignity, and equality. Additional collecting foci are regional and university materials, innovation and entrepreneurship, and the spaces where these intersect with social change.

The Libraries' focus on collecting the history of social change emerged from one of Du Bois's key insights: that the most fundamental issues in social justice are so deeply interconnected that no movement—and no solution to social ills—can succeed in isolation. Rather than focusing on individual movements, the Libraries focus on the connections between and among movements, and the flow of people, organizations, and ideas. The goal of this approach was to build a more robust framework for interpreting the history of social engagement in America and to lay the foundation for a deeper understanding of the experience of social change.

Emphasizing the cross-fertilization between social movements and centers of activist energy, SCUA collects materials from individuals and organizations involved in peace and non-violence; social and racial justice; economic justice; drug policy; agricultural reform; environmentalism; sustainability; alternative energy; organized labor; gay rights; disability rights; spiritual activism; antinuclear activism; indigenous peoples, and intentional communities.

Embedding Special Collections in Library Spaces

Library spaces present opportunities to showcase social justice collections and resources. While the main library building is named for Du Bois, and the Du Bois Center on floor 22 also bears his name, there is a lack of information and entry points to his legacy in the most-used library spaces.

New initiatives seek to better utilize public space toward JEDI goals. The main library entry floor is being transformed from a pass-through service space to an exhibition area with materials from collections on display physically and digitally. A bust of Du Bois, previously tucked away on the 25th floor reading room, will be moved to the lower level, the most-visited space on campus, and joined by a bust of B.R. Ambedkar, a visual representation of intention and synergy around social justice.

JEDI Action Plan and Task Force

In recognition of the foregoing challenges, and under new leadership, the Libraries will be creating a JEDI Framework that holistically looks at services, spaces, procedures, policies, and opportunities for learning and growth across all library units and for the variety of stakeholders and patrons who engage with the Libraries. The Framework will include how the Libraries can enhance connection and belonging, which are critical areas for the entire campus, including students, staff, and faculty. By using a JEDI lens, the Libraries will seek to better understand how inclusion and diversity of thought can be increased across the Libraries' services and engagements. The JEDI Task Force will be assembled from across the Libraries staff, including both professional and paraprofessional staff, and will convene to identify the key challenges and opportunities inherent in the Libraries' engagement with the campus, and to provide recommendations that will shape an action plan that provides strategic focus areas and milestones to gauge progress. Examples that may be integrated in the action plan include many of the threads running through this chapter, such as conscious editing, applying a JEDI lens to instruction (e.g., ensuring that examples provided as part of information fluency/literacy instruction are based on diverse audiences and experiences), curating collections that help marginalized voices and experiences be heard and made available, identifying programming that supports connection and belonging, and creating opportunities for students to co-create artistic representations that can be included in library spaces. It is likely that during the work of the Task Force there will be additional themes and opportunities that will emerge and be incorporated into the action plan. This framework will also include recommendations for JEDI funding that will enable a OneLibrary approach be taken to support JEDI work and ideas and formative assessment and evaluation approaches to our programs, services, collections, and spaces. UMass Amherst Libraries sees JEDI work as a principle in which there will be continued growth and not one that will be accomplished in a "check-box" fashion or by reaching one specific goal; this will be part and parcel of the Libraries now and into the future to enable the creation of a connective thread where the UMass Amherst Libraries are a place for all.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

JEDI: The acronym stands for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and refers to incorporating these values into discussions and actions about belonging, community, ethics, and inclusive spaces.

OneLibrary: Being part of and functioning as OneLibrary entails embracing a holistic approach that takes into account the collective requirements. It involves nurturing our shared objectives, fostering an inclusive perspective, and acknowledging that each individual's contributions are crucial to achieving our mission. Moreover, it necessitates recognizing and valuing the distinctiveness of individuals, units, and departments that form an integral part of the entirety of our endeavors and aspirations. By adopting a OneLibrary philosophy and lens by which we connect with each other and our work, we actively demonstrate our appreciation for the diverse skills, experiences, and perspectives of all, thereby enriching the collective entity as a whole.

RECESS: A place to Recharge, Engage, Connect, Energize, Support, and Succeed—is located on the second floor of the W. E. B. Du Bois Library. This friendly space is dedicated to student wellbeing, relaxation, recharging, and connecting. In addition to being a place for students to gather, take breaks, and enjoy non-academic activities, RECESS is home to the Libraries Outreach Series.