

Broward county library system

[Education](#), [Learning](#)



Libraries fulfill an important role in the society. They house books, journals and publications and make them available to the public. Through libraries, the advancement of knowledge is assured and people have a place to go to in securing important information for research and other purposes in securing information (Battles, 2004). Moreover, public libraries have evolved so that even the members of the community who are not in the universities would have access to the wealth of information contained in books, journals and magazines.

Through this, the needs of the people for information would be addressed and literacy would spread further in the society. The United States has instituted its public library system, funded by government funds and accessible to the public. Although public libraries differ from scholarly and research libraries, they usually portray fiction and other works of popular significance. Public libraries are seen as necessary for the maintenance of a literate and intelligent population. Most often, they also offer internet access to the general public.

In the experience of the US, the first public library was opened in Boston, Massachusetts in 1636. Even if there are problems in the funding of public libraries in the US, they are still performing an important role in the society. In fact, this year alone, a 15-branch library in Oregon was closed for six months. Back in 2004, the whole city of Salinas in California shut down its public library system. It managed to reopen in 2005 but with reduced operating hours (American Library Association (ALA), 2007).

Even with these challenges, libraries are still important in ensuring the dissemination of information in the society. Broward County Library Broward
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County Library continues to fulfill its role of meeting the needs of people in securing information, education, and recreation. It is one of largest public library systems in the United States. Broward County library boasts of being the library with large area with 1. 3 million square feet. Furthermore, it offers the highest number of operating hours annually (Broward County Library Website, 2007).

It also boasts of high income derived from its operations and services offered. It also has the largest collection of audio and video, as well as the greatest circulation of materials and highest number of library card holders. The number of computers available for staff and public use is the highest among public libraries in the US (Broward County Library Website, 2007). The Broward County Library was established in 1973 as a result of the efforts of library activists. It started out with \$1. 5 million dollar budget, four branches, and 270, 000 books as part of its collection.

Now, it has several libraries under the system with its Main Library, the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, the Alvin Sherman library, Research and InformationTechnologyCenter, five libraries in several regions and 29 other branches (Broward County Library Website, 2007). In keeping up with the challenges of modern technology, the Broward County Library, the library has established its own website so that people would be able to gain information through the Internet. With the use of the Internet, people can access information about the library remotely even without visiting the physical branches of the library.

The African-American Research Library One of the important developments in the recent history of the Broward County Library is the establishment of <https://assignbuster.com/broward-county-library-system/>

the African-America Research Library. Although the Civil Rights Movement has accomplished a lot for African-Americans, information about the achievements and the ideals of the movement should still be disseminated and promoted all over the country. This library was conceptualized by Samuel Morrison, who dreamed to build a library about African-Americans. It would cater to the Broward community and to the broader world.

This library was further inspired by Morrison's visit to the Auburn Research Library on African-American History and Culture. By the time of its founding, there were only two libraries dedicated to African-American history (The Story of AARLCC, 2007). The focus of the library is the cultural influence of the spread of African-Americans in the United States. In the mid-1990s, the library planned to be established was just a small library because of the lack of finances. In fact the budgetary requirement was short by \$7 million dollars.

Drawing upon the strength of the civil rights movement, Morrison drew upon the grassroots and involved the community in achieving his dreams for the library (The Story of AARLCC, 2007). Morrison literally went to the streets in order to mobilize support from the community. As such, the fundraising efforts became underway and the much needed additional millions came in through donations from corporations, church people, civic organizations and concerned citizens who believed in Morrison's dreams (The Story of AARLCC, 2007).

The fundraising campaign was followed by the establishment of the library building, taking note that the design and the ambience reflected African-American sensibilities. The collection of the library came about through the <https://assignbuster.com/broward-county-library-system/>

contributions of different people who shared the vision and the dream, starting with actress Esther Rolle who donated her personal possessions and other documents that showcased the civil rights movement and other African-American memorabilia.

As such, by 2002, the African-American Library and Cultural Center stood as part of the Broward County Public Library System (The Story of AARLCC, 2007). Conclusion The Broward County Library is fulfilling its role in providing access to information to the residents of Broward County. Yet, it does more than that, through the establishment of African-American Library, it is also providing a testimony to the achievements of the civil rights movement, which is one of the major highlights of American history.

The County Library is therefore serving the community, not only in providing information contained in books, journals and other media. Rather, it is also providing appreciation of the segments of history through the African-American Library. It is a testimony to the commitment of the Broward County Library to its commitment to its population and to the United States as a whole. Lastly, public libraries, even though they may be struggling in making ends meet, should look for sources of funding in the same way that Morrison turned his dream to reality.

Reference American Library Association. (2007). News reports of nationwide library funding impacts. Retrieved 30 Oct 2007 from <http://www.ala.org/ala/news/libraryfunding/libraryfunding.htm>. Battles, M. (2004). *Library: An Unquiet History*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. Broward County Library Website (2007). Retrieved 31 October 2007 from <http://www.broward.org/library/b>. The AARLCC Story. (2007). Broward County Library. <https://assignbuster.com/broward-county-library-system/>

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