The Importance of Preserving Student Organization Records at an HBCU

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Abstract
Have you ever dreamed of being a part of a legacy? Some students attend a school for educational purposes, while others want to be accepted into a community of like-minded individuals who will help launch their careers. Yet, when a student attends a historically black college and university (HBCU), the person achieves both paths while in the pursuit of their academic degree.

Consequently, not all history is being preserved. In my analysis, I have noticed since the decline of University Publications including the student newspaper and yearbooks that Prairie View A&M University, we are lacking to gather modern-day information for future preservation.

Hence, the purpose of my research is to combine community engagement and being aware of the importance of preservation. The study of contemporary archival collection development is stagnant in ways of improving based on the availability of archivists, especially at HBCUs. Through a quantitative survey analysis, I have reached out to various institutions to gather information on archival collection development practices and the availability of policies and procedures. My study revealed that due to the availability of archivists in these settings, some collections are in a huge backlog and not a concise analysis of campus student life records on one institution. Overall, I conclude that active community engagement with various organizations, faculty advisors, and outreach initiatives can gather the importance of cultural preservation to be in the Archives department rather than in the silo departments across the school campus.

About the authors:
Evelyn Davis considers herself the HBCU archivist. She is a Processing Archivist and Digital Humanities Librarian at Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View, Tx. She assists with helping the university re-discover their history since PVAMU is the second oldest university in the state of Texas. While obtaining her dual master's degrees, she developed a passion and interest in African American Studies within Special Collections, so when she given the opportunity to work at an HBCU, she was honored to become a part of a rich history and legacy of families here in Prairie View, TX. Her other hobbies include writing poetry, dancing, bowling, painting artwork, exploring my local museums, blogging, and podcasting. Additionally, she is a Louisiana native, born in the New Orleans area and greatly influenced by her Creole heritage to embrace different cultures and preserve historical places. As a result, her love for cultural preservation started out combining her passion for writing and wanting to preserve stories at the same time. She is happy to continue her journey into Black Librarianship and strive to help communities preserve their stories for future generations.