Voices from Florida

Public programming as a tool for archival advocacy

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Society of Florida Archivists
2023 Annual Conference
Voices from Florida

Voices from Florida is a monthly public program hosted and curated by the Special Collections & Archives Division of the Miami-Dade Public Library System, focused on highlighting unique stories about Florida's history, culture, environment, and communities.
The program also serves to advocate for the available resources for library patrons, which include archives, books, databases, and more. Critical to this message is the preservation and long-term care of historical and culturally significant materials that are within the library's collections.
Online Event

Finding Freedom on Biscayne Bay: A Brief History of Biscayne National Park

Tuesday, August 30
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Listen to Park Ranger Gary Bremen’s fascinating stories about the native people, shipwrecks, pirates, presidents and more that have made Biscayne National Park one of the most interesting places in the world.

Registration is required. For more information and to register, please contact Miami Beach Library at 305-272-2665, scan the QR code or visit miamibeachlibrary.org. Zoom link will be emailed to participants within 24 hours of the event start time.

So-Fla’s Scary Cinema

Saturday, October 22 • 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Local history meets horror in this engaging discussion of four fright films made in and around South Florida. Join Florida International University Librarian Eduardo Fojo as he provides interesting film facts, history and insightful critical commentary.

For more information, please contact the library or scan the QR code.
Give Them Their Flowers: A Lecture on Black LGBTQ+ Miami History

Join writer and researcher Nadege Green for an exploration of Miami’s Black LGBTQ+ history. By collecting oral histories and archival material Nadege brings to life this understudied part of Miami’s history.

Following the lecture, attendees are invited to visit the exhibit at the Little Haiti Cultural Center Art Gallery located at 212 NE 59 Terrace.

All ages.

Saturday, March 25
Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Lemon City Branch Library
430 NE 61 St • 305-757-0662

For more information and to register, please scan the QR code or contact the branch.

Coral Morphologic in the Coral City

Find out what makes Miami the Coral City it is today. Go on a journey through space and time with Marine Biologist and co-founder of Coral Morphologic Colin Foord to learn about our coral reefs and their role in building a more sustainable and resilient future.

Coral Morphologic promotes coral conservation through art, science and technology.

All ages.

Thursday, April 27
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.
The series began in April 2021 as virtual programs that were created and presented by Special Collections & Archives staff.
Program goals

Through the Voices from Florida program we aim to provide engaging discussions about Florida’s rich cultural and historical legacy that will inspire patrons to further pursue their passion for knowledge by utilizing the Special Collections department.

1. **ENGAGEMENT**
   - Focused on unique stories of Florida's history, culture, literature, and communities.

2. **ADVOCACY**
   - Highlight the available resources for library patrons, which include archives, books, databases and more.

3. **RESEARCH**
   - Allow community historians, researchers, and advocates to tell their stories in their own voice and providing outside assistance when further research is needed.
Thanks to a grant from the Florida Humanities we were able to expand the program. We decided that all the events and speakers would focus on Florida’s environment and its relation to water, climate change, and sustainability.

- By creating a themed series we had repeat engagement from patrons.
- Online events allowed us to reach patrons across the state!
- The grant funding allowed us to offer an honorarium to each of the speakers.
Collaborating with local storytellers

For our 2022 year of programming we made a targeted effort to reach out to local storytellers who had used library resources in their particular areas of interest. We found these presenters were some of our best advocates and were enthusiastic to have a platform to share their stories.
Creating community connections

A teacher and several students from Booker T. Washington High School attended the February event because they were working on research projects about Black history in Miami but were having trouble finding resources. They stayed after the program for an impromptu tour.

The students then attended the March presentation which lead to a collaboration with Nadege Green who featured the students research on her Instagram account @BlackMiamiDade.

The teacher then extended an invite to present about how to conduct research using the Florida Collection. 40 kids signed up for library cards and new research skills were acquired!
Programs promote library resources

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY
- Librarian
- Newsbank: The Miami Herald Collection
- Ancestry Library Edition
- Digital Collection (Sanborn Collection, City of Miami Incorporation Paper)
- Interlibrary Loan (The Library of Congress)
- The Vault (Reference not found on floor)
- Microfilm
- Books
- City Directory
- Scholarly Journals (Tesqueda, JSTOR)

TYPES OF RESOURCES
- Census Records
- Family Records (Photographs, Family Tree)
- Vital Records (Birth Records, Death Certificates)
- Newspapers (local, national and international)
  - Miami Herald
  - Miami Metropolis
- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- United States Department of Interior (Homestead Act Documents)
- FloridaMemory.com (State Library and Archives of Florida)

“THERE IS HISTORY IN PLAIN SIGHT THAT IS NOT ACKNOWLEDGED. THERE IS HISTORY IN PLAIN SIGHT THAT IS NOT EXPLORED AND THERE IS HISTORY IN PLAIN SIGHT THAT IS PROGRESSIVELY BEING TORN DOWN.”

-CHRISTINE MALCOLM

Slides created by Christine Malcolm illustrating the many library resources she relied on when doing research for a documentary series titled The History of Black Miami, a project of AnneMarie Henry, Keith Moore, & Malcolm.
Experiments with the format
VOICES FROM FLORIDA
CELEBRATING LGBTQ PRIDE

Join us for an afternoon of history, author talks, and music celebrating Pride Month.

1:00 p.m.
Author Talk with Julio Capo
Welcome to Fairyland

2:15 p.m.
Singing Performance with Miami Gay Men's Chorus

3:00 p.m.
Author Talk with T. Deutch
Queer in the Sunshine State

Saturday, June 25
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Miami Beach Regional Library
227 22nd Street • 305-535-4219

To report materials to accessible format, sign language interpreters, and/or accommodations to participate in any Miami-Dade Public Library System-sponsored programs or meetings, please call Media Relations at 305-549-6728 or email programming@mdpl.org two days in advance to schedule your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service).
Humans in the Everglades – Past and Present

Saturday, July 23
1:00 p.m. - Hands-on Activity
2:00 p.m. - Lecture

KENDALE LAKES BRANCH LIBRARY
15205 SW 86th St. • 305-348-0336

Learn about the "River of Grass" and its history from an Everglades National Park Ranger.

For more information, please contact the branch or scan the QR code below.
Programs bring awareness
When developing programs in-house it was beneficial to tie the program to an exhibit to cut down on research time.

Partnering with local creatives allowed us to bring unique stories about our communities to patrons while highlighting the multitude of ways archives get utilized!

Reflections & Results

23 programs over a three year period

566 patrons engaged both virtually and in-person
Next stage

In March 2023 the program was awarded a Community Projects Grant through the Florida Humanities! This grant will allow the program to expand to multiple branches throughout the system and will continue to include virtual programs!

questions? thoughts? suggestions? email me @ labudak@mdpls.org