Student-led Collection Development for Diversifying Collections and Making Connections

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**Student-Led Collection Development for Diversifying Collections and Making Connections**

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**Goal:** promote diversity in the library collections by providing students with the knowledge and a budget to purchase popular reading material from Philadelphia independent bookstores whose collections reflect diverse voices

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**Internship Development**

Librarians at Bryn Mawr College established an annual paid spring break internship for undergraduate students focused on collection development.

**Six students** of diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and academic disciplines are selected based on their interest in books and reading.

**Independent bookstores with a focus:**
- Philly AIDS Thrift @ Giovanni's Room, an LGBTQ/feminist bookstore
- Uncle Bobbie's Coffee and Books, a Black-owned community bookstore

**Budget:** $5000 (books, student wages, incidentals)

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**Outcomes**

Students gain understanding and appreciation of:
- Processes for choosing, acquiring, and displaying books in libraries and bookstores
- Themselves as consumers and the role this plays in shaping the shelves

"I did not realize that there is an immense amount of time, labor, and care necessary for a book to arrive on a shelf and, eventually into my hands."

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**Program Highlights**

**Visits**
- Local independent bookstores & college bookshop
- Local public library
- Behind the scenes tours of campus libraries

**Student collection process**
- Discuss academic library acquisitions and collection development
- Collate book selections; check library holdings
- Review and discuss selections; decide together on final purchases
- Students create online presentation with reflections and book reviews
- Library buys student selections from the bookstores
- Public celebration and display of new titles in the library

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**Library expanded**
- Relationships with student participants
- More ethical, equitable, and impactful selection and acquisition practices
- Business relationships with the bookstores
- Local impact by sharing replicable model: Haverford hosted 2023 internship featuring other bookstores

- 100+ student-selected books purchased each year
- 38% of 2022 titles checked out
- 300+ firm order books purchased from independent bookshops since 2022

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See more on our program website