



**Atlanta University Center  
Robert W. Woodruff Library**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library Awarded Mellon Grant for  
HBCU Past Presidents Oral History Project**

The Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library has been awarded a grant by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support an initiative to document, publish and preserve the experiences and administrative contributions of living former presidents of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The project, entitled “Documenting the Perspectives of the Council of Past HBCU Presidents,” will collect the oral histories from select past presidents, placing them within a historical context and framing issues of leadership and strategic management within HBCUs.

As debate over the relevancy and value of HBCUs continues with the question of whether these institutions will survive, it has become increasingly important to ensure their stories are preserved. While archives can preserve institutional records, they cannot capture the first-hand perspectives and leadership experiences of administrators who had an influence on the health of HBCUs. The presidents are the keepers of the rich past of HBCUs, and without a record of their narratives, the insight into this history will be lost.

For the Mellon-funded project, members of the Council of Past HBCU Presidents, an Atlanta-based organization comprised of former presidents, will be interviewed. In addition to capturing their oral histories, biographical profiles of Council members will be created and an annotated bibliography of their scholarship will be produced and published for public access. The AUC Woodruff Library’s Archives Research Center will serve as the repository for the collected material.

“We are pleased to receive the Mellon Foundation’s generous support for this timely project. The Council of Past HBCU Presidents have a perspective about leading HBCU institutions through some critical periods of the last century, a perspective that informs U.S. history in general and African American history in particular,” said Loretta Parham, CEO and Director of the AUC Woodruff Library. “The information collected and shared will be a critical resource for scholars on race, education, and management.”

**About the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library**

Established in 1982, the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library serves the collective research and information needs of Clark Atlanta University, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse College and Spelman College. A 21st century learning place, the Library features collaborative learning and study spaces, state-of-the-art technology, practice presentation studios, a premier destination Archives Research Center and a café. Visit [www.auctr.edu](http://www.auctr.edu).

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