The Xavier Library Resource Center: Becoming A Better Partner in Community Empowerment

Founded by St. Katherine Drexel (pictured above) and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1925, Xavier University is the only Black and Catholic University in the nation.

Xavier University of Louisiana is #1 in the nation in awarding bachelor’s degrees to African American students in biology, chemistry, physics and the physical sciences.

These are some motivating reasons why the Library must continue to empower its staff, students, faculty and surrounding community:

- To improve our self-perception as an organization
- To assist in developing a stronger more confident local community
- To recruit students and supporters from the local community
- To retain those students and supporters

Empowering staff, students, faculty and community requires the following in part:

- Confidence: in our resources, our skills and our mission
- Inclusiveness: respect people for what they bring to the group
- Organization: structure the library to continue acting as a source of empowerment when key people leave
- Co-operation: develop a (or develop into) a team that works well together
- Serve the campus and the community
- Access to Resources:
  - Tangible Resources: Books, Databases, Internet Access, and Media Resources
  - Nontangible Resources: Personal Experiences of library staff, Positive Growth-oriented Environment, and Community Connections
Some Ways Xavier University’s Library Resource Center Can Empower Students, Staff, Faculty and Community

An integral part of our Library’s focus should be to empower EVERY user irrespective of their position or status.

**How Can Empowerment Extend to Staff, Students and Community**

- **All Library employees** can empower people by providing access to traditional resources and emerging technologies: books, internet, 3D modeling or immersive 3D rigs e.g. Oculus Rift. As well as desired nontangible assets like personal encouragement, local knowledge and other shared community interests.

- **Librarians** should empower library staff in various ways. For example, librarians can empower staff by encouraging them to network or collaborate with others through attending and presenting at workshops, seminars, and conferences (e.g. Louis User Conferences, ALA or BCALA).

**Technology and the Library Resource Center**

- **Internet access** is available to every patron of the library at Xavier University. However, to strengthen usability, librarians must actively and positively encourage staff to stay abreast of emerging technologies and their practical applications, through staff led technology committees for example.

- Empowerment through technology, must include opportunities for community users affected by the digital divide to learn how to access resources beyond the library.

- Empowerment opportunities such as hackathons or smart-phone app development seminars imparts users with personal tools for developing businesses or other means of improving their fiscal wellbeing.
What Results are Envisioned Through Our Library's Empowerment Initiatives?

Ultimately we seek to engender...

**ENvironments That Nurture Human Potential**

However to get there we must:

- Build our reputation in the community as a reliable, innovative and distraction-free information service provider to support Xavier’s recruitment and retention initiatives
- Continue to be a resource and refuge for life-long learners
- Continue enhancing the information literacy skills of our students and the skills of our surrounding community as a whole
- Integrate information, instruction and other services into the community
- Share and promote our expertise and resources through engagement with campus and community partnerships as well as with individual citizens
- Facilitate and manage academic resources and partner with community organizations that can result in community members being more psychologically and fiscally resilient

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