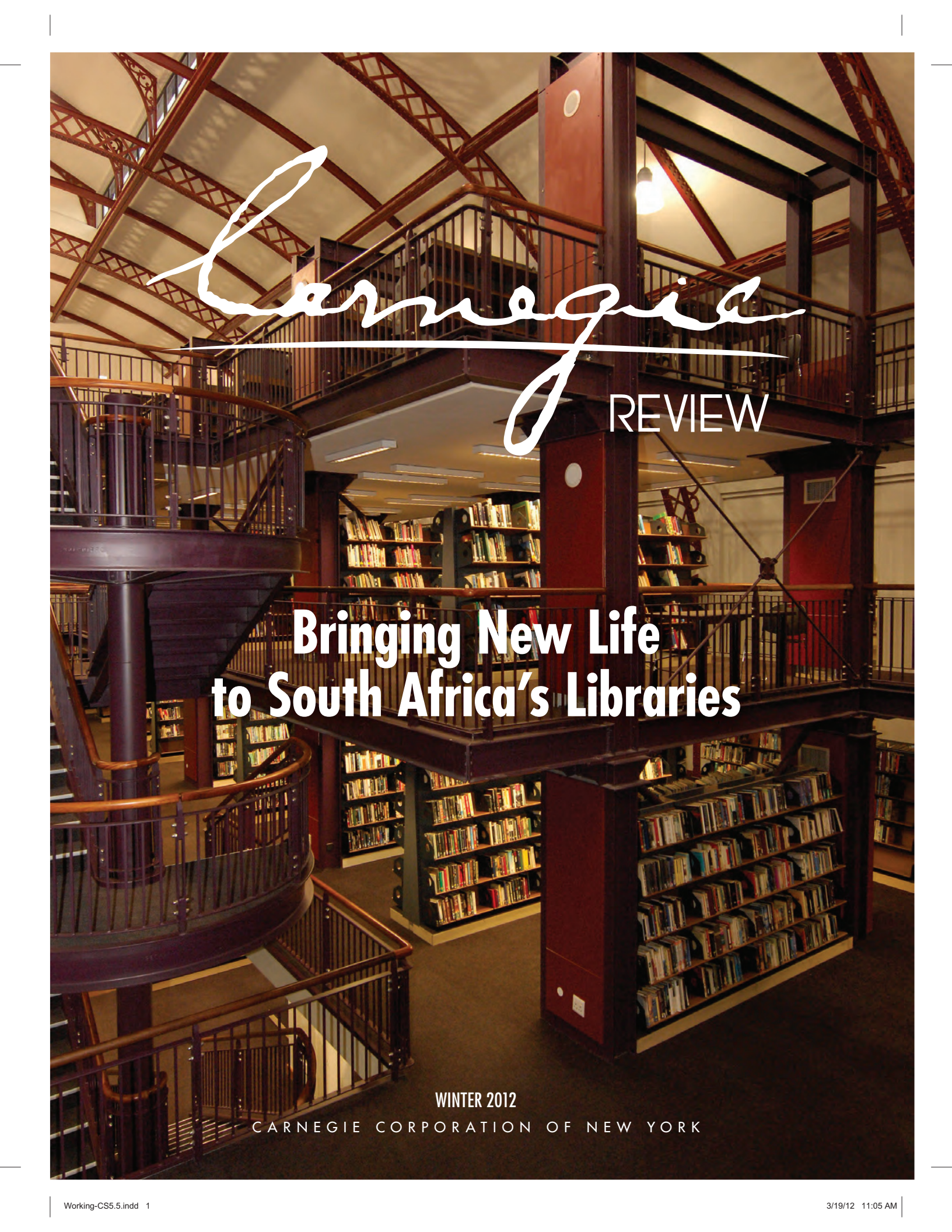


The background of the entire page is a photograph of a grand, multi-story library interior. A prominent feature is a large, dark wood spiral staircase on the left side. The upper floors are filled with bookshelves and have ornate metal railings. The architecture is characterized by a high ceiling with exposed wooden beams and a warm, ambient lighting.

Carnegie

REVIEW

Bringing New Life to South Africa's Libraries

WINTER 2012

CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK



When we create libraries, we advance the open society that is the foundation of democracy. I believe the library may well be the single institution that best represents an open society—in Africa and around the world. We must acknowledge that libraries are indispensable, and their creation and preservation should be our duty and our joy. Libraries have and always will contain their nation's heritage, the heritage of humanity, the records of its triumphs and failures and of its people's intellectual, scientific and artistic achievements. Yet libraries are not repositories of human endeavor alone—they are instruments of civilization. They provide tools for learning, understanding and progress.

Libraries represent the link between the solitary individual and humankind—our community. Libraries, like museums, contain the DNA of our civilization. They are the building blocks of our culture.

One individual in particular who understood and appreciated books and libraries was Andrew Carnegie. Perhaps Carnegie's greatest philanthropic act was his endowment of libraries: he helped to create well over 2000 libraries in the United States and other parts of the world, including Africa. As a poor boy who could not buy the books he so desperately wanted to read, Carnegie understood the power of providing a place where no one asks if you can afford to pay in order to read. As he said, "Whatever agencies for good may rise or fall in the future, it seems sure that the Free Library is destined to stand and become a never-ceasing foundation of good for all."

That is why I have always believed libraries are, indeed, the great defenders of freedom and democracy. They safeguard the truth, preserve memory and protect history so it cannot be perverted or revised to suit nefarious purposes. I often think about that fact because one of the books that most influenced me in my youth was George Orwell's *1984*. I can still recall the shock of reading how, in the world that Orwell created, facts and information could so easily be manipulated or denied. Luckily, we are not living in Orwell's 1984.

We are also lucky because we need what libraries provide. They serve as levers of change within societies, improving literacy levels, preserving history and languages, and acting as information hubs. Libraries often provide a community's only access to electronic communication. This is particularly true in many African nations. Hence, reflecting the interests of Andrew Carnegie, who helped to fund public library buildings in South Africa beginning in 1911, the Corporation has been making major investments in sub-Saharan African libraries. Our grants have leveraged other funding to build model public libraries in South Africa and to revitalize the libraries of several universities on the continent. We are proud to have worked with our many South African partners across all sectors to provide all of South Africa's citizens with excellent libraries that will contribute to the nation's progress for decades to come.

Vartan Gregorian

President, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Carnegie Review is a publication series that generally focuses on program areas as they come to their natural conclusion. Its aim is to assess a cluster of grants, providing insight into how a particular program area developed, the grantmaking and people involved and the lessons learned.

Bringing New Life to South Africa's Libraries

1

A library was “a never failing spring in the desert,” in Andrew Carnegie’s view, the number-one investment a community could make to help its people. Carnegie’s conviction still holds true today, particularly in Africa. In the age of technology, with a global economy focused on knowledge and information, libraries hold the key to creating opportunities and helping to solve the continent’s problems.

Not that long ago African libraries were in crisis. Lack of resources, leadership and vision had crippled many institutions. Public libraries in most of Africa were crowded and overextended with limited and outdated services. In South Africa, the challenge was expansion and inclusion of the majority African population into services that were restricted for a white minority.

The need for a fresh approach was obvious when Vartan Gregorian assumed the presidency of Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1997. It was past time for people in Africa to have access to adequate, up-to-date technology on par with the developed world. The former president of the once-struggling New York Public Library system, Gregorian considered libraries the record of humanity’s intellectual, scientific and artistic achievements. “It would be a true tragedy,” he said, “if that record did not serve and include African countries

at the highest level possible.” Still, it would be no simple matter to meet this need given the unique challenges of the region: multiple languages, oral traditions, lack of free Internet access and a need for legions of well-trained professionals to staff libraries now and in the future.

First Steps

Carnegie support for libraries in Africa was not a new idea; it was part of the Corporation legacy. Between 1911 and 1961 almost \$9 million had been provided to library projects in the continent’s Commonwealth countries, with two-thirds of the total going to South Africa. In 1927 the Corporation sent two consultants, Milton Ferguson, state librarian of California, and S.A. Pitt, librarian of the Glasgow Public Library, to South Africa to investigate the status of librarianship there. The experts’ reports to the Corporation in 1928 laid the foundation for library funding in South Africa for decades, until the Corporation suspended its library program in 1961.

Ferguson and Pitt reported that the South African library system of the 1920s was backward, had no branch libraries and catered exclusively

to educated middle- and upper-income whites. Services did not exist for rural communities, or for blacks and other nonwhites who comprised four-fifths of the population. Carnegie Corporation made grants for the development of library facilities for blacks in South Africa and other African countries, supplying books to rural schools, churches, mine compounds and social centers in small and scattered communities—work considered by library scholars to be among the Corporation’s most valuable contributions in this part of the world.

By the late 1990s, the end of apartheid in South Africa made all public facilities open to everyone, but libraries remained far from adequate. The 2,500-plus institutions could not meet the huge demand and, with most located in predominantly white neighborhoods, were inaccessible to township and rural blacks. Most young people in the highly populated informal settlements and rural communities lived in homes without electricity. Conditions were crowded and students lacked quiet areas in which to study.

Few schools in disadvantaged communities had libraries, so for approximately eight million of the 12 million students in South Africa the public library, if it existed, was the only option. At the same time, the solutions to the problem that were proposed—bookmobiles, second-rate facilities and online rather than printed materials—were not based on a realistic understanding of the students’ needs. This is where things stood in 1999 when the Corporation began looking for ways to relaunch a library program in Africa.

In May 2000 a group of international donors and librarians convened at Carnegie Corporation to brainstorm ways to meet Africa’s urgent need for libraries and access to global knowledge. A key concern was sustainability—the capacity for projects to live on after donor funding ran out. Library initiatives needed to be designed and funded by partnerships among donors, government

agencies and leaders of African organizations, they determined, and managed by librarians with the necessary skills and training to provide appropriate services for local constituencies. This conclusion guided the approach adopted by the Corporation for its African library program, which aimed to create and revitalize public libraries to serve as model centers of learning, communication and technology that could be widely replicated.

Led by then senior program officer Gloria Primm Brown, the new initiative, originally named “Gateways to Information: African Public Libraries,” was designed to foster: the development of literacy programs; linkages between education systems and library systems; continuing education and adult learning in collaboration with ongoing programs; and library service as one of the vehicles for overcoming the digital divide. Through a special competition for South African public libraries, six library systems were selected to be part of this program: Durban Metropolitan Library Services, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality, City of Johannesburg Library and Information Services, Free State Provincial Library and Information Services, Mpumalanga Provincial Library and Information Services, and Northern Cape Provincial Library Services.

Corporation funds were to be used to strengthen these institutions’ infrastructure, enhance their capacity to deliver services and assist in developing exemplary centers of learning and communications. Program staff saw these library systems as among the best in South Africa. Their strong, progressive leadership was attempting to respond to the masses of previously disenfranchised blacks, primarily children and illiterate adults living in townships, informal settlements and rural communities without electricity or water. But before long the Corporation was struggling to keep on track its efforts to rescue South African libraries.

A New Perspective

In 2002, South Africa national Rookaya Bawa, an information studies and development specialist, assumed leadership of the African Libraries program. A veteran librarian/leader with experience in education, government and private business, Bawa had led the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Information and Library Services where she was responsible for the planning and building of new libraries, among oth-

er duties. She had also worked on numerous policy initiatives at the provincial and national levels of government in Africa. Given the desperate nature of the sector and the Corporation's limited funding, she considered it impossible to oversee the number of sites the program had selected. Bawa also saw that paying for small improvements spread over multiple locations would never yield significant impact or bring about lasting change. Better to support only a few libraries and, in her words, "do them well."

Rookaya Bawa



Program Officer, Higher Education and Libraries in Africa and Manager, African Libraries Project

Those with the least deserve the best.

For people with no experience of a library, no half measure of a library will do. That's because we are nurturing an interest as well as serving a need. Some people think all it takes is a shack, a coat of paint, some shelves and 100 books and you've got a library. It's not true. Just like a special needs school should have the best teachers, not the crumbs from the table, by the same token libraries for underrepresented people should offer the very best service. They must be *exemplary* model libraries. When you have fabulous space and engagement you can leverage your success for future projects.

Very often when people think of a poor community they think, "Wonderful! Send a bookmobile." But that's useless! First of all, you have to presuppose what people want to read. Then, with a bookmobile, people can't smell and feel the books; they can't browse. With the mobile, someone may assume you want Harry

Potter. They give you Harry Potter. Then they go away. People in poor communities have a different concept of time and distance, and they travel. They won't be there to return the book on time. For the poor, a small, one-room inadequate library like a mobile or a shack is *not* wonderful.

There's great benefit to serving poor people well—with Internet, photocopiers, encyclopedias, working sanitation, TV sets for children to watch after school, homework support, arts and cultural programming. It's an incredible win-win. The programming and the collections are the bait—what it takes for people to feel, "I want to be here." So are the telephones, fax, TV, music and indigenous language books. There's no point having a library if you don't have a full menu of services. When you give the best there is such heartfelt joy in return. A model library creates a wow factor and other people say, "I want it all too!"

Carnegie Corporation supports the building of wonderful model libraries that represent the best of everything a library can be. The Corporation does not fund bricks and mortar. We pay for everything that goes into the building, but not for the building itself. Money for construction of model libraries has to come from the municipalities. How did we manage to raise money to build such fabulous libraries in poor areas? Because I worked in government and built 10 libraries a year, I

know where the pots of money are for capital work. We made the funding attractive enough for local officials to be unable to walk away. Once they've gotten excited about the project, in two or three years they can do it. It's not possible to do it all the first year. But it can be done in smaller increments.

In government, if money in this year's budget is not spent, next year's budget will be reduced. So we make sure those residual funds would go to the library. Essentially, I was a traveling salesperson. Local government can't say no to money for education, violence prevention, women's opportunity, AIDS prevention, health, etc. That's what the library makes possible. The official opening of one of these libraries is a huge political event. It's *their* library; they built the place. We are the smallest contributor and don't give one cent for bricks and mortar. We support training, collections and technology. Carnegie Corporation also championed big-time free Internet access. Before, customers paid for every minute spent online. But we sought a flat rate for everyone and we got it.

When I came to Carnegie Corporation, the African Public Libraries Initiative was struggling. By trying to serve six systems, each with many branches, the program was dealing with 340 separate sites. The Corpo-

ration's contribution of well over \$3 million was spread too thin and having little or no impact. Ultimately we decided to operate in South Africa alone because it already had a strong library system we could deal with, as well as government support and history with Carnegie Corporation. Working in a decentralized, rather than national way, emphasizing local empowerment, is very much in the Andrew Carnegie tradition. Because I came from South Africa, I had a track record of having built multiple libraries at a time, and I knew what it would take. I also knew if we could create one exemplar it would be replicable throughout the system.

Our model library strategy was to create a large state-of-the-art city library with multiple branches. These libraries are lifesavers for the people who depend on them. If you are poor you take the train to the library hours away and that library has to help you. There's nowhere else to go. For each of these large city "nodes" as we called them, we planned to also have a library in one of the nearby townships (formerly the nonwhite areas under apartheid). None of this could have been accomplished without local capital and, in fact, our ability to leverage funding from local sources is really the heart of the story. It's as though they built the house and we supplied the furniture.

Starting Out and Starting Over

The African library initiative's first round of funding in 2000 included two grants of \$750,000 each to Durban Metropolitan Library Services and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. Durban's funding was to support adult literacy programming in the country's most populous province, which had the highest adult illiteracy rate. Computers for the 60 literacy centers would link to employment and health and human services resources and other essential providers of information and services.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality was a newly formed metro area that was integrating the library systems of three cities to serve more urban constituents as well as underserved residents in rural communities. Its funding was intended for staff development, services to children and services at nontraditional facilities.

These two grantee institutions fell victim to the typical struggles with focus, leadership and accountability that plagued the initiative's early years. In 2002 both programs were asked to undergo substantive changes designed to yield what Bawa termed "measurable and visible doables." In Durban, the

project was to be reduced, providing services at six sites rather than at all the branch libraries of the municipality. Similarly, the Municipality project was to be limited to four flagship libraries. Despite these efforts to refocus, in time both grants were canceled and much of the grant money returned. However, later Corporation-funded projects brought benefits to these areas along with many others.

In 2000, additional programs were launched in Botswana and Kenya. The Botswana National Library Service received an initial grant of \$67,000 to develop a strategic plan, followed by a \$2 million grant for four model libraries—two urban and two rural. Activities were to include training of librarians, expansion of outreach services (including a bookmobile), upgrading of collections and development of a Web site.

The Kenya National Library Service received a \$75,000 planning grant followed by over \$2 million for similar development and capacity building in five model libraries, with additional support to come from the Kenyan government and local businesses and organizations. A development office and marketing strategy were also in the plans. The Library Service already operated a central library and 28 branches in heavily populated regions of Kenya, and even had camel library services for the vast northern desert region. At the time, Kenya's National Library Service was considered the strongest public library service in East Africa. Unfortunately, neither of these efforts lived up to its promise. These examples, along with the two in South Africa, demonstrate the challenges this program encountered and the need for managed expectations and close oversight. At the same time, recognizing the inherent difficulties of this work makes the program's successes all the more impressive.

Situations generally improved when the Library Program, under Rookaya Bawa's leadership, evolved from a multisite/multiprogram strat-

egy to a high-impact strategy focused on a select few sustainable centers of excellence in South Africa. Originally, many small investments at multiple library sites provided services primarily to poor new provinces and underresourced municipalities. The emphasis was on information and computer technology (ICT) and outreach, which put the Corporation in the position of supporting numerous nontraditional library sites, book boxes, information kiosks and varied children's programs. The failure of projects to meet targets (as described above) led to the conclusion that the existing approach was overly ambitious. The Corporation was very likely partnering substandard libraries, according to Bawa, since many of these sites did not meet internationally accepted library guidelines.

To establish a new approach for the library program, grantees attended a workshop where they reflected on their accomplishments and determined how to achieve better results with existing grants. Subsequently, most requested grant modifications to reduce their investments from 40 to 50 sites down to four or five. The resulting projects were more feasible, with most targets delivered in a timely manner, and their success attracted funding partners. In short, the Corporation's investment revitalized both donor and government interest in libraries.

In South Africa the strongest provincial systems were selected for transformation, which included such improvements as developing collections, multimedia, library automation, ICT connectivity, security, database access, consortia building, outreach programs and training as well as remodeling and furnishing. The revised strategy supported the creation of centers of excellence that would meet International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and UNESCO standards (see page 20) and become flagship libraries for the country. With appropriate technology, these sites could also become gateways to the world at large.

Because the Corporation does not build libraries, the choice of sites has been limited to areas with purpose-built, functional libraries or sites that attract partner funding for infrastructure development. Libraries in all nine South African provinces, including the few independent libraries, were invited to submit their “best library” for possible funding as a model library. The criteria were a building that was strategically placed, that had the necessary infrastructure [or the potential to obtain it] and the leadership to become a center of excellence. The Corporation received 19 submissions.

The National Library of South Africa was selected as well as four public library sites: Pietermaritzburg, Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. As they are all major public libraries with multiple branches, these institutions could bring together the significant nodal information hubs in South Africa. Consolidation would build capacity and strengthen branch libraries by providing automation support, collection development, acquisition, processing, statistics, outreach programs, mobile and house-bound services, staff training, etc. All five sites were identified as being strategic and robust, with the potential to create a critical mass for national impact with limited investment.

Children First

The first model library program got underway in March 2004 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, with the creation of a junior reference library for children and young adults. Pietermaritzburg, in the Msunduzi municipality, is the capital of KwaZulu-Natal, the country’s most populous province with the highest youth population. This children’s “library of excellence” was designed to set national standards for public library services to youth and to positively impact many other libraries, particularly

area branches. Serving children was an important first step in light of the library’s critical role in development in South Africa. Libraries act as learning centers where students listen to stories, attend meetings, access information and do homework, all in a safe and pleasant environment. They support literacy and provide a quiet space in which to study.

The library chosen for the new children’s facility was the Natal Society Library, one of five legal deposits in South Africa that house one copy of all the country’s publications. A central library with many branches, it served more than 200 area schools, only 25 of which had their own (mostly inadequate) libraries. The renovation was a priority project for Pietermaritzburg, a key part of the Freedom Square tourism and economic development initiative that was intended to rejuvenate the city.

The provincial government undertook all the costs of building the new children’s wing in response to the Corporation’s offer to underwrite everything else: books, multimedia, computers, furniture, connectivity, security, needs assessment, training and more. The anticipated benefits of this investment ranged from increased access to the library for the region’s children and young people, to establishing a national standard for library facilities, to boosting literacy and related skills for students, educators and patrons of all ages and levels of ability and socio-economic status. The new facility was named the Bessie Head Library, for the esteemed writer who was born in Pietermaritzburg.

Restoring Local Pride

Cape Town, the second most populous city in South Africa, was next in line to establish a Corporation supported model library. Located in the country’s southernmost region, this library was once considered the flagship of the system, with the strongest

John Morrison



Manager, Library Services Msunduzi Municipal Library

The Bessie Head Library funded by Carnegie Corporation used to be known as The Main Library. It was started 150 years ago by the Natal Society, a local civic organization I generally refer to as an “interesting colonial relic.” As the largest independent library in South Africa, it was an anomaly. The Society said the library should be open to all people, and in 1975 it became the second library in Africa open to all races—even during apartheid. It caused a huge uproar.

The library remained a private institution until 2004 when it was taken over by the municipality. The library’s always been packed with children, and we ran out of space years ago. Like most developing countries, youth make up a huge percentage of our population, and we needed to expand the children’s section drastically. When we applied to Carnegie Corporation for funding it was Rookaya Bawa’s idea that we should go to the government as well, which we did. The resulting building was paid for with public money and furnished and stocked with Carnegie Corporation funds. It stands out in the center of town and looks fantastic. The children’s section is an all-glass appendage on the original building, which allows children to look in and see all the other children inside. Last year 168,824 children and young people visited the library. It’s an amazing number. And they don’t just take out one book; they request several on their research topic—climate change, for example. We close at 1:00 on Saturdays, and some mornings it’s as if a whole high school came in at once.

The facility I’m describing is the children’s reference library, which was designed for school projects. The main group who use it are poor, young African kids who

live out of town and take a taxi or two to get here. The further away they live, the poorer they are. It’s an amazing sight on Saturday morning to come in at 8:00 AM and see a 50-meter-long line of kids waiting inside, and over 100 meters more outside, down the whole side of the building and down the road. On Public Library Day the minister of culture came and thanked us for the great turnout, but we had to tell him it was nothing special, it’s like that every Saturday—simply packed. Some months we check out as many as 90,000 books.

Many of the children have no experience using a library. At first we allowed free access, but kids could wander around all morning and never find what they wanted. So now we have more staff and every kid is interviewed, helped and given the books they require. It’s quite interesting because the kids are very shy. They turn away from you and talk and often you can’t hear them. Then they either head for the lovely furniture the Corporation provided and get to work, or they join the queue for the photocopier. We copy thousands of pages every day. The Corporation helped us buy two more machines because what we had wasn’t enough. Kids need help there as well, because most of them have never used this equipment.

By the end of Saturday morning the staff are ready to collapse because they don’t stop for a minute. At 1:30 we’re still going because we can’t turn anyone away.

On weekdays we have students here who weren’t able to matriculate [to secondary school] and they get a second chance, so they come in to prepare. We didn’t use to open in the morning, but now we have to open for these young adults. So many come that now we have to close at one, “for lunch,” so they will leave and we can give others a turn. Again, the library is packed the whole day.

We have every conceivable book and study aid on hand. The schools here are quite inadequate. We have no way to measure our outcome, but there’s a change in the kids we get coming through the library. Their

literacy is better; so is their English. It's observable and a fantastic success. The children's library is my special interest. Without it there's no chance for most of these children to achieve something equivalent to a middle-class education. Providing the library is the best thing the community can do.

The reference department is the busiest, but the children's lending library is also very good. Few schools have libraries, so new, fresh colorful books entice people to take up the reading habit. It's starting to bear fruit. It used to be that we would never see African people taking out books for pleasure. They only wanted non-fiction, informational books. Now our users reflect our demographic, and we have just as many African customers as the white ladies who were our traditional clientele. This is a huge transformation of usage. Patrons are able to take up to 10 books and keep them up to two weeks, and many do keep them that long.

The second round of funding from Carnegie Corporation was for the adult reference library. We got pristine storage and air conditioning. We have a state-of-the-art music library, which is unusual in South Africa. We have 100-year-old scores that local orchestras can borrow. Once Carnegie Corporation and the Province enabled us to add the children's wing, it changed the whole focus

of the library. The demographic of the city center has changed as well. It used to be a little Victorian town, and now it's packed with people, cars, noise, commerce, taxis, buses and movement everywhere. A lot of money was spent placing a taxi rank in Freedom Square near the library, which means we're helping more people beyond our boundary. We don't check residency, so everyone's allowed in. And we get a lot of distance learners, too.

The greatest challenge has probably been trying to work in a building that is being renovated, which in this case covered a period of over five years. A building site is a filthy site. We had to move and resshelf all our collections—even things like newspapers going back 160 years. Everything had to move. We couldn't have done it without Carnegie Corporation funding that paid for temps, actually library science students from the university.

We put in special gardens as well. Couples who were getting married asked for the keys, to take their wedding photos by the fishponds—and we allowed it. People love it! It's a transforming landscape and something new, not part of the past. The gardens have brought us immense pride after the gloomy apartheid days. It's something that everyone can look at and say "it's ours." It's a psychic thing; regenerating the square has made people feel proud of themselves.

service and the best reference and specialist collections in the Cape. However, the costly amalgamation of the region's six municipalities and restructuring of local authorities made it difficult to purchase new books to maintain materials at their previous level, and the library's resources had fallen far short of patrons' needs. Still, the existing library was situated in the City Hall building close to all forms of public transportation and would still be conveniently located after an anticipated move into the adjacent, much larger Old Drill Hall. All in all, the Corporation staff felt this library provided a solid base on which to develop the quality of col-

lection and range of services that could set the national standards needed in a library of excellence. For these reasons, the Board awarded a three-year, \$2 million grant to be administered by then manager of libraries, Heinrich Hermann.

The library's improved collections, especially local history and indigenous books, would directly contribute to overcoming the impact of the legacy of apartheid, it was felt, fostering a sense of local and national pride in a country torn apart by racial division. In practical terms, a grant to the Central Library would have a direct impact on many more libraries because it purchases, processes and dis-

tributes materials to all 98 branches. Upgrading technology within the library would also have a significant community impact. Cape Town City had received a Gates Foundation Award for its Smart Access project, which made Internet access available to the public at large from library sites in the city. The Corporation's grant would extend the impact of the Gates investment, providing additional locations for public Internet access. Finally, the central library would be used as a base to train other librarians, contributing to building a skills base in information management in South Africa—a high priority of the program. The library did move as planned and fulfilled the expectations of the initial grant, thereby earning a second round of funding beginning in 2008.

Around the city of Cape Town, people from rural areas have through the years come to live in informal settlements, the largest of which is Khayelitsha. Predictably, this area was never adequately provided for by the government. However, the transition to nonracial government has brought about significant pressure for service delivery to the historically disadvantaged community, as more and more people have moved in.

In places like Khayelitsha, libraries are considered vital for providing access to information as well as community violence prevention programs. With funding commitments from the national and provincial governments, the two substandard libraries that had served the black communities of Khayelitsha during apartheid were targeted for replacement with new, model libraries—one regional and one local center. Carnegie Corporation provided funding for collections for children, youth and adults in both new libraries to support the education, literacy and lifelong learning needs of the community.

The library in Harare opened to the public in June 2011 to an overwhelmingly positive response, according to local media reports. One of its unique features is the early childhood development section for children up to age six. Known as Funda Udlale in the local language, it has books, soft toys, computers, games and an assortment of educational materials. Nursery school and daycare centers are encouraged to bring children there for reading and activities, and for the caregivers to learn about child development. The library also has a teen space, which opens onto a giant chess board and has a game room equipped with computers and Wii gaming consoles.

Ninnie Steyn



**Director of Library and
Information Services
City of Cape Town, South Africa**

My responsibility is the delivery of library services throughout the city, to 99 libraries, four satellites, three mobiles and, of course, the model Central Library. Our libraries serve a population of approximately 3.7 million. It's both very challenging and interesting to juggle always inadequate resources and

make it work as well as possible. It's been our privilege, with the Carnegie Corporation grants to the Central Library and to other model libraries in developing communities, to create an example of what a library should offer to the public.

Before we began on the model library, the Central Library was in the old City Hall, with different spaces on different floors on the left and right sides of the building housing various collections. It was old, disparate and poorly maintained. Not a cohesive whole, not enough meeting rooms and we shared some of the space with other organizations. When the opportunity came along, we leveraged the Carnegie Corporation grant and

moved into the Old Drill Hall, a historic building across the street from our original location, which we turned into a functioning library. It was hugely challenging because as it was a historic building, we couldn't touch the outside. Instead we gutted the inside and dug out a basement, which was also risky because the water table is rather high, and if there had been any artifacts there we would have had to stop immediately. Working with a historic building was also difficult because costs escalate and there are so many unforeseen expenses. We spent over \$5.5 million on the conversion. Arguably we could have built something brand new for less.

Another challenge was managing a strategic budget. With the municipal changes there were always new players coming on board with different cultures that led to changes in our project team. We had to make sure that the vision put forward in the grant would be maintained. Significant changes in the project team had to be carefully managed. I had to be able to forge ahead and believe; it takes resilience in spades.

We used every possible space to the maximum. We have two mezzanine levels in the middle of the space and two annexes, all with the most possible space for seating. The ICT is incomparable, state-of-the-art. In the Knowledge Commons are 80 PCs and there are eight more in the children's section. The whole space has wireless access. It's an understatement to say it's well used. We had to cap patron use at 500 megabytes per person per month. Our last usage statement showed we were using a terabyte per month, which is significant for our part of the world. This is all funded by the city's Smart Access program, which provides everyone with OpenOffice software and an e-mail account, which gives people a way to become more confident with the Internet.

With the Carnegie Corporation grant we are rolling out electronic resources and we are very much at the beginning of that process. We've got better staff development, new ways of doing things and can be a greater help to the public. We can keep up with

the rest of the world. The library is now vastly different, compared to the way it used to be. There's been an 88 percent increase in human traffic. It's more relevant to what people need. We're open all day Monday through Saturday and always fully occupied. There are always lines for the knowledge commons, and people run to get in and take the first 80 computers as soon as it opens. You don't want to be in their way when the doors open! There's seating just outside that area and people move up one chair at a time.

Overall, what the funding allowed was for us to create a service offering that people weren't used to. Over time, if downgrades to service persist long enough, people accept them as the status quo. But why not push the boundaries and show that this is what a library could and should be and should do for you. Every two to three years there's an external survey of public services, and the library received one of the highest marks in the last survey. The public perceives that it is good service. They're the ones who benefit most with the increased hours, more staff and more new libraries in developing areas.

We've been very privileged to have received several grants; we're now on our third. And we're currently building a library in Khayalitsha, a developing community. It's an opportunity to research what difference a community library can make where they've never had one. Before, they've had very little in the way of community facilities and services. It's a wonderful space to study, surrounded as it is by informal settlements. It is so important to this sort of community to have access to information and be able to participate in a democracy.

With this facility we're also working on building a literacy culture, which doesn't happen through the school system. If we're able to track and measure what works, it will help allocation of resources in the future. I always say it's difficult to argue against your colleagues for funding. How do you explain making a difference in people's lives? It's so abstract, preparing people who will run a democracy. It's a challenging thing to prove

to those who emphasize real value in concrete terms.

We're finalizing a library in Khayalitsha's Harare community with a focus on early childhood, because there are so many primary schools in the area. We're aiming to provide cradle-to-grave service. We are trying not to lose them as teenagers. It's a unique emphasis. I wish I could take a snapshot of patrons now and 20 years from now to show what a difference it will have made in their lives. The library is located in a square near a business hub and youth center, commu-

nity center, taxis and trains. The library will even have a flat on top of it where a 24/7 caretaker will reside. It's part of a plan in cooperation with our partner organization, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU), which emphasizes activity, safety and security. They've had wonderful success in lowering crime and we couldn't ask for a better partner.

My plans are to keep on creating new libraries. The latest population figures show a need for 10 more libraries! It's all in our future year planning.

A New National Library

In June 2004 the Corporation provided funding to develop a strategic plan for the National Library of South Africa aimed at creating a model library of excellence. Previously, South Africa's National Library was spread over two campuses—Pretoria and Cape Town—which had existed as independent entities during the apartheid government. Since independence, the two institutions had become one institution with two branches, a fraught arrangement that officials realized had to change. With Pretoria's appointment of the first black national librarian, efforts there were undertaken to build a united team across racial lines that would identify strategic initiatives and establish the best national library in Africa. The Corporation provided the funds for this planning phase.

With the plan in place, the South African national government provided funding for the building of the library. The vision was for a facility to house the local collection of indigenous South African materials and to make them electronically available worldwide, and for sufficient connectivity to give South Africans access to information from anywhere. National libraries are extremely important in Africa, where they serve as reposi-

tories of local knowledge and information. Every publisher in South Africa is legally required to submit a copy of every publication to the designated legal deposit or national library. Once the information housed in these national libraries is digitized, it becomes widely accessible, both locally and internationally. A national library also acts as a repository for all government publications, and is instrumental in developing bibliographic standards for data in the country's automated systems. For all these reasons, the Corporation committed to supporting the national library project in Pretoria as a strategic priority.

Model Rejuvenation

Johannesburg's stately City Library building has presided over the central city since 1934. It was not only the first large library in South Africa to become free for patrons—more important, it was open to all races beginning in 1974, even during the worst years of apartheid. Among its special materials are local gold mining records, historic information on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, and valuable collections of art, Africana and music. Challenging itself to become the "best" city in Africa, Johannesburg made a commitment to

Rachel More

Deputy National Librarian South Africa

The need for the national library is immense. Most importantly, the country needs to develop a “culture of reading.” Most of the black community has been denied access and opportunity. Libraries for them are something new, and the new South Africa is trying to build a love of libraries and reading.

When Carnegie Corporation came on board with this project, its involvement convinced the government that it was vital to build a new library and to fund its construction. The Corporation then had the opportunity to provide computer access. As a result, the library has 400 new computers for the public. People do not normally have access, so they need to use the library and these are excellent computers. It’s no surprise that 1,500 people come in daily to use them. It’s had a very huge impact and made it possible for us to bridge the digital divide.

Carnegie Corporation’s support assisted the national library in collecting all information published by South Africans abroad. Many if not all of these works were never seen in this country before, especially those published by people in exile. Books written by persons who were banned in the country tell all about the struggle for democracy and the exile experience; why did they have to leave? Now the books are in the collection. Now we are able to understand what they went through. We work closely with publishers and with other national libraries, who are on the lookout for these works, which are about South Africa for the past 100 years. Next year the African National Congress (ANC) celebrates its 100th anniversary and we will be exhibiting all books seen in the country for the first time as a centenary commemoration of freedom and democracy.

To make sure the collection of books from abroad is available, there’s a copy of each book for library

visitors, as well as an archive copy. There’s a very high demand for these works—so high that even though we had a big reading room, with support we created an extension. We’re also opening a new wing for research and reference.

Our patrons are mostly young people, and they are coming in on a daily basis. This is the group who benefits most. But the more people who use the computers, the slower it goes because of the limited bandwidth. For the future, we’ve applied to the government for increased bandwidth so service will be faster. Also, one obstacle to building a culture of reading is that, as a result of apartheid, we don’t have a lot of books in indigenous languages—just English. And we need writing too. This is an opportunity for us to print in indigenous languages in order to encourage reading. There are 11 official languages, and nine of them are African. We really do not have enough books published in these languages, and we need more of them so the languages won’t die.

The library’s greatest challenge is, now that we have so many computers available to the general public, we did not foresee that such great numbers of people would want to use them at the same time. We’ve had to figure out how to deal with queues of people waiting for access. Now we must limit use to 15 minutes per turn. The lines are still long, but we’re dealing with them in a better way. People are encouraged to book their time in advance, then they can go off and browse in the library and come back.

This has been a great improvement for the community. We never thought we would serve so many people per day! People come for Internet access but discover there is much more here. They are starting to really use the library. Demand is so high we’ve had to extend our hours. We started out 8 to 4, and now we’re staying open until 6 PM and opening on Saturday. For a national library this is something new.

the rejuvenation of the business district, complete with a number of multimillion dollar development projects.

A major overhaul of the library itself was made part of that plan. Carnegie Corporation approved a \$2 million grant toward the creation of a model city library beginning in 2005 (following a \$50,000 strategic planning grant in 2004). When added to its earlier grants to the City of Cape Town and the Msunduzi Local Authority (home of the Bessie Head children's library in Pietermaritzburg), the Corporation's investment would be responsible for a critical mass of transformed libraries in the south, east and central regions, all with multiple branches.

Based on the library's strategic plan, the second grant was earmarked for weeding and cataloging of collections and records (which entailed hiring staff to manage millions of items) plus purchase of book and electronic materials and equipment and promotion of the library. To make information in diverse formats accessible to the public, the library needed data projectors, DVD players, TVs, headphones, etc. Additions to the reference, arts, young adult and African studies collections,

among others, were also urgently needed. Finally, the resulting state-of-the-art facility would need to advertise its services and collections in hopes of boosting membership and usage.

In November 2011, Carnegie Corporation's Rookaya Bawa accompanied program director Omotade Akin Aina and Johannesburg executive mayor Mpho Parks Tau on a preview tour of the library, scheduled to open early in 2012. Noting that adult illiteracy in South Africa was estimated at 3.3 million, the mayor stressed the library's role in language acquisition, communication and sharing of information and ideas. He told the story of South African yachtsman Neal Peterson, the first black person to sail solo around the world. Peterson, who had discovered sailing and the art of navigation through the books he read at his local library on the Cape Flats, testified that "books are about more than having access to information; it is about what one does with that information and where it can take you." After praising the library's unique and valuable collections, he thanked the Corporation for choosing to transform the Johannesburg site into a 21st Century Model City Library.

Atilla Lourens



**Deputy Director
Library and Information
Services
City of Johannesburg**

I'm involved in the development of library buildings and programs, both planning and execution. I had been on the job about four years when the model library project began in 2005. The building dated from 1934, and since the 1990s there wasn't really anything go-

ing on in there in terms of maintenance and improvement. The structure was deteriorating quite fast. Then the city joined seven cities together and we inherited seven different libraries and their stock, which had to be put together on the same system. That used up a lot of money and as a result the quality of the collection suffered.

We approached Carnegie Corporation in 2005, at which time the library was just too far gone for us to save it ourselves. The collections needed to change. It had been a European-influenced library and we never had the funds to change the content. Still there were good Afrikaans and European music collections and

some indigenous languages. We asked for help with the collections first. Our old collections are unique in Africa and therefore very valuable. But they were not in the database; it was too expensive and time consuming. We still used the old card system. Carnegie Corporation initially gave us \$2 million to upgrade the collection and link to the database. This was the way we could show the city how the library was improved for new generations. In terms of the collections, the library now really lives up to Johannesburg's name as the City of Gold.

Then something needed to be done for the building. The challenge was to convince the authorities to put the library in the budget. With Carnegie Corporation leverage, we were able to do that. We ended up with 60 million rand—almost \$9 million. We made sure the city never went back on its promise. We finished with the linking at the end of the fiscal year. Along the way our staff has become so well trained we can't keep them because bigger companies come along and eat them up. Now that the library construction has been finished, we're busy ordering furniture. Carnegie Corporation could see the city was keeping its promise, and Rookaya recommended that we apply again for our information technology needs. This grant proposal was approved in June 2011 and we've been busy spending money on IT, security, audio visual equipment, and the like. We have very few months left to prepare for our big opening on February 14, 2012.

The new library is vastly changed from how it used to be. It's been opened up, with all the walls of all the dark little offices taken down so there's light coming in everywhere. We put three glass floors in just for IT needs. It looks spectacular—far more wonderful than I ever expected. After three years of constant work you can look at it and say "thank heavens it's done—and it looks so good!" The old library had such good materials. The architect kept the preservation tightly under his fist, but still there's a wonderful mix of old and new. The

furniture, for example, will be ultramodern but the old parts of the building were restored and kept near to their original state.

The renovation also provided an opportunity to make the collections much more accessible and inviting to the public. Our team is excellent, invaluable. One member is already on pension, but promised to stay another year to work with us. There's been sadness too, we've lost three valuable people who passed away while this project was going on.

I admit that we underestimated the project. You think you know the building because you've been there for years and years. Then you lift the carpet and find that the floor underneath is completely crumbled and has to be totally redone. That's the kind of unpleasant surprise that happens time after time. Even the architect underestimated the extent of the restoration and we had to get more funding. At one stage it was the electricity; we had to rewire the whole building. But we tackled it and we won.

I have to say the people in the community are very angry with us right now. We get a steady stream of e-mails, "When are you opening?" they demand. And there are phone calls, because we also underestimated the time requirement. But soon these angry people will become happy people when they see the transformation. And especially when they start using the Internet. Because this is a first; there's nothing else as big as Jo'burg. Direct access to the Internet is probably the best part of the project. We've been teasing the public in the newspapers and they're going to be pleasantly surprised. We have 212 computer workstations.

The next project we have in the planning stages now is for after the opening, and that is to get the youth involved in accepting the library and looking after it. Then word will spread throughout the city. We have big plans and big programs in mind going forward. We'll need to discuss with the community whether we need to expand our hours and possibly open on weekends. That's the first big issue on the list.

Easy Access, Eventually

There are four million people in the eThekwin Municipality—home to Durban, the busiest port in Africa. This municipality is considered the economic center of South Africa, and it accounts for 10 percent of the country's total economic output. Since 1911, Durban's main library has been located in the City Hall. Over time, increased demand for books and services has resulted in library services being spread out among four different buildings in the inner city. In 2001, local authorities were amalgamated into the metropolitan system, which added 45 more libraries to the core network, and necessitated a name change from Durban to eThekwin Municipal Library. By 2011, 100 satellite

libraries provided basic services to an area of more than 772 square miles.

A single large centralized library would be far more cost effective and sustainable than the present system. Such a landmark library, the largest in the province, is planned as part of a major urban design project that will create a heritage precinct in the Durban Central Business District, along with a natural science museum, a post-apartheid art gallery and a cultural museum. Instead of shuttling between four sites to satisfy their information needs, people will be able to use a single, new state-of-the-art library, which will allow better use of infrastructure and staff. It will house all the core collections, increase efficiency through book sharing, nurture the growing culture of reading and will potentially save the public's money.

Guy T. Redman



**Deputy Head: Parks,
Recreation and Culture
Libraries and Heritage
eThekwin Municipality**

The Durban Central Library was one of several within the central business district (CBD) that were brought together. Carnegie Corporation will pay for fitting out the library and the capital funding for construction will come from the provincial government and from the City of Durban. It's to be a brand new facility and we haven't yet broken ground. This fiscal year, 2011, which runs from July to June, we're determining who will design the library. That should take nine months. Then we'll form the professional team and break ground during the following financial year. My main role is to mobilize funding. I was the leader in creating the grant proposal for Carnegie Corporation. The current funding is from the province

and we're mobilizing funding from other spheres to the tune of 30 million rand.

The ideal location for the library is in the very center of the city. It's a very large, open piece of land in an advantageous location—adjacent to the international conference center. Everybody wanted to get their hands on this property, but we want it secured for the library. There will be a science museum, and medical and government services—a one-stop shop—as well as a residential component. The library will be the anchor for all of this development.

A huge challenge has been getting political leadership behind the project because of all the other competing challenges. It's a hard sell versus the backlog of so many other funding demands. But it will bring prestige to a city like Durban when it becomes an information hub. Officials and other funders have begun to see the bigger picture. Apart from verbally agreeing, they've put funding behind it. The organizational structure has been approved, and that is a huge vote of confidence. We needed that authority to secure the Carnegie Corporation funding.

Now we're mobilizing as much additional funding as possible—from the city and state (province), and we are still trying to get national government funding. It's not just because of an interest in arts and culture; the treasury should invest because of the relationship of spheres of government. The city gets some funding as a proportion of the national treasury; some must be spent on a library and on the entire project.

Durban has the best climate in the country throughout the year. It's considered South Africa's playground. It's called the fourth capital, and the people here are not just South Africans. There's a huge foreign national population: German, Chinese and other Africans. It's one of the cultural hubs of South Africa, all of which contribute to the economy. It's a port city, the largest in the continent, so it's a very busy gateway to Africa. Problems here become problems for the whole country. What is good for Durban is that our International Center attracts big conferences, such as the climate change conference in November 2011. In 2014 the International Union of Architects congress will take place for the first time in Africa.

As we see it, the library's identity is to be the heart of the city—an important focal point and an information hub. It must be a state-of-the-art facility that will give people access to information in ways they never before imagined. Existing facilities have been scattered and people don't know where to go. With one central location, everything converges.

The community is aware that the library is coming, and in the sense that it is a political project, there must be public documentation. For example, with the Corporation funding, the media was very interested. The plans include a relatively huge youth component because they have been left behind. The adult component is not as big because we have to fill a backlog for children and youth. The other seriously unmet need is for people with disabilities.

There's also going to be a component for indigenous language and knowledge systems. This is an area where there are huge gaps. Our history is very contested and full of unknown stories. It's the library's job to collect history and let people tell their own stories.

Leaders for Model Libraries

While the Corporation has long been committed to creating model libraries in Africa, these libraries can only exist with strong leadership at the top and at middle-to-upper management levels. Without opportunities to develop leadership skills, librarians will never become advocates for the critically needed solutions and interventions that will allow their institutions to thrive. However, the entire library profession in South Africa is in crisis, according to Rookaya Bawa, because there have not been enough suitable candidates to assume leadership positions. As recently as 2008, she noted, the University of Cape Town's library director was from the United States and the head

of the university's library school was from the United Kingdom. The head of the University of South Africa's library was from Zimbabwe and the head of that university's library school was from Kenya, and so on. These are but two examples that motivated the Corporation, with Bawa's guidance, to look for a remedy.

It was well known that the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign had a very successful leadership program at the Mortensen Center for International Library Programs. Carnegie Corporation, Mellon Foundation and MacArthur Foundation had provided funding for librarians from Africa to attend. However, this was a relatively expensive approach, and not feasible for large groups. In order to create a sufficient pool of librarians with leadership capabilities, it was

Preserving Cultural History

The Ulwazi Program is an initiative of the eThekweni Municipal Library to preserve the indigenous knowledge of local communities in the greater Durban area. This innovation, developed and implemented by the software applications section of the libraries, is an integral part of local public library and information services. Web 2.0 technologies are used to create a collaborative online local indigenous knowledge database.

The main objective of the program is to enable members of Durban communities to preserve the knowledge about their culture, history and environment. The program relies on community participation for the collection of local information and makes use of volunteer fieldworkers to drive the work at ground level. Local indigenous knowledge is captured through the full spectrum of media and made available online through the Ulwazi Web site www.ulwazi.org. The library acts as moderator and custodian of the online resource.

A second objective of the program is the transferring of IT technologies and skills to local citizens.

This allows the people of eThekweni to become part of the global information society. It benefits them through economic advantage and contributes to the building of a cohesive community and enhances intercultural tolerance. The program celebrates cultural diversity, arts and heritage and aims to promote Durban as an international tourist destination by profiling places of interest, local culture and history of the area and its people. The model can be replicated elsewhere, adapting to different contexts, such as education, health and the environment.

The program has grown exponentially since its inception and typically boasts more than 30,000 page visits per month from 90 countries around the world. Through funding assistance from the Goethe-Institut this year the program is being rolled out to township and rural schools in a bid to create opportunities to enhance ICT skills among young people and generate interest in their own history and culture.

necessary to invest in creating a critical mass of trained people in South Africa and throughout the larger continent.

The University of Pretoria library school seemed to be the answer. The institution had the support of both the University of Cape Town and the University of KwaZulu-Natal's library schools, and had recently appointed two candidates with close associations to the Mortenson Center. With Corporation support, Pretoria established a leadership academy to train a host of librarians in South Africa, and in the future, from the larger continent. The program would not be without risk, Bawa admitted. The project leaders would be key to its success and, as often happens in Africa, there was

always the possibility that they might leave for other positions.

More Support for Libraries in Africa

In addition to new facilities and materials, African libraries were in desperate need of trained staff and digitization. Carnegie Corporation also supported a number of vital projects in these areas:

South African Bibliographic and Information Network

The Corporation funded training for new cataloguers to enable them to do online cataloguing in an internationally acceptable format. Over 200 workers from city, provincial and academic libraries,

Ujala Satgoor



**Deputy Director
University of Pretoria
Library Service**

Carnegie Corporation awarded a library leadership grant with two components. The first was to develop leaders to meet the needs of public and academic libraries in South Africa. The second was to locate a training entity to carry on the program. The grant was for a three-year period ending in June 2012.

The issue of library leadership development in South Africa has a history that began in 2000, when the Mellon Foundation provided funding for representatives of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) to attend leadership training at the Mortensen Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. I worked on that project and was able to send 23 librarians over the course of three years to train at the Center.

It was so successful. What was critical about it was that the training addressed our particular needs. It was a real partnership; we identified our needs and wanted a program that was not generic but specific to South Africa, while also giving our people exposure to American librarianship.

What was gratifying was that 16 of the participants, when they got back, took over the leadership of the Library Association—two as presidents and others as regional chairpersons. We saw that it could work.

When it was time for a new group to be trained, the U.S.-based program had ended. We felt that a program should be created in South Africa that would be similar to the Mortensen Center program, but unique to our development needs. In January 2008 we attended a meeting where Carnegie Corporation invited proposals. I took up the challenge, feeling, “we can do it.”

The University of Pretoria Library School was chosen to host the Centre for African Library Leadership (CALL) with two more library schools on board as partners. 120 candidates were chosen for training from both academic and public libraries. Of those, 30 will be selected for “train the trainer” in order to pass on what they’ve learned.

It’s been amazing! The whole program has really worked extremely well. One hundred librarians have completed the training so far. One of the great strengths is that the program has been accredited by the University of Pretoria. Participants, who range from 30 to 50 years old, are chosen based on merit, and selection is intensely competitive. Requirements include a degree in library and information science; senior or middle management position in an academic, public/community or national library service for at least five years; willingness and ability to share what is learned with others in the profession; demonstrated commitment of the participant’s home institution to supporting sharing and future development activities; excellent communication skills, spoken and written media, with a fluent command of English; willingness and ability to work as a team member; strong leadership potential and skills in the workplace, the profession or the community; commitment to the profession as demonstrated by participation in professional activities; knowledge of field of study and interest to engage effectively in, and derive benefit from, the academic as well as the practice-oriented content of the Academy.

The leadership course covers core organizational and leadership issues—strategy, ethics, organizational dynamics—as well as best practices. In teaching technological concepts, students are assessed based on their daily blog and group wiki, among other projects. Three months later their major research report is due. Some of the topics have included:

- How to use space effectively in a small library to create a user-friendly environment;

- Can mobile learning become a reality as a vehicle in delivering information literacy?
- Development of an online computer literacy tutorial;
- The academic librarian as diplomat: A journey into a challenging world of the information illiterate;
- Effectiveness of computer games in computer and information literacy;
- Indigenous Reading Development Programme: A multilingual approach in the classroom;
- Public libraries as social agents in lifelong learning.

The course has resulted in a huge shift in mindset, and there's been a very positive response. Many of the graduates have been promoted and have brought innovations into their libraries. South Africa has needs that are unique. The political structure of the country has demanded new competencies. Who is responsible? Who must give direction? Professional librarians must transition from functionaries to dynamic leaders.

Typically, people have been appointed to management positions without skills or training, which leads to major issues with management of people, resources

and services. The Leadership Academy is addressing these questions. To be a leader and decision maker you must understand these issues. Once we have the right people in place, they can maximize the potential of their institutions. That is why it's essential that the Corporation's grantee institutions are included in the Academy. We must build capacity and contribute to enhancing existing services. We have begun to think beyond individual institutions to the sector as a whole.

In setting up the Centre our aim was first to create an entity specifically for library leadership development and then to look at other related topics impacting leadership in the library field. It has all panned out as envisioned. We set a very high standard and stood firm. As a result it's a very sought-after program by early-to-mid-career professionals and a feather in one's cap to attend. It's reinvigorated the profession and the librarians' commitment to their career choice. Everyone who goes through the program becomes very committed to being in the field and making a difference.

with a particular focus on Corporation grantees, received training at sessions covering all major South African regions.

Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA)

LIASA was formed with support from the Corporation to succeed two racially divided library associations created during apartheid. The association was then able to develop a database of training courses for librarians and to create a training unit to oversee the emerging needs of the profession.

National Research Foundation (NRF)

Based on a comprehensive audit of existing digitization projects in South Africa, the Corporation supported key stakeholders across various fields (education, government, nongovernmental organizations, etc.) working in cooperation with the NRF

to collaborate on standards and best practices and undertake digitization on a national scale.

University of Pretoria

The university created a master's program in information technology to address skills shortages in public and academic libraries across sub-Saharan Africa and upgrade the ICT skill sets of the next generation of library and information professionals.

The New School (New York, USA)

To aid in building research and teaching capacity in institutions of higher learning, the Journal Donation Project provides free or discounted scholarly journal archives in countries which, for either political or economic reasons (or both) have not done so. In Africa, six university libraries in Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda have benefited from this program.

Looking Ahead

“This program kept Andrew Carnegie’s candle alive, continuing his legacy in an amazing way,” Rookaya Bawa says. But future libraries must be re-imagined, she contends, and the investments in people and places we’ve made so far will enable us to face the future in an innovative way. Bawa predicts that with good enough broadband in Africa (and elsewhere) libraries will eventually

have smaller hard collections and more electronic media, and space will be used in a whole new way. Libraries in developing countries will deal with social issues and will be brokers and curators of information rather than direct providers. “I hope we’ve taken a big step in that direction,” she says. “I believe we have.”

Written by Karen Theroux

The UNESCO Manifesto: A Gateway to Knowledge

Freedom, prosperity and the development of society and individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information.

The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, inde-

pendent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups.

This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO’s belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.

UNESCO therefore encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.

The Public Library

The Public Library is the local center of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users. The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who cannot, for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials, for example, linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

All age groups must find material relevant to their needs. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials. High quality and relevance to local needs and conditions are fundamental. Material must reflect current trends and the evolution of society, as well as the memory of human endeavor and imagination.

Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressure.

Missions of the Public Library

The following key missions, which relate to information, literacy, education and culture, should be at the core of public library services:

1. Creating and strengthening reading habits in children at an early age.
2. Supporting both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels.
3. Providing opportunities for personal creative development.
4. Stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people.
5. Promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations.
6. Providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts.
7. Fostering intercultural dialogue and favoring cultural diversity.
8. Supporting the oral tradition.
9. Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information
10. Providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups.
11. Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills.
12. Supporting and participating in literacy activities and programs for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.

Funding, Legislation and Networks

The public library shall in principle be free of charge. The public library is the responsibility of local and national authorities. It must be supported by specific legislation and financed by national and local governments.

It has to be an essential component of any long-term strategy for culture, information provision, literacy and education. To ensure nationwide library coordination and cooperation, legislation and strategic plans must also define and promote a national library network based on agreed standards of service. The public network must be designed in relation to national, regional, research and specific libraries as well as libraries in schools, colleges and universities.

Operation and Management

A clear policy must be formulated, defining objectives, priorities and services in relation to the local community needs. The public library has to be organized effectively and professional standards of operation must be maintained.

Cooperation with relevant partners—for example, user groups and other professionals at local, regional, national as well as international levels—has to be ensured.

Services have to be physically accessible to all members of the community. This requires well-situated library buildings, good reading and study facilities, as well as relevant technologies and sufficient opening hours convenient to the users. It equally implies outreach services for those unable to visit the library.

The library services must be adapted to the different needs of communities in rural and urban areas.

The librarian is an active intermediary between users and resources. Professional and continuing education of the librarian is indispensable to ensure adequate services.

Outreach and user education programs have to be provided to help users benefit from all the resources.



437 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
T. 212.371.3200
www.carnegie.org

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