The Importance of Libraries at UMD

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College Park Scholars Academic Showcase, May 6, 2022

What Was My Goal?

For my practicum project, I took the class CPSP349T, a class about infrastructure in America. In this class, I did a research project about the UMD library system that I will base my showcase project on.

This picture is a collage of some of the many different spaces that you can find inside of libraries at UMD. Image from https://www.lib.umd.edu/about

Site Information:

Location - Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center

Address - 4131 Campus Drive, College Park, MD, 20740

Supervisor - Dr. Nicole Mogul

Goal of the Class – Research a vital form of infrastructure

My Research Topic – Libraries at UMD

This is a design for the Oakridge Centre in Vancouver, which acts as both a library and a community center. Image from - https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/oakridge-community-centre-vancouver-public-library

What I Did:

For my project, I researched the library system at UMD to learn about all the resources that it offers. My research involved stakeholder maps of everyone involved with the library system, an interview with a UMD archivist, and document research to learn the long-term plans for the library system.

The Project's Impact on Me:

This project had a large impact on the way that I viewed libraries in general. Libraries have much more to offer to their users than just books and computers. Libraries can be excellent places to study and meet with friends. They can be community centers that hold regular events to educate the public. They can be small museums with information on display as is the case with the exhibition gallery in Hornbake library.

A picture of the Maryland Room in Hornbake Library. The Maryland Room holds exhibits pertaining to the history of Maryland. Image from https://prangecollection.wordpress.com/2017/08/14/prange-collection-materials-are-now-available-at-the-maryland-room/

Issues Confronting Site:

The main issue that libraries face today is their old image and their lack of interest from the public. People don't realize how important libraries could be for a community with proper funding and creative management. People still hold to the idea that libraries are all outdated and should be done away with.

Future Work:

From this point on, work could be done to try and incorporate more building techniques to make libraries into more of an active place that acts as a community center as well as a place for work and studying. This would greatly increase interest in libraries and keep these vital resources alive.

Acknowledgments:

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Mogul for helping me to set up this project and for helping with ideas for what to look for in this project.