

4-1-2021

Georgia Library Spotlight - Emory University, DEI Little Free Library

Julie Newton

Emory University, jnewt01@emory.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Newton, J. (2021). Georgia Library Spotlight - Emory University, DEI Little Free Library. *Georgia Library Quarterly*, 58(2). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol58/iss2/2>

This Column is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia Library Quarterly by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.

GLA SPOTLIGHT

Emory University DEI Little Free Library

The Emory Libraries' Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee recently launched a pilot DEI Little Free Library, as a complement to the library's "Confronting Racism" initiatives. The DEI Education sub-committee's initial idea was to claim a bookshelf in the Robert W. Woodruff Library's staff room for a space to donate and exchange books on the topic of anti-racism and social justice. Assistant Conservator and DEI committee member Julie Newton reached out to the library's exhibition team for simple signage, reading: "Donate a book. Borrow a book. Share and discuss with family and friends, and keep the circle of learning about social justice going. All genres—including children's books—are welcome."

Exhibitions Designer and Fabricator John Klingler rose to the occasion, not only agreeing to design and produce the signage, but suggesting that the committee build a structure

inspired by the many creative and free outdoor libraries found in the community. Newton was delighted by this generous offer and countered, "in that case, can you make it an exact, small-scale model of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birth home (a national historic site located at 501 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta)?" Klingler designed and fabricated the amazing, tiny library and donated some of the materials as well.

Despite limited staffing in the library due to the pandemic, there has been an active exchange of books so far. Unlike the rare books that Newton treats as a conservator, she can wipe down the covers of these donated books with disinfectant before staff members take them home to share. The committee hopes that this DEI free library will inspire others to build and curate their own libraries and keep the circle of learning about social justice going. Klingler has already envisioned an outdoor version of this library with a working porch light and other details faithful to Dr. King's birth home.

