

4-1-2021

## News - Augusta University, Reese Library

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### Recommended Citation

Kubicki, J. M., Luster, A., & Oliver, J. (2021). News - Augusta University, Reese Library. *Georgia Library Quarterly*, 58(2). Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol58/iss2/10>

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*People, Libraries  
and Agencies* **IN THE NEWS**

## Augusta University Reese Library

Two years ago, Reese Library shared their story via a [Georgia Library Spotlight](#) on how a small Black History Month (BHM) team of four collaborated with university and community partners to host a popular live event, including an exhibition, on its book displays. After a successful event series last year, the library implemented this year's programming in a somewhat normal world.

Augusta University Libraries reopened in the fall of 2020. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, the BHM 2021 team, now grown to a size of 10, created a hybrid mix of activities for students, faculty, and staff to enjoy safely. First and foremost, Reese Library continued its favorite tradition of highlighting books on various black history topics in displays on the first floor. One display was on past and present African American authors from Georgia, including Evelyn Coleman, Pearl Cleage, Benjamin Mays, and Augusta's own Frank Yerby, to name a few. The other display collected a spectrum of books related to the

fight for freedom, equality, and justice, from slave rebellions and the abolition movement to Black Lives Matter.

Reese Library expanded this tradition by holding a poster exhibit in the lobby. The BHM team and others created informative posters on a wide variety of notable African American persons, movements, and events. Some of these explored the rich local Black history of Augusta, Georgia, such as a feature on Amanda America Dickson and Ware High School. Meanwhile, other posters highlighted the greater African American community, such as the Deacons for Defense and Justice. Students, faculty, and staff could browse the exhibit in the Reese Library lobby. The library created a virtual exhibit of these posters on a [BHM Research Guide](#).

The BHM team created two videos: one of an interview and one on a panel discussion on different Black history topics. These were shared on the Libraries' social media channels, including YouTube, and on the BHM Research Guide. Reference and

Instruction Librarian Thomas Weeks enjoyed a conversation with Augusta University's Dr. Seretha Williams, interim chair of the English &



World Languages Department, on Afrofuturism. Topics discussed included its concept, origins, key players in the movement, its relationship with Black history, and a potentially “controversial question” on Dr. Williams’ favorite author(s). Reference Assistant and Adjunct History Professor Marshall Abuwi facilitated a panel titled “HBCUs: History of Higher Education in the African American Community.” The panelists included Augusta University’s Dr. John Hayes, assistant professor of history, and Jeffrey Jones, adjunct professor in the Department of Humanities at Paine College. Topics discussed included the origins of HBCUs, their challenges over time with an emphasis on the South, and the place they have today. Reese Library partnered with Student

Life and Engagement to host a screening event of the Afrofuturism interview in the ballroom. Students that attended enjoyed a complimentary boxed lunch. So far, there are over 100 combined views for the videos.

Reactions to the hybrid programming for BHM 2021 at Reese Library were positive and encouraging. A successful effort, BHM 2021 at Reese Library could not have succeeded without its dedicated BHM team, a diverse team of Reese Library faculty and staff. Led by Jillian Oliver and David Kearns, the team included Marshall Abuwi, Tonya Dority, Aspasia Luster, Josette Kubicki, Katlyn Tuten, and Thomas Weeks.