HELIN Consortium
HELIN Digital Commons

Digital Commons Information | HELIN Consortium

4-21-2008

HELIN Post Grant Report to the Davis Educational Foundation

Bob Aspri
baspri@etal.uri.edu

Martha Rice Sanders
HELIN Consortium, msanders@etal.uri.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://helindigitalcommons.org/dc_information

Recommended Citation
Aspri, Bob and Sanders, Martha Rice, "HELIN Post Grant Report to the Davis Educational Foundation" (2008). *Digital Commons Information.* Paper 4.
http://helindigitalcommons.org/dc_information/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the HELIN Consortium at HELIN Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digital Commons Information by an authorized administrator of HELIN Digital Commons. For more information, please contact msanders@etal.uri.edu.

Rev. 1/11/06

DAVIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Grant Report

Grantee: The HELIN Consortium **Interim Report ____** **Final Report __X__**

Contact: Robert Aspri **Email: baspri@etal.uri.edu** **Telephone: 401-874-5863**

Project Title: HELIN Digital Repository Project

Date Awarded: November 21, 2005 **Amount Granted: $236,000.00** **Term: 2 years**

In five pages or fewer, please provide answers to the following questions:

1. **Please list your original goals for this project and describe the extent to which the goals were achieved.**

The HELIN Digital Repository Project sought to preserve and make accessible current and historical materials that document the social, business, political, educational, cultural and civic life of Rhode Island as well as New England, and to archive and preserve faculty publications, student theses and capstone papers, university publications, and special collections including photographs and audio and video clips. In addition, the libraries intended to publish journals within the repository. This would give students and faculty easy access these resources, thus enriching the research materials available for teaching and learning.

During the period of the grant, six of the HELIN Consortium member libraries (Bryant University, Johnson and Wales University, Providence College, Roger Williams University Salve Regina University, and the University of Rhode Island) created active digital repositories which include many of the types of resources identified within the grant proposal. One library (Wheaton College) chose to create their repository with another consortium to which they belong using a different platform. The remaining two libraries included in the grant (the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College) did not build digital repositories. For the working repositories, a search on Google or Google Scholar will find published repository material.

The HELIN Consortium Digital Repositories have only been online for approximately 20 months, but already many of the libraries have added significant content to their individual repository sites.
http://helindigitalcommons.org/

The Consortium chose the ProQuest Digital Commons product after receiving the two year grant ion November 21, 2005 from the Davis Educational Foundation to create customized individual repositories for each HELIN library wishing to participate. ProQuest was chosen because it was essentially a "turn-key" product that provided an easy and quick way to build customized digital repositories without having to maintain on-site hardware and software costs. The repositories were

each built and customized by ProQuest in the first two months of 2006, and each repository was ready for digitized material to be archive by the end of February 2006.

Bryant University, Salve University and the University of Rhode Island have each published on-line journals in their repositories. Bryant has published "Global Perspectives on Accounting Education"; Salve has published "Journal of Interdisciplinary Feminist Thought"; and, the University of Rhode Island has published "The Online Journal for Global Engineering Education. The links to the journals follow:
http://digitalcommons.bryant.edu/gpae/
http://escholar.salve.edu/jift/
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/ojgee/

The University of Rhode Island also published a Senior Honors Project collection, a Special Collections Image Archive and a Special Collections Archive of Rhode Island Senator John H. Chafee manuscripts containing both audio and video content.
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/photographs/
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/chafee_audio/

Providence College has begun to publish documents in their repository by Department, Program and Center, and have included many documents published by Faculty, students in social work, and Library Faculty and Staff.
http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/communities.html
http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/facstaff_pubs/http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/socialwrk_students/

Bryant University has begun to publish collections of documents by Department, and has an extensive collection of Special Collection Documents. The library was also contacted recently by the Discovery Channel, asking permission to use a photograph from the Special Collections Historical Photographs Archive. The researchers at the Discovery Channel were able to locate the image through a Google search.
http://digitalcommons.bryant.edu/communities.html
http://digitalcommons.bryant.edu/library/

Johnson & Wales University has established a Dissertation Collection in their repository and has also begun to publish documents by Research Unit Center and Department.
http://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/dissertations/
http://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/communities.html

Roger Williams University has published a collection of working paper documents from an annual conference held on campus each year sponsored by the Center for Macro Projects and Diplomacy. They also have begun to publish documents from the library faculty under a University Libraries Community, including their library newsletter, "Connections". "Connections" also includes an article on Roger Williams University's digital repository, in the Spring 2006 issue.
http://digitalcommons.rwu.edu/cmpd_working_papers/
http://digitalcommons.rwu.edu/communities.html
http://digitalcommons.rwu.edu/libnews/

Salve Regina University, in addition to their "Journal of Interdisciplinary Feminist Thought", has embarked upon an ambitious project to publish student honor's theses, and has created the "Pell Scholars Honors Theses" community. Salve has also established a community of doctoral dissertations.
http://escholar.salve.edu/pell_theses/
http://escholar.salve.edu/dissertations/

Finally, the HELIN Central Office has begun publishing all HELIN reports, minutes, official documents and statistical documents in the HELIN Digital Repository. All the repositories can be searched by key word or author from the repository site.
http://helindigitalcommons.org/communities.html

2. **To what extent did the project advance the foundation's objectives of strengthening teaching and learning practices and controlling costs? Specifically,**
   a. **What methods were used to assess the project's impact on student learning? What were the results of that assessment?**
   b. **How did the project impact costs? Please include quantitative data, if collected.**

As stated above, the original goals for this project were to provide students and faculty easy access to a consortium-wide digital repository of valuable educational resources that were heretofore largely unavailable and inaccessible. By collecting and digitizing this educational material in a library based repository, we insured that the digitized material is based on a solid foundation of cataloging and indexing. We also insured that the repository itself would be thoroughly searchable by a variety of indexes, and that it also could be searched worldwide through Google and Google Scholar. This new digital repository, enriched with research materials available for teaching and learning, has introduced students and faculty to a new method of retrieval and storage of educational materials that will enhance and strengthen future teaching and learning practices.

Also, we are able to gather extensive usage statistics from the repositories. Usage statistic totals can be gathered by daily totals, monthly totals, yearly totals, by specific period of time, or by aggregate total. The statistics are downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet, and can be sorted by various categories. The statistic categories include the title of the digitized material, the "url" link to the material in the repository, and the total number of time the material has been downloaded. The statistics can also list the domain where the download originated, so we can track where the usage is originating. Since the creation of each repository in February 2006, there has been 71,161 total downloads of repository material. The original Davis Grant application has been archived in the HELIN repository, and has been downloaded 55 times. **(see the attached Digital Commons Usage Statistics 02.06-02-08 document).**

The participation in this project by a consortium of libraries has saved thousands of dollars in the first two years, and will save hundreds of thousands in the future. If each individual institution had participated separately, the cost for the first two year period would have been nearly double. The two year Consortium-wide pricing to

begin the project was $235,667, and was completely funded by the Davis Educational Foundation **(see the attached Digital Commons License Agreement and Price document)**. If each of the nine institutions had subscribed separately, the total price for one year would have been approximately $216,023, or $388,842 for a discounted two year contract **(see the attached Digital Commons Individual Library Pricing document)**. Participating as a consortium has certainly allowed us to control costs, and we have insisted on negotiating our renewal costs for each of the repositories based on the lower consortium-wide pricing **(see the attached BePress Proposal to The HELIN Consortium document).**

3. **What did you learn in the course of the project that might be beneficial to another college contemplating similar work? Please include challenges encountered and unanticipated outcomes.**

It was more difficult than we expected to collect versions of faculty papers that were appropriate for archiving so we needed to educate people on copyright law.

In addition, one year into the project, ProQuest was purchased by CSA Inc. and six months later the merged company sold the Digital Commons product back to Berkeley Electronic Press (BePress), the organization which originally created it. The Bepress staff went out of their way to ensure a smooth transition. However, delays occurred since we then needed to educate Bepress on the work we had done, including the customizations made to our sites by ProQuest.

4. **How do you intend to sustain and build upon, if appropriate, the outcomes of this project?**

The Consortium is currently negotiating an extension to our original two year contract for Digital Commons. We are negotiating the renewal of all seven repositories, and there is a possibility that an additional library will also renew. Prior to the renewal, the libraries did an assessment of each repository. The assessment took into consideration the following categories: Amount of Content; Type of Content; Site Usage; Projected Content; Staff Involvement; Public Access Methods; Promotional Efforts; Equipment and Training; Copyright Issues; Reflections on Implementation; and Future Plans. The assessment documented the progress and future worth of the project, and ultimately led to the conclusion that the project was important and sustainable. The libraries' renewal of the Digital Commons repositories was build upon this assessment. The assessment document has been published in the HELIN Consortium Repository, and can be viewed at the following link:
http://helindigitalcommons.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1430&context=archive

5. **How were the Davis Educational Foundation's grant funds spent? <u>Please attach an itemized expense summary comparing actual expenses with your original budget</u>. Please briefly explain variances.**

The nine libraries of the HELIN Consortium purchased the repositories based on consortium-wide pricing. The price was for a two year subscription to the ProQuest Digital Commons platform, and the contract and pricing has been attached.

6. In an effort to improve our grant making, we welcome your comments regarding our grant application, site visit, award notification and post-grant reporting process.

We found the grant application submission requirements to be very thorough, and it forced us to focus on issues important to a consortium-wide project. Issues such as leadership, time-tables, and outcomes need to be fully developed for a project to be successful; and, writing the grant helped us re-examine those issues in detail.

Members of the site visit team were very well prepared, and quite interested in how a consortium of libraries would benefit from collaborating on such a project. They asked many questions in that regard, and that was particularly helpful in allowing the group which planned the HELIN repository project to reflect on what each library would gain by building the repositories collaboratively as a consortium.

I would say that the post-grant reporting process was the hardest part of the whole project. The project is still in its infancy, and that makes it difficult to report outcomes. We are grateful for the Davis Educational Foundation for their generous support of this project. A repository project takes years to come to fruition; and, although we have been successful in many ways, there is much more to accomplish and many more expected outcomes. We are especially interested and focused on moving ahead with the digitization of the many rare and archival book collections throughout the consortium, and archiving them in the repository.

Finally, the original grant application has been archived in the HELIN repository, and statistics show that, at least twice a month, someone discovers it by searching Google and downloads it. A few have contacted those in the HELIN Central Office to learn more. In our answers, we always thank the Davis Educational Foundation for funding this important project to our libraries.

Robert H. Aspri, HELIN Executive Director
Martha Sanders, HELIN Knowledge Management Librarian