The Library is for Everyone: Cultivating Campus Partnerships to Enhance Library Accessibility

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The Library is for Everyone:
Cultivating Campus Partnerships to Enhance Library Accessibility

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Background
Accessibility Team Goals
• Improve the accessibility of our physical and digital spaces and resources
• Enhance the user experience
• Increase the visibility of accessible services

What We Did
• Researched best practices and policies
• Collaborated with campus partners to gather feedback and expertise
• Assessed library spaces to create a list of strengths and weaknesses
• Made recommendations for high-impact, low-cost changes to our library spaces

Methods & Processes
Identify all possible areas of accessibility that affect our spaces, resources, and services
Review peer institutions to build knowledge and identify services to add or improve
Meet with SAS Director for recommendations and accessibility tours
Meet with UNH Access4All President to hear about students’ experiences

Quick & Attainable Goals
Add Signage
Promote accessible resources with clear signs
Keep Paths Clear
Remove barriers such as book trucks, recycling bins, wires, etc.
Measure
Use a yardstick to test accessible space for wheelchairs

Partners
UNH Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
• Advised about physical accessibility concerns
UNH Access 4 All Student Organization
• Provided student-centered feedback
UNH Survey Center
• Provided feedback for creating accessible, mobile-friendly, and valid surveys
Internal Library Partners
Library Information Technology
• Addressed web accessibility concerns
Collection Management
• Assisted with physical barriers to materials
Circulation staff & Library leadership
• Facilitated recommended space changes

Next Steps
• Disseminate surveys among students with accessibility needs
• Research accessibility trends across campus
• Conduct usability testing for spaces and web
• Develop an impact-effort-cost matrix with recommendations to library administration

Future Growth
• Create and foster channels for future conversations around accessibility
• Push for universal design in renovations
• Support a broader range of disabilities
• Assess the impact of our space changes on library users

Key Takeaway: physical accessibility can be easily accomplished through a commitment to awareness and enforcement of simple space changes