



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

New York Black Librarians Caucus records

1971-1981

Sc MG 157

Summary

Creator: New York Black Librarians Caucus

Title: New York Black Librarians Caucus records

Date: 1971-1981

Size: 0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Gift of Harriet Brown, co-chair of the New York Black Librarians Caucus, November 1981.

Revision History: Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

Abstract: This collection is mostly comprised of correspondence, meeting minutes, financial reports, and newspaper clippings pertaining to Black librarianship. There is a folder of minutes for the Black Librarians Caucus of Queens, the NYBLC predecessor, as well as policy statements from both American Library Association (ALA)'s Black Caucus and the NYBLC. The correspondence folder contains letters from Alex Haley, Senator (NY) Carl McCall, Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton, and E. J. Josey. Additionally, the collection includes letters documenting the Caucus' position on the showing of the film *The Speaker* during the 1977 (Detroit) ALA conference. The film's objective was to demonstrate the problems of censorship and First Amendment Rights violations but the ALA Black Caucus took a strong position against the film and ALA's selection of it. This position was fully supported by the NYBLC. Other material in the collection relates to a series of Genealogy and Oral History workshops presented by the Caucus to celebrate the Bicentennial in 1976.

Preferred citation: [Item], New York Black Librarians Caucus records, Sc MG 157, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Accessioned by Rosalie P. Jeter, 1996.

Creator History

As an affiliate of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Inc. (BCALA), the New York

Black Librarians Caucus, Inc. (NYBLC, Inc.) is committed to the professional development, growth of and opportunities for library professionals; to scholarship, mentoring and support of graduate library students; to bridging the digital divide; and to advocate for quality standards and services in school libraries, in special libraries, on college and university campuses and in public libraries serving Black communities.

In 1970, a group of Black Librarians met to address the problems resulting from widespread racism in their profession. Libraries in Black communities were most often inaccessible, had neglected facilities, and inadequate staffing and resources. It was increasingly evident that minority communities were being left behind in terms of access to the avalanche of information so indispensable in a rapidly changing technological society. The members of the group that met over 40 years ago decided to take collective action. They founded an organization and named it the Black Librarians' Caucus of Queens since most of its members lived or worked in that borough. The problems that this group rallied around were so persuasive that librarians from the greater New York area soon joined the founding members. In 1975, the organization's name was changed to the New York Black Librarian's Caucus Inc.

Today, the Caucus is still a thriving, vital organization that strongly advocates for quality library services in all communities, broad professional opportunities for Black Librarians, bridging the Digital Divide and other important issues. Through the annual Donna Hoke Scholarship award, the Caucus assists at least two Black graduate students in pursuit of master's degrees in library and information science.

Scope and Content Note

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Arrangement: Arranged chronologically.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American librarians

African Americans -- Societies, etc

African Americans and libraries -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

New York Black Librarians Caucus

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 News clippings and articles 1971-1979
- b. 1 f. 2 Black Librarians Caucus of Queens 1971-1974
- b. 1 f. 3 Caucus definition documents 1972
- b. 1 f. 4 Programs 1972-1976
- b. 1 f. 5 New York Librarians Association (NYLA) and ALA membership directories 1972-1980
- b. 1 f. 6 ALA Black Caucus and other library associations 1973-1980
- b. 1 f. 7 Membership lists and committee reports 1973-1976
- b. 1 f. 8 Correspondence 1973-1981
- b. 1 f. 9 Newsletters 1973-1981
From NYBLC and other organizations.
- b. 1 f. 10 Financial reports 1974-1975
- b. 1 f. 11 Annual reports 1974-1976
Reports from the President regarding fundraising.
Meetings
- b. 2 f. 1 Notices 1974-1978
- b. 2 f. 2 Agendas and minutes 1974-1981
- b. 2 f. 3 Bicentennial Genealogy Workshops 1976
Includes promotional material and handouts.
- b. 2 f. 4 Work with the Schomburg Committee 1977-1980