

# Historic Chronology of Black LIS Education

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1900 Edward C. Williams, first professionally trained Black librarian

4 Main library programs emerge

- 1925-1939 Hampton Institute, VA
- 1941-2005 Atlanta University
- 1941 NC College for Negroes, Durham
- 1969 Alabama A&M University, Huntsville

1905 Thomas Fountain Blue & Louisville, KY Colored Branch Library

- First public library service to Black patrons
- T.F. Blue appointed head of department for colored branch & initiated first library training program

1936-1939 Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program (NTLTP), held on 4 campuses in TX, TN, VA, GA

Hello Everyone

Welcome to our presentation on the Historic Chronology of Black LIS education  
First, we must acknowledge this wonderful opportunity provided by the generous sponsorship of Dr. Anthony Chow, Director of SJSU School of Information and Tracie Hall, ALA Executive Director

Second, the QR Code on the opening slide provides a link to a timeline, story map, and bibliography. There was a lot of information that could not be presented on either the posters or here today and so additional information is provided on the timeline and story map. The bibliography provides documentation of the most vital information that informed the research.

## Presentation Outline

- Introduction
  - How research topic came into existence, the overall research question and the research question for this presentation
  - Timeline and Story map of additional research information and bibliography available by clicking on QR Code
- Research timeline: 1900 – 1939
  - Edward Christopher Williams
  - Louisville, KY Colored Library
  - Thomas Fountain Blue
  - Confluence of events
    - Influential Organizations: ALA – Board of Education for Librarianship (BEL), General Education Board (GEB), Carnegie Corporation, and Rosenwald Fund
    - Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program (NTLTP) 1936 - 1939
- Research timeline 1939- 2005
  - Other library schools established between 1941 and 1969
  - Focus on Hampton Institute (University) and Atlanta (Clark Atlanta) University
- Conclusion
  - Findings
    - Post 2005 closing of Clark Atlanta University
    - 1986 paper by Rosemary Ruhig Dumont
    - 2010 Knowledge River Study
    - 2023 paper by Curtis L. Kendrick on survey findings

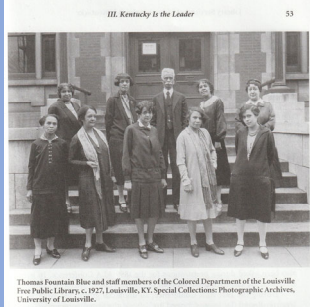
Today's presentation is divided into 4 parts: 1) introduction, 2) Research timeline: 1900-1939 which includes the establishment of the Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program (NTLTP), the impact of the influential organizations that established the Hampton Institute as the first professional library program for Black librarians, 3) the closing of the Hampton Institute, the opening and closing of Atlanta University more widely known of Clark Atlanta University, and the effect of the closing of graduation rate of Black librarians, and 4) findings after the closing of Clark Atlanta University. Many schools were or attempted to establish a professional library school between the time Hampton Institute and Atlanta University was established. Such schools were Fisk University, North Carolina College for Negroes which was later renamed to North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina, and Alabama A&M University. Some of these schools had many iterations of a library program and continue to operate as a library school. However, the focus of the research was on Hampton Institute and Clark Atlanta University.

# Research Timeline 1900-1939



**Edward Christopher Williams**  
– first professionally trained Black librarian

Photo credit  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward\\_Christopher\\_Williams](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Christopher_Williams)



Thomas Fountain Blue and staff members of the Colored Department of the Louisville Free Public Library, c. 1927, Louisville, KY. Special Collections: Photographic Archives, University of Louisville.

**Louisville, KY  
Colored Library Branch Staff**

Photo credit: Jones, R.F. (2002) p 53

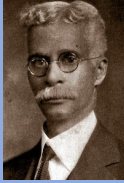


Photo credit  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Fountain\\_Blue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Fountain_Blue)

**Thomas Fountain Blue**  
1905 – Louisville, KY Western Colored Library Branch open  
– TFB appointed head of department for Colored Branch  
- TFB initiate library training for staff at Colored Library Branch  
- Library training credited with being foundation for NTLTP

## Influential People and Organizations

- 1901 –Carnegie Corporation, Andrew Carnegie
- 1902 – GEB established by John D. Rockefeller
- 1924 – ALA BEL established



**Julius Rosenwald  
Rosenwald Fund**

Photo credit:  
Ascoli, P.M. (2015) p 120



**Florence  
Rising Curtis**

Photo credit:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence\\_Rising\\_Curtis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence_Rising_Curtis)

Edward Christopher Williams is the first known professionally trained librarian. He graduated from the NYS Library and became known at Adelbert College/Western Reserve University and Howard University for increasing their collections.

Louisville, KY Colored Library Branches – Western Branch (1905), Eastern Branch (1914)  
Thomas Fountain Blue (1905)

Influential People and Organizations

-- the most important article on this topic is Martin & Shiflett

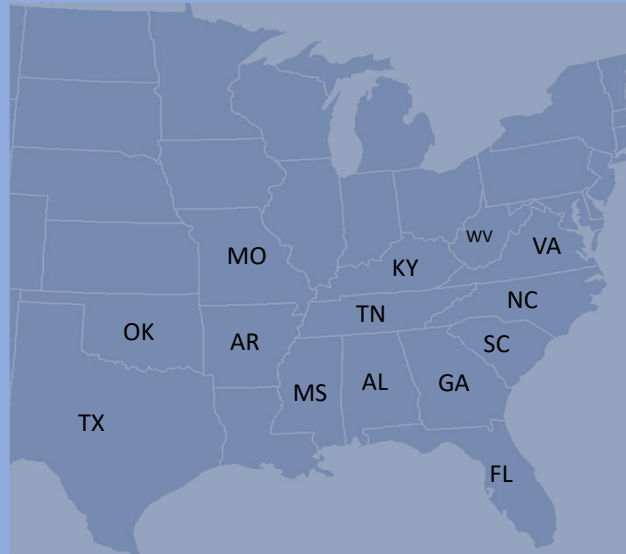
## Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program 1936 - 1939

### Fisk Institute, TN

- Tennessee
- Kentucky
- Missouri
- Northern Alabama
- Northern Mississippi

### Prairie View State College, TX

- Texas
- Oklahoma
- Southern Mississippi
- Northern Arkansas



### Hampton Institute, VA

- Virginia
- North Carolina
- W. Virginia

### Atlanta University, GA

- Georgia
- South Carolina
- Florida
- Southern Alabama

Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program established and operated from 1936 to 1939 with funding from the Carnegie Corporation, General Education Board, and Rosenwald Fund. Florence Rising Curtis as director of Hampton Institute and overall organizer of the program was unable to teach in Texas because Texas law prohibited a white instructor from teaching Black students. Virginia Lacy Jones, a Hampton graduate, replaced Curtis as the director. Students attended schools based on their home state as demonstrated on the slide.

## Research Timeline 1939-2005

- Hampton Institute (University)
  - Established in 1925 and closed in 1939
  - Financial assistance provided by Carnegie Corporation, GEB, Rosenwald Fund
  - Florence Rising Curtis, first director
  - Closed due to lack of continued funding and F.R. Curtis retirement
- Atlanta University (Clark Atlanta University)
  - Established 1941 after the closing of Hampton Institute
  - Established to be a sister school to Emory University
  - Eliza Atkins Gleason, first Dean
  - Financial assistance provided by Carnegie Corporation, GEB, Rosenwald Fund
  - Pre-eminent library school, graduated 2600 Black librarians from 1941-2005

## Findings and Conclusion

- Post 2005 closing of Clark Atlanta University
  - Credited with high graduation rate of Black librarians
- Rosemary Ruhig Dumont 1986 paper
  - Develop pipeline from high school
  - Develop peer support
  - Need for financial support
- 2010 Knowledge River Study
  - Develop financial assistance to stay in school
  - Develop pipeline from high school
  - Professional and career development through mentorship and leadership training
- Curtis L. Kendrick 2023 paper
  - Increase BIPOC librarians from 17% to 25%, must graduate 500-1,100 BIPOC for next 10 years
  - Host residency programs, provide scholarships, incentivize leadership & development programs

The research was great to dive into. However, it is too much for 10 minutes or even 1 hour. There are many avenues to pursue in this area. However, the findings from 1986 to 2023 and observed by different researchers and programs is that much work needs to be done to sustainably recruit and retain BIPOC librarians and especially Black librarians.

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