

STORAGE SOLVED

THE CHALLENGE: The University Archives and Regional History Collections include: books, journals, archives, monographs and bound periodicals dating back to the 1700s. These special collections had been stored in three campus buildings, including an old gymnasium space previously used as a swimming pool, since 1990.

A PURPOSE-BUILT SPACE

XTEND® MOBILE HIGH-BAY STORAGE HOUSES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS IN WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY'S NEW ZHANG LEGACY COLLECTIONS CENTER



"We had a real challenge here at Western Michigan University," said Sharon Carlson, Archives and Regional History Collections Director for Western Michigan University.

The multiple locations made accessing the archives a challenge for students, faculty and researchers. Library staff often found themselves escorting researchers across campus, only to discover the need to come back at a later time or even another day to gain access to that part of the collection.

Aside from accessibility barriers created from housing the collection in multiple locations on campus, the conditions of these facilities were not ideal. Since the original buildings were never intended to be libraries, there were issues with temperature and humidity control.

"Having all of the collections under one roof seemed to make a great deal of sense," said Carlson, "It also made a great deal of economic sense for the university, because they were maintaining some very outdated buildings."

THE SOLUTION

After eight years of planning and design, the Zhang Legacy Collections Center was built, and an XTend® Mobile High-Bay Shelving system from Spacesaver was installed by The Casper Corporation, the Authorized Spacesaver Representative in Michigan.

The new building, designed to LEED® Silver specifications, is climate-controlled, with temperature regulated by a

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Charles C. Zhang, Western Michigan University Alumnus



geothermal heating and cooling unit and built with a vapor barrier to keep out moisture. There is also UV-filtered glass to protect the archival materials.

The XTend Mobile system installed for Western Michigan University features 201 specially-designed sections of shelving that are 34 feet high which equate to approximately 15 lineal miles of storage. The system houses 450,000 book volumes and 25,000 archive record boxes and can move 180 tons of weight with the push of a button. Though the planning took about eight years, the installation of the shelving system took only 35 days.

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"In the end there was a real cost savings to getting the entire collection under one roof and having them in a purpose-built building like the Zhang Legacy Collections Center," said Carlson.

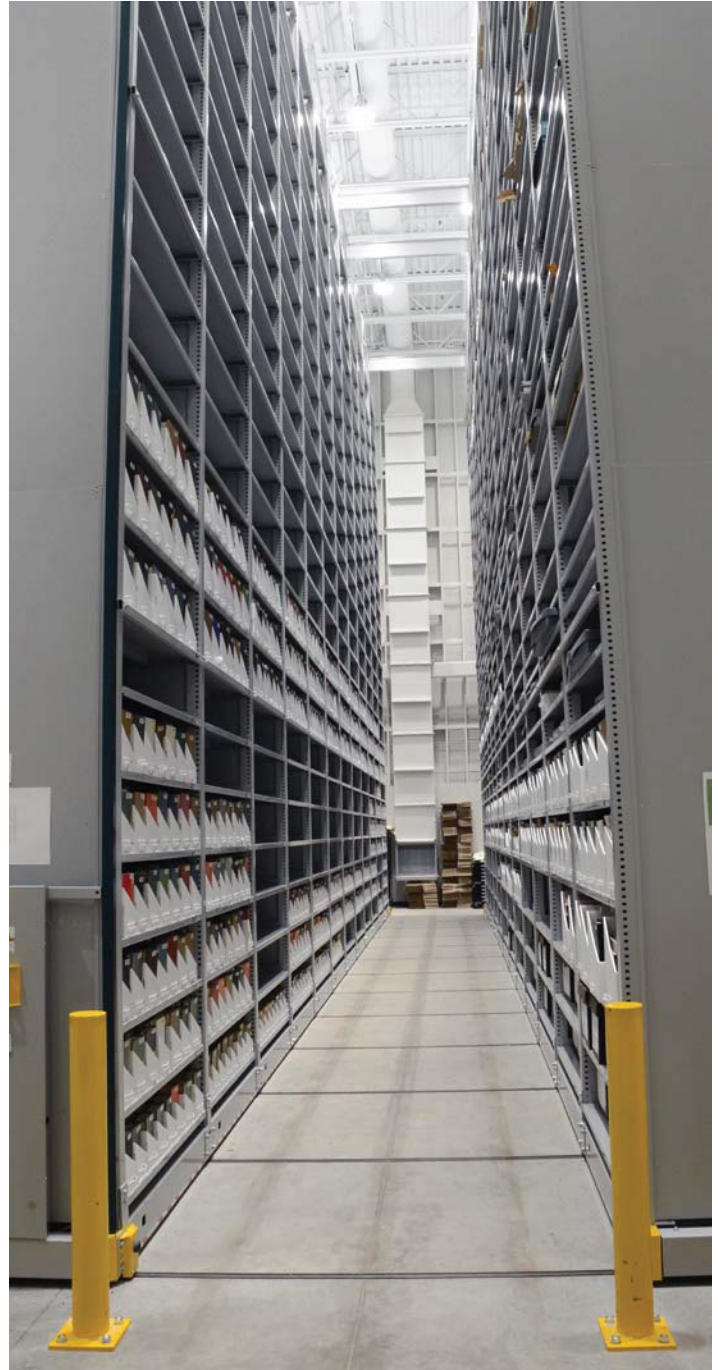
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The installation of XTend Mobile High-Bay shelving within the new "purpose-built" legacy center has allowed the University to keep the materials in an ideal environment, which is more efficient for the faculty, students and researchers. Staff will be able to access research materials quickly and get them to the patrons in a much more reasonable amount of time.

"There is a great deal of enthusiasm in our group," said Joe Reish, Dean of University Libraries. "We will be able to find things that were not easily found before because we were in different locations for our archives and regional history collections."

Not only will services be improved, this new legacy center will ensure the preservation of these valuable collections for future generations.

"We take very seriously the trust placed in us to care for the documents that have been donated by those we call the 'donors of treasure,'" said Carlson. "Those treasures contain thousands of stories, books, articles, videos and productions... without these treasures there would be no purpose for this building."



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"Lynn and I care deeply about Western Michigan University and not just from an education point of view but also from a community resource point of view," said Charles Zhang during the dedication ceremony for the Center.

"We are honored to provide our support to this amazing legacy center, which will provide safe and accessible accommodations for the huge historical collections that serve the public in the pursuit of knowledge."

Spacesaver and The Casper Corporation are proud of their contribution to the success of this project.

"We cannot thank you enough for our involvement in this historic and great project," said Jim Casper.

The foundation of education stacks high for the future of Western Michigan University's students and staff.