

Case Study:

FLEXIBLE SHELVING FOR A CAMPUS LIBRARY

Harper College | Palatine, Illinois





The aging building hadn't been remodeled in more than 20 years.

The planning committee wanted more flexible spaces and a brighter, more open feel.



"We observed how the students used the spaces. The movable shelving allowed us to reconfigure several areas on the second floor to reduce group seating and mitigate loud conversation, while still promoting collaboration."

Njambi Kamoche | Dean, Resources for Learning

A commitment to learning

On most campuses, the library is a lively hub of learning and collaboration. But students and faculty at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, found that working in the old library was more about endurance than enjoyment. The aging building hadn't been remodeled in more than 20 years, and it was dark, overcrowded, and noisy. Perhaps most importantly, the building's labyrinthine layout made it difficult for students to find their way around.



"We needed to find a better place for them to learn."

Njambi Kamoche | Dean, Resources for Learning

An open, flexible concept

When the campus acquired funds to renovate the library, faculty and staff knew exactly what they wanted: flexible, student-centered spaces that would take advantage of natural light and expansive views. They also wanted a space to secure the college's archives, which were growing steadily every year.

The planning committee worked with the Chicago-based Spacesaver distributorship to design shelving that not only stored books and other printed materials, but that also coordinated with the team's design goals.



Sleek shelving

The library's main level is bright, open, and busy. The planning team wanted to provide casual collaboration spaces on this level, along with access to popular periodicals, digital media, best sellers, popular reading, graphic novels, and other materials. Counter-height cantilever shelving contributes to the open feel, allowing natural light from large windows to fill the space. A-frame carts provide storage and display for DVDs and other media. The shelving is fitted with casters that allow staff to move them when they want to repurpose the space.

The third floor is dedicated to independent research and quiet study. Tall cantilever shelving units house the majority of the library's collection, and study carrels offer privacy.

Throughout the library, Spacesaver shelving was fitted with custom end panels that integrate with the rest of the building's interior design. The result is a sleek, clean look that unifies the facility while also providing convenient access to the library's collection.

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'CARTS' FOR ANY SETTING
Movable library shelving can look and function much like a library cart, or the casters can be concealed for a more streamlined appearance.



Shelving on Concealed Casters
Best for Infrequent Moves



Shelving on Visible Casters
Best for Frequent Moves

Marmalade Library,
Salt Lake City, UT



A secure space for archives

The design team also worked with the local Spacesaver consultant to design a secure area to house the college's archives and special collections. They chose 4-Post shelving mounted on a high-density mobile system to store archival boxes and printed materials.

The archivist also needed to store odd-sized items including plaques, dinnerware, and other objects associated with the institution's history. Due to budget considerations, and because the objects didn't need the more extensive protection offered by museum cabinets, the planning committee chose Spacesaver's 4-Post

shelving units fitted with doors and museum trays. The trays fully extend, allowing researchers to view objects without disturbing them, and the doors have keyed locks to provide an additional layer of security.

The archives were designed with room to grow. Some of the high-density storage shelves are currently empty, awaiting future acquisitions. The cabinet trays can be raised or lowered without special tools, allowing staff to adjust tray spacing to maximize space and accommodate objects of different heights. Additional trays can be added as the collection grows in the future.



The archives included a place to store odd-sized items like historic dinnerware.



The secure archives area was designed with room to grow.



Enduring Solutions for Campus Libraries

At Spacesaver, we understand that planning a new building or a major renovation is a once-in-a-career opportunity for many library professionals. It's a daunting task, but we work on library projects every day and we can help make sure you understand all your options.

Contact us to connect with your local Spacesaver consultant, who can coordinate with our in-house engineers, project managers, and manufacturing professionals to design, build, and install enduring storage solutions that will stand the test of time.

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