FAU, NIGERIA LIBRARIES NOW SHARING RESOURCES

Written by STAFF REPORT
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BOCA RATON - The Florida Atlantic University Libraries have signed an agreement to share copies of their articles and documents with the American University of Nigeria Library.

The Nigerian university, which serves about 1,400 students and 100 faculty members in the farming town of Yola, is struggling to develop research and teaching programs.

The agreement allows the seven-year-old library to request up to 30 electronic photocopies of periodicals, conference papers, government documents and other materials each month from FAU Libraries’ interlibrary loan department.

“We are glad to assist this young institution in providing access to its faculty as they establish their research programs,” said William Miller, dean of the University Libraries at FAU. “The university is in a poorer region and does not have a budget to access the expensive proprietary materials that we subscribe to.”

FAU officials said the agreement is the FAU Libraries’ second for special services with an international library. Since 2001, FAU Libraries have sent electronic copies of materials to the Papazian Library at the American University of Armenia in Yerevan, Armenia. The American University of Nigeria and the American University of Armenia are modeled after the U.S. higher education structure.

At the American University of Nigeria, many of the professors and administrators are either American or have worked in colleges or universities in the United States.

BROWARD STINT

The library’s director, Ahmed Demirhan, is an American and a former Broward County Library employee who became acquainted with Miller and the FAU Libraries through the Southeast Florida Library Information Network.

“This agreement is a big window for us and will allow our faculty access to current scholarly resources,” said Demirhan.

FAU officials say the special agreements are consistent with FAU’s mission of forging distinctive alliances, serving diverse communities and expanding its international presence.

WORLDCAT

That includes employing WorldCat, a global network of library content and services that uses the web to connect 72,000 member libraries in 170 countries, as its main source for sharing research and resources.

“This demonstrates our willingness to share resources in the international arena and identifies us as a good place to come to for resources,” said Troy Christenson, interlibrary loan librarian and coordinator at the FAU Libraries. “Sharing our resources enhances our ability to borrow materials for our university community.”

MORE REQUEST

Officials say the FAU Libraries’ interlibrary loan department is receiving more requests for international articles and documents, and expects that trend to continue to rise. FAU’s diverse student and faculty populations are requesting more research materials in their native languages, and the Internet is helping to increase awareness of the availability of the articles.

DEMAND

“The more our budgets shrink, the more it will continue to drive up demand for these services,” said Christenson. “We must borrow because we cannot purchase or store all of the materials.”

For more information on the agreements or on the FAU Libraries’ interlibrary loan program, contact Troy Christenson at 561-297-3657.

Photo: Omachi Okala