

**The Christiansburg Institute** now has the power to tell its rich, century-long story through its self-managed Christiansburg Institute Digital Archive thanks to a \$251,052 Digitizing Hidden Collections: Amplifying Unheard Voices grant from the Council on Library Information Resources. The University Libraries at Virginia Tech is collaborating with the institute on its grant-funded project, “Changing the Narrative: Modeling Equitable Stewardship of African American Storytelling and History,” to digitize stories, photos, and documents of Christiansburg Industrial Institute—the first high school in Southwest Virginia to educate the formerly enslaved (1866–1966).



Christiansburg Institute students and faculty pose beside the Edgar A. Long Building. Photo courtesy of Christiansburg Institute Museum and Archives.

The grant funds will support digitization of 38.65 linear feet of Christiansburg Institute Museum and Archives’ collections, including technology and two new institute staff positions to digitize and process materials on site at the Christiansburg Institute. The University Libraries has access to specific experience, funding, technologies, and bandwidth to create additional avenues of discovery for the collections. The materials will be freely available to anyone with an internet connection through the Christiansburg Institute Digital Archive and the University Libraries’ Southwest Virginia Digital Archive.

**The James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota Libraries** has acquired a rare, seventeenth-century map of the Java Sea thanks to generous funding from the James Ford Bell Trust. The 1672 manuscript chart by Dutch cartographer Johannes Blaeu was commissioned by the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC) to provide more accurate information of the area for VOC ships coming from the Indian Ocean or sailing south of the region to expand trade. The 31-inch by 38.25-inch map is signed and dated and is one of only five known charts of the area by Blaeu. The other four are housed in European archives.

Blaeu was one of a family of Dutch printer-publishers who also were mapmakers. The Bell collection contains several works by the Blaeu family, including atlases, maps, and other printed works. This new acquisition, however, is perhaps the most special. The Bell Library holds several maps similar to Blaeu’s—nautical charts, sometimes called portolan charts—that are focused on the sea and its coastlines rather than on land. The earliest of those dates to 1424, and the others are from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. *~*