

# THE SEPTIMA CLARK LEARNING CENTER

## ***MOVING OUR LEARNING RESOURCES CLOSE TO OUR WORKSHOP CENTER TO BETTER SERVE OUR CONSTITUENCIES***

**The building that now holds our crowded dorm will be renovated and redesigned to house the spacious and light-filled, new Septima Clark Learning Center.**

**Relocating and renovating the Learning Center *will* enable us to better meet the diverse needs of workshop participants, community organizers, researchers, staff, interns, and visitors.**

Over the course of our 80-year history, the Resource Center has been a key component of our educational programs, and has grown to include a unique range of services and resources---one of Highlander's most unique assets. Our staff members are skilled in assisting visitors with the wide range of materials available. The closer proximity will allow our education team to incorporate these services and spaces into workshops more easily and frequently. It will also enable researchers to interact more easily with workshop participants if they so wish. The new Learning Center will provide much-needed, additional meeting and training areas for small groups, yet will also provide a separate area for researchers to work uninterruptedly at the same time.

**Closer proximity is especially important for those attending weekend workshops.**

We want to give workshop participants more time and opportunities to gain greater familiarity with the variety of materials in the Resource Center. *Beyond materials pertaining to the particular workshop they're attending at that time, we want visitors to become familiar with the whole range of materials available and plant the seeds for future use, long after the workshop has ended.*

**Adding needed space for the archive.**

Adding archive space will enable us to house our permanent archive of historical materials in the new Learning Center and reserve the current archive room for materials that are being sorted and accessioned, as well as---at last!---creating a dedicated space for administrative records.

## FEATURES OF THE SEPTIMA CLARK LEARNING CENTER

- Archive
- Harry Lasker Memorial Library: books & materials about popular education methodologies and books related to Highlander
- Highlander Bookstore
- Highlander's original library (portion on display, remainder archived)
- Information & Reference Center for workshop participants and visitors
- Resource support center for Highlander educational team
- Space & services for researchers
- Small group meeting & workshops space
- Computer stations
- Video viewing stations

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTION, AND ITS RELATION TO STAFFING AND LOCATION

The personal interaction between people at Highlander is one of the most valuable educational experiences. Having the *Learning Center building and staff near the Workshop Center* will allow for more interaction with workshop participants and sharing of materials. It is usually the conversations with workshop participants and visitors that help to make connections between what we have and what they are interested in.

The distance between buildings at Highlander decreases interaction, and as workshop participants are usually not here for long periods of time, they often don't have much leisure time to drop by. Thus we believe that both interactions and material use would increase with a closer location. We often have to plan a particular time during a workshop to invite people to the Resource Center. Often these times are spent mostly selling books, leaving less time for talking with people about what they are doing and directing them to particular materials. Being located near the workshop center would allow for more interactions over the course of a workshop.

Having the bookstore, library and archive all together allows limited staff to multi-task more efficiently to do whatever is needed on a given day, and multi-tasking is what happens most days at the Resource Center.