

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



University of Tennessee – Strong Hall High-Density Storage to Preserve the Past Well Into the Future

CHALLENGE

The University of Tennessee - Knoxville's Anthropology Department, including its Forensic Anthropology Center (famous for "The Body Farm") had for years been located in renovated rooms under the school's famous Neyland Stadium. As their assemblage of tens of thousands of archaeological artifacts, skeletons

and other samples continued to grow, the cramped quarters became untenable. In addition to limited size, the area under the stadium used window-mounted air-conditioning systems; the fluctuating humidity made the collections subject to damage from mold and mildew.

SOLUTION

With the planned construction of a new campus building, Strong Hall, anthropology faculty saw the possibilities of solving their space needs. Representatives of the department worked with architects and Patterson Pope Sales Representative Scott Bertini to plan a storage system that would both meet present needs and accommodate future growth.

"We decided on powered high-density systems from Spacesaver as the ideal product to meet the university's needs," said Bertini. "The materials they're storing needed ample protection from environmental irregularities and they needed space to be able to grow in the future."

The new units hold thousands of boxes of samples – everything from modern human and animal skeletons to animal bones and artifacts representing life in the distant and more recent past. All told, the four units boast compacted aisles, each one designed to hold box storage and, where necessary, zoology cabinets.

"This new installation alleviates our space concerns and lets us focus on the research at hand," said Benjamin Auerbach, Professor of Anthropology who worked on planning the project with Bertini. "During the fall, we'll have anywhere from six to 12 researchers in here at any one time. That includes staff, grad students and external researchers. This is a fantastic system."



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University of Tennessee

ACHIEVEMENT

With a new space comes a renewed enthusiasm. Said Professor Auerbach, “While the external researchers who use our collection don’t really know what was here before, our grad students praise the new system as compared to what we had in our old space at the stadium. They say it’s a night-and-day difference.”

Ease of access and increased organization have created an exceptional work area. Whereas previously collections might have been separated by rooms or even over multiple floors, the new system allows for more cohesion and a streamlined look.

“I’ve never been involved with something like this, so it was just a really interesting project,” said Bertini. “It’s really nice to be able to play a role in creating something that will be used over and over again – not just today but for future generations.”

For Professor Auerbach, the easy process made the transition from the old space to the new one that much smoother.

“Working with Patterson Pope was incredibly easy,” he said. “It was nice not having to move the collection into a temporary space. We didn’t move anything until the new space was ready. It looks fantastic, and works very well.”

