KISLAK CENTER
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

OPENING 2018

MIA MI LIBRARIES
At the heart of the University of Miami Coral Gables campus, a former lecture hall is being renovated and transformed into a place of learning and discovery to benefit the entire community, the Kislak Center at the University of Miami. The revival of this historic community space in the midst of the campus’ cultural hub will serve as an attractive and accessible new home for the University Libraries’ departments of Special Collections and University Archives, which have outgrown their current homes on the eighth floor of Otto G. Richter Library.

The Kislak Center has been established with a landmark gift to the University of Miami and Miami Dade College of the Jay I. Kislak Collection of the Early Americas, Exploration and Navigation. The collection comprises rare books, manuscripts, maps, photographs, and artifacts on themes related to the history of the early Americas, hemispheric cultural encounters, and global exploration beginning with early Native American cultures and extending to modern times. It is the product of the efforts of Jay I. Kislak, a real estate entrepreneur and mortgage banker, who came to the Miami area in 1952, and has evolved over the course of his collecting career to be recognized as one of the largest and most important of its kind in the United States.

The Kislak Center at the University of Miami will feature a grand reading room and gallery showcasing items from the Special Collections and University Archives vaults. The Center will also host public programming for the University’s centers, institutes, schools, colleges, and libraries during the evening and weekend hours. With a seating capacity for 275 guests and state-of-the-art acoustics and technology infrastructure, the Center will support a full range of lectures, panel discussions, and musical and theatrical performances. The Kislak Gallery of Exploration and Discovery, a conference room, and a curatorial office suite will be located on the Center’s mezzanine level, accessible from the first floor by means of a new staircase and elevators.

The Kislak Center at the University of Miami will serve to spark a heightened and mutually sustaining dynamic between University of Miami intellectual and cultural programs and the communities of South Florida.
Image of an early sixteenth century map illustrating European footholds in Florida and the Caribbean from the Jay I. Kislak Collection of the Early Americas, Exploration and Navigation.