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2015 University of Dayton Libraries Cultivating Knowledge and Building Community

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A university library is much greater than the number of titles in its catalog or the number of carrels in its study spaces.
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: A COMMITMENT TO SERVE

In the University of Dayton Libraries, we provide the services, resources and spaces the University community needs to learn, discover, create and research. Whether we’re acquiring materials, employing new technology or designing new learning spaces, we do it with our students, faculty, staff and the community in mind.

The Libraries help the University fulfill its academic mission through active partnerships and collaborations. We are constantly looking for new opportunities to support this mission.

As illustrated in these stories of our faculty, students and alumni, the University Libraries continuously evolve to meet the needs of a new generation of students and scholars — yet remain committed to our core purposes of connecting people to information, facilitating the creation of new knowledge and preserving our cultural record.

Kathleen M. Webb
Dean, University Libraries
University Libraries invest more than $1.6 million per year in books, journals, databases and more to ensure that UD faculty, staff and students have access to the best methods and materials available, and the faculty and staff provide instruction and assistance to every department on campus.

“I’m able to function here as a researcher because of the services of the Libraries — the librarians, OhioLINK, interlibrary loan, it goes on and on,” says history professor David Darrow, director of the University Honors Program.

“Libraries give students the greatest chance possible to do quality work,” Darrow says. “I always tell my students their best friend is the reference librarian. ... I can’t conceive of assigning any research project without including collaboration and consultation with the library.”

Darrow says library support is part of the reason UD’s top undergraduate students produce publishable scholarship — an unusual achievement for undergraduates.

“Our honors students are contributing to the production of new knowledge,” Darrow says. “Many of the students in the Berry Summer Thesis Institute end up having publications as first author by the time they graduate.”

Darrow makes library instruction a part of almost every course he teaches and encourages all students in the University Honors Program to make the most of the Libraries’ assistance.
A LIBRARY BUILT FOR AN EMERGING RESEARCH INSTITUTION

The first time communication professor Sam Wallace came to Roesch Library, it had just opened. It had plenty of space on its seven main floors — “shelves and shelves in the stacks without any books,” Wallace recalls — and an ambitious acquisition plan to serve an emerging research university.

“They are far more valuable to me than just finding things that I need and making them appear. They are listeners, problem solvers — guides through the maze of databases and search strategies.”

Years later, when Wallace joined the faculty, Roesch Library’s shelves, study carrels, reference desk and instruction spaces were full, and the circulation desk was bustling; a nexus of both academic and social interaction, Roesch draws about 2,000 visitors per day during typical weeks of the semester — and many more during exam weeks.

Since 1971, Roesch Library has been as much a part of campus life as Flyer basketball, Christmas on Campus and the student neighborhood. Its technology, spaces and resources keep advancing with the latest learning, research and teaching methods.

“And the library professional staff are the best,” he says. “They are far more valuable to me than just finding things that I need and making them appear. They are listeners, problem solvers — guides through the maze of databases and search strategies.”
In the University Libraries, our doors are open — sometimes around the clock — because that’s what our students and faculty want in this vibrant, highly residential learning community.
What students learn in the University Libraries doesn’t end when they finish their papers and turn in their projects.

After international studies and Spanish major Libby Durnwald took a semester-long library course on research methods, she was able to put her library skills to use in her summer internship with Catholic Relief Services in Washington, D.C.

“It really elevated the caliber of research I could do,” says Durnwald, who has taken missions to Guatemala, Mexico and Ecuador and plans to pursue a career abroad in international development. “During my internship, I was able to use research skills in ways they didn’t expect, and because I could use UD’s databases from Washington, I had access to library resources that a nonprofit wouldn’t typically have.”

Durnwald also has been active in Porch Reads, a popular donor-supported book club that started in 2005 to encourage leisure reading among undergraduates.

“My parents instilled a love of books and reading,” she says. “For most college students, that usually translates into research materials and resources. With Porch Reads, you get a new book — free, and it’s a good book. Porch Reads is UD’s best-kept secret.”

Durnwald says that the library’s biggest fans call it “Club Roesch” and even use the hashtag #ClubRoesch in social media.

“Students love the library, but it’s the resources and the people in it that make the libraries phenomenal,” says Durnwald.
“The Libraries really are a part of the social network of the University,” says Linda Arvin Skuns ’63. “It’s not just a place to study.”
ADVANCING WITH TECHNOLOGY AND TRENDS

When University of Dayton secondary education graduate Linda Arvin Skuns ’63 was a student at UD, a collegiate library was a source for research and a place to study without interruption.

When she came back to campus in the mid-2000s after a long career as a high school English teacher, the University of Dayton Libraries were much more than that.

“The programs are not just for the highbrow academic. They encourage the citizens of the community to come in and benefit from what’s here, like the rare books, the 1913 flood exhibit and the baseball special collection.”

“It’s much more social, which is really how it should be, because that’s how education and business are done today,” says Skuns, who served six years on the Libraries Advisory Council, providing guidance and ideas for the Libraries’ continuous improvements to spaces, services, technology, programs and materials. “Businesses are run by people collaborating. The way the University Libraries are set up now, students can do that, too.”

The Libraries also do a lot more community outreach, she says — exhibits, lectures, films, dialogues and other public events.

“The programs are not just for the highbrow academic,” she says. “They encourage the citizens of the community to come in and benefit from what’s here, like the rare books, the 1913 flood exhibit and the baseball special collection.”

MAKE A VISIT
Come browse, read, explore our archives, attend our programs, conduct research, view our exhibits or see our beautiful Marian-inspired artwork and materials. Visit udayton.edu/libraries/stories to find out more about University Libraries.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE
If you share our enthusiasm for cultivating a love of knowledge and inspiring learning and research, we’d welcome your ideas, involvement and support. Contact the dean’s office at 937-229-4265.