

Remarks by University of Dayton President Eric F. Spina

BLESSING OF THE RENOVATED ROESCH LIBRARY

Friday, Sept. 27, 2019

Gathering Place on second floor of Roesch Library

Thank you so much, Kathy!

I thank you especially for your leadership, patience, guidance, and the collaborative approach you took during both phases of this renovation. Libraries historically have been thought of as quiet places, sanctuaries. Between the jackhammers and the interactive work that this space is designed for, this place was filled with creative racket.

And it's all worth it. I offer my heartfelt gratitude to you, our librarians, the staff—and all on campus who gave input into the design and furniture choices. A special thanks to Katy Kelly, who organized a “furniture petting zoo” that allowed students to rate the comfort of tables and chairs—including a chair called “Bob” with its cushioned footrests. I love *that*.

As I walked through the first-floor gallery's exhibit of photographs and artifacts illustrating the history of our library, one observation struck me full force.

This is not your father's library. Or your mother's, for that matter. It's a library for our times—bright, colorful, open, inviting.

This transformation has been *nothing* short of amazing, and I'm thrilled that our faculty and students have the kind of technology and comfortable spaces to study, learn, and collaborate in ways that enhance their academic journey. Today, Roesch Library stands as a testament to digital and collaborative learning in higher education.

Despite all the changes, Roesch maintains its distinctive personality, though.

Our library, called “Club Roesch” by students, has always had a bit of an attitude, a bit of a swagger. Isn't that true?

What other campus library organizes 15-minute dance parties at midnight during finals week for students to relieve stress? Where else can you find the world's largest collection of material on Mary, the mother of Jesus? And the library's exhibits—from rare books to an indoor living garden—are legendary.

But this renovation ups even Roesch's game.

On this floor, you immediately notice the abundance of natural light coming in from the windows, the flexible space in the middle of the room for small or large gatherings, and the spot by a window that's been dubbed “the living room” because of the comfortable furniture and decorative ceiling lights.

I also love the Scholars' Commons for engaging with fellow researchers and faculty and the Collab for team projects, library instruction, and group study. A special thank you to a group of innovative students from IACT, who brainstormed the concept for Concourse D, a collaborative space where new ideas and solutions take flight.

My favorite addition may be the Dialogue Zone, a place for people to be "at the table" engaging in challenging conversations. It's a distinctly Marianist feature—and so needed during our times as we cultivate respect for diversity of thought and find common ground on issues.

I'd now like to introduce Provost Paul Benson to reflect on how the library's newly developed space will impact learning, scholarship, and creativity.

Thank you!