

5-18-2022

Connecting Classroom Learning to Library Employment

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Harris, Kayla, "Connecting Classroom Learning to Library Employment" (2022). *Marian Library Blog Archive*. 81.

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Connecting Classroom Learning to Library Employment

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Wednesday May 18, 2022

By Kayla Harris

This spring, the Marian Library said goodbye to graduating senior Matthew Frabotta, who worked in both Roesch Library and the Marian Library for the past two years. The Marian Library student employees complete so many of the tasks that make our operations possible — from greeting visitors at the front desk to shelving books to assisting with exhibits and programming. The impact of their work often endures long after they graduate.

Frabotta, from South Bend, Indiana, connected his classroom experiences as a history major and Italian minor to several projects in the Marian Library. While organizing and describing a collection of pamphlets, artwork and other souvenir material from Marian shrines, he noted some of the unusual items such as wind protectors for taper candles at candlelight processions and pennants for particular shrines. This material inspired the fall 2021 exhibit *Journeys of Faith: Shrines, Souvenirs, and Catholic Tourism*. To physically introduce

undergraduate students to the Marian Library, Frabotta assisted with developing a self-guided PATH-eligible event that brought over 600 students to see this exhibit during October 2021.

Frabotta indicated an interest in maps, so his expertise was especially helpful when developing Journeys of Faith into a digital exhibit using StoryMaps by ArcGIS. Using latitude and longitude coordinates, he plotted each shrine on a world map and uploaded digitized souvenirs to each location. This use of digital storytelling tools proved helpful as he completed his capstone project under the direction of professors Haimanti Roy and Laura Sextro. He used the digital humanities platform Scalar for his capstone project, Forging a Community: Italian Immigration to Ashtabula Ohio, 1888-1922, for which he conducted some genealogical research — another skill he used to enhance a Marian Library exhibit.

A Vision of Art and Faith: The Litany of Loreto and the Work of Ezio Anichini (1886-1948), explores the legacy of the Italian artist Anichini and recurring figures such as the Virgin Mary of the Litany of Loreto. Frabotta not only translated Italian text; he also conducted some preliminary genealogical research of the Anichini family that allowed curators to provide a more nuanced understanding of the artist.

The entire staff of the Marian Library congratulates and thanks Matthew for his many contributions!

– Kayla Harris manages the arrangement and preservation of the Marian Library's archival materials including photographs, personal papers and other artifacts.