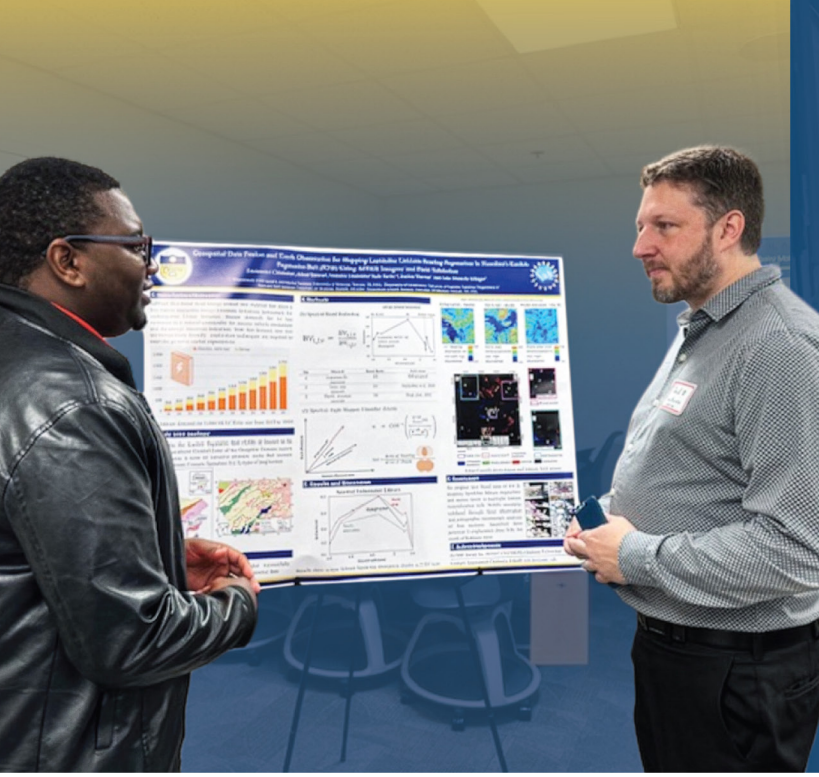




UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE LIBRARY, MUSEUMS AND PRESS

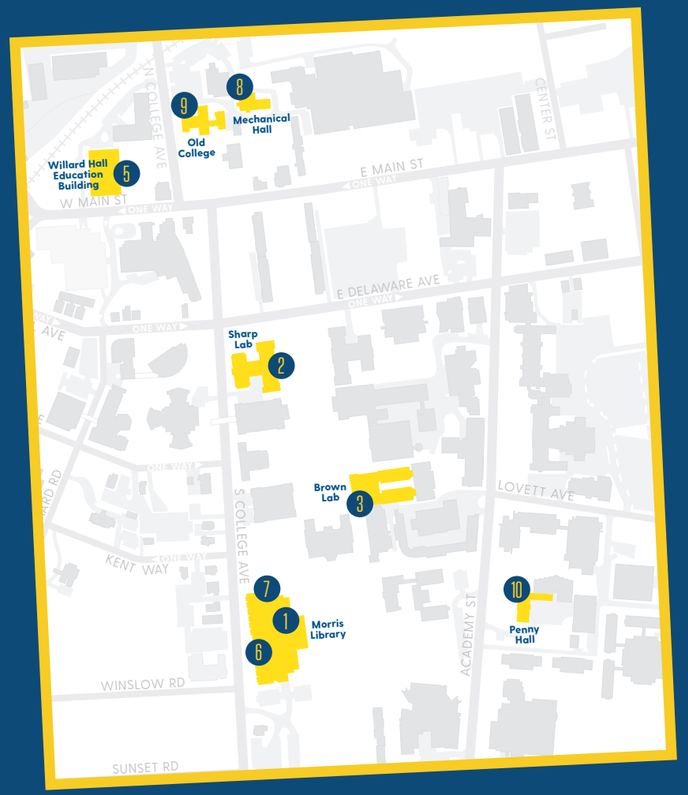
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JULY 2024–JUNE 2025

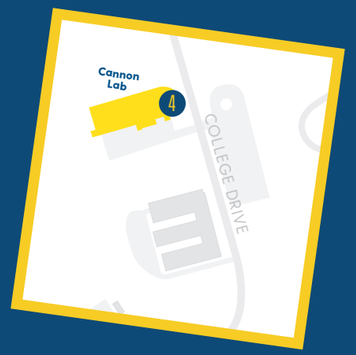




OUR LOCATIONS



University of Delaware Campus
Newark, Delaware



Hugh R. Sharp Campus
Lewes, Delaware

1 Morris Library

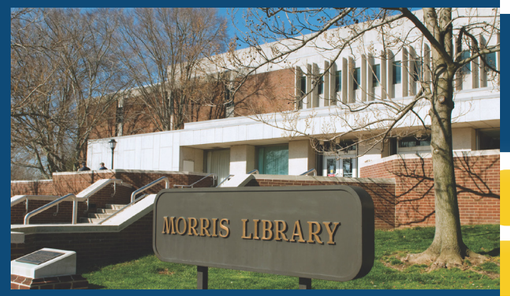
2 Physics Library

3 Chemistry Library

4 Marine Studies Library

5 Education Resource Center

6 University of Delaware Press



7 Special Collections Gallery



8 Mechanical Hall Gallery



9 Old College Gallery



10 Mineralogical Museum

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Trevor A. Dawes,
vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PROVOST

I am delighted to present this report from the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press which highlights the impactful work done during the 2024-2025 academic year. In the pages that follow, you will read about some of the projects, initiatives and research spearheaded by our dedicated staff that capture the core of our mission to support the intellectual endeavors of our Blue Hens and the broader community.

This year we reflected on the future of the library and the ways in which we will need to adapt to continue to offer high-quality services that are essential to the University. It became clear that we needed to redefine the priorities of the Library, Museums and Press to ensure we are maximizing our talented staff and resources to continue to have a meaningful impact across the campus.

The Library Executive Council (our senior leadership team) set that course for the future by establishing three strategic focus areas: enhancing research support, expanding experiential learning and advancing open scholarship. These priorities will ensure we are responding to the evolving needs of the University community. It likely comes as no surprise that these priorities are already integral parts of the work that we do, and the stories, events, initiatives and more covered in the pages of this year's report serve as powerful examples of these priorities in practice.

As advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) continue to transform teaching and learning at the University and across the world, one feature story covers the ways our staff has taken a leadership role in helping the community navigate this major shift in technology. From workshops to the creation of an AI chatbot, the Library, Museums and Press has been instrumental in shaping what the future of AI will look like at the University.

Our second feature highlights the generous gift from Mark Samuels Lasner that made it possible for us to expand our Special Collections footprint within the Morris Library. It details the behind-the-scenes work that went into this transformative project–from our successful fundraising efforts and the physical renovation to the June 14th donor event that celebrated this project as we look forward to its completion.

The final feature reflects on the evolution of the academic research library over the last several decades. Through technological advances, changes in service models, budgetary constraints and more, it showcases the ways the Library, Museums and Press has responded to the shifting needs of our scholars ensuring we continue to provide meaningful services to our community that empower them to learn and flourish at the University and beyond.

The report also celebrates the achievements of our staff, highlights many of our exhibitions and programs from the last year, showcases examples of experiential learning opportunities that allowed students to gain invaluable hands-on experiences and features our community outreach, open access and academic support initiatives and so much more.

So much of the work we do would not be possible without the support of our donors. We are deeply grateful for your generosity, which has allowed the Library, Museums and Press to grow and build upon the opportunities and resources we provide for our community.

The examples listed here are just a snippet of the amazing accomplishments you will read in the following pages. They exemplify the hard work of the Library, Museums and Press staff as well as their commitment to supporting research, teaching, learning, embracing innovation and creating spaces that inspire discovery and creativity. I'm excited for you to dive deeper and discover the various ways our team has helped our scholars thrive.

Cheers,



Trevor A. Dawes
vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian

Building a New Home for Special Collections

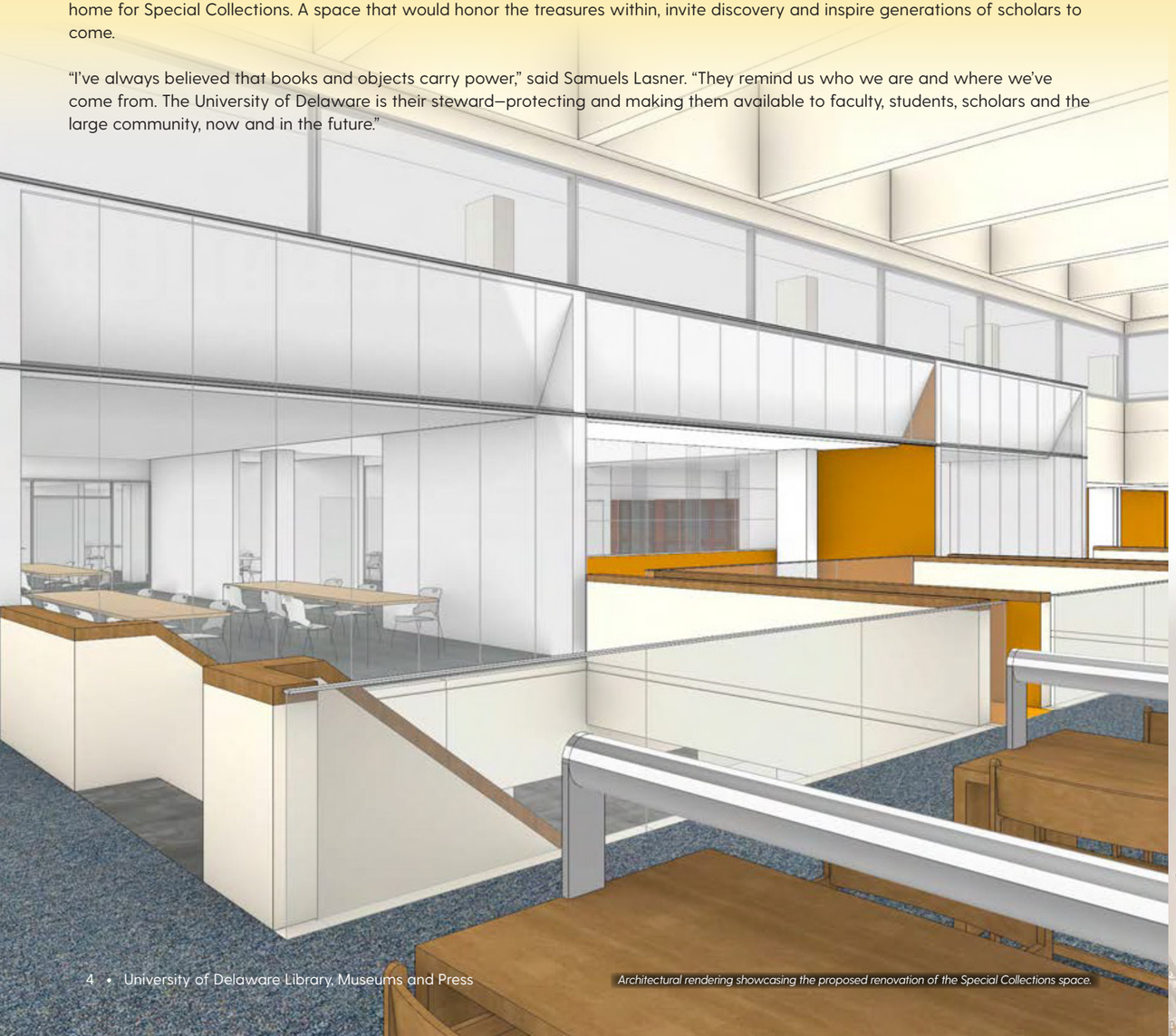
A Story of Vision, Perseverance and Community

When bibliophile and longtime University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press supporter Mark Samuels Lasner gifted his renowned collection of British literature and art to Special Collections—valued at $11 million—he gave more than books and rare materials. He gave the Library, Museums and Press a vision.

With rare materials published between 1850 to 1900, the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection then included over 9,500 works: signed first editions, letters, manuscripts, photographs and art from figures like Oscar Wilde, William Morris, Christina and Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Max Beerbohm. Each piece carried with it a story, a voice and a tangible connection to the creative and cultural movements of its time.

That remarkable gift didn't just enrich the Library's holdings—it became the cornerstone of a dream: to create a new, welcoming home for Special Collections. A space that would honor the treasures within, invite discovery and inspire generations of scholars to come.

"I've always believed that books and objects carry power," said Samuels Lasner. "They remind us who we are and where we've come from. The University of Delaware is their steward—protecting and making them available to faculty, students, scholars and the large community, now and in the future."



Architectural rendering showcasing the proposed renovation of the Special Collections space.

From Vision to Planning

Soon after Samuel Lasner's gift, planning began for a comprehensive renovation that would redefine how visitors, researchers and students experience Special Collections. Shelly McCoy, associate university librarian for public services and space planning, remembers those early conversations vividly. "We wanted to create a space that would do justice to the extraordinary collections we care for—a space that's beautiful, flexible and accessible," she said.

The concept was simple yet powerful: unite the Library's rich collections, exhibition galleries and teaching spaces under one roof—a modern, inviting environment that sparks curiosity the moment you walk in.

Special Collections has long been a cornerstone of academic discovery, housing rare books, manuscripts, archives and artifacts that inspire research and scholarship across disciplines. Yet the space that holds these treasures has not been renovated since the broader Morris Library renovation in 1986.

Recognizing the need for a modern, accessible and inspiring environment to match the significance of its collections, the Library engaged Gensler, a leading architectural firm, in 2019 to design an expansion and renovation of the existing footprint. The project envisioned a reimagined space—one that would bring together and expand the Special Collections storage areas and Gallery, while adding much-needed classrooms and flexible learning spaces for students and faculty.

With the planned completion of the Library Annex addition in early 2020, general collection books would be relocated there, allowing Special Collections materials to be temporarily housed in the Annex during construction. By early 2020, the project had reached the schematic design phase, laying the foundation for a dynamic new chapter in the Library's history.

Setbacks and Determination

Like many ambitious projects, the path forward was far from linear.

Just as planning gained momentum, the world changed. The COVID-19 pandemic forced institutions everywhere to pause—and UD was no exception. Budget constraints, shifting priorities and global uncertainty put the renovation temporarily on hold. "We had this incredible vision and the groundwork laid," said McCoy. "But like so many things during that time, we had to wait and trust that when the time was right, we'd return to it stronger."

That sense of resilience, even during the pause, led teams across the Library, Museums and Press to continue refining ideas and exploring possibilities. The dream of a new home for Special Collections remained alive—quietly, persistently—waiting for its next chapter and the green light to forge ahead.

Pause to Progress

By late 2023, momentum began to build again. Renewed commitment from University leadership and strong advocacy from Library supporters reignited plans for the project. The Library got the green light to begin talking about the renovation more publicly. A project manager was assigned, fundraising began and in late 2024, the University's Board of Trustees officially approved the renovation for the summer of 2025, signaling a new beginning.

"It was such a joyful moment," said McCoy. "We could finally say yes, this is happening. We're going to bring this vision to life." With approval secured, planning teams returned to work reengaging architects, updating plans and mapping out a phased renovation process. And this time, the excitement spread quickly.



Staff members from Special Collections taking a behind-the-scenes hard hat tour of the in-progress renovation.

A Community of Support

With the project moving forward, attention turned to rallying support from across the UD community more publicly. Fundraising began in earnest, and the response was both heartening and humbling. Through initiatives like I Heart UD Giving Day and the Vice Provost's Fall Direct Appeal, alumni, friends, staff and faculty joined together to help make the new Special Collections home a reality once again.

Among the most significant commitments were several leadership gifts that underscored just how deeply this project resonated with the University's closest supporters.

One devoted Library supporter made a transformational $750,000 gift toward the campaign.

Longtime supporter, past Friends president and UD alumnus Ted Killheffer also contributed $20,000 to further strengthen the campaign.


The Friends of the UD Library Board of Directors touring the in-progress renovation after a board meeting.

"I graduated from UD in 1958, the year a number of interested Delawareans formed a group to support the Library as it grew in size and prestige to match the University's efforts to become one of the nation's best," recalled Killheffer. "As the Library has grown, its Special Collections have become important resources for scholars and researchers at Delaware and beyond. I am proud to add my contribution to efforts to support and sustain the Morris Library's Special Collections."

Members of the Friends of the University of Delaware Library—a nonprofit organization that has supported the Library for nearly 70 years—began discussing the possibility of making an extraordinary $1 million contribution toward the renovation after first learning of the need during I Heart UD Giving Day.

"We believe this project ensures that generations to come will experience the same wonder and discovery that has inspired members of the Friends for nearly 70 years," said Jim Dalle Pazze, Friends president.

At the most recent Annual Board of Directors meeting, the Friends board voted and unanimously approved a $1 million gift to support the renovation.

Together, these gifts reflect a shared conviction: that the preservation and accessibility of knowledge are essential to the University's future.


Staff member Tywanda Cuffy welcomes guests at the June 14th event.

Cause for Celebration

That conviction came to life the morning of June 14, 2025, when the Library, Museums and Press hosted an event titled *Building a New Home for Special Collections*.

Planned by Tywanda Cuffy, director of external relations, communications and development initiatives, along with her colleagues, Nicole Hernandez, external relations coordinator, and Kris Raser, multimedia project manager, the event was held a Saturday morning on the second floor of the Morris Library Atrium and brought together friends and campus leaders for a day filled with connection, gratitude and excitement for what's to come.

Guests mingled over brunch and a mimosa bar, enjoyed music from a talented student and faculty jazz ensemble and heard remarks from Library and Development leadership.

Cuffy welcomed the crowd saying, "This morning isn't just an event. It's a vision realized."

The celebration also included a silent auction featuring original artwork by former UD staff artist Meg Grotti, with proceeds directly supporting the renovation.


A raw look at what will become the future reception area of the new space.

During the event, Samuels Lasner surprised guests with a personal $20,000 matching gift challenge—an inspiring reminder that generosity begets generosity.

"The energy in the room was unforgettable," said Cuffy. "There was this shared sense of pride and a feeling that something truly special was unfolding." By the end of the event, more than just funds were raised; a collective sense of purpose was reignited. Donors left inspired knowing their support was helping to write a new chapter in the Library's history.

After the event, additional support from attendees began rolling in.

Construction Begins

Construction on the Special Collections renovation began in June 2025 with the installation of construction barriers and walls, along with the removal of bookshelves in the renovation area. By September 2025, drywall, ceilings and soffits were completed, followed by the installation of glass partitions, which began in mid-September and were finished by the end of November.

The renovation is expected to reach substantial completion by the end of December 2025, with construction officially wrapping up in January 2026. The newly renovated Special Collections area is slated to open to the public in Spring Semester 2026.

Looking Ahead

Once finished, the new Special Collections space will welcome students, scholars and visitors into an environment that honors tradition while embracing innovation.

Visitors will find thoughtfully designed displays, collaborative study spaces and a bright, modern reading room—all built to showcase the University's exceptional holdings and foster discovery for generations to come.

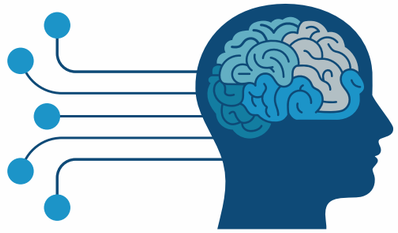
While significant progress has already been made, there's still time to support this project. Several meaningful naming opportunities are still available to honor loved ones, families or organizations. Gifts can be made easily online, ensuring every member of the community can play a role in shaping the Library's future. If any of this is of interest to you, please contact T.J. Cournoyer at tjc@udel.edu.

As McCoy reflected, "This project is about so much more than bricks and mortar. It's about preserving knowledge, inspiring curiosity and creating a space where the past and future meet. And together we're making it happen."

Spring 2026 will mark the grand reopening and ribbon-cutting of the new home for Special Collections—a moment years in the making, built on vision, dedication, generosity and the unwavering belief that access to cultural and historical heritage deeply enriches the learning experience.



Providing Experiential Learning Opportunities



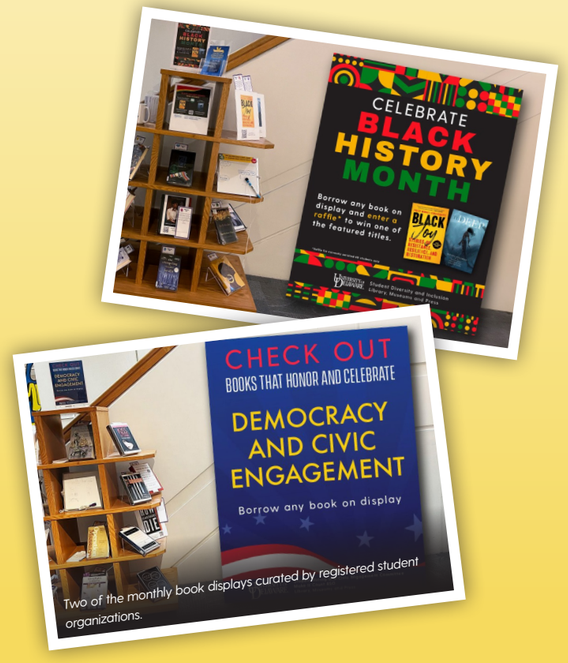
The Library, Museums and Press is committed to creating hands-on learning experiences that prepare students to think critically, conduct original research and engage deeply with cultural and historical materials. By collaborating with faculty, supporting graduate assistants and offering opportunities to work directly with collections, we give students the chance to apply their skills in meaningful, real-world contexts. These experiences not only deepen their academic understanding but also help them develop valuable skills that prepare them for future careers and lifelong learning.

Graduate Assistant Improves Digitized Materials Image Quality

Thanks to the Friends of the UD Library gift to support the digitization of our collections, the Library was able to hire graduate student Ryan Dittmar as a graduate assistant to our Digitization Team to help with the project. Working closely with Tom Pulhamus, senior assistant librarian and digital technology librarian, Dittmar gained hands-on experience photographing delicate materials from the Library, Museums and Press collections. Alongside building new technical skills, he contributed valuable expertise—most notably identifying a pixel calibration issue that affected image quality. His discovery allowed the team to correct the problem and improve the accuracy of digitized materials, demonstrating the meaningful contributions student assistants bring to our work.

Student Organizations Co-Curate Monthly Book Displays

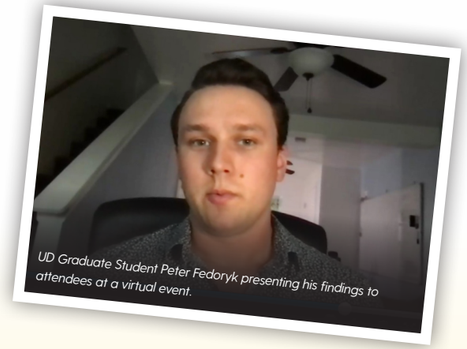
Located on the first floor of Morris Library, the monthly book display highlights themed selections of books, films and audio materials for the Blue Hen community. Curated in collaboration with registered student organizations (RSOs) and campus partners, the display reflects the diverse identities, causes and interests that shape campus life. Recent themes have included Black History Month, Constitution Day and Staff Picks. This year, Alison Wessel, associate librarian and social sciences librarian, and Molly Olney-Zide, associate librarian and UDLib/SEARCH coordinator, connected with new student partners at the RSO Involvement Fair, sparking fresh collaborations. As students work with librarians to select display items, they strengthen their research skills while also engaging in open conversations about intellectual freedom—making the display both a learning experience and a celebration of community voices.



Two of the monthly book displays curated by registered student organizations.

Doctoral Student Uses Collections and Data to Explore Black Entrepreneurship in Wilmington

Peter Fedoryk, a doctoral student in the History Department, explored Black entrepreneurship in Civil War–era Wilmington through a Delaware Humanities Opportunity Grant supporting a Collections as Data project. Using 19th-century Wilmington City Directories and related datasets, Fedoryk—guided by Data Visualization Librarian Kayla Abner—created a curated subset of records focusing on Black entrepreneurs. He then transformed his findings into an interactive StoryMap, which was presented at the September event *Mapping Black Entrepreneurship in Civil War Wilmington*. This project not only advanced historical research but also demonstrated the value of library collections for innovative digital scholarship.


UD Graduate Student Peter Fedoryk presenting his findings to attendees at a virtual event.

Art History Student Pens View from the Vault Article

While working as a gallery attendant for the Museums, Roxana Guarriello, an art history and art conservation major, contributed an essay to the Library, Museums and Press's monthly *A View from the Vault* column. The series highlights the fascinating histories behind objects in Special Collections and the Museums. Guarriello's piece explored the possible identity of a bronze statue of a dancing girl by Belgian sculptor Paul-Ange Nocquet. Collaborating with Ashley Rye-Kopec, assistant director for Museums, she helped bring new attention to this intriguing work of art, offering the wider community an opportunity to engage with and learn more about the Museums' unique collections.

Museums Collaborate with Art Professors and Students

Two semester-long collaborations with art professors and their students exemplify the hands-on experience available to the UD community through the Library, Museums and Press. Ashley Rye-Kopec, assistant director for Museums, worked with Jennifer van Horn, a professor of art history and history, to incorporate pieces from the Museum into van Horn's lessons, allowing for students to study artworks in depth. The students produced research papers on their chosen objects and shared their insights through informal conversations where they connected the artworks to broader themes. Rye-Kopec also worked with Roxanne Radpour, a professor of art conservation and electrical and computer engineering, and three students in her independent study class to utilize non-invasive imaging technologies to examine several objects in our collection. Students studied artworks ranging from ancient vases to 20th century paintings—allowing them to practice and enhance their skills—and also offered new insights on some of the objects based on their research. Students and faculty found immense value in the ability to engage directly with our original works and appreciated the space for learning and discovery.



Roxanne Radpour and her students prepare artworks for examination before presenting their end-of-semester findings to University Museums staff.

Fostering Academic Success

The Library, Museums and Press is dedicated to helping students thrive by connecting them with the skills, resources and experiences to enrich their education. From first-year orientation to advanced capstone projects, our workshops, partnerships and programs foster curiosity, build confidence and create opportunities for meaningful learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Digital Badge Pilot

In fall 2024, the Library, Museums and Press launched its first digital badges as part of a campuswide initiative to recognize co-curricular learning and skill development. Led by staff members Maria Barefoot, Amanda McCollom, Daniel Peart, Jess Barth, Charissa Powell and Meg Grotti in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning, the two pilot badges—Research Data Management and Digital Storytelling with Video—were open to UD students, faculty and staff, offering participants the chance to build practical expertise and earn a credential to showcase their accomplishments. The response was enthusiastic: 42 participants enrolled in the first Research Data Management badge, while 19 enrolled in Digital Storytelling with Video (with an additional seven on the waiting list). Workshop participation skyrocketed in later sessions, increasing by 157% for Intro to Adobe Premiere Pro, 255% for Basics of Research Data Management and 116% for Data Management Planning with the DMPTool. This early enthusiasm highlights the importance of our role to help the community build essential research skills.



Global Stewardship and Storytelling Workshop

The UD Library, Museums and Press offers a wide range of workshops to support students preparing to study abroad. This year, a new session on Global Stewardship and Storytelling was added to the lineup. Developed by Amanda McCollom, associate librarian and multimedia literacy librarian, and Jess Bath, emerging multimedia technologies librarian, in partnership with the Center for Global Programs and Services, the workshop gave participants the opportunity to strengthen their photography and videography skills while reflecting on the importance of ethical storytelling. Students gained a framework for responsible travel and greater cultural awareness—tools that will serve them both abroad and beyond. Programs like these showcase how the Library, Museums and Press supports students' academic success and personal growth.


Blue Hens listen closely as University of Delaware librarians lead an interactive workshop.

Digital Storytelling and Video Production Workshop

In March, the Library, Museums and Press designed a multimedia workshop to prepare students for the CHEER Hub National Video Competition, which encourages creative engagement with themes of coastal hazards, equity and resilience. Led by Multimedia Literacy Librarian Amanda McCollom and Emerging Multimedia Technologies Librarian Jess Barth, the workshop introduced participants to digital storytelling strategies, media literacy evaluation, production techniques and editing software, while also offering practical advice on planning videos and sourcing creative content. By equipping students with the tools and confidence to share their stories, the workshop fostered both technical skills and critical awareness—demonstrating how the Library, Museums and Press empowers students to combine creativity with meaningful social impact.

Cultivating Curiosity: Self-Guided Library and Museum Experience

To help first-year students discover the many resources available through the Library, Museums and Press, staff designed a self-guided program themed around the 2024 Common Reader, *I Never Thought of It That Way* by Monica Guzman. Designed by staff members Lauren Wallis, Shelby Daniels-Young, Meghann Matwichuk, Ashley Rye-Kopec, Jess Barth, Daniel Peart, Charissa Powell, Kris Raser, Kaitlyn Tanis and John Caldwell, Cultivating Curiosity introduces students to key services such as DELCAT, databases, the Student Multimedia Design Center, Ask the Library chat, the Film and Video Collection and Special Collections and Museums. Faculty teaching the First Year Seminar courses embraced the program, incorporating it into their lesson plans to help students build research confidence from the start. Over the academic year, more than 2,050 students completed the program—an early and lasting investment in their academic success at UD.

Women and Gender Studies Capstone Project

This year, the Library, Museums and Press partnered with Angela Hattery, professor in the department of Women and Gender Studies, to support her class capstone project on *American Violence*. The class of 25 students organized an event featuring Brandon Wolf, survivor of the 2016 Pulse Nightclub massacre and nationally recognized advocate against gun and anti-LGBTQ violence, and then interviewed Wolf and faculty members to examine the causes and consequences of violence and explore paths toward change. Jess Barth, emerging multimedia technologies librarian, helped bring the students' ideas to life through recordings and slide presentations. The project and event deepened students' engagement with urgent social issues and demonstrated the power of collaboration to amplify voices for justice.



Blue Hens pose for a photo at the event organized by the capstone students.

Advancing
RESEARCH SUPPORT

One of the core missions of the Library, Museums and Press is to foster academic excellence by equipping the University community with research tools, expert support and inspiring learning spaces. This year, our students, faculty and staff have pursued innovative projects that highlight the power of world-class collections and hands-on engagement. The examples below illustrate how staff expertise, resources and collaborative partnerships make meaningful scholarship and discovery possible.

Acquisition of Senator Tom Carper's Papers

This year, the Library, Museums and Press proudly expanded its political holdings with the addition of Senator Tom Carper's papers—capturing his 24 years of service in the United States Senate to complement the records he previously donated documenting his 10 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. This initiative was led by John Caldwell, political and public policy papers archivist, and Rebecca Johnson Melvin, manuscripts librarian. In tandem with this milestone acquisition, the Library, Museums and Press was awarded a grant from the U.S. Senate Preservation Partnership, enabling archivists to fast-track the collection's processing and share innovative approaches to electronic records with repositories nationwide. The Carper papers are an incredibly valuable addition to Special Collections and serve as an example of the rich political history accessible to our scholars.



Staff members pose with Senator Tom Carper's papers in Morris Library.

Librarians Support DataFest

This past spring, the Library, Museums and Press co-sponsored UD DataFest, a data analysis "hackathon" hosted by the Data Science Institute and coordinated through the American Statistical Association. Over the weekend-long celebration of data led by Brad Thompson, an associate professor of mathematics, undergraduate teams worked intensively with a large complex dataset to uncover insights and present their findings. Our librarians played a key role in preparing and supporting students by offering pre-event workshops on data visualization tools R and Tableau taught by Kayla Abner, data visualization and analysis librarian, and Daniel Peart, department head for the Research Data and Design Commons, assisting teams throughout the competition and serving as judges. We received enthusiastic feedback from students, faculty and industry mentors—including representatives from JP Morgan—who praised the student projects and opportunity for real-world collaboration.



Kayla Abner, data visualization and analysis librarian, speaks to a group of students at DataFest.

Delaware Humanities Funded Project Uncovers Black Entrepreneurship in Wilmington

Dael Norwood, professor of history, collaborated with the Library, Museums and Press to secure a Delaware Humanities grant supporting a Collections as Data project, which aims to provide access to library collections in order to facilitate computational analysis. Graduate student Peter Fedoryk explored 19th-century Wilmington City Directories and our related datasets as part of the grant. He was able to research individuals in the directory to highlight the stories of Black entrepreneurs and ultimately produced a StoryMap providing new insights into the city's past. With the support of Kayla Abner, data visualization and analysis librarian, and Kaitlyn Tanis, history and social sciences librarian, this project culminated with the September event, *Mapping Black Entrepreneurship in Civil War Wilmington*, where presenters shared details on the project with the community and brainstormed ways to integrate the StoryMap tool into K-12 classrooms.



Data Coordination Across Campus boosted by Data Services

This year, the Library, Museums and Press concluded the Data Coordination Across Campus research project, an initiative designed to better understand and support the data needs of UD researchers. Led by Daniel Peart, Colleen Estes, Emma Jaud, Alison Wessel, Michael Stewart, Sarah Katz, Kaitlyn Tanis and Michael Kyle, the project included an environmental scan of researcher priorities, an inventory of existing data services across campus and the development of new pathways for improving coordination. The first outcome is a new web-based Data Services Directory, a tool that allows users to filter and quickly identify the right campus service for their research needs. Launched in June, the tool has already been praised by collaborators in the Research Office and IT as a significant step toward stronger campuswide coordination and collaboration.



LEADING THE WAY FOR AI IN ACADEMIA

By Carlett Spike

The use of artificial intelligence has exploded with the onset of tools like ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini in the past few years. As these tools continue to transform the ways society works and learns, the Library, Museums and Press is committed to supporting the UD community.

For the past few years, the Library, Museums and Press staff has been at the forefront of the arrival of AI in academia. As early as 2022, our team began planning for the potential impacts of AI on higher education, and was an early adopter by launching the AI chatbot UDStax.

As the intellectual and interdisciplinary hub of the University, below are a few standout examples from the last academic year of the ways the Library, Museums and Press staff have supported the community's navigation of AI.

Campus AI Workshops

Several times each year the UD Library, Museums and Press organizes AI workshops to educate, inform and keep the community up to date on the latest in AI. During the spring semester Library staff in collaboration with university Information Technology and other campus partners, held a series of eight workshops titled "Reimaging PedAlgogy: AI Literacy for Educators," which offered a deep dive on the use of AI in academic settings. Topics covered included using AI to optimize writing and research, tips to enhance course materials with AI and the ethical implications of using these tools.

"Every event we do has new people who maybe were afraid of AI or unsure of AI at first, and now, they are finally coming to the discussion," said Maria Barefoot, the online learning, student success and curriculum partnerships librarian who has designed and led many of these workshops. "I think that's really wonderful that we provide a space and service where we can introduce people to healthy AI use."

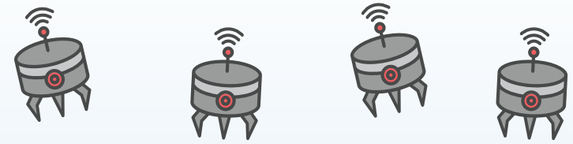
AI Retreat for Art Conservation

When it was time for Melissa A. Tedone to plan the faculty retreat for her colleagues in the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC), she figured it was the perfect time to tackle AI. "I had just been hearing a lot about AI in the news and had been keeping an eye on it," said Tedone, who is the associate director of WUDPAC. "There was consensus among our colleagues that it is an important topic and we wanted to learn more." So she reached out to Kaitlyn Tanis, history and social sciences librarian for the Library, Museums and Press, to organize the retreat.

Tanis brought together a team of librarians—Beth Twomey, Kayla Abner, Daniel Peart and Maria Barefoot—each with various expertise in AI, for the 23 faculty members who participated in the day-long retreat in June. It included a review of the various AI tools and each's capabilities; opportunities for the faculty members to explore ChatGPT, Copilot and other AI tools; discussions on AI literacy and classroom integration possibilities; and an honest conversation of the pros and cons of AI use, such as the negative environmental impacts.

"It was great to have such a large team of librarians who all could speak to AI from slightly different perspectives," Tedone said. The retreat really made an impact as her colleagues have decided to make an AI policy and include it on their syllabi. They have also decided to prioritize AI literacy as part of their curriculum.

"Our bread and butter as librarians at the University of Delaware is to help faculty and students think through and understand appropriate uses of generative AI," said Tanis. "A big part of our job is teaching information literacy skills to make sure our community of researchers are able to critically evaluate any tools and information they use. I think this retreat was a really good example of that in practice."



Team Solves AI Bot Swarm of UDSpace

In 2024, UDSpace was swarmed by AI bots which submitted multiple requests that overwhelmed the system. UDSpace is the University's digital repository which preserves and provides free open access to scholarly articles, white papers, dissertations and other research outputs produced by UD faculty, students and staff.

Due to this attack the Library, Museums and Press received complaints from users that they couldn't access UDSpace. "At the start of a normal day, we're used to receiving less than 10 simultaneous queries a second to access information," said Mark Grabowski, head of Library Information Technology. "As you can imagine, we were surprised to have 80 to 100 simultaneous queries with users complaining about UDSpace being inaccessible."

The Library's IT team investigated the issue and acted quickly to find a fix. They worked up several temporary solutions including blocking IP addresses. In May, they cracked the code by programming a forbidden message to appear when a request comes in from a bot. This ensures everyday users still have access and the system will run properly.

Swarms like these are unfortunately becoming more common as AI continues to grow. "It's all about the data," said Johnson. "AI companies are constantly looking for more data to improve their Large Language Models (LLMs). UDSpace has massive amounts of high-quality data that is attractive to these companies."

That said, the Library, Museums and Press team is always monitoring situations like these to protect valuable information for the UD community. Johnson added, "AI is changing the rules, and this is an excellent example of UD Library's IT team quickly responding with an incredible solution that doesn't limit our students, faculty, staff and the global community from accessing the information that UDSpace holds."

Staff Publish Article on AI Chatbot

In the spring of 2024, the Library, Museums and Press launched UDStax, an experimental artificial intelligence-based chatbot available on the Library's website. The chatbot pulls from the Library, Museums and Press website to answer user questions about Library services and spaces.

After the semester-long pilot program staff members Beth Twomey, department head of Research and Engagement, Colleen Estes, assistant head of Library Information Technology, and Annie Johnson, associate university librarian of Research, Teaching and Technology, assessed the tool to understand the ways users engaged with the chatbot, its accuracy and the behind-the-scenes work it took to keep it running. They published their findings in a research paper titled "It Takes a Village: A Distributed Training Model for AI-Based Chatbots." in the journal *Information Technology and Libraries*.



Colleen Estes (left), assistant head of Library Information Technology, and Annie Johnson (right), associate university librarian for Research, Teaching and Technology, sit together to discuss and review their published article.

"As this is an emerging service that not many academic libraries offer, we thought publishing this article would help other academic libraries who are interested in potentially exploring a chat bot for their institution," said Johnson. "In the article we basically lay out step-by-step how we created the chatbot, how we went about launching it and what it took to get it up to speed."

For example, the paper highlights the process of deciding which tool to use for the chatbot. After researching six options, the team chose the subscription based model Chatbase. They also wrote about reviewing and improving the chatbot, the process of updating content and several challenges they faced throughout.

"Keeping up with it is a job in itself," said Estes. "Month by month, the technology changes, the tools that are offered change and the general public and students' expectations and comfortability using the tools change."

They drew several conclusions, but chief among them was the value of creating and offering this service—and that it can be done with limited resources. "Libraries assume that unless they're very well resourced in terms of money or staff, that they can't do anything related to AI, but I think that our experience has proved you can still engage with AI in meaningful ways, even if you don't have a huge budget," Johnson said.

This experience also highlights the behind the scenes work of librarians to test out new technologies and to educate themselves so they can do the same for the UD community. “It’s very important to us to remain a trusted resource on campus,” Twomey said. “We evaluate all sorts of AI tools to decide whether they are up to our standards to ultimately figure out if they will be useful to our community.”

Winter Institute on Learning

In January, UD Library, Museums and Press staff members collaborated with the Center for Teaching and Learning and IT Academic Technology Services for the Winter Institute on Learning, a three day AI conference for faculty. The goal was to provide faculty a space to engage with AI tools to strengthen their understanding and literacy as well as determine how to integrate AI into their courses and programs.

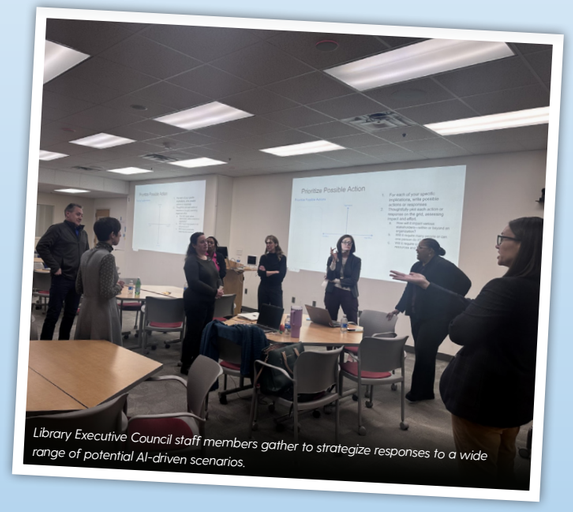
Attendees discussed AI literacy, explored examples of uses of AI in program curricula and gained valuable resources to use moving forward. Charissa Powell, head of student success and curriculum partnerships for the Library, Museums and Press, said this event provided a great opportunity to get everyone on the same playing field. “When it comes to AI, people’s experiences and comfortability vary widely. There are just a lot of different responses and reactions to AI,” she said.

Attendees walked away with a new-found appreciation for what’s possible and enjoyed the opportunity to connect with others. Persephone Braham, a professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies who attended the conference, said she uses AI in her course work regularly. Her students use AI specifically for textual analysis, often to create visuals of what they are reading.

Although she already had a lot of experience with AI, Braham said she likes to attend events like the Winter Institute on Learning to keep up to date and learn from others. “The Institute really gave me a sense of community,” said Braham, who added in-person workshops have been limited the last few years due to the pandemic. “I was able to meet and connect with other faculty members who are doing interesting things with AI.” Reflecting on the event, Powell said faculty members were thankful for the Winter Institute on Learning workshop.

AI Scenario Planning Retreat

As AI continues to transform research and the classroom experiences, the UD Library, Museums and Press Leadership Team held a half-day retreat in February to discuss the landscape of AI in higher education and to create an action plan to support UD moving forward as AI continues to evolve. The assembled team brainstormed various possibilities for how AI may impact their work, education, research, teaching and more to explore the challenges and opportunities higher education may face throughout the next decade.



Library Executive Council staff members gather to strategize responses to a wide range of potential AI-driven scenarios.

Of the several conclusions the team came to throughout the retreat, the importance of remaining a trusted resource for the community was key. To emphasize this, their action plans include engaging library staff in training around AI to ensure readiness for new services and workflows, collaborating closely with other groups on campus, and continuing to provide a welcoming space for students, faculty, and staff to come together in person.

Annie Johnson, associate university librarian for research, teaching and technology, collaborated with Cynthia Hudson Vitale, associate dean of Johns Hopkins University, to write a forthcoming article about the experience. Among their conclusions they write, “Over the course of the retreat, it became clear to participants that even in a future where AI plays a dominant role, the human-centered experience that libraries offer remains essential.”

The examples above are just snippets of the work—both front-facing and behind the scenes—that UD’s dedicated team of librarians have done to engage with AI and help the Blue Hen community better understand its possibilities and limits. As there are more technological transformations of AI, the Library, Museums and Press will continue to lead the community by offering educational opportunities and resources. Currently, the staff is working on an AI Literacy Day, planned for early December, to explore AI and reflect on the ways it is reshaping society.

Making Scholarship Open and Accessible

The Library, Museums and Press continues to advance innovative research by ensuring that scholars have the tools and resources they need to thrive. At the heart of this work is a commitment to free and open access to scholarly research. Each year, we expand these resources to strengthen classroom equity, reduce barriers to learning and enhance the academic experience for the entire University community and beyond.

Migration of Digital Collections to AM Quartex

The Library, Museums and Press launched a new Digital Collections Portal on the AM Quartex platform in January, expanding public access to the University’s rich digitized materials—including artworks from the Museums’ collections. The migration, made possible by the work of Theresa Hessey, Mark Grabowski, Colleen Estes, Emma Jaud, Jan Broske and David Cardillo, began in August 2024. Quartex provides a powerful search experience, enabling users to more easily explore, discover and connect with UD’s unique digital content. Since the launch, over 50 additional collections have been added, with early feedback from users highlighting the platform’s improved functionality and accessibility. The Quartex portal marks an exciting step forward in making the University’s cultural and scholarly resources more widely available to researchers, students and the broader community.

Pressbooks OER Publishing Platform

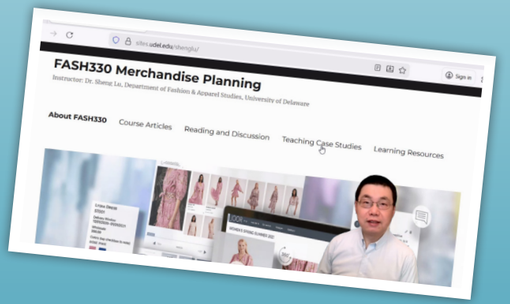
In December 2024, the Library, Museums and Press launched the *University of Delaware Pressbooks*, a user-friendly open educational resources platform designed for faculty to create dynamic, Canvas-integrated course materials. This system allows instructors to publish original content and adapt resources to meet students’ needs, reducing the cost of traditional course materials. Faculty can independently explore the platform with onboarding support from OER Publishing Librarian Jeanne Kambara. Since its launch, Pressbooks has enabled UD faculty to expand access to educational content, experiment with new teaching approaches and incorporate open resources seamlessly into their courses.

UDSpace Celebrates 20 Years of Free Scholarly Research

UDSpace—the University of Delaware’s open-access institutional repository—marked its 20th anniversary in October 2024, celebrating two decades of freely sharing UD’s scholarly output with the world. Items in UDSpace were downloaded nearly 300,000 times in the past year alone, reflecting its vital role as a widely accessed source for cutting-edge scholarly research. Since its inception in 2004, UDSpace has supported open access to faculty publications, theses and dissertations, technical reports, as well as digital collections. The milestone was made possible through the work of team members Paige Morgan, Jessica Deshaies, Mark Grabowski, Joshua Kim and Annie Johnson.

Open and Affordable Teaching Material Authoring Grant’s First Resource Completed

As part of the inaugural OATM Authoring Grant cohort, Professor Sheng Lu, an assistant professor of fashion and apparel studies, created a new Open Educational Resource (OER) for his courses. This allowed him to make a free, high-quality learning resource for his students that saved them an estimated $100 each. Overseen by Assistant Librarian and Open Education Librarian Jeanna Kambara and University of Delaware Press Director Julia Oestreich, the OATM authoring grants support faculty working as individuals or in a team to develop resources that foster classroom equity, reduce costs and inspire innovative teaching at UD and beyond. Students positively report that access to OER’s improve their learning experiences and Professor Lu expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity and support.



ON VIEW

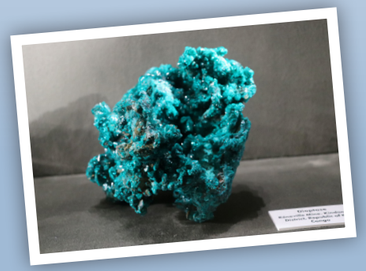
The Library, Museums and Press is committed to creating hands-on learning experiences that prepare students to think critically, conduct original research, and engage deeply with cultural and historical materials. By collaborating with faculty, supporting graduate assistants and offering opportunities to work directly with collections, we give students the chance to apply their skills in meaningful, real-world contexts. These experiences not only deepen their academic understanding but also help them develop valuable skills that prepare them for future careers and lifelong learning.

Sight, Sound and Motion: The Dimensions of Sculpture



September 3–December 13, 2024
In this immersive exhibition curated by Amanda Zehnder, senior curator for museums, visitors explored sculpture as a visual, moving and sounding art form. The exhibition encouraged awareness of how movement, space and sensory perception shape understanding of sculpture. As viewers moved around each piece, shifting light and angles revealed new details, while some works incorporated motion or sound to engage multiple senses. The exhibition also examined scale—through small studies, adaptations of larger works and related two-dimensional art—inviting students and faculty to engage deeply with the Museums' sculpture collection and a range of sculptural practices.

Sculptural Copper Saved from the Smelter





September 3, 2024–May 15, 2025
Curated by Sharon Fitzgerald, curator of the Mineralogical Museum, this exhibition shows a stunning display of natural copper specimens saved by the miners who appreciated their rarity and beauty. Sourced from Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula—the world's largest deposit of metallic copper—these pieces reflect a rich mining history that spanned from 1845 to 1997. While most copper was smelted into wire or alloyed into bronze, early English miners who brought their expertise to Michigan recognized the unique artistry of natural crystalline formations and chose to preserve them. Today, these remarkable, sculptural specimens are celebrated in museums and private collections around the world.

Minerals from China and India



February 4–May 15, 2025
This spring exhibition, curated by Sharon Fitzgerald, curator of the Mineralogical Museum, explored the dazzling geological beauty and stunning array of mineral specimens from China and India. The display offered insight into the intersection of science, natural beauty and human fascination with rare and complex materials. From China's expansive mining industry—home to more than 1,500 mines producing critical materials like rare earth elements, gold and lithium—to India's awe-inspiring Deccan Traps, one of Earth's most dramatic volcanic formations, the exhibition offered a fascinating look at the science and splendor of the mineral world.

Colors of Old College

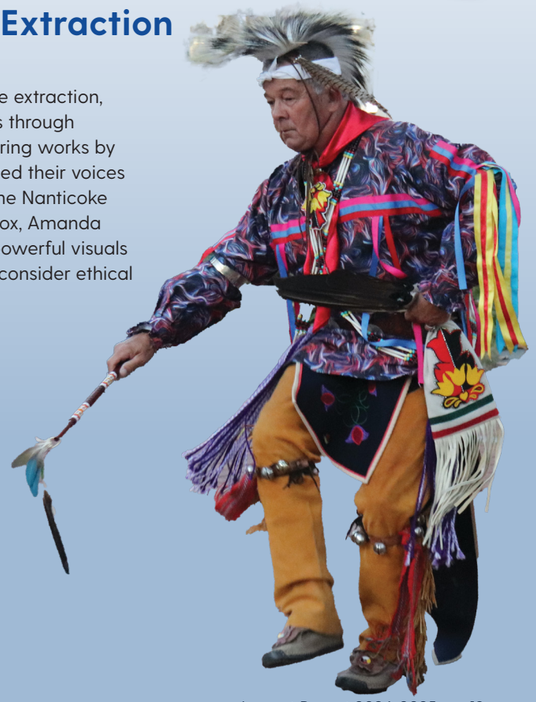


Fall 2024–Spring 2025
Curated by Vimalin Rujivacharakul, Catherine Matsen and Chandra Reedy, this exhibition celebrated the history and materiality of the University's iconic Old College building. By combining archival research, conservation insights and student-centered multimedia projects, the exhibition revealed the evolution of color, design and material choices across centuries. More than 30 collaborators, including the Student Multimedia Design Center, contributed to the installation, showcasing the power of cross-campus partnerships. Visitors were immersed in a narrative that combined architecture, art and history, while students gained hands-on experience in research, curation and storytelling using Special Collections and Museums resources.

MINE: What is Ours in the Wake of Extraction



Guests gather outside of the museums to view traditional dance from members of the Nanticoke Nation.



September 3, 2024–May 15, 2025
MINE explored the environmental and social consequences of resource extraction, focusing on gold mining in the Amazon while addressing global issues through gallery talks, a film festival and an exhibition in Mechanical Hall. Featuring works by Indigenous artists, including a Peruvian collective, the exhibition elevated their voices and perspectives. A storytelling and dance program by members of the Nanticoke Nation complemented the exhibition, which was co-curated by Jon Cox, Amanda Zehnder, Sharon Fitzgerald, Maisie McNeice and Patsy Craig. Pairing powerful visuals with documentaries like River of Gold, MINE challenged audiences to consider ethical consumerism, global sustainability, and environmental justice.

What They Saved: Souvenirs and Mementos from Special Collections



In *What They Saved: Souvenirs and Mementos in Special Collections*, visitors explored objects and keepsakes from Special Collections, learning about the people who held onto them and the reasons why. From hats and handkerchiefs to dolls and dog tags, the mementos on view were imbued with personal meaning and connection that preserved the experiences of the individuals represented in our collections and provided insights into histories, events, celebrations and celebrities of days gone by. This exhibition was co-curated by Petra Clark, Alexander Johnston, Hillary Kativa, Mark Samuels Lasner and Arline Wilson. The exhibition was the focus of several outreach events, including a curator's tour for the Center for Material Culture Studies Thing Tank symposium and a visit by Urban Sketchers Delaware, as well as featured on Delaware Public Media's "History Matters."

The Rail-Splitter Surprise: Abraham Lincoln and the Presidential Election of 1860



August 27–December 13, 2024
In *The Rail-Splitter Surprise: Abraham Lincoln and the Presidential Election of 1860*, visitors discovered how Abraham Lincoln, who wasn't always the beloved household name he is today, emerged as a viable presidential candidate to lead the nation during a period of divisiveness that would result in the Civil War. Materials on view included editorial cartoons, contemporary political speeches, campaign literature and portraiture of Lincoln from the 1860 election season that demonstrated how he introduced himself to the country and defied expectations to win the Republican nomination and the national contest in November. This exhibition was curated by Librarian L. Rebecca Johnson Melvin.

The Stakes Are Too High: Voting, Civic Engagement and Political Participation



September 9–December 13, 2024
Coinciding with the 2024 presidential election season, this exhibition demonstrated how and why voters need to stay civically engaged in between election days. Through government documents, informational pamphlets, flyers, campaign buttons, scrapbooks and other historical materials, the exhibition explored the topics of voter education, voter participation, voter registration and civic engagement. This exhibition was curated by Political and Public Policy Papers Archivist, John Caldwell and History/Social Sciences Librarian, Kaitlyn Tanis.

Celebrating LGBTQ+ History Month with Special Collections

October 1–31, 2024
Organized in celebration of LGBTQ+ History Month, this exhibition contained a selection of materials from the University of Delaware Library's Special Collections related to LGBTQ+ history in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Ranging from candid photographs to activist publications, these artifacts highlighted a variety of LGBTQ+ people and experiences, from the UD campus and beaches of Delaware to the metropolitan hubs of Philadelphia and New York City. This exhibition was curated by Samantha Garlock and Petra Clark, assistant librarian and instruction librarian for special collections.

Honestly Abe: Juvenile Literature About the Life and Times of Abraham Lincoln

February 3–May 23, 2025
This exhibition invited visitors to explore the rich themes and historical trends within children's biographies of Abraham Lincoln, drawn primarily from the Lincoln Club of Delaware Abraham Lincoln Collection in Special Collections. Through cover art, illustrations and narrative text spanning more than 150 years, the materials on view showcased popular portrayals of Abraham Lincoln that have shaped our understanding of him as an exemplary role model and the quintessential American for readers of all ages. This exhibition was curated by Hillary Kativa.

Transcendent Resilience: Black Women, Artivism and the Carceral State

February 6–August 8, 2025
This exhibition highlighted the voices of Black women navigating the carceral system through art, literature and ephemera. Developed in collaboration with the Museum Studies program, graduate students curated the works under the guidance of Curtis Small, research services manager in special collections, with instructional sessions led by Shelby Daniels-Young, collections enhancement and engagement archivist, Petra Clark, assistant librarian and instruction librarian for special collections.. Inspired by the earlier exhibition *I'm Literally Taking It Out the Mud* (curated by Dr. Felicia Henry) *Transcendent Resilience* provided a platform for student-led research, critical inquiry and public engagement. Visitors explored the intersection of art, activism and social justice while faculty, students and campus partners experienced a meaningful connection to Special Collections as living, teaching collections. An undergraduate intern is creating the online version of the exhibition during the Fall 2025 semester.

Morris Library Book Display

September 2024-June 2025
Each year, the Library's monthly book display provides students a platform to share their interests, passions and identities. Working with registered student organizations and campus partners, students curate displays that incorporate Library materials, from books to multimedia, reflecting diverse perspectives and fostering research skills. The displays promote dialogue, intellectual freedom and creative expression. Recent displays include ones celebrating Pride Month, National Parks and hobbies. Thematic displays were also created by the Wildlife Society, the UD Origami Club and the UD Gospel Choir. Through these rotating exhibitions, students experience first-hand the processes of curation, research and audience engagement, illustrating the Library's role as an inclusive, educational and participatory space.

Artists in Morris



September 2024 - June 2025
The Artists in Morris Alumni Exhibition featured the bold, multi-dimensional works of alumnus Amir Campbell, MFA23, whose vibrant use of materials and color transformed Morris Library's Reading Room into an immersive artistic experience. Complementing this, the *Artists in Morris: Student Exhibition* showcased ten works by eight current UD student artists across photography, metal, painting and printmaking, highlighting the creativity and range of emerging talent within the University's artistic community.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

The University of Delaware Press continues to expand its reach—embracing innovation, equity and accessibility in scholarly publishing. This year, the Press launched its first Open Access title, won a federal grant, transitioned to a double-anonymous peer review process and welcomed a major new book series! Each of these initiatives reflects the Press's commitment to supporting authors, faculty and the broader academic community while advancing the accessibility and discoverability of scholarly work.



University Press Director Julia Oestreich sells recently published catalog to guests at an event.

Publication of First Open Access UD Press Title

This past October, the Press debuted its first Open Access book, *Unsettling Sexuality*, published simultaneously on Manifold and in print thanks, in part, to the financial support of Library, Museums and Press donors! The Manifold platform allows inclusion of images, multimedia and interactive links, enhancing the reader experience. Authors and editors worked closely with the Press to craft the digital site, which has been highlighted at scholarly conferences. This milestone marks UD Press's commitment to Open Access publishing, providing scholars worldwide with free access to cutting-edge research while maintaining rigorous editorial standards. *Unsettling Sexuality* sets the stage for future OA publications that combine scholarship with digital innovation.

Press Wins Grant to Make Previously Published Title Openly Accessible

The Press was one of only 20 applicants awarded the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant through the Fellowships Open Book Program, the Press recently made Bruce Hayes's *Hostile Humor in Renaissance France* available as an Open Access title via the university institutional repository UDSpace and Chicago Distribution Services' Bibliopen platform. Originally published in 2020, and lauded as "a clear and lively discussion of a tense social milieu," the book now reaches new audiences, allowing the scholarship to gain renewed visibility. By making backlist titles openly available, the Press supports equity in scholarly communication and broadens the impact of authors' research beyond traditional print audiences.

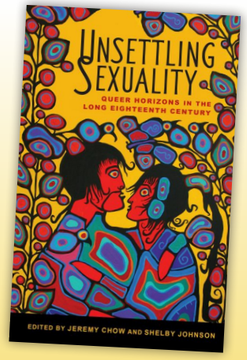
Regenerations Book Series Transfers to UD Press

The Press acquired the *Regenerations: African American Literature and Culture* series this year, diversifying the Press's catalog. The Press will publish all future works in the series and, as of early 2026, will distribute all previously published editions, with 10 of 11 current titles slated for Open Access release. The reissuing and OA publication of these series titles enhances discoverability of significant nineteenth- and early twentieth-century African American literature and encourages scholarship in this area. The announcement that the series will now publish under UD Press, made at the Modern Language Association conference, was met with enthusiasm from editors and authors.

Transition to Double-Anonymous Peer Review

In fall 2024, the Press transitioned from a single-blind to a double-anonymous peer review system, enhancing equity and reducing potential bias in manuscript evaluations. Both authors and reviewers remain anonymous unless they choose to reveal their identities, fostering a fairer, more transparent process. This change aligns with the Press's commitment to anti-racism and inclusivity, while providing the opportunity for authors and reviewers to reveal their identity encourages collegial mentorship opportunities between them. In light of this new system, the Press has also implemented a new peer review form. Reviewers have responded positively, appreciating the focused guidance provided in the form, which emphasizes equity, collaboration, and scholarly rigor. UD Press Director Julia Oestreich, said "After extensive discussion with the Press Board of Editors, it became clear that a double-anonymous peer review model was best aligned with Press values, but we also wanted to foster more impactful relationships between author and reviewer. Keeping the process anonymous, but allowing the parties involved the choice of breaking anonymity, can allow reviewers to become mentors, helping authors produce better scholarship and promote greater collegiality in the fields in which we publish."

The University of Delaware Press Recently Published Titles:



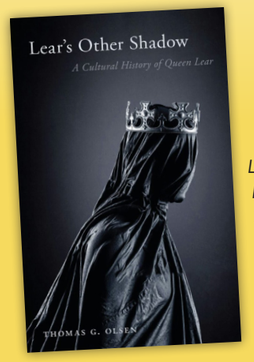
Unsettling Sexuality: Queer Horizons in the Long Eighteenth Century (October 2024)
Edited by Jeremy Chow and Shelby Johnson

Openly accessible at:

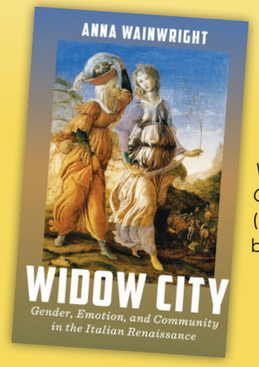


Hostile Humor in Renaissance France (March 2025)
by Bruce Hayes

Openly accessible at:



Lear's Other Shadow: A Cultural History of Queen Lear (March 2025)
by Thomas G. Olsen



Widow City: Gender, Emotion, and Community in the Italian Renaissance (May 2025)
by Anna Wainwright

THE EVOLUTION of the Academic Research Library

By Carlett Spike

The University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press looks a lot different than it did 25 years ago. At the turn of the 21st century, the Library functioned primarily as a physical space. Students came to check out stacks of books, professors borrowed microforms for their classes and researchers made use of the 16 copy machines available to reproduce materials. It was the epicenter of academic work firmly rooted in the analog world.

Fast forward to the onset of the internet, and all of that changed. The early 2000s ushered in an era of increased online access to content and searching tools. The library moved to providing more journals online, making it easier for the UD community to study and conduct research remotely. What once required an in-person visit could be accomplished anywhere. Since then, advances in digital media, online learning tools, multimedia and social media have all contributed to major transitions in the role of the Library. Now in 2025, AI has begun to change the landscape yet again.

Despite all the changes, the Library, Museums and Press has never wavered in its purpose to meet the evolving needs of the University community through access, expertise and support.

“Through all the shifts and seasons, the Library, Museums and Press has remained an integral part of the University of Delaware experience,” said Trevor A. Dawes, vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian. “This is all thanks to our staff’s commitment to excellence that has ensured we stay ahead of these transitions to meet the needs of our students, faculty, staff and the broader community.”



UD students enjoying one of the many spaces to study and gather on the first floor of Morris Library.

Reorganizations and Restructuring

As user needs have changed, so too has the structure of library services. Some of the most visible transformations are tied to reorganizing longstanding systems and simplifying the user experience.

For example, Morris Library once had 11 separate service desks, including one just for newspapers and periodicals. Each desk had a distinct function. Over time, feedback made it clear that visitors wanted something simpler.

“It was confusing for students and other library patrons to have to figure out where to go and to which desk for each service,” said Shelly McCoy, associate university librarian for public services and space planning. “You simply go to one place to get all of what you need.”

Today, there are only three service desks in Morris Library. This choice embraces a one-stop-shop model that prioritizes ease of access.

Another shift came with the rise and fall of the library computer lab. In the early days of campus internet access, many students did not have their own computers. The library filled that gap by offering rows of desktop machines. But as laptops and mobile devices became widespread, those labs became less essential. Those spaces have been reimagined for flexible study, collaboration and digital scholarship.

Some changes have been more subtle—less about what services are offered and more about how they’re framed. Renaming traditional desks like “circulation” or “reference” to a more intuitive “help center” is one small example of making the library feel more approachable. Behind every shift is a focus on access and service.

“The resource students need the most is the expertise of the library staff,” said McCoy. “They may not see all the work that happens behind the scenes, but it’s that deep knowledge and support that makes all the difference.”

Navigating Budget Strains and Other Challenges



A student assistant sits in the Help Center, ready to assist the next visitor.

In addition to technological innovation and shifting student needs, the Library, Museums and Press has had to navigate ongoing financial pressures that have significantly shaped its operations. Over the past 25 years, the University of Delaware—like many institutions nationwide—has weathered major disruptions, including the 2008 recession, the COVID-19 pandemic, and most recently, cuts to federal funding for higher education.

In response to these economic realities and continued inflation, this year the Library, Museums and Press announced adjustments to its collections budget.

“Over the past five years, we have experienced significant reductions in both staffing and general operating budgets,” Dawes wrote in a September letter to the UD community. “Throughout this period, we have done everything possible to maintain our commitment to the services, programs, and resources we provide despite increasingly limited resources. Unfortunately, rising costs, particularly for library materials, now require us to make additional strategic adjustments to ensure sustainability.”

As part of those adjustments, the Library made the difficult decision to cancel several journal and database subscriptions including the Institution of Mechanical Engineers Journal Collection and the Sage Premier Collection, and the number of subscriptions to Taylor and Francis journals was reduced. According to Erin Daix, associate university librarian for acquisitions and collection services, these decisions are never taken lightly.

“When we’re making these decisions we’re looking at the research faculty are doing on campus, what courses they are teaching and what undergraduates are studying,” she said. “We also look at what is being used and what is not being used or requested through Interlibrary Loan.”

Each year, Daix and her team review the available resources and assess their value relative to the budget. In some cases, rather than eliminating access outright, they’re able to make strategic swaps that balance cost with continued access.

"Though people are understandably not usually happy to lose immediate access to journals, we do provide alternative solutions through Interlibrary Loan and partnerships with other libraries where we can get any requested materials quickly," Daix said.

Additionally, opting to invest in different resources can result in more opportunities for users, she added. For example, AI has opened many new ways for users to search and find sources. The Library is currently exploring a pilot of Primo Research Assistant so students can use AI to find resources in the Library, Museums and Press online catalog DELCAT.

Despite the financial and technological shifts, Daix said the core mission of the Library, Museums and Press remains unchanged. "My role is to continue finding ways to provide information," she said. "I don't think the role of the Library, Museums and Press is going to change, but how we're going to provide that information will likely change over time."

Shifting Strategic Focus Areas

So where does the Library, Museums and Press go from here? In many ways, the answer lies in returning to its core mission: serving as a place for study, inspiration and connection.

"Students still want to use the space," said McCoy. "They're checking out fewer physical materials at the desk, but they're still needing help—whether that's in person, through chat services or just needing a quiet space to work. The environment of the library allows people to focus and get things done."

In response to this continued demand for study and collaborative spaces, one focus of the Library master plan is a significant expansion of seating in Morris Library—increasing seating from 1,800 to 3,200. To help create that space, lesser-used materials will be relocated to the Library Annex, allowing more room for flexible, user-centered environments.

Another area of strategic focus is instruction and research support. As academic tools grow more complex, the Library, Museums and Press continues to expand its offerings of consultations, workshops and classroom instructions to help students and faculty develop strong research skills and confidently navigate library resources. For example in 2026, the Library is planning to transition the Student Multimedia Design Center on the lower level of Morris Library to the Research Data and Design Commons. This redefined space will create a modern, integrated hub for research, data visualization and multimedia scholarship.

These are just a few examples of the ways the Library is evolving to meet the moment. What has never changed is the unwavering commitment of the LIbrary, Museum and Press staff to support knowledge, curiosity and academic excellence—wherever the future may lead.

"I really see the Library continuing to focus on helping people be the best researchers they can be," McCoy said. "That means making sure they can find and access the right resources, no matter where those resources live."



Blue Hens take a moment to pose for a photo while hanging out in the Student Multimedia Design Center in the lower level of Morris Library.

ENHANCING User Experience

We are committed to making research and discovery seamless and accessible. This year, we advanced that mission through projects that enhance the user experience—improving website accessibility, introducing real-time seat availability, extending studying hours and launching UDLibMap, a new wayfinding tool that helps users locate materials with ease. Together, these initiatives show how technology, data and equity can transform the user experience across digital and physical spaces.

UDLibMap Wayfinder Integration for DELCAT

In May 2025, the Library transformed how users find materials in Morris Library with the launch of UDLibMap, a custom-designed wayfinding solution which integrates directly into DELCAT. With a single click, patrons now receive clear directions and a highlighted map showing exactly where their item is located in the stacks on the lower level, second or third floor—removing barriers to discovery and making research faster and more intuitive. UDLibMap not only replaced a popular paid tool but also improved upon it by adding the ability to easily generate stack row numbers and call number labels, further simplifying navigation. Developed in-house by Colleen Estes, assistant head of library information technology, and Emma Jaud, web developer II for library information technology, with input and feedback from Derek Dolby, Sebastian Derry and Edward Moyse, the project saved $20,000 per year while delivering a seamless, user-focused experience that enhances access to the Library's collections. On average, UDLibMap receives nearly 50 clicks per day.

Show Available Seats: Using Data to Enhance the Student Experience

Through the integration of Occuspace technology and the development of the Show Available Seats page linked from the homepage, the Library is transforming how students use one of the most popular spaces on campus. This service provides real-time quick view data on seat availability in zones throughout Morris Library, saving students valuable time during their busiest weeks and improving the study experience. Now in its second year, the pilot confirmed long-held observations about peak usage, zones of activity and student dwell times—offering far richer insights than traditional turnstile data. This data has directly informed decisions, including expanded Library hours during finals in response to student demand. Led by Shelly McCoy and developed by Emma Jaud, with contributions from Chad Maring, Colleen Estes, UDPD and student advocates, the project demonstrates how data-driven innovation can enhance both services and advocacy, ensuring the Library continues to meet students where they are.

Website Accessibility Audits and Remediation

From April to August 2024, the Library, Museums and Press undertook a manual accessibility audit of all publicly facing websites, identifying and remediating design elements and content that did not meet the accessibility standards mandated by the federal Office of Civil Rights. This work ensures full compliance with federal guidelines while also delivering a better, more equitable online experience for our users. By making digital resources easier to navigate for individuals of all abilities—including those using screen readers or other assistive technologies—the project removed barriers to discovery and strengthened our commitment to inclusive access. Led by Colleen Estes and Emma Jaud with contributions from the many content managers of the Library, Museums and Press websites, the initiative reflects both technical excellence and a deep dedication to serving every member of our community.

BRIDGING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Over the past year, the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press has expanded its reach beyond campus, bringing students, local schools and community members into direct contact with our collections and expert staff. From high school visits and creative workshops to panels on censorship and intellectual freedom, these programs foster curiosity, learning and meaningful connections.

Urban Sketchers Delaware Group Visit

For the first time, Special Collections welcomed 12 members from the Urban Sketchers Delaware group, a community of artists who practice on-location drawing. During their December session, participants explored the "What They Saved" exhibition, capturing favorite items and scenes within Morris Library. Staff members Hillary Kativa and Petra Clark provided a brief overview of the exhibition before letting artists engage creatively with the space. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants enjoying the opportunity to connect art practice with historical objects. This visit highlights the Library's role as a cultural hub and demonstrates the value of opening collections to diverse audiences beyond traditional classroom or research settings.



Members from the Urban Sketchers posing with their artwork.

West Park Place Elementary School First Graders Visit Morris

In June, Morris Library hosted 36 first-grade students and six teachers and volunteers from West Park Place elementary school to learn about library services and collections. As part of an annual field trip to the University of Delaware campus and greater Newark, the group from West Park Place typically visit the Newark Free Library. However, with the Newark Free Library currently closed for renovations, teacher Jamett Garlick reached out to staff member Tywanda Cuffy about hosting the group at Morris Library. Staff members Hillary Kativa, associate librarian and special collections department head, and Molly Olney-Zide, associate librarian and UDLib/SEARCH coordinator, coordinated the visit, which included visits to the Help Center and Student Multimedia Design Center, where the students asked lots of questions about the video game collection! The students also spent time practicing reading picture books from our collection, filling in coloring pages and drawing pictures of their favorite library spaces and book characters.



First graders from West Park Place Elementary School hanging out in Morris Library during their visit.

Governor's School Visual Artists

Delaware's competitive Governor's School program brought high school visual arts students to the University's Mineralogical Museum where they were tasked with drawing mineral specimens as part of their curriculum. This immersive experience provided hands-on learning that connected students to UD's collections while encouraging the development of their artistic talents.

Staff Co-Plan Banned Books and Censorship Panel with Goldey-Beacom College

More than 30 guests attended a hybrid panel hosted at Goldey-Beacom College, to explore issues of censorship and intellectual freedom beyond Banned Books Week. Featuring UD and Goldey-Beacom faculty alongside local librarians, the discussion covered how book challenges are addressed, the role of libraries in defending access and strategies for promoting inclusive discourse. Students and community members engaged actively, asking questions and contributing to the conversation. The event strengthened connections with the broader community while reinforcing the Library's commitment to advocacy, education and transparency in issues surrounding information access and the protection of intellectual freedom.

Appoquinimink High School Visits Special Collections

Special Collections hosted 45 students from UD alumna Charlene Taylor's AP English class, giving them a hands-on introduction to primary source literacy. Students explored a pop-up exhibition tailored to their dystopian literature unit and toured the "What They Saved" exhibition. Librarians guided them through activities that reinforced research skills, close reading and engagement with unique materials. "Arline Wilson, Petra Clark and Alex Johnston curated a collection of materials just for my students and it sparked an interest in not only literature, but libraries!" Taylor said. After the field trip, Taylor and her students debriefed and she was impressed by how extensive their feedback was. "I was particularly excited by one student who shared that she felt 'compelled to minor in English now.' That made my heart soar ... and they loved being able to touch such important and unique materials. It really gave literature a face."

EXPLORING Campus and Community Events

This section highlights some of the most engaging and impactful events hosted by the Library, Museums and Press over the past year. Each event showcases how we connect with students, faculty and the broader community while promoting learning, creativity and cultural engagement.

Banned Books Week

Banned Books Week brought students, faculty and staff together to celebrate intellectual freedom through readings, workshops and table events. The 12th annual Banned Books Week Read-Out featured 16 readers and over 300 attendees connecting with challenging texts. By engaging in these discussions, participants deepened their understanding of censorship and the importance of access to information.



Blue Hens peruse a variety of banned books at the tabling event as part of Banned Books Week.

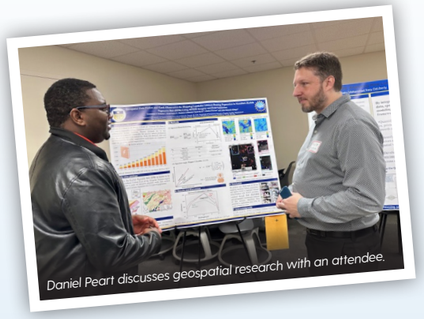

Staff member Bob Tolliver listens to an undergraduate student share their research at showcase.

Winter Showcase of Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Works

In February of this year, the Library, Museums and Press partnered with the Undergraduate Research Program to host the Winter Showcase in the Morris Library Reading Room. The event highlighted undergraduate research and creative works, strengthening collaboration between the Library and campus research programs. Students, faculty and attendees praised both the showcased work and the Reading Room as a venue. Thanks to planning by staff members Bob Tolliver, Shelly McCoy, Chad Maring and Kris Raser, the campus organizers would like to host the event in Morris Library again next year.

Earth Day Indigenous Tech-In

On April 22, 2025, the UDARI American Indian and Indigenous Relations Committee hosted the Earth Day Indigenous Tech-In, marking the 55th anniversary of Earth Day. The Library, Museums and Press presented map-sized data visualizations highlighting UD's history as a land-grant university and its impact on Indigenous peoples. Attendees engaged with the materials and learned about the University's legacy. Organized by Rebecca Johnson-Melvin, Daniel Peart, Bob Tolliver, IDEAS Committee members and the UDARI American Indian and Indigenous Relations Committee, the event showcased collaboration and the Library's contributions to UD's mission.


Daniel Peart discusses geospatial research with an attendee.

GIS Day in Morris Library

In fall 2024, the Library, Museums and Press hosted GIS Day in partnership with Campus IT, marking its return after several years. The event highlighted geospatial research through posters, presentations and a career talk with a GIS industry professional. Organized by Daniel Peart, department head for the research data and design commons, with other collaborators from across the University, it strengthened campus partnerships and showcased library resources. State Representative Cyndie Romer delivered a proclamation recognizing GIS research and education at the University of Delaware.

An Evening With Michael Dirda

The Friends of the University of Delaware Library hosted Pulitzer Prize-winning book columnist Michael Dirda on April 9, 2025 at Arsht Hall for "A Life with Books: From the Last Days of Typewriters to the Digital Era." Dirda shared reflections on nearly five decades of literary journalism, interactions with iconic authors and the evolution of book reviewing from print to digital. The evening featured a cocktail hour, dinner and a Q&A session, engaging readers, writers and bibliophiles while celebrating the enduring power of books and storytelling.



Guests enjoy the Friends Annual Dinner at Arsht Hall.

Winter Institute on Learning

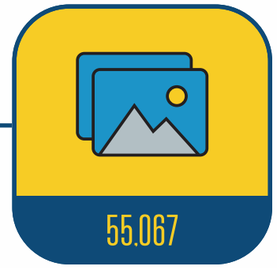
Meg Grotti, associate university librarian for learning, engagement and curriculum support, and Charissa Powell, department head for student success and curriculum partnerships, collaborated with the Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning, and Academic Technology Services to host a three-day Winter Institute on Learning. Over 50 faculty members from UD and the University of Baltimore participated in sessions integrating AI literacy into course design and assessment, and learned how to identify, adapt and teach AI literacy concepts within their academic programs.


Charissa Powell speaks to a group of faculty at the Winter Institute for Learning.

By the Numbers

1. **1.9M+ electronic book titles**
   Knowledge at your fingertips—anytime, anywhere.
2. **2.6M+ electronic media resources**
   Streaming scholarship that powers discovery.
3. **1.4M+ physical collection titles**
   A cornerstone collection built for generations.
4. **55,067 images newly digitized**
   Preserving history—one image at a time.
5. **53,874 interlibrary loan transactions**
   If we don't have it, we'll get it.
6. **1,799,582 full-text article requests**
   Research delivered instantly.
7. **3,269,250 database searches**
   Millions of searches fueling big ideas.
8. **35,334 study room reservations**
   Spaces that support focus, collaboration, and success.
9. **18,047 individuals engaged**
   Empowering learners through programs and community.
10. **274,337 institutional repository uses**
    Sharing UD scholarship with the world.
11. **657,235 homepage visits**
    Your gateway to every resource.
12. **25 manuscripts acquired for publication**
    Bringing new voices and stories into print.
13. **1,021 consultations**
    Personalized support for every research journey.
14. **552 multimedia & tech equipment loans**
    Tools to create, innovate, and communicate.









Celebrating Our Staff

Our staff continue to exemplify creativity, dedication and leadership in everything they do. This year, colleagues received awards, shared expertise nationally, advanced research skills and made discoveries that improved our operations. Each of these accomplishments reflects the talent, commitment and impact of the people who make the Library, Museums and Press a vibrant, innovative and inclusive community.

Emma Jaud Wins Staff Innovation Excellence Award

Emma Jaud, web developer II for library information technology, received the University of Delaware's Innovation Excellence Award for Spring 2025, which recognizes staff who develop creative solutions to complex challenges. Jaud was honored for designing and implementing the Library's "Available Seats" tool, an accessible solution that helps students find seating efficiently and supports academic success. Her work exemplifies the university's values and demonstrates innovative thinking applied to real-world challenges. The Staff Excellence Award Committee noted her contributions as a model of creativity and impact, highlighting how her efforts improve the student experience across campus.



Emma Jaud, web developer II for library information technology, was awarded UD's Innovation Excellence Award.

Amanda McCollom Serves on Panel about Multimedia Literacy Program

In September 2024, Amanda McCollom participated in a national webinar panel hosted by the Media Education Lab on multimedia literacy in higher education. The panel provided a platform to share the development and evolution of UD's digital media literacy program, highlighting cross-campus collaboration and strategies for supporting student learning. McCollom's contributions showcased UD's leadership in media literacy initiatives and facilitated knowledge exchange with other educators and institutions seeking to launch or expand their own programs. Her insights reinforced the importance of adaptability, collaboration and the real-world impact of multimedia literacy in higher education.



Amanda McCollom facilitates a workshop for UD students.

Creating a Research Curriculum for Librarians

Charissa Powell, head of student success and curriculum partnerships, developed a research curriculum designed to support early-career researchers and library professionals in exploring how personal experiences shape research identity. The program encourages value-driven research agendas and provides practical guidance for identifying resources and building confidence. Pilot participants reported that the curriculum reduced isolation, offered support not covered in formal master of library and information science programs, and strengthened their professional development. Feedback from a tenure-track librarian and a recent graduate confirms the curriculum's impact in fostering reflection, mentorship and a sense of community within the library and information science field.



Charissa Powell (left) poses with collaborators Nimisha Bhat (middle) and Hailley Fargo (right).

Graduate Assistant Ryan Dittmar Discovers Camera Issue

Ryan Dittmar, the first graduate assistant to join the Digitization Team, demonstrated remarkable attention to detail when he noticed a green pixel in the camera during calibration. Trained by Tom Pulhamus, Ryan identified 3–5 dead pixels on the camera sensor—something previously unseen—which could have affected image quality. His observation and prompt reporting helped ensure the integrity of the digitization process. Ryan's curiosity, skill and diligence highlight the important contributions our graduate assistants make to the Library's operations and projects.



Ryan Dittmar smiles for a photo in front of digitization equipment.

Alexis Faust Receives Student Assistant Scholarship

Alexis Faust was awarded the 2024–2025 Library, Museums and Press Student Assistant Scholarship. This $1,000 award recognizes student assistants who demonstrate academic excellence, outstanding contributions and engagement with the Library. Alexis stood out for her strong academic record, thoughtful personal narrative and glowing recommendations from staff. The scholarship highlights the vital role student assistants play in supporting Library, Museums and Press initiatives while fostering their personal and professional growth.



Hat's off to Alexis Faust who was accepted into the M.A. Online in Criminal Justice Program at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, which she began this past January.

Remembering Susan

By John Brennan



Susan Brynteson, who led the University of Delaware Library during a period of dramatic growth from a superior small college library to a nationally respected research-oriented university library, died May 26, 2025. She was 89.

Ms. Brynteson came to Delaware in 1980 as director of libraries. In 2001, she was named May Morris University Librarian, and she was given the additional title of vice provost in 2008.

When Ms. Brynteson announced her plans to retire in 2015, then-UD Provost Domenico Grasso said, "Susan Brynteson has been critical in transforming the University of Delaware Library from a traditional 20th century research university library to a dynamic 21st century institutional resource."

Upon retirement, she became May Morris Librarian Emerita. In 2016, Ms. Brynteson was honored with the University of Delaware Medal of Distinction, presented to individuals who have made humanitarian, cultural, intellectual or scientific contributions to society, have achieved noteworthy success in their professions or have given service to the University, the state and the region. In addition, to honor her service, the University created the Library Director Fund for Innovation and Creativity.

In other honors, the University of Delaware Library Associates passed a resolution recognizing "the varied, numerous and outstanding contributions of Susan Brynteson to the Library Associates, to the University of Delaware Library, to the University of Delaware and to the field of scholarly librarianship," and the University Faculty Senate approved a resolution acknowledging her commitment, leadership and "her years of outstanding service."

Colleagues remember

Many of Ms. Brynteson's colleagues and friends shared reflections about her.

Trevor A. Dawes, vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian:
"When I began my role as vice provost for libraries and museums, I reached out to Susan for advice. Her response—though I can't recall her exact words—was essentially, 'You got this!' That simple but heartfelt encouragement reflected who Susan was at her core: generous, uplifting and unwavering in her support of others. She made me feel capable, seen and valued, especially when it mattered most. Though she is no longer with us, I truly believe her support and spirit remain. I will miss her dearly."

Dan Rich, University professor of public policy emeritus and former provost:
"Susan Brynteson was passionate about the Library. For three and a half decades, she educated University leaders about the Library's importance to the University's success and how the Library could be enhanced. She garnered resources that probably would not have been obtained by a less persuasive and persistent library director. Susan was always looking ahead, with an expansive view of what the Library should become. She pioneered the electronic library but reveled in the printed page, greatly adding to the physical collections. An early proponent of online connections to libraries across the globe, she took great pride in the Library's Special Collections and in creating a supportive home for the UD Press. She anticipated changing student needs, creating the Student Multimedia Design Center and group study rooms. By any measure, Susan Brynteson made the Library stronger, and she also made the University of Delaware better."

Sandra Millard, retired deputy University librarian and associate University librarian for public services and outreach:
"I worked directly for Susan Brynteson for 28 years. Susan worked successfully with six presidents, nine provosts and countless faculty and staff since she began in 1980. When I arrived in 1987, the major expansion and renovation of the Hugh M. Morris Library for which she advocated had been completed the year before—a major project that had the support of the University president, provost, Board of Trustees and Library Associates. Susan witnessed libraries changing dramatically from 1980 to 2016, and she was relentless in seeking support and funding from the University to meet rapidly growing needs for resources, staffing, space and technology. She wanted the University of Delaware to be on the forefront of the future of libraries. She was a strong leader, a detail-oriented manager, who, when a big new idea was suggested, often said yes, what will it cost and how soon can it be done! She supported the adoption of the latest technologies, and the staff to manage them. She continually advocated for funds allocated for research resources as well as Special Collections. Susan worked carefully with Delaware elected officials to ensure that their papers became part of the University of Delaware Library. Susan assembled an excellent staff from around the country, provided support for professional development, and as a result, many University of Delaware Library staff became leaders in the library world. Susan never forgot to send special Christmas cards to the staff in the administrative office and wear her unique pumpkin hat to staff Halloween parties. She looked forward to spending time with her family and to volunteering at her beloved Yaddo, the prestigious writers' colony, for several weeks every summer. Even at Yaddo she worked daily for the library, sending work back and forth. She was proud to be a member of the Yaddo board and a lifetime member of the Yaddo Corporation. Her length of time leading the University of Delaware Library was rare in the library world. One staff member who responded to learning of her passing commented, 'I thought she was immortal…'"

During her tenure, the University of Delaware Library:

- became a member of the by-invitation-only prestigious Association of Research Libraries in 1983 upon which the Delaware General Assembly passed a congratulatory resolution;
- completed a major addition to the Hugh M. Morris Library in 1986 that doubled the space of the original 1963 building;
- converted from a card catalog system to the online DELCAT catalog, now DELCAT Discovery;
- celebrated the addition of the 2 millionth volume, a Shakespeare Second Folio, in 1991;
- developed a statewide K-12 partnership called UDLib/SEARCH, providing online periodical and encyclopedia databases and teacher training to all public K-12 schools in Delaware since 1997;
- opened the 15,000-square-foot $1.5 million Student Multimedia Design Center in 2007 to meet the needs of increasing numbers of classes that involve creation of multimedia projects and presentations;
- upgraded technology for University students, faculty and staff providing more than 250 state-of-the-art workstations, wireless throughout, loan of laptops and multimedia technology, high speed printing and more;
- established UDSpace, in which the University of Delaware was an early adopter of DSpace open source software to create an institutional repository for University research;
- acquired the senatorial papers of then-Vice President Joseph R. Biden, as well as the papers of Sen. Edward E. (Ted) Kaufman, Sen. Thomas R. Carper; Rep. Michael N. Castle; Sen. John Williams and Delaware Sen. Thurman G. Adams Jr.;
- became the home of the University of Delaware Press; and
- expanded the membership and programs in the University of Delaware Library Associates, a friends group that works to expand and enrich the Library's research collections.

Paul Anderson, retired assistant director for library administrative services:
"Susan's long career of service is notable for numerous accomplishments. Among the most important were qualifying for membership in the Association of Research Libraries, completing a major renovation of the Morris Library, establishing the online catalog, DELCAT, developing a more informed and effective staff through professional development and supporting collaborative efforts in the state of Delaware and nationally to improve library and information services. These accomplishments greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the Library in meeting the research needs of students and faculty as well as the presence of the University of Delaware on the national stage."

Deborah Rae, retired head, Cataloging Department:
"I knew Susan throughout her entire tenure at the Library. I was a new librarian when Susan interviewed for the directorship. I can still see her in the meeting with Library staff—so full of energy, with folders of articles she had already collected about the University and the state. She arrived several months later and in a whirl of energy began the profound transformation of the Library. She maintained a great deal of that astonishing energy throughout the years, as we all wrestled to keep up. It was that energy that allowed Susan to have three No. 1 priorities during construction and renovation of Morris Library. And it was her relentless drive that convinced artist Lance Hidy to create a poster of the new atrium when he had no time to do so. Susan broke, no shattered, the glass ceiling and encouraged other women to reach their full potentials. She was my mentor, my inspiration, my friend. What I will remember most fondly about Susan, is that in all the years, I never knew her to make a decision or request that was self-serving. She was unwavering in her dedication to the Library, librarianship and the University of Delaware."

Rebecca Johnson Melvin, retired librarian and head of the Manuscripts and Archives Department:
"Susan Bryntenson was a fierce advocate for libraries and librarianship. My husband and I, both now retired from careers as librarians at UD, feel like we worked in the golden age of academic librarianship under Susan's helm. Morris Library matured during Susan's tenure as library automation, integrated library systems, subscription databases and the Internet advanced access to global information sources and services. She was of the generation that brought the modern library and it is no small feat that she led UD into the Association of Research Libraries. To face enormous technological and workflow changes, she supported continuing education and professional development for library staff, which reached 150 at one point. Especially important was Susan's engagement with campus administrators, faculty and community on behalf of the Library. With support from a very strong University of Delaware Library Associates (UDLA), she hosted exhibitions, lectures, receptions, annual dinners and other programs that put the Library front and center of intellectual and social events. Susan loved creative people—from solar scientists to Pulitzer Prize-winning poets—and she loved print culture and she enjoyed bringing people together to celebrate reading and libraries. She served on boards of the Delaware Theatre Company, the Lincoln Club of Delaware and Yaddo, examples of how her networks benefitted the Library. Susan must also be remembered for the profound growth of Special Collections after she came to Delaware, as she cultivated many important collection donors and UDLA made regular monetary gifts to support acquisitions. Stellar literary collections—such as the Donald Justice papers, Alice Dunbar Nelson papers, Paul Bowles papers, Ishmael Reed papers, Brian Coffey papers and many more—bring scholars from around the world to Delaware. Beginning with the gift of the senatorial papers of John J. Williams, Susan led a robust program to collect the papers of Delaware's political and public policy leaders. These also include the House papers of Tom Carper and John Carney, and the senatorial papers of J. Allen Frear, Jr., Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and most recently Tom Carper. These archives support modern scholarship but are vitally important to promote an understanding of the democratic processes of government. Susan really connected the Library to Delaware, not just UD. We are lucky to have had her."

Anne Boylan, professor emerita of history:
"My sincere condolences to Susan's family. She was a steadfast advocate for the Library (and for libraries generally), a stalwart supporter of faculty research and a fierce defender of the First Amendment. In 2013, when the History Department planned a semester-long commemoration for the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, she not only threw the Library's support and resources behind it, but she arranged to have the Library's rare copy of the Proclamation put on display, and she personally attended some events. Hers was a consequential life."

Margaret Stetz, Mae and Robert Carter Professor of Women's Studies and professor of humanities:
"Susan Brynteson was the Queen of the Library. Although she laughed whenever I called her that, she never denied that it was true. Like a monarch, she was a beloved and benevolent ruler, but she could also be imperious and demanding, because the Library mattered so much to her. More than once, like Lewis Carroll's Red Queen, she shouted the equivalent of 'Off with their heads!' when things weren't done the way she thought was right—or rather, the way she knew to be the only right one. She was famous for having the license plate 'DELCAT,' because she was always thinking about the Library, no matter where she went. (And she went everywhere far too fast; she was a terrible driver.)

"When it came to the Library, no detail was too small for her notice. Everything in the building had to be up to her very high standards, and she always made sure that it was. If major storms were predicted, she stayed in her office all night and walked around the building to ensure that there was no damage, no leak anywhere."

Note: with the author's approval, this story was repurposed from an In Memoriam that originally published in UDaily.

Honoring Our Supporters

Thank You for Powering Possibility

By Nicole Hernandez

The Library, Museums and Press is deeply grateful to all who supported our mission between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025, especially our True Blue Hen Loyalty Society, Delaware Diamond Society, Founders Society and Carillon Circle donors. Your generosity helps create transformative experiences for students, faculty and the broader community.

With your support, we serve as a vibrant hub for experiential learning, open knowledge and scholarly research. You help us preserve and share world-class collections, expand access to rare archival materials and digital resources, and create hands-on opportunities like student-curated exhibitions and assistantships. We are also thankful for our dedicated staff, who champion these efforts every day and serve as ambassadors for our initiatives. Together, we are not only opening doors to knowledge, we are empowering the next generation of thinkers, creators and leaders.

Murray Story

A Lifelong Steward of Special Collections

A respected expert in rare books, archival materials and 20th-century literary collections, Tim Murray has long understood the transformative power of a strong Special Collections department in academic libraries. As the longtime head of Special Collections at the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press, Murray spent his career building and stewarding collections that now serve as vital resources for researchers, students, scholars and community members alike.



Tim Murray poses inside the Special Collections Reading Room with rare materials from Special Collections.

Throughout his tenure, Murray received "tremendous support for Special Collections development," a legacy he speaks of with deep appreciation. That support, combined with his passion for rare materials fueled decades of work, resulting in "build[ing] some remarkable collections".

Murray is a deeply engaged advocate for the Library community and has received numerous prestigious honors throughout his career. Most recently, he was appointed by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. to serve on the National Museum and Library Services Board. Following his retirement in 2023, he joined the board of directors for the Friends of the University of Delaware Library, continuing his longtime role as a dedicated liaison and supporter. He also served as a liaison to the Lincoln Club of Delaware, further strengthening the Library's connection to the broader Delaware community.

However, Murray's impact never stopped at professional achievement. A committed philanthropist himself, he has long supported the Library, Museums and Press's mission through personal giving both during his tenure and in retirement. For over 25 years, Murray has donated numerous rare and unique items from his personal collection, including hundreds of books on American literature and fine print presses, and many pieces of ephemera related to President Abraham Lincoln, enriching the Library's holdings in Delawareana, fine press publications and other areas.

This year, Murray took his commitment even further by establishing the Timothy D. Murray Special Collections Acquisition Fund with a generous gift. This endowed fund is designed to provide ongoing support for acquiring rare and unique materials–something Murray views as essential to the Library's mission. "Having a strong, competitive acquisitions budget" he noted, "should be one of the Library's highest priorities." Murray's vision for the fund is powerful: to enable the continued expansion of the Library's world-class collections for future generations of scholars.

Murray's philanthropy is both personal and purposeful, rooted in a lifelong passion for collecting, preserving and sharing knowledge. Through his gifts and volunteerism, he ensures the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press remains a beacon of scholarship and discovery.

Friends of the UD Library Expands Knowledge and Access Through Philanthropy

For 67 years, the Friends of the UD Library have contributed over $2.5 million in support of the Library, Museums and Press. This year, they gave an additional $150,000–with $100,000 to support the acquisition of unique and rare items for Special Collections and $50,000 toward our digitization initiatives. Included in their gift was $10,000 dedicated to outreach programming for Special Collections, helping fund popular events such as the *Night of Frights and Delights* Special Collections Open House and the *Blossom and Bloom* event.

To date, 14 complete collections have been digitized thanks to the gifts from the Friends, including this year's additions: the Latimer family papers, which chronicle maritime life and China trade; the Pauline A. Young collection, which preserves her work documenting the life of her aunt, Alice Dunbar-Nelson; and the Littleton and Jane Mitchell papers, which highlight the legacy of prominent Delaware civil rights activist and educator Littleton P. Mitchell. Digitization efforts continue daily, with newly accessible materials available through the Library, Museums and Press website.

Giving Tuesday Impact: Expanding Access, Building Careers

On Giving Tuesday, 41 donors came together to raise $1,365 in support of a specialized student assistantship in Special Collections. This generous support allowed for the design and implementation of the assistantship during the summer of 2025, which was thoughtfully tailored to help an undergraduate student explore their passion for a future in libraries, archives or museums.

Working closely with expert staff, student assistant Lily Hearn gained hands-on experience enhancing access to digitized collections. Her work included adding standardized metadata, linking digital content across platforms and applying Library of Congress subject headsings–all of which significantly improved discoverability for students and researchers. Reflecting on the experience, Hearn said that working in the Special Collections department, "has been an incredibly enriching experience at this point in my academic and professional career. [I] got to explore collections management in a library setting and learn about digital archives and the importance of sustaining a connection between them and public access."

The assistantship not only advanced access to our collections but also inspired Hearn to continue working with material culture collections and to advocate for accessibility to digitized collections. Thanks to donor generosity, this opportunity helped shape the future of a promising professional in the cultural heritage field while strengthening the accessibility and impact of our collections.

A Place to Learn and Grow for UD Student-Parents and Children

A call from the Vice Provost to support student-parents inspired a generous response. More than 30 donors came together to raise $1,525, partially funding the purchase and installation of a parent and child study carrel in Morris Library, with the remaining cost covered by the Library, Museums and Press. A recent survey revealed that 70 percent of UD students with children–many caring for children under five–attend classes full time. These parents face significant challenges securing affordable, reliable childcare, often waiting up to six months to find suitable options. Installed during the fall semester, this specialized workspace, with an integrated play area for children, offers student-parents a supportive, distraction-aware environment to focus on their studies. By easing one of the many challenges of balancing academics and caregiving, this initiative represents a meaningful step toward educational equity and access for all.



he new parent and child study carrel arrived this fall and can currently be found on the first floor of Morris Library.

Your Generosity Makes a Lasting Impact

At the University of Delaware, we are proud to recognize and celebrate the generosity of our donors through four special recognition societies: the True Blue Hen Loyalty Society, the Delaware Diamond Society, the Founders Society and the Carillon Circle. With your support, the Library, Museums and Press can continue enriching the Blue Hen community with exceptional resources, expertise and opportunities. Thank you for making a difference.

Tried and True

Our True Blue Hens have been with us every step of the way. We are deeply grateful for these dedicated donors who have supported the Library, Museums and Press for three or more consecutive fiscal years. Your ongoing commitment strengthens our mission and enriches the Blue Hen experience.

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