

# Reflecting Forward

University of Washington Libraries All Staff Annual Meeting

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[Video recording on YouTube](#)

Hello and a warm welcome to the Libraries 20th annual All Staff meeting. This year's All Staff, like everything else these past 9 months, is not typical. Hopefully, you all had a chance to connect in the Zoom coffee break and perhaps enjoy a cup of tea courtesy of the Libraries. Cheers!

I want to extend a thank you to the All Staff team, especially Stephanie Guerrero, for orchestrating logistics and production across so many different elements, as well as Libraries Assessment, HR, Communications, Facilities and Admin Services. Producing this meeting in a typical year is a lot of work, and this year posed an even greater challenge under COVID circumstances. It was a tremendous undertaking, and your contributions are very much appreciated.

What a year. While the All Staff is typically focused on the last academic year, the current reality of our everyday lives, the challenges we are facing today--in this moment--are worth acknowledging. Managing work, caregiving, isolation, anxiety, and uncertainty-- these are real issues everyone is facing right now. We are adapting, and yet the shift in our work and personal lives remains a significant challenge. It has not been easy, but I want to applaud you for pulling together and supporting each other, for showing empathy and grace when it is needed most.

When I think about the past year, I can't help but simultaneously think about the future-- how we will take what we've learned (and what we are still learning) during these extremely challenging times and use it to create better ways of working and being.

Today is about seeing our past in the context of our future--*reflecting forward* -- not only to meet the needs of our users, but to meet the needs of each other - as co-workers, as teams, as one Library. The increased collaboration between staff and portfolios born from this time is something that I believe will have a lasting and positive impact on how we approach our work moving forward.

One of the most important areas of that work will be our continued efforts to reimagine what equity, diversity and inclusion mean for us as we come to terms with a global social justice reckoning and civil rights movement that asks us all to do better. This must be a sustained priority, and all of us have a role to play. We'll be talking more about our progress in this area throughout this presentation.

It's hard not to think about life in "Pre-COVID and "Post-COVID" terms. Pre-Covid feels like a distant memory right now as the intensity of the past 9 months looms large in our collective experience. Today you'll hear from colleagues across portfolios to highlight the many different ways we have adapted and risen to the challenge. In the midst of such tremendous upheaval and change, there is still **much** to celebrate.

For our library, philanthropy has always made the difference at critical moments. This support allows us to respond, to be nimble and grow. The conclusion of the University's 10-year Boundless Campaign in June 2020 resulted in a total of **39 million dollars** for UW Libraries.

The campaign far exceeded our goal of 25 million, or 158% of the original goal, the highest percentage from any unit across the University. Just wow.

The campaign added 35 new endowments for a current total of 112. Together these endowments fuel new ideas, pilot projects and allow us to respond to critical needs in real time. This increased funding also allowed us to extend scholarships for student employees from 10 to 32.

One of the things that I find most interesting about this achievement is *where* most of these gifts came from.

It is not from multi-million dollar corporate or institutional giving. The majority -- about **96%**-- came from *individual* donors! **17,591** donors to be exact. Of those, **88% gave gifts of \$500** or less. And **68% of these gifts came from non-alumni**.

This illustrates the incredible impact of community support for our Libraries. This is a testament to the dedicated effort of the Libraries Advancement team, developing and nurturing relationships and connections over many years. A very special thanks and congratulations to Sheryl Stiefel and her team on this significant milestone.

But this work is not done in a silo. I also want to thank all of the Libraries staff, current and retired, who met with donors, became donors, and contributed in many ways across all three campuses. This was truly a team effort.

The largest gift to the campaign was made in this fiscal year-- 6 million dollars from the Atsuhiko and Ina Goodwin Tateuchi Foundation; a gift worthy of renaming the East Asia Library.

Fortunately, we were able to celebrate and announce the gift in person about a month before shutdown. This transformational gift will support programs, space, and operating enhancements to better serve users and protect collections. Thank you to Zhijia Shen and the entire TEAL team for their efforts to steward this incredible gift.

Speaking of protecting collections, another high- impact philanthropic gift this year came from The Mellon Foundation through a 1 million dollar grant to advance shared conservation services among the UW Libraries, the Henry Art Gallery and the Burke Museum.

The five-year initiative has been delayed due to COVID restrictions, but when work is able to commence, it will help to address the unmet conservation needs of photographs, prints and other works on paper across all three institutions. Congratulations to Stephanie Lamson and her team on building the partnerships and support to enable this critical work.

Partnership is at the center of what we do every day-- with other departments, with each other, with students, and with the community. The UW Libraries High School Internship program, led by Kian Flynn and Elliot Stevens, is a prime example. In its 3rd iteration during the summer of 2019, ten local high school students (up from 6 the year before) gained valuable experience and skills developing media projects while learning about career opportunities in higher education. Working closely with Seattle Public Libraries and the UW Dream Project, the program is an

excellent example of how we can engage partners to achieve our mission beyond the boundaries of our campus, especially and intentionally with efforts to reach marginalized communities.

These are stories worth telling - and we now have a place to share our work more broadly with the implementation of the Libraries blog. If you haven't read it lately,

I encourage you to look back at the posts this year because they tell your stories and highlight so many aspects of our work that are often not seen. It is really great to hear different voices across the Libraries represented in these stories.

For most users, the amount of work that goes into maintaining collections, subscriptions and other resources is invisible and intangible, yet it is foundational to almost everything we do. This year's negotiations of "big deal" journal packages with Elsevier, ScienceDirect, Springer Nature, and SAGE represent a significant investment of time and resources.

In January, we finalized a new 3-year agreement with Elsevier representing more than a year of strategic planning and collaboration with UW faculty. This work was led by the Libraries negotiation team, alternative access teams, and was spearheaded by Denise Pan.

The process created new Libraries Negotiation Priorities, Guiding Principles, and a Class C Resolution passed by the Faculty Senate. These efforts provided the institutional support required for successful negotiation to achieve greater market transparency while reducing the total costs by nearly \$900,000.

We know by the growing coalition of academic libraries who are working to dismantle the unsustainable models that these companies rely on, this work is far from over, but through this new contract, UW Libraries has made significant changes to our approach that will have lasting impact on future contract negotiations.

I have highlighted but a few of the major milestones from our "Pre-COVID" timeline, although I know there are many more. As we know a picture is worth a thousand words, I'll let the images of the past year do the talking now through this video titled "History in the Making" produced with help from Brian Shipley and the Media Arcade.

## **HISTORY IN THE MAKING VIDEO**

### **How COVID changed the way we work...**

And so it was - During the week of March 17th, all UW Libraries officially closed their doors on all three campuses, and the marathon of remote work began. Later in this presentation, we will hear more about the many ways our teams adapted to meet the needs of online learning; however, when I think about those first few weeks and months, there is so much to reflect on in terms of our immediate response.

First, I'd like to acknowledge the entire Libraries Facilities team led by Linda Ambre. You are at the heart of operations; keeping our people, our buildings, and our collections safe. A special thanks to Brad Van Horne at our Seattle campus who has been on site since day one-- monitoring and responding to many emergent situations, including making homemade sanitizer when supply chains failed.

And to all of our staff who help to manage operations on site at Bothell, Tacoma and the Health Sciences libraries-- thank you for keeping the lights on and so much more. You are the Libraries first responders, and we appreciate you.

The coordination and speed at which our teams worked to increase access to available resources such as streaming video and eBooks was incredible. Moments like this underscore the import of having flexible funding from philanthropic sources. With \$116,000 in reserved funds from endowments and new funds from the Libraries COVID-19 Emergency Needs Fund, we were able to purchase these essential resources quickly.

During these early days, we learned teleworking skills and became Zoom experts almost overnight thanks to the ITS-DS team and Bryna Lieberman's patience, guidance, and goodwill at every turn. Within a very short period of time, events, workshops and consults were "pivoted" effectively to online platforms.

We found new ways to connect with each other, to share information, and to collaborate that will continue well beyond a POST-COVID environment.

It has been a time for experimentation, listening and constant iteration. One example of this was the way the HEAL WA program within the Health Sciences Library adapted to create virtual practicums, enabling participants across the country to continue their fieldwork instead of canceling it.

Slack and Teams channels expanded, facilitating our ability to troubleshoot issues in real time, and provide critical connections and emotional support.

Through these newly expanded ways of working, we were able to crowdsource ideas and input that were especially helpful in creating the Libraries Caregiver Guidance document. I am grateful to everyone who participated in these discussions, and I am proud of the ongoing work our teams are doing to engage and move it forward.

The formation of the *Coming Back to Campus* teams, the *Director's* group, and the *Online Learning and Innovation* team are examples of cross-portfolio work born out of COVID that have real staying power in terms of modeling how we can collaborate more and better across teams. We'll be hearing a lot more about projects related to remote support for users later on in the presentation, and I think that work is truly inspiring when I think about collaboration and what we've accomplished this year.

In the early days of COVID, our web site had to become a triage point for centralized communication.

We built new pages, instructional blogs, and a COVID Research Guide (thank you science librarians - Maureen Nolan, Sally Pine, Diana Loudon and others).

Testing these channels over several months helped to inform a larger redesign of our home page and other web site resources that continue to influence and improve communication with our users. Thanks to Christine Tawatao, Web Operations, PWOG, Alyssa Deutschler, Nancy Huling, Jackie Belanger and Assessment, and all those who help us understand how user needs change and how our web site and communications can be more responsive.

Internally, our very robust COVID Portal in staffweb exists thanks to Carolyn Aamot

and the Libraries Intranet Operations Group. Our Monthly COVID Town Hall meetings continue to address concerns and questions with transparency; but also provide space for the community. The Town Hall structure is something we plan to continue indefinitely based on the positive input and feedback thus far.

And last but certainly not least- Curbside “No Contact” Pick-Up. Kirsten Spillum, Tami Garrard, Hannah Wilson, and the entire Access Services team- thank you.

When we talk about developing new ways of working, developing this service model from the ground up in the middle of a pandemic, with limited staff and a host of logistics challenges, you prevailed in record time. I recently heard this quote from one of our users:

*“I feel like a seal during feeding time at the zoo, waiting for books to be brought out to the Skagit Lane entrance.”*

Certainly, these feelings of happy anticipation and satisfaction are not unique among our users, and the herculean efforts of Access Services as well as their willingness to safely keep service going is definitely worth celebrating. Hip, hip, hooray!

After about 9 months, I know the marathon we entered back in March seems more like one of those super marathons; instead of 26.6 miles, it’s feeling like an ultramarathon of 100 miles or more. But no matter how long the rest of the race goes on, we can look back at those first few painful miles and see how far we’ve come. This perspective will undoubtedly be our guide in the months, and miles ahead.

## **EDI & anti-racist work in the Libraries (pre/post COVID)**

In May, the killing of George Floyd sparked a national social justice reckoning and drive for change at all levels of our society. The university, the Libraries - all three campuses and many individual units within the Libraries--responded with statements of solidarity, support, and a commitment to anti-racist work. While this work is ongoing, in many cases through mechanisms like the Libraries Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee, many new efforts have been driven organically by individual teams and staff taking the initiative and answering the call to do more. These actions collectively inform our work ahead - and there is still much more to do. The examples shared today are not comprehensive, but they illustrate how this work is showing up in our work today--all of which inform future planning and change on a broader scale.

In the wake of George Floyd’s murder and the subsequent protests across our community, the need for more internal reflection and discussion was evident. The Libraires EDI committee organized discussion sessions for all staff during this critical moment in time.

Since its launch in June, over 180 Libraries employees have become members of the Anti-racism Slack Channel, which serves as a place to create community around organizing conversations, furthering projects, and sharing resources focused on antiracism and diversity, equity and inclusion.

The UW Bothell/Cascadia College Library's Social Justice Team and Community Reads Teams built upon a long history of creating space for reflection with staff, adding more antiracism learning sessions, hosting 5 sessions over the summer with more planned for Fall and beyond.

All resources and discussion guides are posted publicly for others to use.

Other teams are also creating space for ongoing reflection, education, and discussion, in routine meetings including Special Collections, Health Sciences, the Libraries Cabinet, Research and Learning Services, and others.

Over the summer, the EDI committee made significant changes to its planning priorities, developing new strategic actions, and working groups open to all.

Throughout 2020 and 2021 the committee, along with these working groups comprised of Libraries staff from all levels, will focus on:

- **Recruitment & Retention**
- **Training**
- **Policy Review.**
- **EDI Committee Review**

I am excited to see the recommendations from the committee and working groups as this work has the potential for significant impact moving forward.

In July, the ALUW proposed to me and to the Libraries Cabinet the formation of a tri-campus working group to reevaluate police presence in the Libraries. In the coming months, the Decriminalization Working Group will develop its charge to review existing policies and procedures relating to use of police within the Libraries.

They will collaborate with stakeholders across units, build consensus and form recommendations for change with a goal to eliminate, or at least minimize, police presence in Libraries spaces. They will work to provide Libraries staff with the resources and support necessary to effectively and safely perform their duties; and intentionally connect the Libraries work to other tri-campus initiatives on alternative policing. The group plans to provide recommendations to the Cabinet in December 2020.

The Orbis Cascade Alliance Cataloging Standing Group, chaired by Erin Grant, wrote a recommendation to change the subject heading "Illegal aliens" to "Undocumented immigrants" (along with other related subject headings changes) in Alliance search interfaces. The recommendation was approved unanimously by the Alliance Council in September, and the Norm Rules Standing Group, chaired by Junghae Lee, is currently working on a way to implement these changes.

The Libraries Racial Justice Resource Guide was created through the collective efforts of many, spearheaded by Theresa Mudrock and graduate students Bethany Barelman and Chelsea Riddle.

There were many guides developed during this time, providing a starting point for personal education and learning, and this guide collected important campus-specific information in addition to broader resources that many across the university pointed to as a helpful tool.

While these are but a few examples of first steps post-shutdown, EDI remains central to the objectives embedded in our Libraries Strategic Plan. We see this work show up in many ways through ongoing programs and initiatives.

Our Libraries reading and reflection groups across all three campuses are an excellent example of the important role we can play to encourage meaningful connections, and to build community in partnership with our users, and in particular, with marginalized populations.

Through UW Bothell Community Reads, UW Tacoma's Real Lit, and Odegaard's Recommended Reads for Equity collection, we create space to celebrate voices and perspectives that are too often underrepresented.

Through the words of featured authors, students and community members who participated with us this past year, both in person and remotely we send a message to our community that the Libraries is a place that is truly open to all.

The Libraries values the voices of community members who shine a light on injustice, racism, and inequity. The Libraries is a place to find connection and support in a world that is - particularly now- isolating and disconnected from each other's lived experiences. These programs are not new, but they represent a commitment to our users, a commitment to change, and a desire to learn as we shape our priorities moving forward.

The **Undergraduate Student Success & Assessment and Planning team** partnership is an initiative that seeks to engage the Libraries with essential student data to help inform our future work. It synthesizes UW and national data sources that assess the undergraduate experience, with an emphasis on BIPOC and underserved students. Through data-driven discussions and reports, the teams seek to prompt reflection and generate collaborative action across the Libraries. Their most recent activity includes the report *Undergraduate student experiences during COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter*.

Again, I know what we talk about today is not comprehensive when it comes to identifying every action and effort being taken up across the Libraries; it represents a few of the most immediate steps taken in response to the Black Lives Matter movement early on. For now, I want to thank all of you who actively participate in this work, who ask the hard questions of leadership and of each other to push for change, and for being open and willing to do the work ahead.

This past year has been all about change and learning to adapt. The collective work of our teams in support of remote learning has been truly inspiring. But don't take my word for it. Coming up next is a chance to hear from our spotlight speakers - Moriah Caruso, Perry Yee, and Ann Lally.

## SPOTLIGHT Speakers Presentations:

- Spotlight #1  
*Remote Support for Users (Resources)*  
Presenter: Moriah Caruso, Digital Preservation Librarian & Collective Collections Strategy Librarian
- Spotlight # 2  
*Remote Support for Users (Instruction, Student Success, and Research)*  
Presenter: Perry Yee, Senior Online Learning Support Manager
- Spotlight #3  
*Documenting & Preserving History*  
Presenter: Ann Lally, Digital Collections Curator

Thank you, Moriah, Perry, and Ann., What an incredible overview of work across teams and portfolios. I am pleased to add to the long list of accomplishments a few notes about UW Press.

2020 marked the centennial celebration of the UW Press imprint. To commemorate this milestone, the Press debuted a new brand and logo this year as well as a new web site.

But reaching 100 years was not the only significant achievement. They published 55 new books, received 308 reviews, and won 6 prestigious book awards from scholarly societies including an American Book Award for *John Okada: The Life and Rediscovered Work of the Author of No-No Boy*.

The Press hosted 78 book events, 18 of them virtual, collaborating with a range of strategic partners that helped bring authors' stories to new audiences including Elliott Bay Book Company, Hugo House, the Capitol Hill Historical Society and the High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon.

Another fantastic collaboration this past year is the Open Access (OA) e-book project, a partnership between the Press and the Libraries funded by the Allen Fund. Now, most of the books in the press's long-standing and award-winning series *Studies on Ethnic Groups in China* (SEGC) are openly available.

In the past six months, these books have been used in 123 countries. Usage statistics show that they're used far more often than comparable paid-access books. For example, the OA books on JSTOR and MUSE have been used over 13 times as much as comparable paid-access books in the last six months. As a first foray into OA publishing for the UW Press, this pilot provided an excellent test case on how OA can significantly expand the reach of Press authors and research on a global scale.

What's more, these books, and all of the books that are created on the Manifold platform are more accessible now because of the significant contributions and leadership of Elliott Stevens and UW Accessible Technology who identified accessibility issues early on in the pilot phase, and worked in partnership with Manifold to improve the platform. Manifold is being used by



dozens of institutions and is a better, more accessible tool in part because of this partnership and Elliott's dedication. Bravo.

And now, for one of our longest standing All Staff traditions - one of my favorites, the March of Time and staff acknowledgements. If we were in person, I would be asking you to stand and be acknowledged. Since we can't be together in person, please take some time to send your colleagues a congratulations message on Slack, Teams, or drop them an email -- they deserve it!

## March of Time, HR, Promotions slideshow presentation

### Looking Ahead

Seeing the March of Time, I can't help but think about my own march which started some 28 years ago with UW Libraries.

With my pending retirement in June, I know I will have a lot of time to reflect on all the milestones, progress and challenges over the years that have influenced where we are at this moment in time.

We have spent most of today reflecting on the past year, and now it's time to look to the future. While the COVID situation presents many unknowns in terms of when we might return to routine operations, there are several events and activities that are certain to shape our path forward, a few of which I will highlight today.

- In the coming year, we will build on the individual efforts happening across the Libraries and within the EDI Committees and new working groups. The Cabinet is actively reviewing our existing commitments to identify additional, specific actions we can take to make qualitative changes towards a more equitable, inclusive, diverse, and anti-racist organization. This work includes reviewing and dismantling policies, practices, and cultures that perpetuate inequalities.
- The **Online Learning and Innovation Team** will continue to implement the current Online & Hybrid Learning Plan, with special emphasis on practices for creative, sustainable, and equitable collaboration between staff.

The team will also focus on new ways to build meaningful community online between people and the Libraries, including both students and academic support partners.

- Over the course of the year, we will learn a lot from our newest initiatives that have recently come to fruition.
  - The new **UW Libraries Undergraduate Researcher Tutorial** is now available and will officially launch later on this month, led by the undergraduate student success team and many campus partners, these modularized, asynchronous sessions will introduce students to UW Libraries resources and services across disciplines early on, helping to address a gap in introductory training for

undergraduate research. This is a fantastic new resource and I can't wait to see how we build on it for the future.

- The Open Scholarship Commons launched as a virtual space that brings together Libraries consultation services, workshops, and events on a range of topics. We look forward to working with faculty and students to share and publish their work openly, work with data, use digital tools, and navigate their rights. By bringing together expertise throughout the libraries into the OSC, we will be helping support the University's goals to expand the impact of research and knowledge and the public good.
- We will be building out the Libraries remote shelving facility at Sandpoint to house hundreds of thousands of volumes under good environmental controls. The budget has been approved to build out 30,000 square feet. UW Facilities is working with Campus Architecture and Planning to complete a Design Model for the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Once the Design Model is drafted, UW Facilities and CAP will be meeting with the Libraries Working Group to answer questions and narrow down a timeline for construction and move-in dates. The Libraries Working Group can look forward to meeting with Facilities and CAP mid-November.
- We will continue to monitor and plan for any additional university budget reductions and impact on the Libraries. The fall enrollment numbers were solid, and the state revenue forecasts are better than anticipated, but we remain in a waiting game.
- Due to our success in diversifying sources of funding and building on endowments, we have the ability to cover most of the pre-COVID shortfall and 4.6% budget cut to the Libraries by using one-time endowment and carry forward funds this fiscal year. In anticipation of a flat or decreased budget for next fiscal year, we are planning for a subscription review for Spring 2021.
- An unintended consequence of the pandemic is that the HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service (ETAS) has given us an opportunity to experiment with Controlled Digital Lending (CDL). Based on a fair use analysis, we are loaning digitized copies of print books in place of the physical item. We see CDL as a strategic action that will have impact increasing access long after COVID and reopening.

As remote work remains our modus operandi, we will continue to seek out best practices, guidelines and methods for supporting all of us at home - be it reviewing and updating our Caregiver guidance for employees and supervisors, ergonomic support and tech help, looking at new ways to build community and reduce isolation, and more. As always, please share your ideas, comments and suggestions through Town Hall and CBC input docs available via Staffweb.

We will continue using our strategic plan to guide our efforts and decisions. It is our north star. We, of course, are adjusting how the plan is realized during the pandemic, embracing the opportunities that this new environment requires.

At this moment--November 2, 2020, the day I am making this recording--I have no way of knowing what our world will be like come tomorrow, November 3, or the days and weeks that follow.

But I do know that we--the UW Libraries--will continue to play an integral role--documenting these moments in time, gathering information, and supporting research to help our community understand and act on the issues that will shape our future.

We will rise to the challenges ahead. We will move forward with integrity and commitment to fulfill our mission of “connecting people with knowledge to advance discovery and enrich the quality of life.” ***Everybody's life.***

It has been a history-making year.

And now, please enjoy our final segment. The Libraries all staff video. Thank you and take care.

**All Staff Slideshow**