Letter from the Dean

On a recent trip to Boston I had the occasion to chat with Jay Dominick, CIO at Princeton University. When he learned of my position at SMU, he asked if I was on the convener or collector side of libraries. “A convener,” I said. “With a collections background.” In truth, I’m both.

Often, I am asked about the relevance of libraries in this age of infinite accessible online information. Library relevance is crystal clear to me. My job as Dean is to lead others to see what libraries are and can be. Like most elements in modern society, libraries are dynamic and continuously evolve.

Take healthcare, for example. Fifty years ago, our doctor was a general practitioner who handled most healthcare needs, recording our medical information by hand in hard-copy charts. Today, teams of specialists and entire hospitals are dedicated to single fields such as cancer, pediatrics or cardiac care. Electronic health records prompt physicians to consider additional information from trusted clinical information sources to create specialized care plans. We expect to make appointments, see test results and even consult with a doctor online.

This multi-modal existence has become natural in our personal lives, why not in our academic lives? Scholarship, like the rest of our lives, is now hybrid – print and digital. Today’s researchers need specialized consultation and access to tools for network, text, spatial or visual analysis. Like modern doctors, university faculty need a team of interdisciplinary professionals supported by a first-rate information and technology infrastructure for knowledge discovery and creation.

Where do faculty and students learn these new ideas and tools? How do they have access? Where is the common place to learn, share, communicate, grow and develop new ideas? My answer: the library.

Libraries are both collectors and conveners. SMU Libraries acquires unique materials such as “The Galactic Sherlock Holmes” collection featured on page 12 and the magnificent Jordan art book bequest (page 10). With the collections, we prepare exhibits that engage the community and provide learning opportunities and skill building internships. Our librarians and archivists are essential partners across campus. They deliver expertise and enthusiasm to a variety of projects on campus and in the community and give life to the history of SMU, Dallas, and a rich world of cultural heritage available to scholars worldwide. They enrich our history through encouraging the addition of new voices to the narrative, such as with our Voices of SMU project, profiled on Page 6, which enriches our University archives by pairing SMU alumni from underrepresented minorities with students to record important stories about their experiences as students. As you will see throughout these pages, SMU Libraries collects, convenes and, I would add, inspires.

SMU Libraries’ new strategic plan, on Page 4, maps our route to the top by showcasing the essential nature of library expertise in reaching the University’s research, teaching, and learning aspiration.

In our new strategic plan, we aim to create a library where faculty and students have excellent collections at their fingertips along with cutting-edge technology, tools and expertise for maximum research and scholarly impact. I invite you to read our strategic plan (smu.edu/libstratplan2019) and join us on this journey – visit our libraries, use our collections, visit one of our exhibits or attend an author event. Whatever brings you our way, I look forward to seeing you at the library soon!

Holly Jeffcoat
Dean of SMU Libraries
My SMU Library

Just as SMU has solidified itself as the University at the heart of Dallas, Fondren Library has solidified itself as the heart of SMU.

My name is Darian Taylor and I am a senior at SMU studying Public Policy as well as Corporate Communications & Public Affairs. I have the privilege and honor to serve as this year’s student body president. The different libraries on this campus have given me some quiet places to study (and sometimes stress), but also hang out with friends and have a good time between classes. There have been days when I have no homework or extra-curricular tasks to complete, but I still make my way to Fondren and find it very hard to leave. Everything I could ever need for a research paper or study session is all right there. Besides my room, Fondren is where I spend most of my time. That being said, I also love to visit Bridwell Library (when it’s not under construction), Hamon Arts Library, and even the Underwood Law Library. No matter what, there is a library on campus that I will find myself in at any point of the day.

I knew that Fondren Library was one of my favorite places on campus early in my time here at SMU. During my first semester freshman year, I was taking 18 hours and trying to get involved on campus. I spent a lot of my time throughout the week in the library and was somewhat stressed because of the amount of work I had to complete. That semester, during finals week, Fondren brought stress-relief puppies one day and I immediately felt calm and ready to get my work done. Fondren has done this every finals week that I have been at SMU and I have gone back time and time again.

Darian Taylor
Student Body President
SMU Libraries’ strategic plan leads a unified vision

Abuzz for months with surveys, interviews, brainstorming, and boots-on-the-ground campus engagement, the SMU Libraries now has its new strategic plan. The ambitious and visionary roadmap connects SMU’s seven libraries with the University’s research aspirations, which are at the heart of this plan.

“All the exploration and discovery efforts focused on creating the best library for SMU that specifically addresses the needs of this diverse, interdisciplinary community,” said Holly Jeffcoat, dean of SMU Libraries. “Librarians are the skilled experts in the information ecosystem, dedicated to assisting the SMU community through professional knowledge, excellent service and personalized consultations to meet campus learning and research goals.”

The University’s strategic plan, Launching SMU’s Second Century, names SMU Libraries in Goal One as essential to SMU’s aim to become a top 50 university and to increase its research and student academic quality. The SMU Libraries strategic plan embraces the community excitement about the University’s bold direction that relies on librarians’ vast expertise and trained eye for identifying innovative tools to advance faculty and student work.

“We’re thrilled to exert our professional skills and experience,” said Jolene de Verges, director of Hamon Arts Library and strategic plan committee chair. “We want to partner with the faculty in their research activities.”

The committee used human-centered design principles while crafting the visionary plan, which brings strategies to bolster academic quality and global research by championing intentional cross-disciplinary collaborations, advancing the research lifecycle and positioning library professionals for excellence. Among its new directions:

- Amplifying SMU’s cultural heritage special collections as one-of-a-kind primary resources that faculty and student researchers could never experience anywhere else in the world.
- Creating a seamless research lifecycle by supporting scholarly action and increasing community access to research support and resources.
- Increasing engagement in complete student success — including academic social, intellectual and psychological well-being — by aligning with the support efforts of the Division of Student Affairs, and ensuring the Libraries are a welcoming and inclusive third space, outside of class or home, where students know they can find help and resources for productive solo or group learning.
- Nurturing the SMU Libraries’ virtual presence, aka the eighth library, by ramping up service for digital library users and modernizing and simplifying the website, finding aids and digital tool usability.
- Clearing pathways to professional success for library staff, including professional development opportunities and transparent promotion plans across all libraries.

“Seeing and synthesizing the different perspectives was exciting and eye-opening,” said Hollie Gardner, director of strategic initiatives. “The data we collected remains valuable for continuing to refine spaces, services and programs. The result is an innovative library to support innovative research and respond to the needs of our dynamic academic community.”
Jill Kelly, associate professor of history, and Joan Gosnell, SMU archivist, joined forces to fill a gap in the University archives with the Voices of SMU project, a digital video archive of oral-history interviews conducted by undergraduate and graduate students with SMU alumni from underrepresented groups.

Ranging from SMU’s earliest racial integration efforts to present day, the interviews document and validate experiences of alumni of color. Everyone involved in the project hopes it leads to more campus diversity and understanding. The online collection currently contains 57 interviews with African American and Latinx alumni, including Rev. Dr. Zan Holmes, Jr. ’59; Anga Sanders ’70, nonprofit founder and CEO of Global HR Solutions LLC; Jerry LeVias ’69, businessman and former football star; and Delia Jasso ’76, ’92, a former Dallas City Council member and community activist. More interviews are added monthly. Student researchers aim to create an even more comprehensive and diverse digital archive of SMU history by capturing the experiences of other alumni minority groups in the future.

The oral history transcripts are stored in the SMU Archives and made available online in the Southern Methodist University Oral History and Digital Humanities Student Projects digital collection. Technical support is provided by the Norwich Center for Digital Solutions, a division of SMU Libraries. Learn more at smu.edu/libraries/digitalcollections/ohdh.

SMU Libraries hosted its inaugural Digital Humanities Research Institute this summer for scholars seeking to apply this traditional liberal arts field to a 21st-century format. Rafia Mirza, SMU humanities librarian, and Jonathan McMichael, SMU undergraduate success librarian, collaborated with SMU’s Office of Information Technology staff for the four-day pilot workshop, where SMU faculty, graduate students and other library staff learned pedagogical underpinnings of digital humanities research, programming software introductions, data management and other crucial components for this field of research.

While digital humanities research is often subjectively defined, Mirza sticks by this broad description: a researcher’s humanities question or quandary for which computational methods are key to finding an answer. “Computational technology allows for examination of big data,” she says. “Much larger data sets than what an individual could read at one time, for example.”

The elements in this research are too vast, including range of information types and kinds of data, technology tools, methodologies, ethical considerations, presentation and interface platforms, for any individual to become an expert, Mirza says. Participants learned concepts, techniques and best practices for digital humanities, and met SMU colleagues who can help with their projects. “During the institute I learned that digital humanities works best when it’s a team effort,” said Peter Kupfer, associate professor and chair of Musicology at Meadows School of the Arts. “I would feel far more confident attempting a digital humanities project knowing there are people on campus we can work with who have the necessary skill sets.”

Another Digital Humanities Research Institute is planned soon. Learn more at smu.edu/dhri.
The Shop, SMU’s on-campus food pantry, which opened last fall in the Fondren Library, offers non-perishable foods to current SMU students who experience food insecurity.

A joint commitment to total student care inspired the partnership between SMU Libraries and the Division of Student Affairs, and it has received widespread support from the SMU community. Funded through donations from the SMU Mothers’ and Dads’ Clubs and SMU faculty and staff as well as food drives by student organizations, The Shop is located in Fondren Library where students can easily find and access food and basic necessities.

All students may access The Shop by visiting the Fondren Main Desk to check out a key using their SMU ID. They shop the pantry themselves, taking all the items they need, such as canned fruit and meats or granola bars, or essentials like laundry supplies and hygiene products.

“The Shop grew from a united desire to support student success and well-being so they can concentrate on their studies, graduate and then go out and make the world a better place,” SMU Libraries Dean Holly Jeffcoat said. “The library is here to help address student needs. As a familiar community hub, it is a perfect location for this project.”

If you’re interested in supporting The Shop, contact Elizabeth Killingsworth at elizabethk@smu.edu or 214-768-3686.

Business Boom

Business Library business is about to dramatically increase in fall 2020 with the new Cox School of Business enrollment program BBA Business Direct, which admits entering first-year students to Cox. Previously, most SMU pre-business students enrolled in the Cox BBA program in the spring of their sophomore years after satisfactory completion of seven core courses.

As strong collaborators with Cox School faculty for curriculum development and course assignments, the business librarians are key to business students’ success. For two years beginning next fall, they will serve both the legacy and first-year Cox School students. Strategies and plans have been in the works to prepare for the new students.

In addition to course sequence changes and new course and orientation content development, Business Library Director Sandy Miller anticipates particular considerations for this younger constituency. “As first-years they will be adjusting to the basics of just being a college student,” she said. “We suspect there will be more hands-on assistance with general things at SMU.”

“More students earlier in their college careers makes for a different rhythm. We will be ready,” Miller said.
An Arts Scholar’s Legacy

Hamon Arts Library received an outstanding gift this summer in the form of 13,000 books, journals and ephemera from the estate of the late Dr. William B. Jordan and Dr. Robert Brownlee.

A curator and distinguished scholar, Jordan’s monumental impact on the North Texas fine arts community and the field of Spanish art history still reverberates. The collection is largely composed of titles on Spanish art and other European art from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, as well as modern and contemporary American art. Sam Holland, dean of Sam Meadows School of the Arts, credits Jordan’s keen eye for building the world-renowned collection of Spanish art that became the core collection at the Meadows Museum at SMU, of which Jordan was the founding director. He was the former chair of fine art at Meadows School.

This bequest enhances SMU Libraries’ rich repository of Spanish and other European art holdings, which stands as a valuable teaching and research resource for scholars.

Standout interns

During Carson Dudick’s internship last year, the junior double major in history and human rights developed an archival collection documenting MLK’s visit to SMU in 1966, the University’s involvement in the civil rights movement and student activism on campus. She is advocating for the installation of a plaque to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s visit to SMU in 1966. Dudick loved working with University Archivist Joan Gosnell and exploring all the historical objects located just one floor above her favorite study spot. “I had no idea there were so many artifacts in the archives,” she said. After graduation, she hopes to attend law school at SMU.

SMU senior Thomas Parks documented the history of Clements Hall during his internship last year, exploring the daily lives of students and faculty who lived there when it served as a dormitory in the early 20th century. In the process, the history major discovered the second-oldest building on campus held an interesting past, housing at various times the music school, chemistry department and engineering labs. Parks also updated and organized the SMU campus maps collection. “Working in the archives helped me refine my research methods and use the libraries to the fullest potential,” said Parks, who is working on four minors – medieval studies, classical studies, German and creative computing.

Reynolds Sands, a junior studying history with minors in art history and European studies, processed the Dallas activist Monica Fried collection and the Alpha Phi Omega records, creating finding aids for both during her spring 2019 internship. At DeGolyer, she was fascinated by the JCPenney Collection, which chronicles the retailer’s 100-year history, and excited to learn it contains objects of interest to many fields including accounting, fashion and law. At DeGolyer, Sands liked the vibrancy of new information flowing in, whether it pertained to established collections or completely new collections. “It showed me how broad the history of SMU is,” she said. “And also, how intertwined the University is to the broader Dallas community.”

EASY READER

Evelyn Day cleared the path for undergraduate students doing community outreach using research by professors at Simmons School of Education and Human Development. Day answered a request from SMU Professor Jill Allor to set up a Fondren Library sub-collection and checkout system for the Friends on the Block early literacy curriculum tool developed at SMU by Allor and her research team.

In addition to managing the 56-book collection created for K-2 students who have learning disabilities or other reading struggles, Allor’s aim also included easy accessibility for SMU students, like those taking the service-learning course Literacy and Society. Taught by Clinical Associate Professor Sherri English, students in the course use the Friends on the Block books during tutoring sessions at Heart House, an education nonprofit located in Dallas’ culturally diverse Vickery Meadow neighborhood.

Both Simmons School professors appreciate the collaboration with Day, who is the social sciences research librarian at Fondren. “While meeting with my undergraduates about the Friends on the Block books, Evelyn also introduced them to the Libraries’ Juvenile Collection,” said English. “There they can find additional children’s picture books to also use at Heart House. She is a great partner.”

Below Thousands of books on Spanish and other European art were among the 13,000-piece collection bequest to Hamon Arts Library from the estate of Dr. William B. Jordan and Dr. Robert Brownlee.
With more than 8,000 pieces, the Hobbs Collection contains translations of the Holmes canon in 108 languages both natural and artificial, from Afrikaans to Zulu, as well as non-Roman English alphabets such as Braille, shorthand, Morse code and more.

Hobbs discovered the great detective at the age of 9, but did not begin collecting until adulthood when he regularly traveled with his British wife to England. There he purchased a small Holmes collection, to which he selectively added works. When renowned Sherlockian John Bennett Shaw invited Hobbs to Santa Fe for a visit, Hobbs was astonished by Shaw’s collection, which included translations in 60 languages of works from the Holmes canon. Hobbs had only two translations and became determined to find and purchase copies of the remaining 58 owned by Shaw. After nearly four decades of collecting, Hobbs had assembled what he named The Galactic Sherlock Holmes, an online bibliographical supplement to Ronald B. De Waal’s The Universal Sherlock Holmes (1994).

“Naturally, the Hobbs Collection will be of interest to Sherlockians,” said Russell Martin, Director, DeGolyer Library. “But we also think it will be useful for the history of the book more broadly, in an international context. One can study the publishers, translators, designers, country by country, decade by decade. It gives us a much deeper understanding of the popularity of Sherlock Holmes.” The collection also includes parodies, pastiches, new “classic” Holmes stories and novels and modern interpretations.

In the new course Introduction to Digital Literature, taught by Emma Wilson, assistant professor of English in SMU’s Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, undergraduate students from a range of majors including advertising, business, English and music created a public digital repository of materials focusing on SMU’s Arden Club. The student drama group performed on campus from 1916-69 until merged with what is now the Meadows School of the Arts theatre department.

Collaboration with SMU Libraries staff made the project possible, Wilson said. Emily Grubbs, Human Arts Library archivist, introduced the Arden Club archival holdings and helped develop a feasible collection for the students’ work. Cindy Boeke, assistant director of the Norwich Center for Digital Solutions and her team digitized materials. Humanities Research Librarian Rebecca Graff taught students to find specific local historical and literary information during research training classes where they used newspaper and photo archives and monographs.

As the project progressed, two students discovered that a sorority sister in the 1920s held an important role in the Arden Club. “Focusing their project on her contributions to the Arden Club, and to the sorority revived a piece of SMU literary history never brought to light before,” Wilson said. “This was a really original and personal way to tackle the project and brought it to life.”

The course pushes students to analyze and think critically about literature and literary ideas in a digital environment, including how works are interpreted, presented and analyzed on the Web and through different kinds of technology, Wilson explains. Creating their own digital archive empowers putting theoretical knowledge into practice.

“Careers are going to involve working with a digital environment, whether it’s an analytical tool, a product or idea platform, target audience engagement through advertisement or entertainment, or numerous other possibilities,” said Wilson. “Students developed skills to use that environment effectively and to understand how others are using it. These are practical skills for the job market and a holistic understanding of the digital world.”

Learn more about their project at smuardenclub.org.
Elizabeth Moran: Against the Best Possible Sources
September 6 – December 20, 2019
Hawn Gallery, Hamon Arts Library, First Floor

This research-based exhibit explores the early history of the first professional fact-checkers, a position invented in 1923 by then-fledgling Time, Inc., and held exclusively by women until 1971.

Olivia Smith ’11, SMU Meadows School alumna and co-founder and director of Magenta Plains, a contemporary art gallery in New York, curated the exhibit that was created exclusively for Hawn Gallery. Smith, who prefers projects that spark discovery and showcasing artists who display intellectual and artistic rigor, met New York artist Elizabeth Moran last year at the New York Art Residency and Studios Foundation in Brooklyn.

In the exhibit, Moran applies research-based practice to blend the loss of primary sources with the women’s untold stories — and their contribution to modern journalism — using photography, text, sound and other recorded documentation to examine information reliability.

“An exhibition in a gallery located inside of an art library inside of a university seemed perfect,” Smith said. “I hope to promote dialogue across divisions, for example between studio art and journalism programs.”

The exhibit is part of an ongoing project by Moran’s wider research of the Time, Inc. corporate archive.

EXHIBITS

Dan Wingren: The Image and the Magic
August 19, 2019 – August 1, 2020
Hamon Arts Library, Second Floor

Dan Wingren ’47 was an admired professor of art at SMU, where he taught 19th- and 20th-century art history, contemporary art, design, drawing and painting from 1965-91.

Elizabeth Moran: Against the Best Possible Sources
September 6 – December 20, 2019
Hawn Arts Library, Hawn Gallery

Curated by gallery owner Olivia Smith ’11, this research-based exhibit by New York-artist Elizabeth Moran explores the early history of the first professional fact-checkers.

Hercy and Error: The Ecclesiastical Censorship of Books, 1400-1800
September 6 – December 20, 2019
Online exhibit by Bridwell Library
www.bit.ly/bridwellhibit

Digital exhibition showing examples of altered and prohibited books published in the 15th–19th centuries, a time when Christian authorities sought to suppress heretical or erroneous teachings.

Andy Hanson: Dallas Photographs
December 5, 2019 – January 24, 2020
DeGolyer Library, Hillcrest Exhibit Hall

Andy Hanson (1932-2008) worked for 30 years as press photographer for the Dallas Times Herald newspaper. After the paper closed in 1991, he remained a freelance photographer for the rest of his life, documenting the city’s theater, opera, musical and social events. This exhibit showcases a sample of Hanson’s massive archive, including photographs of politicians, celebrities, musicians, actors and other newsworthy people in Dallas.

E Pluribus SMUnum

Our institution is one that has many histories, departments, personalities, and legacies. As times change so do our organizational means, and sometimes we don’t always remember the operational history unless we consult our archives or older community members. When SMU was a sapling institution near the dry north Dallas ranches, a young woman named Kate Warnick came on board as one of its first librarians. Six decades later in 1979, she retired at Bridwell having seen SMU through a majority of the 20th century.

As any institution, we are made of many parts — people, disciplines, interests, libraries. We bring unique perspectives, experiences and methodologies to our work and careers, and sometimes, like Ms. Warnick’s, these labors are vocational. The many libraries on campus have been home to many talented staff and faculty, and each of these units was established at different times in the history of the institution. And yet from the many, these libraries make up one constituent body of the university’s focus on teaching and learning. We continue to work together as we move forward in the 21st century and look forward to the productive services we can provide as a collaborative enterprise: E pluribus SMUnum. From many, one SMU.

Anthony J. Elia
Director and J.S. Bridwell Foundation Endowed Librarian
Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology and SMU Libraries

Save the Date

Acclaimed photographer Laura Wilson will be honored with the 11th annual Literati Award at the Tables of Content fundraiser for Friends of SMU Libraries on March 28, 2020. The event will begin with a cocktail hour showcasing 10 emerging authors, followed by an evening of lively dinner conversations led by 20 notable table hosts from SMU and Dallas. Nancy Perot will serve as honorary chair for the event which will be held in the Fondren Centennial Reading Room at SMU’s Fondren Library. Tickets start at $150.

Wilson has published six books, including That Day: Pictures in the American West, in collaboration with Yale University Press and SMU Clements Center for Southwest Studies. Currently she is at work on two projects. Writers will become a book and exhibition for the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin documenting 35 distinguished writers destined to have a lasting literary legacy. Making Movies documents people who contribute to the magic of moviemaking. Her award-winning work has appeared in The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, Vanity Fair and elsewhere.
Author and entrepreneur Casey Gerald discussed his memoir There Will Be No Miracles Here October 1 at the Dallas Museum of Art as part of its Arts and Letters Live Series, co-sponsored by Clements Center for Southwest Studies and Friends of the SMU Libraries. Named a “Best Book of 2018” by NPR and The New York Times, the memoir has the arc of a classic rags-to-riches tale but turns the American Dream narrative on its head. Bestselling author JoJo Moyes met fans at Highland Park United Methodist Church October 16 for the Author’s LIVE! lecture presented by Friends of SMU Libraries, Friends of the Highland Park Library and Highland Park United Methodist Church. SMU Libraries Dean Holly Jeffcoat interviewed Moyes about her latest book The Giver of Stars, a Depression-era story of five extraordinary women who become horse pack librarians and their remarkable journey through the mountains of Kentucky and beyond. Both funny and heartbreaking, the novel explores women’s friendship, true love and what happens when we reach beyond our grasp. The book has already been optioned to be made into a movie. Other bestselling authors featured in this fall’s Author’s LIVE! series include historians Stephen Harrigan who presented Big Wonderful Thing: A History of Texas on October 8; and S.C. Gwynne who presented his book Hymns of the Republic: The Story of the Final Year of the American Civil War on November 7.

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Send to:
SMU Libraries
PO Box 750135
Dallas, TX 75275-0135

Dean of SMU Libraries
Holly E. Jeffcoat

Editors
Amy Carver ’94

Contributors
Joel Eattmon
Anthony Ella
Cheryl Gaunt

Photographers
Jennifer Crenshaw
Kevin Gaddis
Hillsman Jackson

TO SUPPORT SMU LIBRARIES VISIT
SMU.EDU/GIVING/LIBRARIES OR
CONTACT CINDY RUPPI AT 214-768-2401
OR CRUPPI@SMU.EDU.
All together now – SMU Libraries’ staff forge a plan for the future.