
Friends of the Smith College Libraries

September 2023 News

Dear Friends,

A new academic year always brings fresh energy and ideas and, this year, it coincided with a heat wave! It felt like mid summer with temperatures in the 90s as classes got underway. Neilson, Hillyer and Josten provide respite when the thermometer goes up. LEED gold certified Neilson is an exceptionally environmentally sensitive building and provides comfortable temperatures for library users while keeping the collections at the best temps for their preservation. While the libraries promote learning and research, they also serve as places to gather, relax, and cool off. Read on to learn about how the libraries welcomed new students and library staff to campus.

Library Orientation

First Years' Engagement and Humanities Librarian Xochitl Quiroz introduced new students to the Libraries during Orientation. Her welcome was supplemented by an open house and Zine workshops in Neilson - a fun way to engage with the library and introduce Special Collections. First years and transfer students received a spiral-bound library notebook from the Friends.

Book Banning and the Culture Wars

Event poster and Emily Knox with Dean of Libraries Susan Fliss. Photos by Mary Irwin

On September 14, author, professor, and alumna Emily Knox '98 gave an insightful presentation about her research into what drives the desire for censorship and book banning. She came to campus directly from Washington D.C. where she had [testified](#) before the Senate Judicial Committee on the topic. For anyone who missed our event, the recording is now available on the [Libraries You Tube channel](#).

Emily Knox is an associate professor in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her most recent book, *Foundations of Intellectual Freedom* (ALA Neal-Schuman) won the 2023 Eli M. Oboler Prize for best published work in the area of intellectual freedom. Her previous book is [Book Banning in 21st Century America](#) (Rowman & Littlefield). This event was sponsored by Friends of the Smith College Libraries, the Smith College Office of Alumnae Relations and Development, and the Smith College Department of Government.

Library Exhibitions

Last September, the Libraries launched an Exhibition Program with exhibition coordinator Sydney Nguyen. This inaugural year was the focus of a [video](#), created by Shira Zaid '23, and includes an interview with Sydney about the series of exhibits created with students based on their research interests. Caren Byrd Borland '68 helped launch the program, and funding from the [Oculus Society](#) will extend its reach in 2024.

Radical Visions: The Art of Protest Posters

This fall's exhibition program kicks off with "[Radical Visions: The Art of Protest Posters](#)," a collaboration between the Smith Office for the Arts (SOFA) and Smith College Special Collections and the Libraries. The exhibit features social, political, and cultural protest posters highlighting women's rights issues.

Neilson Library Ground Floor, September 22 - January 30, 2024.

Digital Pedagogy Institute

Learning Research & Technology staff gathered with faculty members attending the Digital Media Institute

For a second year, the Digital Pedagogy Institute paired faculty with librarians and instructional technologists in August to learn about the design, implementation and assessment of digital scholarship opportunities through presentations and hands-on workshops. This fall's participants are: Darcy Buerkle, History; Susanne Fuchs, German; Simone Gugliotta, Italian Studies, Spanish & Portuguese; Christiane Métral, French; Mary Pena, Anthropology; and Irhe Sohn, East Asian Languages and Cultures. They will continue to be supported as they integrate new technology tools into their courses this fall, and they will share their experiences with their peers at a faculty colloquium in the spring.

Open Education Resources (OER)

The high cost of textbooks is a concern for both students and college administrators. This summer, the Libraries piloted an Incentive Grant to encourage faculty to adapt or complete an [Open Education Resource \(OER\)](#). OERs are resources that have been funded, published, and licensed to be freely used, adapted, and distributed, and can be read online or downloaded at no cost. Chemistry professor Kevin Shea was the first faculty member to avail of this grant in order to complete the adaptation of his textbook [Organic Chemistry II](#) for use in CHM 223. By taking advantage of the open licensing of OER, Professor Shea was able to adapt the textbook to align with his students' pedagogical needs while addressing textbook affordability. He said he is excited to see how his students react to the textbook, and he is happy for faculty members at other institutions use it too. Smith ScholarWorks is one of many digital repositories globally that collect and share the academic output of their institution. Browse the [ScholarWorks collections](#).

A Fresh Perspective on Sylvia Plath

The Botanic Garden has just launched a year-long exhibit devoted to Sylvia Plath. Using archival materials from Special Collections and Plath's literary work as a guide, this exhibit invites visitors to inhabit Lyman as Plath once did and to explore Plath's botanical imagination through the arts, humanities and sciences. Complementary programming with campus partners will take place throughout the 2023-24 academic year. Read more [here](#).

In Memoriam

Mary Damiano Pinney '58 AC '80 passed away peacefully on September 4, 2023. Mary graduated in the first class of Ada Comstock scholars having raised six children with her husband Wes. She went on to pursue a Ph.D in Education and served for many years as Associate Dean of Continuing Education at Rider University. Deeply committed to providing access to education, Mary served on the Board of Directors of the Alumnae Association and she chaired the Friends of the Libraries Executive Committee from 1996-2001. Mary loved Smith and our libraries. She said she never tired of the long drive from southern New Jersey to Northampton because each visit was an opportunity to participate in the stimulating life of the community. Gifts in Mary's memory are being directed to the [Friends of the Libraries](#).

New Staff

Over the summer, several new staff members brought their expertise, energy and experience to Smith. Above, left to right, are:

Anna Helgeson - Visual Arts Librarian

Xochitl Quiroz - Humanities and First Years Engagement Librarian

Kit Messick - Head of Special Collections Technical Services

Gail Murray - Electronic Resources and Serials Librarian

Anna Morrissey - Hillyer Access Services Branch Coordinator

2023 Annual Report

Smith's extraordinary libraries inspire students' research, learning, academic growth and personal development. The [2023 Annual Report of Library Donors](#) is now available for viewing on our website. We are grateful for each and every gift. Thank you for partnering with the Libraries to prepare Smith students to envision and work toward a better world.

Best wishes,

Ann Alpers '84

Chair, Executive Committee

Friends of the Smith College Libraries

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