
Friends of the Smith College Libraries

September 2024 News

Dear Friends,

Smith's campus is full of energy, with classes once again in session, and hints of fall in the air and in the trees. Our libraries--Neilson, Hillyer, and Josten--are all involved in welcoming new students and introducing them to the library resources they will use throughout their time at Smith. Neilson hosted new students and their parents for library orientation and tours; Hillyer and Josten followed up with open houses that included fun student activities. Smith's libraries support teaching and learning with abundant print and digital resources, many kinds of help with research, and spaces for quiet and collaborative study, as well as community gathering. The Friends are delighted to support students and faculty as they take advantage of Smith's remarkable libraries.

A Warm Welcome for the Class of 2028

Xochitl Quiroz Welcomes Students at the College Resource Fair. Photo by Leslie Fields

First Year Experience Librarian Xochitl Quiroz has been covering the campus in recent weeks speaking to first year students in small and large settings about library spaces, resources, and services. These responsibilities included leading a training for Student Academic Advisors (SAAs), meeting with international students, hosting Smith Reads discussion groups (for Aimee Nezhukumatathil's *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments*), and introducing new students to archivists and our Special Collections by way of zine workshops. More recently, students were invited to try button making and collage making during afternoon open houses in Hillyer and Josten libraries.

Reflecting on this busy start to the academic year, Xochitl said "It's very important to interact personally with new students to help them feel comfortable around library staff, asking for help, and becoming active users of our libraries." Xochitl remains busy, providing library instruction in many of this fall's 30 first-year seminars.

As we do every year, the Friends support Library Orientation with a gift for students. This year's library notebook carries a QR code that links to a webpage with information for new students.

From top: Zine workshop in Neilson's Browsing Room, a student zine & button-making in Hillyer.
Photos by Xochitl Quiroz and Samm Smith.

Assessing Library Services

Camera and computer equipment loan items available in Neilson

It has been three years since Neilson Library opened fully to the community. With the start of classes, it is wonderful to see students once again using every library space, as intended, and on a daily basis. Continual assessment of student needs and library services is a key component of library work, and the summer months provide an opportunity to take stock of patterns of use and make adjustments.

Last year, an assessment of study spaces led to additional seating being placed in popular study areas. This summer, student interns working for Information Technology Services helped the Libraries assess user needs in terms of [equipment loans](#) at Neilson's Central Service Point and use of spaces in the Digital Media Hub. Read more about the interns' work [here](#).

Newly Digitized Woolf Manuscripts

Digitized postcards written by Virginia Woolf

Over one hundred letters written by **Virginia Woolf** along with related manuscript items from the [Virginia Woolf Papers](#) in Smith's Special Collections have been digitized and added to [WoolfNotes](#), hosted by King's College London. This major digital humanities project brings into the public domain Virginia Woolf's last remaining substantial unpublished work: her reading and research notes.

Friends of the Libraries News

Annual Report

The **2023-2024 Annual Report of Library Donors** can be viewed on our website. [This report](#) lists everyone who made contributions to library funds during the past fiscal year, including the Friends Fund, Special Collections funds, library endowed and other special funds. The Friends Fund benefited once again from the generosity of sixty-six members of the Oculus Society whose gifts boosted the income that will be used this academic year for student services and collection development. On behalf of the Dean and staff, sincere thanks to all for your generosity and thoughtfulness.

New to the Executive Committee

Three new members have been appointed to the Friends Executive Committee. They are: library associate Catherine Gees '10, Washington, DC; retired psychologist Elsa Pottala Pauley '66 Ph.D, Los Angeles, CA; and city program manager Erinn Summers '16, Midvale City, UT. They join continuing members Ann Alpers '84, Chair; Paulina Do '10; Judy Campagnari '85; Stefanie Frame '98; Patty Gray '91; Lesley L. Joplin '09; Emily Knox '98; Julie Richter '83; Liisa Honkalehto Rogers '82, MSW '85. Sandra Landau Rippe '67 and Serena Williams '81 completed terms of service in the spring.

The Executive Committee advises the Dean on building support and fundraising, outreach, and communications focused on library needs. Planning events and activities that benefit the community round out their responsibilities.

Staff News

Head of Special Collections Technical Services **Kit Messick** was honored with a 2024 Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council [Award for Exemplary Service](#). Kit received the award for her work contributing to the National Best Practices for Archival Accessioning Working Group. According to Messick, “good accessioning provides a strong foundation for responsible and sustainable archival practices, and demonstrates an institution's commitment to the ongoing stewardship of their unique materials.” The working group also received a National Leadership Grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Read more [here](#).

Mariana Brandman has joined Special Collections as Sophia Smith Collection Archivist. Mariana comes to Smith from the Massachusetts Women's History Center in Newton, by way of the New-York Historical Society Museum & Library. Previously, she worked at the National Women's History Museum. She received her Ph.D from the University of Chicago and her dissertation, "Take Back the Mic: The Rise of Feminist Stand-Up Comedy in American Culture," is but one example of her long time interest in women's history. Mariana succeeds Maureen Callahan in this role.

A Pioneering Librarian Retires after 34 Years

When Sika Berger joined the Libraries in 1990 as a documents and reference librarian, there was just one computer available for the entire reference staff. She came with an interest in library technology and advocated for a personal computer. During her time at Smith, Sika became involved in many aspects of the technological transformation of our libraries from the development of the very first library website to conducting user experience testing and honing the digital resources and services so heavily used today.

Many of our readers will remember receiving research assistance from Sika over the years. Read more about her interesting career [here](#).

Former Student Library Assistant, Vera Jiā Xi Mancini '24 has won third place in the David Ruggles Prize for her collection of copies of *Pride & Prejudice* in translation by Jane Austen. This prize was established to encourage and support young book collectors of color. Read an interview with Vera [here](#). This fall, Vera starts a Master of Library and Information Science degree program at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa.

Library Exhibits

The Libraries are a co-sponsor of the campus-wide [Turn Up the Languages Festival](#) along with the Kahn Institute, the Lewis Center for Global Study and multiple language departments. Three library exhibits are planned to coincide with the festival which takes place September 30-October 7.

International Graphic Novel Display

Graphic novels in languages other than English drawn from the general collections, Neilson Library.

Translations : Art that Makes Language Visible

This sampling of artist's books in Hillyer Art Library includes the work of a prolific Hong Kong graffiti artist, German public artworks, visual poems in Spanish, French, Portuguese, the art of Korean calligraphy, Japanese poster design, Arabic calligraphic mirror-writing, Hawaii'an poetry, contemporary text- based art and more.

Turn Up the IPA Languages!

A [selection of sources](#) for singers to facilitate singing in a range of languages using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), a standard written representation for the sounds of speech. Josten Library for the Performing Arts.

Rainbow Gu '26 and Wren Colwell display a sampling of Neilson Library's many international graphic novels.

Photo by Mary Irwin

More Exhibits

Explore the Intersection of Art and Ecology

Selections by Art Lecturer Naoe Suzuki in connection with the Advanced Studio Seminar, Hillyer Art Library through December 2024.

Neilson Library: An Evolution

This exhibit documents the history of Neilson Library since 1909.
Neilson Exhibition Gallery, Level 2, ongoing.

Real Clothes, Real Lives: 200 Years of What Women Wore, Smith College Historic Clothing Collection

For everyone who enjoyed [Kiki Smith's spring lecture](#) about Smith's Historic Clothing Collection, [this exhibit](#) opens September 27 at the New-York Historical Society Museum, 170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024, through June 22, 2025.

Thank you, Merci, Asante, Eskerrak, Gracias!

Thank you for your support of Smith's libraries through your generous donations to the Friends of Smith College Libraries and the Oculus Society. With your ongoing membership, the Friends can continue to promote teaching, learning, and academic community through the College's three remarkable undergraduate libraries.

I encourage you to join or renew your support, [here](#). We appreciate all our Friends!!

Happy Fall,
Ann Alpers '84
Chair, Executive Committee

Friends of the Smith College Libraries

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