Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will enable the Huntington Museum of Art to help the state's libraries, institutions identify their constraints and needs in caring for their collections.

The renovated Evansdale Library offers students an attractive and comfortable space with more computers and more room to study.

“I like the look and the feel to it now. It makes it a lot easier to study here.”

William Kistler
Chemical engineering junior

WVU Libraries Receive Statewide Preservation Grant

Many people have personal experience with deteriorating family photographs or old letters. Libraries and museums have these problems on a larger scale. A $40,000 grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will enable the West Virginia University Libraries, in collaboration with the Huntington Museum of Art, to help the state's libraries, art and historical museums, and cultural heritage institutions identify their constraints and needs in caring for their collections.

“We need to be sure that future generations are able to see and use collections that are important to our history,” said Frances O’Brien, Dean of the WVU Libraries. “This planning grant will be the first step in identifying the preservation needs in West Virginia, and working toward the right kinds of care.”

The WVU Libraries and the Huntington Museum of Art will work closely with consultants from LYRASIS and the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA). LYRASIS is the nation's largest non-profit preservation and conservation facility in the nation.
Typically, students visit the Libraries to work on a paper or project that they will then take to class, but a fashion design and merchandising (FDM) senior is setting a new trend. Amanda Gill is the first among her classmates to create an exhibit for the newly renovated Evansdale Library.

“I took a visual merchandising class and did projects within that class, but this is taking what I’ve learned and making it a real world experience,” Gill said. “I wanted to make everything look perfect and professional.”

The venue is now available because of an extensive renovation project on the Evansdale Library’s first floor last summer. During the planning stage, students expressed a need for space to display their work. The revamped Library includes display cabinets and floor space to accommodate requests.

“Evansdale Library is a great location to spotlight students’ work,” said Noel Kopriva, librarian for the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design. “Students like to see what others are doing in class, and exhibitors can get feedback from their peers.”

Lynn Barnes, a fashion merchandising professor in the Davis College, appreciates her students having such a platform because it pushes them beyond what they would do for the usual window display.

“This is three-dimensional exhibit so they have to be aware of every nuance,” Barnes said. “Every detail has to be perfect.”

An aspect of the new exhibit was that Gill made sure she got the details right in her 1970s-themed display. In selecting the clothing from the division’s historic costume collection, she chose male and female ensembles that matched each other in color and style. The accompanying cabinet contained jewelry and shoes from the period, along with a timeline of the decade, magazines, and a record.

Later in the semester, she built a collection inspired by 1930s fashion that contained two gowns from the costume collection and Gill’s sketches.

Her effort was part of her experience as a work study for Barnes. Gill, who is president of the school’s Fashion Business Association, sees it as a way to promote her degree program.

Plans are to work with all colleges on the Evansdale Campus to provide a place to display student work.

In the end, it makes it so much easier if you’re using all the resources available,” Wilson said.

PIL received a sample of respondents from more than 30 colleges and universities across the nation. For an overview of the national project, visit http://projectinfolit.org/. PIL, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, is based at the University of Washington and is in its third and final year.

For questions or more information about WVU’s involvement in this study, contact Carroll Wilkinson, Director of Information Literacy for the Libraries, carroll.wilkinson@mail.wvu.edu.
“Everyone should have that knowledge of how to do research.”

Andrew Dolby, Engineering senior

walked students through the Libraries’ Web site and showed them how they can Instant Message a librarian, find an electronic journal, and text call numbers to their cell phones.

She also told them that they can use iMacs on the lower level to create multimedia class projects. If they need help in a class, there’s free tutoring five nights a week. And when it comes time to write a paper, they can get guidance through the Libraries’ Term Paper clinics.

Schein believes this face-to-face contact is irreplaceable because it allows students to connect with people whom they will feel comfortable approaching when they need help.

“We’re here for the students,” she said. “I tell them they can contact me if they have questions or need assistance. If I’m not the right person, I’ll get you to the right person.”

Curtis Chan, a Resident Assistant at Stalnaker and a political science graduate student from Hong Kong, took advantage of that offer. Although he’s fluent in English, he wanted to find some materials in Chinese but was stuck on where to look. Schein directed him to some digital resources.

“Now I don’t have to go back home or call my friends. I can access the materials online from my home,” Chan said.

He encourages the underclassmen he’s responsible for to take the time to learn what resources are available at the Libraries and how to use them.

“Eighty percent of a student’s time is spent outside of the classroom. We provide lots of wonderful opportunities for students to spend time with faculty and for faculty to get to know their students.”

The Partners invited Anna Schein, Associate Curator of the Libraries’ West Virginia and Regional History Collection, to serve as a Faculty Fellow.

A WVU alumna herself, Schein understands how hard it is for freshmen to acclimate themselves to such a large campus. She worked with a group of colleagues to design lectures, presentations, and tours to expose Stalnaker/Daidisman students to the full array of the Libraries’ services.

“I deeply believe it is important for students to become acquainted with the library as soon as possible after their arrival on campus,” Schein said. “If we do that during their first semester, they will know where to go when they have to do research or write a paper.”

During the fall semester, Schein taught six library instruction sessions at the Downtown Campus Library. She

Librarian Anna Schein talks with students Andrew Dolby and Curtis Chan following a session in the Downtown Campus Library’s classroom.

“The idea is to keep learning,” Debbi Pariser said.

Initiatives at IMLS and Project Manager for the grant, and Ingrid E. Bogel, Executive Director of CCAHA.

Next, a statewide focus group composed of representatives from archives, academic and public libraries, art and history museums, and historic sites will work together to gain further information about the needs of the collecting community.

In the final stage, Clareson and Bogel will use the findings to produce a comprehensive preservation plan.

“That the partnership between WVU Libraries and the Huntington Museum of Art puts this effort on stable ground, and the consortium of institutions across the state that has been created will ensure good solid information for the survey,” said Margaret Mary Layne, IMLS Deputy Director. “By working together on this project, we can create an environment where the treasures that are held dear by West Virginia will be cared for and available for generations to come.”

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Preservation is a concern nationwide. Layne cited IMLS study that estimates that more than 190 million cultural objects throughout the United States are at risk. In addition, the Heritage Health Index survey found that 80 percent of museums, archives, and libraries lack an emergency plan for their collections.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute’s mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge: enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.imls.gov.

For more information about the project, please visit www.imls.gov/collections/about/video.html

Andrew Dolby, an RA and an engineering senior from Berkeley Springs, learned about the Libraries’ wealth of digital resources through a class he took early in his academic career. He puts his knowledge into practice daily as he is currently conducting research with a professor, and graduate students often ask him to search for articles.

“Everyone should have that knowledge of how to do research,” Dolby said.

Another highlight for many students was touring the West Virginia and Regional History Collection. Curator John Cuthbert guided them through some of the Collection’s treasures along with a private tour of his exhibit on abolitionist John Brown.

It was an enlightening experience for Kevin Ayoola, an exercise physiology junior, who was surprised to learn that his hero, Muhammad Ali, visited campus in 1970. A framed photograph in the Collection shows the Champ, surrounded by students, walking through campus.

“That really struck me the most,” Ayoola said.

“Muhammad Ali is one of the greatest American heroes. He changed a lot of people’s lives.”

The Collection’s Rare Book Room provided similar moments of awe. Harold M. Forbes, Rare Books Collection Curator, held three sessions for students, giving them a brief overview of the history of printing and talking about a few of the unique holdings.

Forbes then allowed students to slip on white gloves and explore the collection themselves. The result was a mix of enthusiasm and trepidation.

“I was kind of scared to touch them,” said Mark Snyder, a geography sophomore from Grafton. “I had no idea the Library had books like those.”

The mention of William Shakespeare caught the ear of Gina Lasure, an industrial engineering sophomore and Wheeling native. She was surprised that the Libraries have an original of the Bard’s First Folio, which contains 36 works credited to him.

Jonathan Storange, a political science senior and resident assistant, and Tristan Cain, a multi-disciplinary studies junior, inspected several of the tom esthat Forbes placed on display.

“I thought it was absolutely fascinating,” Storange said.

“He talked about so many aspects of book marketing and book history and binding. You get caught up in the way things are done today, and you don’t realize things might have been done differently 100 years ago.”

Another aspect of the Faculty Fellow program is dinner at the Parisers’ home. Twice a week, the Parisers welcome a group of about 20 students and two guests from campus.

Cuthbert, Forbes, and Schein joined them for faculty dinners, and librarians Allison Read and Mary Strife, Director of the Evansdale Library, were also invited to attend two student majors dinners along with members of the teaching faculty.

Strife found the dinners to be a casual way to meet with students. She especially enjoyed chatting with engineering students because she’s the engineering librarian.

“Any positive contact we can make with students reflects well on the Libraries,” Strife said. “It’s a chance to remind them of the databases, services like Chat-with-a-Librarian, and other resources.”
Rare Book Room is a Natural Fit for Morgantown Printer

Andy Walls will always remember a recent trip to the West Virginia University Libraries’ Rare Book Room. He pulled on a pair of white gloves and gingerly inspected an original First Folio, which is the first comprehensive collection of William Shakespeare’s plays. There are less than 250 known copies.

“The fact the University has something here that not many other universities have is pretty unbelievable,” said Walls, owner of Morgantown Printing & Binding, “It’s fabulous to see the works that you hear people talk about, and it’s not every day that you get to hold a 400-year-old book.”

Having built a business on the printed word, Walls appreciates old books and the craftsmanship that went into creating them.

The ornate fonts and decorative sketches that adorn the Folio’s pages captivated him. He was also enthralled by the Encyclopedie, a 35-volume 18th century French encyclopedia that championed the Age of Enlightenment and served as fodder for the French Revolution. Walls was especially interested in a section that focused on printing and contained intricate drawings of the process of that day.

The piece de resistance, though, was a 15th century choir book. The lines were hand-drawn on vellum, and the pages were bound between wood covers, stitched together with rope, and wrapped in leather.

“I’m looking at it as a printer, and it’s really neat to see the detail and the manner in which the books were put together back then,” Walls said.

For any good researcher. Today, users can read electronic journals from home and chat online with librarians.

State Association Honors Librarian for Outstanding Service

The West Virginia Library Association presented Penny Pugh, Head of Reference at the Downtown Campus Library, with the Dora Ruth Park Award for long and outstanding service to libraries and librarianship in West Virginia.

Pugh, presenting the honor during the organization’s annual conference, said the Awards Committee praised Pugh for her accomplishments as a reference librarian and as a leader in WVLA.

“Her strong work ethic, her depth of knowledge, outstanding leadership and willingness to find solutions through collaborative work are well-known attributes,” the nomination letter reads. “Penny has made remarkable contributions to libraries through her work.”

Pugh came to the WVU Libraries Reference Department as a staff librarian in 1986 and worked her way up to head of reference. She credits her career choice to a love of reading that ignited when a bookmobile stopped at her elementary school. The decision solidified while she was an undergraduate at WVU.

“I became enamored with the idea of libraries as a place where knowledge is stored so every new generation doesn’t have to start fresh,” Pugh said. “We can build on and advance our civilization. We don’t want to invent penicillin again.”

Pugh has strived to help keep the WVU Libraries as a valuable resource in the constantly changing technological world. When she started her career, index cards and the thick green volumes of the Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature were staples for any good researcher. Today, users can read electronic journals from home and chat online with librarians.

Libraries Employee Receives Leadership Award

John Hagen, coordinator for WVU’s electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) program, has received the 2010 ETD Leadership Award presented by the Ohio ETD Association.

ETD President Angie McCutcheon praised Hagen for sharing his expertise in the field and for providing guidance in establishing the statewide organization.

“John’s in-depth knowledge of ETDs has been highly valuable to the Ohio ETD Association,” said McCutcheon. “John has been instrumental in assisting the Ohio ETD Association in getting started and in supporting the selection of topics that have been appropriate for our conferences for four years.”

Hagen began working with McCutcheon about five years ago. He offered his experience with ETDs at WVU and as a board member of the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), an international consortium which promotes ETD program implementation and adoption of standards worldwide.

Hagen brought resources and direction that helped to smooth the process as the Ohio group implemented their program. He assisted them with the technical concerns of establishing an ETD program and provided insight in dealing with political and personality issues that often arise. Hagen has also delivered presentations at OETDA annual conferences.

“It’s a wonderful recognition and honor for my efforts in the past and will certainly make me much more enthusiastic to continue my involvement with ETDs on all levels,” Hagen said.
The WVU Library Faculty Assembly has selected Linda Blake, Science Librarian and Electronic Journal Coordinator for the WVU Libraries, as the Outstanding Librarian for 2010.

The triennial award recognizes a faculty librarian who has made exceptional contributions toward the delivery, development, or expansion of library services or special programs for the constituencies of WVU.

“Linda exemplifies the very best in traditional librarianship while remaining alert to new technologies and trends,” said Penny Pugh, Head of the Downtown Campus Library Reference Department. “Linda possesses a breadth of vision, coupled with a keen analytical mind, and she is extraordinarily productive.”

The Faculty Assembly recognized Blake for her tireless work managing the Libraries’ electronic journals collection, her work as a bibliographer for numerous science departments, her commitment to teaching, and her dedication to the profession. Blake’s leadership has significantly improved access to the Libraries’ ever-expanding electronic journal collection.

Blake was instrumental in the Libraries’ purchase of a management system that allows usage tracking and better content linking. Her sustained collaboration with faculty in Geology and Geography, Biology, and Chemistry has become a model for instruction of information literacy and research skills.

In 2009, she collaborated with Associate Professor Tim Warner of Geology and Geography when he was awarded a grant to improve his course Introduction to Remote Sensing by developing a module on information literacy. Dr. Warner credits Blake’s work on the course for improving students’ research habits and the overall quality of their research papers.

Associate Professor of Chemistry George O’Doherty credits Blake’s collection development work for enhancing the Libraries’ access to the chemical literature and enhancing the academic experience.

“There is no doubt in my mind that these efforts by Linda have made us a better chemistry teaching and research university,” O’Doherty said.

Blake has also been active off campus, promoting libraries through her work with the West Virginia Library Association and the American Library Association. She has served in various capacities with WVLA since 1984 and recently completed a multi-year term as the West Virginia Councilor to ALA.

Blake came to the WVU Libraries in 1997. Previous to her current position, she managed the library at the NASA facility in Fairmont. She received her bachelor’s of arts in English and library science from Glenville State College and her master’s of library science from the University of Kentucky.

Mark Your Calendar for West Virginia Day Celebration

The WVU Libraries and the West Virginia and Regional History Collection will celebrate the state’s founding with an event on June 18.

This year will mark the 147th anniversary of West Virginia’s statehood. The celebration will focus on pioneer surveys, maps and patents in what was then the wild frontier. The preliminary schedule includes exhibits in the WVRHC’s Davis Family Galleries, guest speakers, and a reception.

The event is open to the public. All who attend will receive a commemorative West Virginia Day poster.

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