FALL 2025 | VOLUME 47 | NUMBER 1
NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY

Friendscript

Match Made for the Ages

Elsesser challenge focuses on RBML, library needs

At Homecoming, alumni and friends enthusiastically embraced the campus's past by reveling in this year's unabashedly laudatory theme: "Illinois, Where Legends Begin."

At the University Library, that legendary history was marked by a Library Friends high tea celebrating the 250th birthday of beloved British author Jane Austen. The event not only looked to the glories of the past but anticipated continued future greatness by launching the Elsesser Matching Gift Challenge for the Rare Book & Manuscript Library (RBML).

Spearheaded by Lionelle '66 LAS, MS '67 LIS, and Jim '66 BUS, MS '67 BUS Elsesser of St. Louis, this $1M matching challenge supports the Rare Book and Manuscript Library and several other special funds at the Library. This two-to-one match—up to $1 million—will run the course of a year (through September 26, 2026). With the hope of inspiring others to support the Library, the couple will generously match all gifts supporting the Rare Book & Manuscript Library; innovation, research and professional development; graduate student workers; and undergraduate student workers.

Well known for their devotion to Library causes, the Elsessers have been particularly drawn to funding significant artifacts of rare antiquity. In the past, their generosity has enabled the purchase of such singularly exceptional items as *Opus Galli Anonymi*, a 17th century manuscript by Sir Isaac Newton, one of the most influential scientists of all time, as well as *Campi Phlegraei*, an 18th century beautifully illustrated and celebrated book on the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius.

"We are very excited for the potential provided by the Elsessers' challenge," said Lynne Thomas, MS '99 LIS, RBML's head librarian. "Gifts like these allow us to purchase exceptionally noteworthy items that would otherwise cost more than our entire annual acquisitions

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"Your generosity has opened doors for the Rare Book & Manuscript Library to acquire significant works—volumes so central to scholarship that it's hard to imagine our collections without them, yet so costly today that they would otherwise remain out of reach."

—UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN AND DEAN OF LIBRARIES CLAIRE STEWART, AT THE JANE AUSTEN HIGH TEA & BOOK TALK ON SEPTEMBER 26

LIBRARY.ILLINOIS.EDU/FRIENDS

INSIDE

Make a Gift toward the Elsesser Matching Gift Challenge

Friendscript is a publication of the Office of Library Advancement, 1408 West Gregory Drive, Room 227, Urbana, IL 61801. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome and should be submitted to Heather Murphy at **hmurphy@illinois.edu** or (217) 333-3758.

The Office of Library Advancement garners interest and secures external funds from Illinois alumni and friends, provides visibility for the Library through its programs and events, and promotes the Library within the Illinois campus and the community-at-large.

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Printed with UV ink on recycled paper.

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Match Made for the Ages, *continued from page 1*

budget in the current market." It also enables the unit to acquire core titles to address historic gaps in its holdings.

With their mutual interest in history, the Elsessers look to the past to connect to the present. "There's an evolution in the development of humankind," Lionelle mused. "The thing about rare materials is that they put you into the continuum of evolution.

"You start to understand how the continuum evolves and how you fit into it."

Both Elsessers respond to the exquisite nature of rare items, in addition to their historical importance. Jim recalls his fascination as an undergraduate with the presentations of Audubon's *Birds of America*, placed on daily display on the Main Library's second floor. "I was in the Library a lot back then," he said, "and I would go up and look at that, and I just thought that was so neat."

"Rare materials are often stunning," Lionelle added. "There is a beauty, whether it's the binding or the quality of the sheepskin that it's written on . . . There is something aesthetically very satisfying about rare materials."

The Elsessers remember their undergraduate and graduate days at Illinois as a formative time where their experiences ranged from falling in love to embracing scholarly discipline. "What a university should do is broaden your scope," Lionelle said, "and certainly for both of us it did."

After graduation, Jim served four years as an officer in the U.S. Navy, including a year in Vietnam, where he was selected as the aide/flag lieutenant to Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, the Commander of Naval Forces in Vietnam. A long business career followed, where Jim became chief financial officer of Ralston Purina and chief executive officer of Interstate Bakeries. In 2021, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the U. of I. Gies College of Business.

Lionelle used her background in English and library and information science to embrace literacy and library efforts at Norfolk State University, a historically Black college. Later, she served as chief of the library service at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Minnesota, and also wrote the text for the Medical Library Association course in patient education.

In addition to adding to RBML's collections, the Elsessers want to support public education and make these resources accessible, or, as Lionelle puts it, "in the world—not on somebody's private shelf."

And they also want to influence younger generations. The impact of being able to observe—and in some cases, touch—historically significant objects cannot be underestimated. Jim notes that bringing their grandchildren to campus to view such items gave their grandson a lifelong appreciation for rare books. And their granddaughter, with an intense interest in architecture, grew wide-eyed in wonder while viewing the Library's holdings of Frank Lloyd Wright.

"She just sort of stood there, staring at them . . . page by page, and that was exciting to me," Lionelle said. "Essie was just glued, and it was wonderful to watch her excitement about seeing all of that."

"There is a lot of joy in giving and seeing the fruition of your gift," Lionelle said. "There is a lot of pleasure knowing that you've added a little tiny bit of something of value."

And that's how an institution gains legendary status, one step at a time.

Cutting the Cost of College

Open Educational Resources boost student success

The rising cost of a college education continues to be a significant burden.

In 2021, the Education Data Initiative found that the average yearly cost of books and supplies for full-time undergraduates at a four-year college approximated $1,240.

The ramifications of those numbers? Plenty. Data compiled in recent years by the U.S. PIRG Education Fund indicate some harrowing national findings:

- Effect on studies: 63% of students skipped purchasing a textbook, resulting in 90% of them worrying their grades would be affected.
- Effect on time: 25% of students worked extra hours to pay for books.
- Effect on curriculum: 19% selected classes according to the cost of course materials.
- Effect on health: 11% skipped meals in order to pay for school.

Institutional responses gathered at the University of Illinois indicate similar concerns, with 73% saying their classroom performance was affected in some way because students could not afford the materials.

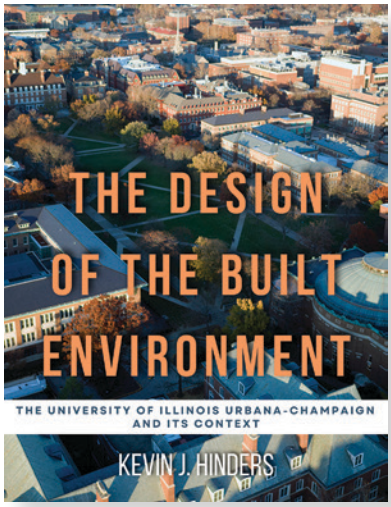
One creative solution gaining momentum in recent years is Open Educational Resources (OER), a worldwide movement aimed at cutting costs, modernizing educational materials, and helping students succeed. Essentially, these textbooks or myriad other resources use different copyright licensing, take advantage of digitally produced options, and are accessed—for free—online.

The average yearly cost of books and supplies for full-time undergraduates at a four-year college approximated $1,240.

At the U. of I., that effort resides with the Illinois Open Publishing Network or IOPN (pronounced "I-Open"). Headed by Dan Tracy, MA '02 LAS, PHD '08 LAS, MS '12 LIS, it is a Library-based digital open publishing initiative that organizes the program on campus, offering advice and services to educators looking to create new materials in transformative ways.

A student accesses a textbook online in the Funk ACES Library.

"In our case, we make textbooks," said Sara Benson, MS 2017 LIS, U. of I. copyright librarian who works with the unit. "And instead of being produced by traditional publishers, where students have to pay quite a hefty sum for their textbooks, we provide some funding to faculty for summer stipends and . . . graduate hourlies and things like that, so they can create these textbooks for free for their students. And they also have an open license on them so they can be reused by other faculty across the world.



This forthcoming title in landscape architecture (with a University of Illinois theme) is published by Windsor & Downs Press, part of the IOPN.

"We use what's called a Creative Commons license," she said. "All the works that are being created are copyright protected," but the authors are also granting a license to the general public. Whoever uses the book—student, educator, or curious reader—can do so as long as they adhere to the terms of the license.

A fairly recent endeavor on the Illinois campus, IOPN began publishing textbooks in 2020 on topics as diverse as language learning, epidemiology, social work, and engineering. According to Tracy, OER can provide enhanced digital experiences—such as interactive exercises, videos, and audio content (particularly useful in language learning)—as well as save students money.

And the savings are substantial. Since August 2022, the 2,563 students enrolled in an applied science course on drug use and misuse on campus were able to bypass buying an $89.99 textbook and use an online version; savings to date total $230,644.37. Similarly, 140 students

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‘The Library Is the Laboratory’

Students win award for researching historical math models

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mathematicians realized they had a problem: Their expanding field of study was quickly evolving from the concrete to the theoretical.

Imagine, if you will, the arc of evolution from the abacus to the abstract, from early scratchings in cuneiform to inscrutable scribblings running across blackboards.

How to respond to this dilemma?

Here’s a thought: Could visual examples help students better comprehend these ideas? Why not create three-dimensional models to demonstrate various principles across a wide range of mathematical concepts?

And so, these problem solvers went to work with string and plaster, glass and beads, cardboard and aluminum, fashioning renditions so beautiful that the artist Man Ray looked to them as inspiration for his work.

Nearly 400 of these stunning models have been the prized possession of the University of Illinois Department of Mathematics since the turn of the century—counted as one of the largest such collections in the world. Some models were purchased from the German company Martin Schilling, others made by U. of I. math professors. Over the decades, students had been encouraged to not only observe but physically handle the items—now more than 100 years old—turning and examining them, much like a modern-day Rubik’s Cube, admiring the architecture and the angles to grasp a concept captured concretely.

For them, and for many, seeing is believing.

What’s old is new again

A century later, as part of a class, young mathematicians on the Illinois campus brought the models back to life.

Having been carefully stashed away during the Altgeld Hall renovation, the models became the star exhibit in a research endeavor open to undergraduates. Working under the auspices of the Department of Mathematics and the Illinois Mathematics Lab (IML), three sophomores and a junior spent the fall of 2024 learning how to suss out equations, conduct research, and present their findings in an academic paper, with the contents of the Mathematics Library proving an essential element of their work.

“Some mathematicians are really good at solving the problem,” but lack writing experience to explain concepts, said Sarah Park, head of the Mathematics Library. “So [this endeavor] is about encouraging them to engage in this research process.”

One such sophomore was Darya Reutenko, who had specifically chosen Illinois because of its research opportunities, as had fellow sophomore Eva White. Joined by undergraduates Dadi Feng and Cathy Guo, the foursome spent a semester on the project, guided by Park and IML Director Karen Mortensen, analyzing and documenting the unique collection, as well as writing a historical overview.

> *“Connecting the math and the beauty [of the models] together is just fascinating.”*
>
> — SARAH PARK

“I really like being able to see math or being able to visualize it better,” Reutenko said. “This was a project that allowed for making a representation of something that is also difficult to imagine in your head, but it’s also at the same time possible if you make a model of it.”

Each student took on 10 models from the collection, working collaboratively and separately to divine the models’ meaning and provide a description. While some models had equations attached to them, others did not, and the students had to puzzle out what concept the physical presentation portrayed.

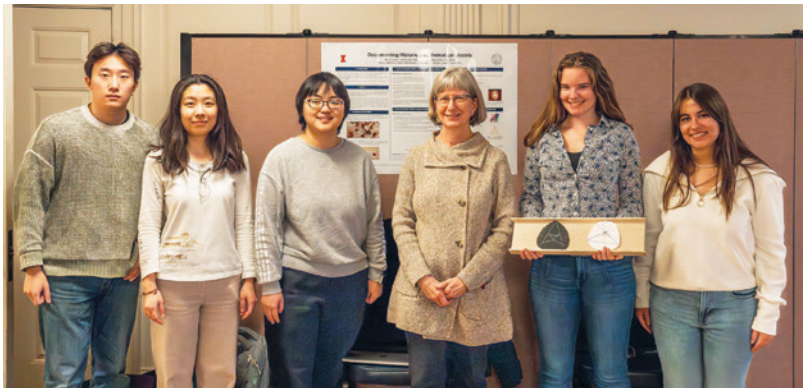
Students also consulted research materials, such as catalogs and historical literature, to assist them in their work. As an added asset, White used her fluency in German to better comprehend the texts that accompanied the models from that nation.

“It gives a really interesting insight into the way that people thought about math before we had computer modeling,” White said of the models’ origin. “It’s difficult for us to imagine that people didn’t have that kind of thing, and people really just had to think about these equations and try to determine what they would look like in their own heads.

“That’s inspiring to me.”

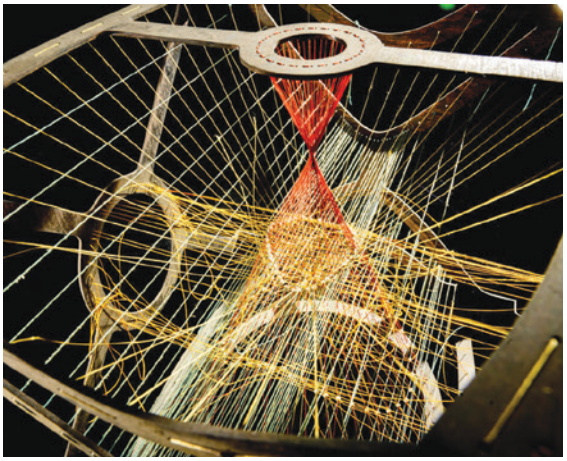
The historical aspect also appealed to others in the group. “It’s just really cool to study something from the past that not many people had studied,” Reutenko said, “and to bring it back out and analyze it and then have future generations be able to study from it as well.”

White appreciated that the project would continue to help make mathematics more accessible. “A visual stimulus should help people become more interested



Team members of the Fall 2024 mathematics research project

Left to right: **Dadi Feng, Xinran Yu (Graduate Student Advisor), Cathy Guo, Karen Mortensen, Eva White, and Darya Reutenko**



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Mathematics Librarian Sarah Park and Director of the Illinois Mathematics Lab Karen Mortenson

in math," she said. "It's not just equations and problem solving—[it] can also be turned into something really beautiful, like an entire collection of models."

Park, the librarian, echoed those sentiments. She viewed the project as recognizing the efforts of former members of the math department who realized the value of the models and collected them in the first place. "We feel like we have to celebrate their efforts," she said, and noted the long-held tradition of using the models as teaching tools, still effective all these years later.

Students modernized the models collection by using Mathematica software to create 3D digital images. These online renderings, as well as 3D models constructed by another cohort of students a semester later, bring the models to an even wider audience.

Nevertheless, the old-school physical renditions continue to impress.

"Actually having the physical copy there is so different," White said. "Because looking at it online, no matter how perfect the reproduction is, will never really give you the same kind of thrill as having the model there" in front of you.

As Park put it, "Connecting the math and the beauty [of the models] together is just fascinating."

Rewarding efforts

As the students labored at their task, their efforts were not unnoticed. In spring, their work received the first Nancy D. Anderson Mathematics Research Award.

Anderson, who headed the Mathematics Library at Illinois from 1972 to 2000, was highly regarded for her work in the field of mathematics libraries, as well as for her success in elevating Illinois' collection to worldwide acclaim.

The monetary award, which is funded by the Nancy D. Anderson Mathematics Library Endowment Fund, evaluated three areas: what students learned, presentation of their findings, and use of library resources. The students' project was notable, judges said, for its extensive use of the Mathematics Library collection.

And who knows that better than Park? "The library is the laboratory for mathematics," she said, referring to the accumulation of mathematics information from centuries past to today's discoveries.

And while the project provided a valuable addition to library resources, it was personally rewarding to its participants as well.

"The experience was more than an academic project," Reutenko wrote in a LinkedIn post. "It was a turning point that deepened my passion for mathematics and research. I discovered the value of applying mathematical theory to open-ended, real-world problems, where solutions are not predefined. It highlighted the importance of creativity, persistence, and interdisciplinary collaboration in mathematical inquiry."

An outcome, perhaps that may just be what the original model-makers had in mind.

Window to Their World

Printer's mark speaks to Fessler family interests

For Jim Fessler and Ryan Baise, selecting a printer's mark window to honor their forebears was easy.

"The window just sang to me in many, many ways," said Jim '85 LAS, JD, LLM, who holds a long and close history with his parents, the University of Illinois, and the Library itself. And for son Ryan '11 AHS, a former Fighting Illini football player, the Thomas Davidson window seemed a perfect choice to commemorate his grandparents and underscore a generations-long connection to Illinois.

At the U. of I., 27 printer's mark windows line the walls and stairways leading to the Main Library's Shebik Family Reading Room, each one bearing the emblem or trademark of an early printer in Europe. A magnificent feature of the Illinois campus, the stained-glass printer's marks pay tribute to these initial publishing efforts and the importance of collecting and disseminating information. Centered within striking 16-foot-tall windows, the exquisite emblems provide inspiration while the surrounding glass allows natural light to spill onto patrons below.

For Jim, a printer's mark window dedicated to his parents in a library setting seemed eminently appropriate. His father, Kermit, received his master's degree in education from Illinois in 1965 and worked as a school principal. Jim's mother, Patricia, a high school librarian, served on the first Library Friends board, and in time, the family established a library endowment in their name. Jim practiced library law for a decade and currently serves on the Library Board of Advocates.

"I wouldn't be where I am without my parents," said Jim. "Two of the things that were very important to them were Illinois sports and the Library—because as educators, they felt that the library was the heartbeat of any educational institution."

Those values were passed on to the family, with Jim being brought to his first Illini football game at age 6 and, when it came time to select a college, "there was no other choice." Jim would thoroughly enjoy his time on campus, studying speech communication, gaining friendships at the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity house, and attending sporting events.

He also had some connections to the Library. As a freshman, he worked at the Library's Oak Street location. Later on, his fraternity brothers would provide an indelible memory.

Kermit and Patricia Fessler with their University of Illinois Alumni Association commemorative patio paver

Jim received the 2022 Lou Liay Spirit Award for consistently demonstrating extraordinary spirit and pride in support of the university while inspiring loyalty and pride in his fellow alumni.

"My biggest memory of the library is my fraternity used to go Christmas caroling every year, so we would dress up as elves and Santa and Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer," Jim recalled. The costumed group would walk through the tunnel that connected the former Undergraduate Library with the Main Library, whispering carols until they got outside, when the festive group would burst into song at the top of their lungs.

With the elder Fesslers' vocational backgrounds, designating a printer's mark window to them seemed particularly appealing. In addition to their support of education, the tie to Thomas Davidson, a printer in Edinburgh, Scotland, resonated in several ways.

"My mother and father loved golfing, they loved traveling, they loved Scotland," Jim said. "So I was immediately drawn to the window for those reasons. But then when I looked closely at the window, the printer [worked for] King James V of Scotland, which I thought was funny, since my name is James."

The trademark also pictures four owls, whose correlation to wisdom reflected the Fesslers' devotion to learning. "And then I had to chuckle when I saw the 'wildmen of the woods'" included in the trademark, Jim said. Those creatures reminded him of himself, his siblings, his fraternity brothers, and all of the former students who had been nurtured by his parents.

And while the window gives nod to the Fesslers' connection to the Library, the dedication takes care to cover their fandom of Illini sports as well. "In honor and memory of Kermit J. (M. Ed '65) & Patricia L. Fessler," the plaque begins. It ends with a rousing "I-L-L!"

For more information about window dedications, Library Friends should visit ***library.illinois.edu/friends/window-dedication****. View more photos from this story in this issue at* ***library.illinois.edu/friends/publications****.*

Empowering International Library Professionals Through Leadership and Scholarship Programs

By Clara M. Chu, Mortenson Center for International Library Programs Director and Mortenson Distinguished Professor

This past year, the Mortenson Center has been reminded of the incredible power of generosity to change lives. Thanks to the creation of the **Kathleen Weibel Memorial Fund**, the legacy of a remarkable librarian and educator is already making a difference for international colleagues.

Kathleen Weibel (1945–2024) devoted her career to mentoring others, advancing women in librarianship, and supporting librarians abroad—especially in Vietnam. To honor her vision, friends and family established a memorial fund at the Mortenson Center. Just months later, **Minh Hien Tran**, Teaching and Instruction Coordinator at RMIT University Vietnam, became the very first recipient.

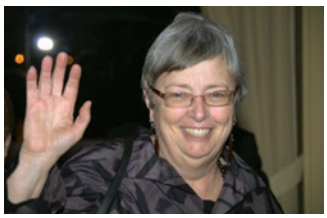
Hien joined us in Illinois for the 2025 Mortenson Center Associates Program. He shared his professional goals, connected with Kathleen's friends, and reflected on how her work continues to ripple through Vietnam's library community. As he returns home, he carries with him new ideas, skills, and friendships that will benefit his students and colleagues for years to come.

A Global Community of Leaders

Since 1989, the Mortenson Center has welcomed librarians from **109 countries**, offering them the chance to learn together, visit libraries across Illinois and nearby states, and build lasting professional networks. The results are inspiring: alumni step into leadership roles, develop innovative services, and strengthen libraries that serve millions of people around the world.

The 2025 program—*"Libraries Unbound: Open, Inclusive, and Engaged"*—brought 16 Associates from 14 countries to campus. They explored how libraries can embrace diversity, use new technologies like AI, and design user-centered services. Participants described the experience as "unforgettable" and left renewed in their commitment to serve their communities.

Thanks to scholarships like the Weibel Fund, interest in the program is soaring. Applications in 2025 more than doubled, a clear sign of the growing demand for this unique opportunity. Next year's theme, *"Poised for Impact: Data, User, Strategy-Driven Libraries,"* promises to build on this momentum.



Kathleen Weibel

Your Impact

Behind every scholarship, every program, and every success story is the support of friends like you. Whether you give in honor of a colleague, to support a cause close to your heart, or simply because you believe in the power of libraries, you are helping to shape the future of our profession worldwide.

Together, we are creating opportunities, building leaders, and honoring legacies—just as Kathleen Weibel did throughout her life. For that, we are deeply grateful.

For more information about the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs, visit ***library.illinois.edu/mortenson****.*

Linda Crowe (above left), Patricia Schuman (above right), and Barbara J. Ford, longtime friends of Kathleen Weibel, led the effort to establish the Kathleen Weibel Memorial Fund to commemorate her life.

Left to right: **Clara Chu, Minh Hien Tran, and Barbara J. Ford**

A Decision to Give

West's donations a yearly tradition

Michael West '71 FAA is a decisive sort of fellow. In seventh grade, he knew that architecture was his chosen calling.

Upon graduating from the University of Illinois, he launched an annual tradition of giving back to his alma mater.

And with every gift, he specifically knew he wanted it to go to purchasing books.

"Always fascinated," West said in describing his attraction to architecture as a vocation. And in typical decisive fashion, he knew Illinois was "absolutely preeminent," given its longevity and the esteem of its graduates, and the place he wanted to go.

"I've been an architect and an engineer since the day I was born," West said, so at Illinois, he opted to study architectural engineering. In his free time, he frequented the Illini Union, Smith Memorial Hall, and Stan's, a local student hangout, as well as worked as a waiter at the Alpha Phi sorority. West lived at Armory House for most of his undergraduate years, whose location directed him to pass through the Armory building on the way to class.

"I would look at the structure, which is very, very interesting," he said of the massive facility's arched frame—proof, perhaps, that he really was enrolled in the right curriculum.

And he also recalled that, as part of his welcome to the university, he received a communication that planted the seed of the importance of giving.

The collections of the Ricker Library of Architecture and Art includes more than 150,000 volumes and 40,000 serials. Holdings cover the fields of architecture, architectural history, art, art history, museum studies, and art education.

"The University of Illinois is supported by three sources—the Legislature, tuition, and grants and gifts," West recalled the letter saying. And after he graduated, the message was repeated, tucked in amid congratulations on obtaining a degree.

"[My time at Illinois] was fundamental, it was formative, it was essential for my advancement in life."

— MICHAEL WEST

"That very first check . . . was probably 50 bucks," he said, and with every passing year the check amount increased. The majority of his donations go to the Main Library, with additional resources directed to the School of Architecture and the Ricker Library of Architecture and Art. His consistent giving, which he sees as his legacy, "has never flagged."

West jokes that his affinity for books traces back to being taken to a library on the way home from the maternity ward, but in fact his mother did routinely take him and his brother to the public library as children and let them select any book they wanted. "Now I'm not the only preschooler that went to a library," he said, "but I will be one of the few where it stuck."

"It's just been a trajectory," he said as his love for libraries grew. "The reason [my giving is] focused on libraries," he said, "is that's where the books are."

And at Illinois, the University Library—with its spectacular collection of more than 15 million volumes— remains an outstanding feature of the campus, even stirring West's father, who was "not a books guy," West said. "But I remember from our first campus visit, the thing that he was most impressed by was the Library."

So why is it important to West to give to Illinois?

"Oh, it's very simple," he replies quickly. "Look at the campus, look at the faculty, look at the number of [Ph.D. graduates], look at the number of Nobel Prizes and other scientific awards won by either faculty or alumni.

"[My time at Illinois] was fundamental, it was formative, it was essential for my advancement in life," West says in his decidedly decisive manner. "There is no way that my enthusiasm would ever fail."

Cutting the Cost of College,
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enrolled in a psychology course on behavioral genetics avoided paying $38 each in textbook rental, resulting in a cost-cutting measure topping $5,000.

And with 15 textbooks in the IOPN pipeline—ranging from computer science to community nutrition to ice skating—savings in these courses are expected to reach more than half a million dollars.

"I think there is a lot more consciousness on the part of professors who also are very aware of the rising cost of textbooks and are looking for more ways to make sure that their students can afford their course material," Tracy said.

"I've always thought OER is a better option for everybody who's wanting to learn the content," said José Andino Martinez, a senior lecturer in chemistry at Illinois, in a promotional video. "I am deeply interested in the equitability of these resources for any student, and I feel that OER has been designed for that purpose."

A key person in spreading the word about OER has been Benson, who has worked to boost general awareness, secure funding, and promote the program's opportunities.

This year her efforts received an individual honorable mention in the Student Success Champion awards program of the Student Success @ Illinois initiative. In addition, Illinois Student Government and other campus entities, including the Office of the Provost, have also voiced support of OER efforts as a means of improving student welfare.

"There's ways that you can use the digital medium to do a lot of things that you could never do in a print textbook," Tracy said of the OER movement.

Including, these days, easing the strain on student pocketbooks.

Help students succeed by giving any dollar amount up to $10,000 to develop OER providing textbooks at no cost to students. Funding supports the Library's incentive program for Illinois faculty to create these works by offering assistance such as faculty stipends, hourly support, copy editing, and publication through **Scholarly Communications & Publishing.** *Visit* ***go.library.illinois.edu/LILF****.*

Agricultural Communications Documentation Center Reaches 50,000 Items

By Janis Shearer, Public Services & Engagement Librarian

This summer brought a milestone worth celebrating for the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center (ACDC). In June, the collection reached its 50,000th item—just in time to launch its 45th year (1981–2026).

The achievement was made possible in part by completing the processing of a remarkable donation that had been in the works for six years. The collection of 2,371 items offered rich insights into agricultural communications and helped push ACDC past the 50,000 mark.

ACDC holds agricultural communications materials from 212 countries, making it one of the most comprehensive and unique collections of its kind in the world. Developed and maintained by agricultural communications faculty members, the center serves students, teachers, researchers, professional communicators, and others interested in communications related to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural affairs.

A Global Resource

The Center brings together diverse and relevant literature about agricultural-related communications and provides services that strengthen the university's role as a leader in this discipline. Because of its scope and uniqueness, ACDC adds depth and distinction to the University Library's vast resources.

Continued Growth

The Center continues to add about 100 documents each month, ensuring the collection remains up-to-date and responsive to the evolving needs of patrons worldwide. With its deep subject indexing, detailed bibliographic organization, and easily searchable database, ACDC helps researchers—from seasoned scholars to first-time users—locate the resources they need quickly and effectively.

For 45 years, ACDC has been quietly but powerfully shaping the global conversation about agricultural communications. This year's milestone is not just about numbers—it's a testament to decades of dedication, collaboration, and the ongoing value of preserving and sharing knowledge across borders.

Read more about the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center, located within the Funk ACES Library, at ***library.illinois.edu/funkaces/acdc/****.*

Library Is Looking For

Find more Library Is Looking For items online at **go.library.illinois.edu/LILF**

$750 for *Merkblätter zum Weltkrieg Die Erobergun Serbiens. 7. Oktober–Dezember 1915*, a broadside map printed in 1918 as success waned for the Central Powers in WWI. Designed to buttress German national pride, the rare propaganda item, sought by the **Map Library**, highlights the Serbia Campaign.

$800 for *Convoy routes–Palestine*, a 1946 map displaying such routes used by the British Army to maintain control of British Mandatory Palestine as Zionist insurgencies flared. The name "Captain H. Hamersley" appears handwritten at the top of this singular item of interest to the **Map Library**.

$975 for *Great Overland Route! Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific RR for California, Oregon, Australia, China and Japan*, a map showcasing railway and steamship pathways for excursions to Europe and Asia. Printed by Rand McNally in 1880, the item is in very good condition and actually comprises two maps: one global and one of the United States. The possibility of international travel presented in this railroad timetable map increases its rarity, thereby catching the eye of the **Map Library**.

$2,000 for *Die Zerstückelung Deutschlands!*, a propaganda map (circa 1919) wanted by the **Map Library** indicating Germany's scathing reaction to the Treaty of Versailles at WWI's end. Headlined "The Dismemberment of Germany," the item details the loss of territory and addition of occupational forces the nation would have to endure under the terms of the treaty. These resentments laid the groundwork for the rise of the "stabbed in the back" myth and Adolph Hitler's ascent to power.

$2,648 (€2,250) for *The Book of the Tailor*, a facsimile of a 1540 manuscript containing detailed water-color drawings of the era's clothing style. With book in hand, tailors could show illustrated examples of outfits to their customers, along with images of emperors and kings. This rare piece of fashion literature, produced in northern Italy, would beautifully dress up the **Classics Library Collection**.

$3,000 funds a new laptop for the Library's loanable technology program—an essential resource students across campus rely on to succeed. Through the **Media Commons**, demand is so high that laptops are often reserved up to two weeks in advance. We're seeking support to fund 20 new laptops, and Library Friends are invited to contribute the cost of one—or more!—to help ensure all students, regardless of major, have access to the technology they need to thrive at Illinois.

Any dollar amount up to $5,000 for personnel to process a significant number of 20th century Romanian monographs acquired by the **International and Area Studies Library**. These books would significantly enhance the Library's excellent collections on the history, literature, culture, and politics of southeastern Europe.

Any dollar amount up to $5,000 for personnel to help integrate donations made to the **International and Area Studies Library**. The wide-ranging items—many of them out of print and held by only a few North American and Western European libraries—cover a multitude of languages.

$5,200 (£3,900) for *Antonio Stradivari: The Complete Works* [Library Edition], an unprecedented compilation of curated provenances for nearly 850 Stradivari creations—including violins, violas, cellos, guitars, lutes, and even a harp. The six volumes comprise the most comprehensive collection of information on these prized instruments and will prove an invaluable resource for Stradivari scholars, including those at the **Music and Performing Arts Library**.

Thank You

The following donors have adopted these items:

- **Christine C. Burgess** for *1914 Elsner Serio-Comic Map, Outbreak of World War 1* (Map Library)
- **Lynn Cline** for *Les nouveaux oracles divertissans (A Rare Occult Guide for Women)* (Rare Book & Manuscript Library)
- **David C. Hunter** for a Sound Burger portable LP player, an Akai 25-key keyboard controller with carry case, and a case for the Scarlett 2i2 studio bundle (Music and Performing Arts Library)
- **Tim and Jamie Kearley** for a table for the Shebik Family Reading Room (Literatures and Languages Library)
- **Catherine D. Lemon** for Megalithic Software *Part I: England (1975) ; Part II: Europe and the Near East (1982); Part III: The orient Sec. A Japan (1988)* (Ricker Library of Architecture and Art)
- **Paul Lisnek** for a twin delight: a two-sided deck of playing cards (Illinois History and Lincoln Collections)
- **Jo Ann McNaughton-Kade** for a Scarlett Studio Audio Interface Bundle (Music and Performing Arts Library)
- **Constance and Alan Mitchell** for a table for the Shebik Family Reading Room (Literatures and Languages Library)
- **Louis R. and Marilyn A. Steenwyk** for *Ask for through tickets ... via Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad... (1871)* (Map Library)

Upcoming Events

The Wake of HMS Challenger: How a Legendary Victorian Voyage Tells the Story of Our Oceans' Decline

- November 12, 2025
- 3:00–5:00 p.m.
- Rare Book & Manuscript Library, 346 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- Visit **library.illinois.edu/rbx**

Women in Science Lecture: Vivian Cheng

- November 13, 2025
- 12:00–1:00 p.m.
- University Archives, 146 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- Visit **go.library.illinois.edu/Nov2025WISLecture**

LIBRARY FRIENDS WEBINAR

Enduring Narratives: Writers and Preservationists in Collaboration

- November 13, 2025
- 12:00–1:00 p.m.
- Visit **go.library.illinois.edu/lfwnov25**

Finding the Female Voice in the Ancient World

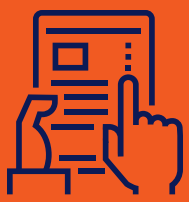
- November 17, 2025
- 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- The Spurlock Museum, 600 S. Gregory Street, Urbana
- Visit **library.illinois.edu/rbx**

Ultimate Archives Trivia

- December 10, 2025
- 12:00–1:00 p.m.
- University Archives, 146 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- Visit **archives.library.illinois.edu**

Women in Science Lecture: Dr. Pinshane Huang

- December 11, 2025
- 12:00–1:00 p.m.
- University Archives, 146 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- Visit **go.library.illinois.edu/Dec2025WISLecture**



Visit **go.library.illinois.edu/calendar** for more information on other upcoming events including monthly Library Friends webinars—a virtual series hosted by the Friends of the Library and initiated by the Library Board of Advocates to share the wonders of the University Library at Illinois.

Library Friends
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Proud Library Alumna to Celebrate Milestone Birthday

Alberta Reitz Steiner, who worked in the Main Stacks as a student and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the College of ACES in 1947, will turn 100 on November 28.

If you're a former student employee of the University Library and would like a Library Alumni shirt of your own, we'd love to hear from you! Fill out the online form at ***go.library.illinois.edu/LibraryAlumni****.*

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