CWU Wins Washington Library Association Service Awards

The Washington Library Association (WLA) has awarded the Central Washington University Libraries Access Services Team and Associate Professor Maureen Rust with 2021 Outstanding Service Awards.

Rust and the Access Services Team were honored for their work bridging the gap between CWU and the Ellensburg community. They were also praised for providing dependable library services despite the significant challenges presented by the pandemic.

"I was really surprised," said Rust when asked how she felt when she received the news. "I didn’t realize I had been nominated."

Rust is also the Student Engagement and Community Outreach Librarian—a role that she agrees fits her perfectly. "I love my job. I love developing programming specific to the students on campus, but also we develop a lot of community events and partner with a lot of community entities," she said.

Hosting Cultural Conversations is only one way CWU Libraries actively engages with the Ellensburg community. Now in its third year, Cultural Conversations takes place with the library, inviting individuals from different backgrounds and identities to tell stories of their culture and talk about things they’ve faced integrating into Kittitas County and the U.S.

Partnering with the Ellensburg Public Library and the CWU’s Office of International Studies, CWU Libraries started these conversations at the Ellensburg Community Center and later transitioned to virtual conversations during the pandemic, continuing to garner engagement online.

The WLA 2021 Outstanding Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions made by an individual or group involved in improvement to library services, advancements in the profession, advocacy for libraries, service to colleagues, or other outstanding work on behalf of libraries.

Wildcat Food Pantry Opens at Brooks Library

CWU students now have one more reason to visit Brooks Library. In an effort to ensure that no student goes hungry, the campus chapter of PUSH (Presidents United to Solve Hunger) opened the Wildcat Pantry on the first floor of the library during the fall quarter. Staffed by volunteers, the Pantry aims to support the basic needs of CWU students by offering free food and personal hygiene products in a stigma-free environment. Students are invited to visit as often as necessary and to take whatever they need.

The Wildcat Pantry is stocked with a variety of nonperishable food, a limited amount of perishable food, and toiletries, including soaps, shampoos, and menstrual products. Pantry items come from campus partnerships with CWU Dining Services and the Wildcat Neighborhood Farm, and many are donated by members of the university and local communities. The Pantry accepts donations of unopened, unexpired, nonperishable food, as well as unopened personal hygiene products.

In addition to running the Wildcat Pantry, PUSH partners with various campus departments, offices, and clubs to bring needed resources to students. CWU SLICE (Student Leadership, Involvement, & Community Engagement) has organized food drives for the Pantry, and the Diversity and Equity Center has hosted pop-up pantries and events. CWU Dining Services helped set up the Emergency Meal fund, which allows students in need to request extra money to be added to their meal plan balance.

The Ellensburg campus joins several CWU centers in this effort to bolster academic achievement by supporting basic student needs. All centers run food pantries in partnership with their host campuses.

The Wildcat Pantry in Brooks Library is open Monday through Friday 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, email wildcatpantry@cwu.edu.
Winter Greetings!
Winter Quarter opened with much of Washington under a blanket of snow. The beginning of a new year combined with the colder months keeping us indoors a bit more provides a good time to reflect on health, especially mental health. In January we began a series of events funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services to promote community mental health including panels, book discussions, and creative exercises. I hope you can join us.

One of the challenges of pandemic conditions has been delivery of our core information literacy instruction. Our librarians have created the “Research Smartz” series to deliver the important lessons of being a good information consumer to our students online.

I’m thrilled to announce we received a generous grant from Pendleton & Elisabeth Carey Miller Charitable Foundation for the second year in a row! This grant enabled us to add the electronic archives of The Olympian, growing our collection of online historic news coverage. This collection now spans the state, the world, and different cultures – try The Times of India, the archives of the Los Angeles Sentinel, Hispanic American Newspapers, or the Tri-City Herald Collection with Historical Archives.

Cultural Conversations and Book Discussion Series

‘CWU Libraries, in partnership with Ellensburg Public Library and the Office of International Studies and Programs, launched their quarterly Cultural Conversations program in winter 2019. Since then, the community series has featured storytellers from Mexico, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa.

With the help of an American Library Association Libraries Transforming Communities grant, we are taking the program one step further by offering a monthly facilitated book discussion.

Upcoming Events

February

15 Research Smartz: Making OneSearch Work for YOU
4:00PM-5:00PM
Online

17 Research Smartz: Getting the Most Out of Databases
12:00PM-1:00PM
Online

23 Community Resilience in Times of Change Book Discussion: The Body Keeps the Score
04:00PM-5:00PM
Brooks Library, 2nd Floor Student Commons

March

02 Community Resilience in Times of Change: Processing Traumatic Events Panel Discussion
12:00PM-1:30PM
Brooks Library, 2nd Floor Room 288

14 Jazz and Crafts
6:00PM-7:30PM
Brooks Library, 2nd Floor Student Commons

15 Piano
6:30PM-7:30PM
Brooks Library Lobby

16 Friends of the Brooks Library Pizza Giveaway
6:00PM-7:30PM
Brooks Library Lobby

17 Grab-and-Go Kit
1:00PM-5:00PM (while supplies last)
Brooks Library Lobby

For more information visit: cwu.libcal.com/calendar/events

Thanks to direct book donations and funding sources such as the Friends of Brooks Library endowment, our new books list grows regularly. This year we continue to work on diversifying the collection, and deepening our holdings of Pacific Northwest topics. Check it monthly for new titles.

Be well, and I hope to see you in person, or online!

-Rebecca L. Lubas
Dean of Libraries
Resilience Series Looks at Mental Health and Trauma

The nation’s mental health crisis among children, adolescents, and young adults is real and widespread because of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the U.S. Surgeon General. Hoping to shed more light on these issues, Central Washington University will host a series of monthly “Community Resilience in Times of Change” events through May 2022.

The series will focus on exploring the effects that COVID-19 has had on our communities and our collective mental health. Additionally, the series will explore ways to mitigate them and strengthen the community as a whole.

Dean of Libraries Rebecca Lubas says the event series will seek to address the immense additional stress COVID-19 has put students under, as well as ways to heal traumas.

“It’s very important because when you’re a student, you’re dealing with all the things life throws at you, as you normally would,” Lubas said. “When you have a traumatic event with as much global impact as COVID, that just makes dealing with a complicated student schedule, juggling family, work, and studies that much harder.”

The content of the events has been developed in cooperation with the community, along with local health care officials and authors, to ensure relevancy for all interested parties.

The first installment was a community panel discussion titled “Mental Health and Growth Mindset,” held at the Hal Holmes Community Center in the Ellensburg Public Library. It featured local practitioners Kimberly Finger, Jackie Moore, and Auren O’Connell, with CWU School Psychology graduate student Juan Serrano moderating.

The next event is a book discussion about The Body Keeps the Score by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world’s leading experts on trauma. The book focuses on the physical ramifications of trauma in the brain as well as the body, and the myriad ways in which one can work toward healing these invisible wounds. The discussion will be held February 23 at 4:00 p.m. in Brooks Library room 288. Registration is available at the calendar listing, as well as the option to order a free copy of the book.

The final winter quarter event will center more directly around the processing of traumatic events and will feature members of the Active Minds student club, plus CWU staff from the Mental Health Counseling Program and Wellness Center. It will be held March 2 at noon in the Brooks Library Student Commons.

These events are made possible in part by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. More information about the series and the spring events can be found on the CWU Libraries event calendar.

Second Consecutive Grant Funds Olympian Collection

CWU Libraries is the recent recipient of a grant awarded by the Pendleton & Elisabeth Carey Miller Charitable Foundation. The Millers, longtime Seattle-area residents and alumni of the University of Washington, supported many charitable organizations and activities during their lifetime. The Foundation, established in 1994, focuses on the Pacific Northwest and continues the Millers’ philanthropic legacy.

Additional information about the Millers and the grant process and recipients is available at Miller Charitable Foundation.

With this award, the libraries have purchased the online Olympian (WA) Collection with Historical Archives. The collection contains articles from the Text Archives—The Olympian (2001-Current), The Olympian: Blogs (2006-2017), The Olympian: Video (2019-Current), The Olympian: Web Edition Articles (2009-Current); Historical Page Images—Morning Olympian (1923-1982), Olympian (1982-2000), and the Olympian (2018-Current). This new collection complements the ever-growing list of online Washington newspaper collections the libraries have purchased and made accessible to the university and local communities in the last few years. Other online newspaper collections acquired by the libraries include the Tri-City Herald Collection with Historical Archives, the Seattle Times Collection with Historical Archives, and the Washington State News.

The libraries’ inaugural Miller Charitable Foundation grant award last year funded two online collections that have received tremendous usage since their acquisition. The first, North American Indian Thought and Culture, contains more than 100,000 pages from autobiographies, biographies, Indian publications, oral histories, personal writings, photographs, drawings, and audio files. The collection is a comprehensive representation of historical events as told by the individuals who lived through them.

The second collection acquired, Early Encounters in North America: Peoples, Cultures, and the Environment, contains materials documenting the relationships among peoples in North America from 1534 to 1850 and contains published and unpublished accounts, including narratives, diaries, journals, and letters. The collection focuses on personal accounts and provides unique perspectives from traders, enslaved people, missionaries, explorers, soldiers, native peoples, and officials.

The online collections made possible by grants from the Miller Charitable Foundation are available at libguides.lib.cwu.edu
Meet Our Graduate Assistants

Arooj Altaf (M.S. Law and Justice ‘22) works hard as a GA, where she spends several hours each week at the service desk. In addition to checking out books to patrons, she helps researchers find what they need via reference interviews. She also designs instructional materials on how to use software and databases made available by the library. Arooj also works in the archives, where her favorite project so far is processing the faculty papers of Dr. Karen J. Blair, who retired from the history department in 2014. As Arooj familiarizes herself with Dr. Blair’s body of scholarly work, she also gains knowledge of the fascinating history of CWU and Ellensburg.

Mara Gans (M.S. Cultural and Environmental Resource Management ‘22) works with the Peer Accountability and Connections (PAC) program, where she helps transfer students network and find resources in the CWU community. She is also a teaching assistant for LIS 245, Research Methods in the Digital Age. When not also working at the service desk, Mara helps out by assisting library faculty and staff with many other projects and workshops around the library. Her favorite perk of this assistantship is being able to interact and work with students to help them learn about all the ways the library can support them.

Juan Serrano (Ed.S. in School Psychology ‘24) also works with the PAC program to help acclimate transfer students to life on campus. Juan works closely with the library’s community outreach team on projects, such as setting up displays, putting posters up across campus and downtown Ellensburg, running outreach booths during campus events, and helping moderate presentations in the library. He really enjoys getting to work with all of the staff and faculty here in the library because they never miss an opportunity to help him grow as a student and to feel appreciated.

Friends of the Brooks Library

The Friends of the Library had an eventful fall that saw us return to “normalcy” (a word that, alas, the illustrious U.S. President Warren Harding did NOT invent in 1920, contrary to popular wisdom). First and most importantly, we held our annual book sale in early November after skipping last year’s sale due to Covid. We expected the event to be successful, but we were taken aback at just how successful it was. We set a record for revenue, taking in $2274.50, much of it coming from sales of books on complex topics like philosophy and science. Yes, people are interested in that stuff. Second, on December 8, we held one of our regular pizza feeds in the library, wherein we hand out free pizza to anyone who seems to be studying diligently (and those who aren’t). We gave away more than 30 pizzas! Third, we held our first annual Jolabokaflod (an Icelandic word meaning “Christmas book flood”) at Pretty Fair Beer on the winter solstice. In our version of Jolabokaflod, participants bring two books to give away and take one book from among the pile brought by others. They also drink beer and eat chocolate. We had about 15 attendees this year. We’re hoping to build on that good start.

We also wish to thank Bob and Marie Jones for another generous $3500 donation to the Friends of the Library endowment.

Finally, we offer congratulations to our own Maureen Rust for being accepted for the Fulbright Specialist Program Roster (meaning she’ll soon be travelling abroad for a few weeks to lend her expertise to a foreign library) and our own Rebecca Lubas for being named Interim Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Dan Herman
-Friends of the Brooks Library Secretary