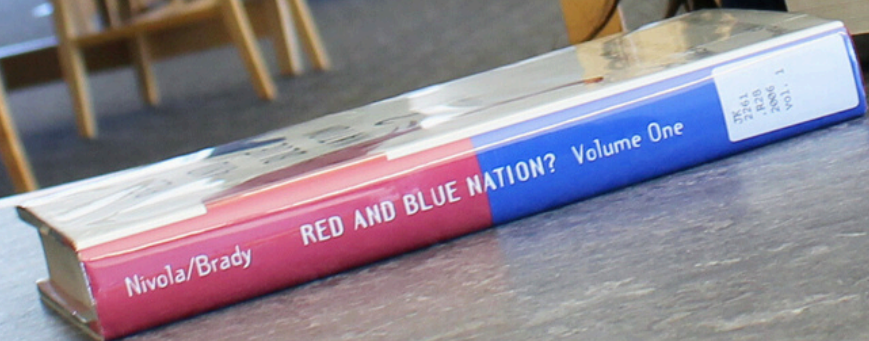


UC MERCED LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



WELCOME

Letter from the University Librarian

It is my pleasure to reconnect with everyone since our last annual report. This past year was filled with energy, creativity, and care. In this 2024-2025 issue, we will highlight some of our activities and initiatives focused on student success, research excellence, and public programming.

We feature a summer archival internship and a collaborative project with the UC Merced Community and Labor Center, both of which provided valuable work experiences for graduate students. We also caught up with a former undergraduate student assistant who shares how his time at the UC Merced Library led to his current position in an academic library. The 2024-2025 year also marked a work anniversary for many of our staff. I'd like to recognize their dedication and hard work over the years.

As some of you know from Provost Betsy Dumont's earlier announcement, I will be retiring in June 2026. I feel bittersweet about my retirement. Though I am looking forward to spending more time with my family, I will be leaving the UC Merced Library, a place I love and cherish.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our students and faculty for working with me these past years. Thanks to our donors and those considering a future gift to the UC Merced Library. We truly appreciate your support. Thank you!

Haipeng Li
University Librarian

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STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Introducing the Library

We had a rich year of fostering student learning and engagement through a range of activities that include outreach, instruction, programming, and recognition of student research.



Library staff and students introduce students and their families to UC Merced during Bobcat Day (spring 2025), answering questions and giving tours.

STUDENT LEARNING

Increasing Research Competencies

Librarians met with students in classroom settings and in partnership with programs to prepare students for research assignments and projects.



Librarian Elizabeth McMunn-Tetangco works with students participating in the campus' Summer Undergraduate Research Institute (SURI). Students learn how to manage the research they find through a citation manager tool.



Librarian Joe Ameen, along with colleagues, meets with undergrads who are in UC Merced's Honors program. Each librarian highlights content to support students in their academic work.

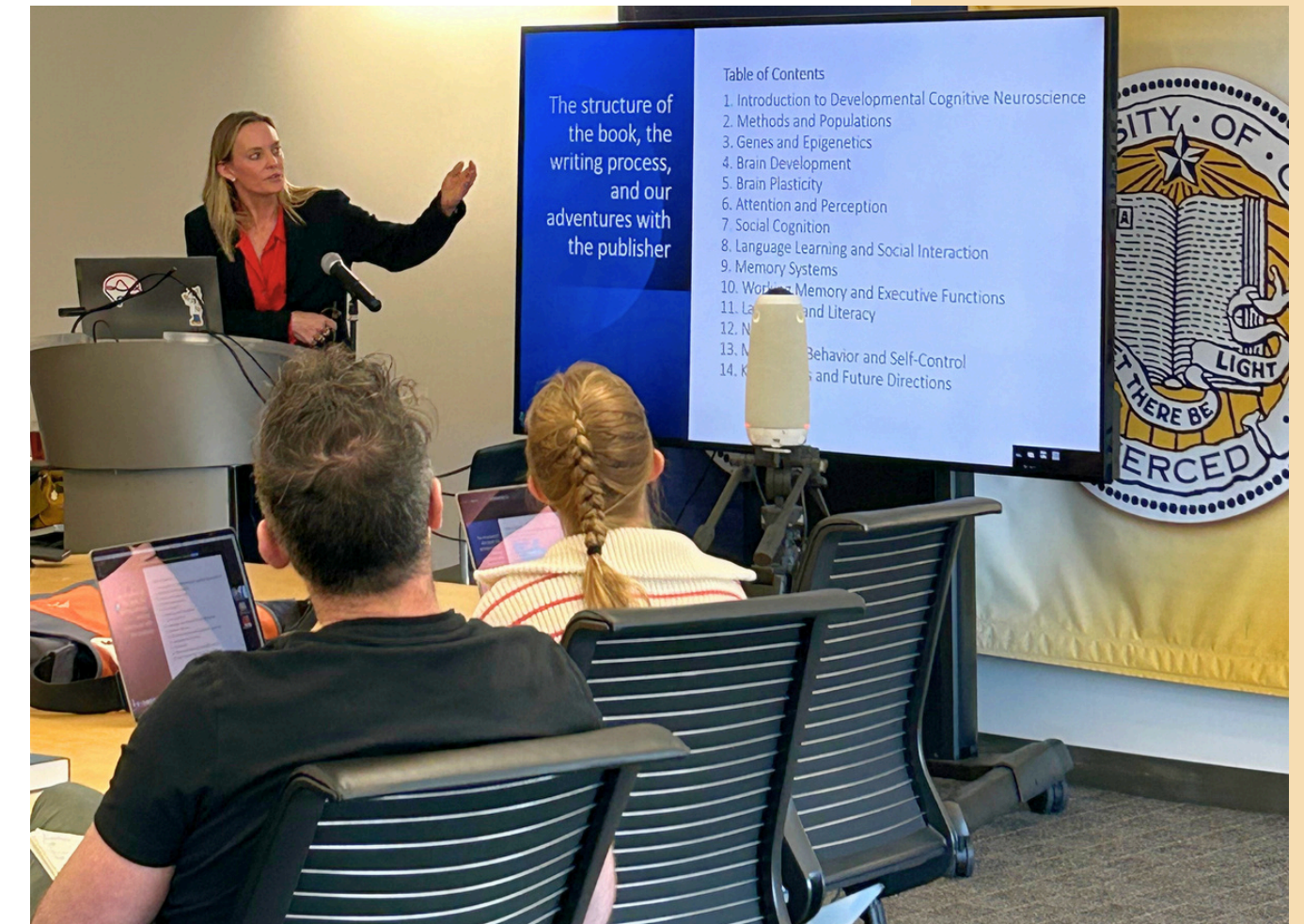
PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Opportunities for Learning

We collaborated with faculty to offer programming on a variety of topics. The Faculty Author Series entered its ninth year. These talks provide students and our larger campus community opportunities to hear directly from UC Merced faculty about their research and publications.



Prior to the 2024 election, Political Science faculty Professors Matthew Hibbing, Anil Menon, and Christopher Ojeda, and librarian Bronwen Maxson offered a panel titled *Making Sense of the Election and Staying Well*. Topics included evaluating political rhetoric, navigating polarization, sifting through the information landscape and strategies of managing stress and coping with emotion. Visit [UC Merced's Newsroom](#) for the full story.



Public Health Professor Dr. Heather Bortfeld was one of five faculty who participated in the Faculty Author Series (24-25). She not only shared her co-authored book *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, intended for undergraduate audiences, but also outlined her own academic journey from UCSB undergrad to UC Merced faculty member.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

UC Merced Library & UC Merced Community and Labor Center

A summer 2024 collaborative project between the UC Merced Library and the Community and Labor Center (CLC) resulted in two extensive bibliographies on the labor movement.



Graduate student Carlo Acevedo, in UC Merced’s Interdisciplinary Humanities program, spent the summer compiling and annotating texts that focused on the history of the labor movement both broadly and in the Central Valley.

In reflecting on the work, Acevedo commented on “a lineage of photographers ... committed to capturing, through photo documentaries, the beauty, the glory, the harshness, and the tragedy of the conditions experienced by the farm workers who have labored on this land.” In his review of historical texts, essays, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and visual arts, he found the organizing efforts of the working class to be both “inspiring and creative”.

These extensive bibliographies and an online research guide titled “Introduction to the History of the Labor Movement” are available for viewing.

Bibliographies:

- [History of the Labor Movement](#)
- [Labor Movement in the Central Valley](#)

ADVANCING OPEN ACCESS

Local & Systemwide



ZERO & LOW-COST COURSE MATERIAL GRANTS

With Scholar Transformational Impact Funds (STIF), 14 faculty used mini-grants from the Library's program to significantly reduce or eliminate course costs for their students between 2023 and 2025. Costs savings for students equaled \$71,863.00.

CELEBRATING OPEN SCHOLARSHIP

UC faculty and librarians celebrated International Open Access Week with 50 examples of open scholarship by UC Merced faculty. This scholarship ranged from open access articles to open-source code.

TAYLOR & FRANCIS OPEN ACCESS AGREEMENT

The UC Libraries struck an agreement with Taylor & Francis to support open access publishing for UC authors at no cost. The agreement covers nearly 2,500 T&J journals and runs from 2024 through 2027.

JOLT

The California Digital Library (CDL) launched the Journal Open Access Lookup Tool (JOLT). With JOLT, UC authors can search for a specific journal title to determine if it qualifies for an open access fee coverage or discount.

ARCHIVES INTERNSHIP

Archival Processing Experience

Tyler McGurk joined the UC Merced Library in summer 2024 as an archives intern while completing his graduate work at San José State University's iSchool. He had the opportunity to work with multiple archival collections though the largest project involved rehousing UC Cooperative Extension, Fresno County Records.

Through the internship, he gained the fundamental skills for archival custodianship and practical experience in a university library archives. McGurk really enjoyed learning how to handle and rehouse different kinds of materials including documents, photographs, negatives, slides, even leather chaps and an ax.

Read the [complete interview](#).



LITERARY ARCHIVE

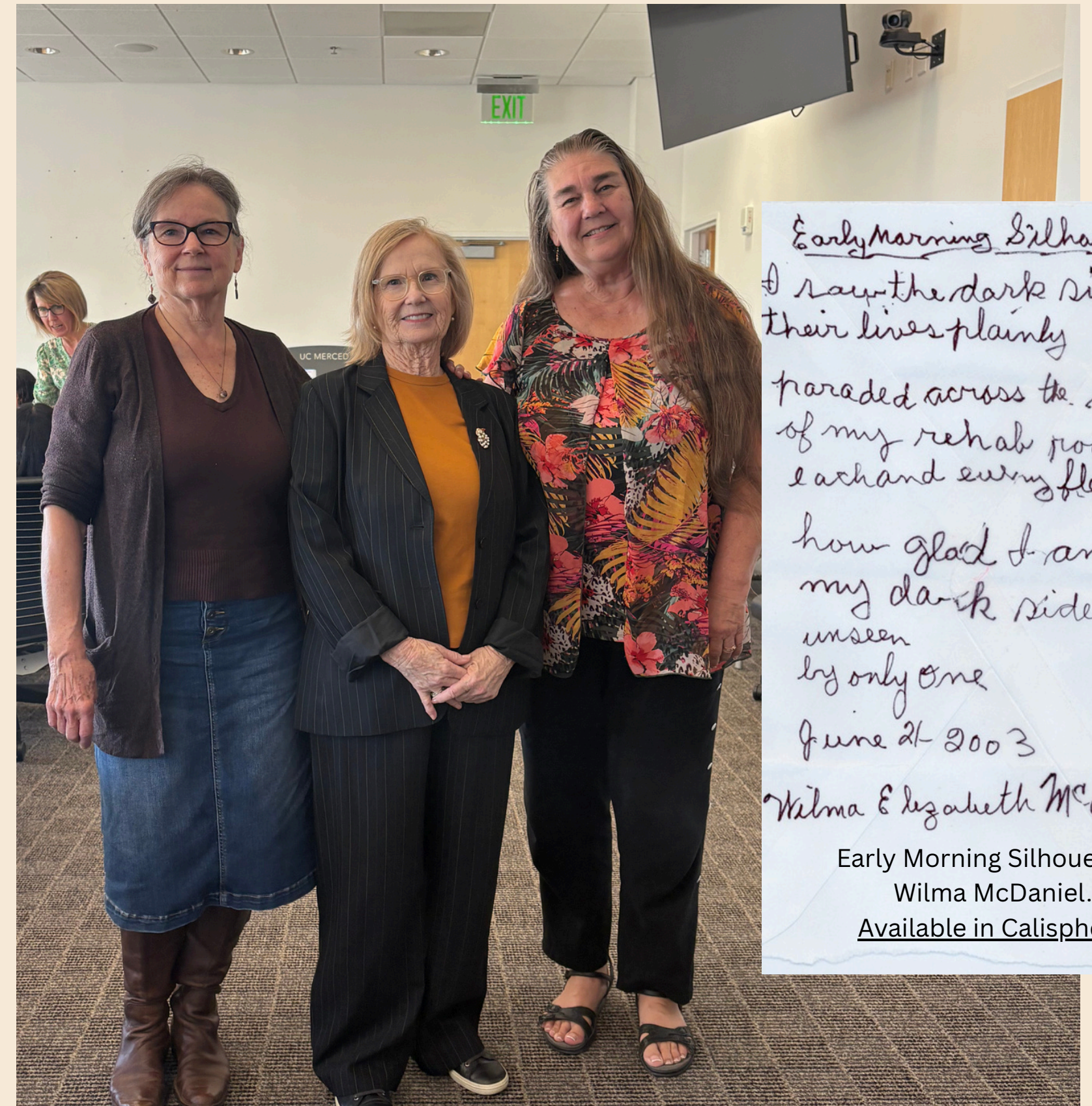
The Life of Wilma McDaniel

Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel, known as the “Okie Poet,” moved to the Central Valley of California from Oklahoma in 1936. Her poetry and prose is known for its spare style and straightforward language with content reflecting the lives of the working-class people and Dust Bowl migrants.

UC Merced Library Archives & Special Collections became the custodian of McDaniel’s literary archive in 2009, largely through the advocacy of the late Professor Jan Goggans, a member of UC Merced’s founding faculty.

In October 2024, the UC Merced Library was excited to host long-time friend and biographer, Betty Blanks, to talk about her 2024 book *Pick Up Your Name and Write: The Life of Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel*. Poet and local educator Lillian Vallee, who served as trustee of McDaniel’s literary estate, also shared remarks.

In the 1970s McDaniel was named poet laureate of Tulare County and was the first woman in California to be honored with a Literary Landmark. The Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel papers include correspondence, diaries, and publications of her poetry.



Author Betty Blanks (center) with Lillian Vallee (left) and Patti Russell-Curry

RESEARCH AWARD

Recognition of Student Research

The Abrescy-Kranich Research Award recognizes students who demonstrate effective use of information resources, an understanding of the research process, and growth in their research practices. This year's undergraduate awardees were Diana Muñoz and Maya Manesh. The award is made possible by the generosity of Arlene Kranich and is named after her grandson Carter Abrescy and late husband Larry Kranich.



In formal remarks at the award reception Kelli Breland, granddaughter of Arlene Kranich, shared about her late grandfather Larry Kranich and his educational journey.

She addressed award recipients emphasizing the importance of their undergraduate education and how proud her grandfather would be of them and the pursuit of their dreams.

View [full story](#).



Diana Muñoz (left) and Maya Manesh (right) stand with Arlene Kranich (center) at the Abrescy-Kranich Library Research Award Reception, March 21, 2025.

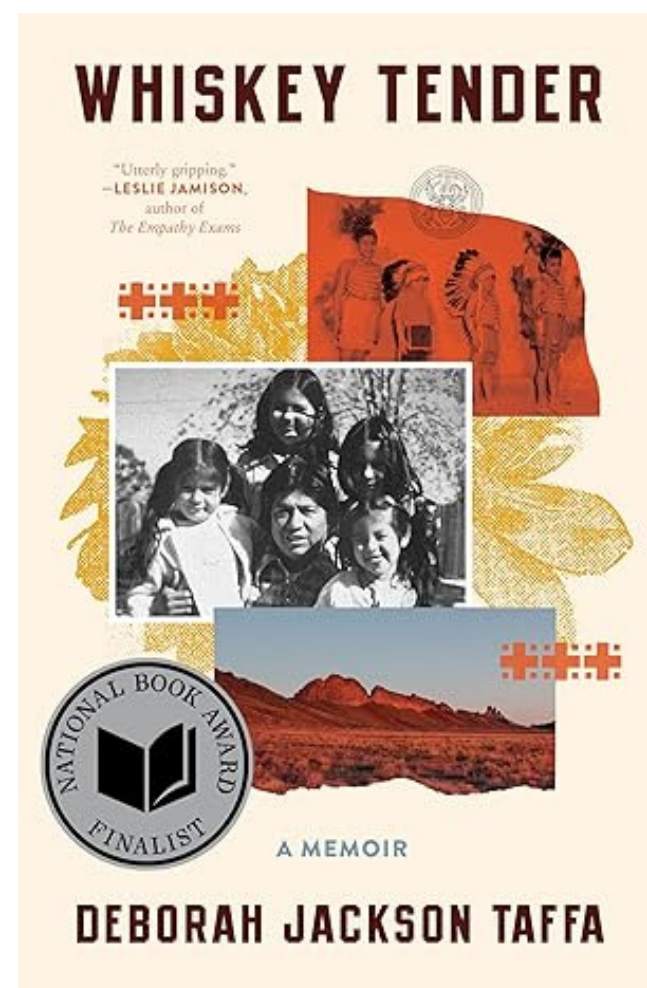
AUTHOR VISIT

Deborah Jackson Taffa

The UC Merced Library was happy to collaborate with campus partners to host an event with nationally recognized author Deborah Jackson Taffa (Kwatsaán/Laguna Pueblo) who read from her highly acclaimed book *Whiskey Tender: A Memoir*.



The event was co-sponsored by the Division of Equity, Justice, & Inclusive Excellence; Global Arts, Media & Writing Studies Department; Merritt Writing Program; and the UC Merced Library in collaboration with the Native and Indigenous Student Coalition.



Taffa was an engaging and generous speaker who shared her writing journey. In *Whiskey Tender* she wove Indigenous history into her personal story. In this book centered around reclamation, she “wanted people to feel what is like to be an Indigenous girl growing up in the shadow of the American Dream.” Read the [full interview](#).

STUDENT CONNECTIONS

Sticker Contest: Purpose, Place, and Past

In spring 2025, the Research & Learning Services group launched a sticker contest. Students were asked include the “Empowering Researchers” motto, incorporate Yosemite National Park or the Sierra Nevada region, and depict an adult and juvenile mammoth.

These design elements were inspired by our mission, location, and the Library’s permanent fossil exhibit featuring Columbia Mammoth bones discovered by CalTrans at a site 10 miles south of Merced in 2012.



Arboleda Fossils at UC Merced.
Located on the UC Merced Library’s 2nd floor.



Two of our top five Instagram postings for the year were the call for sticker submissions and the call to vote for a favorite design.

I am happy to be a part of this in creating representation to Merced's prehistoric past and honoring our researchers. I was able to learn more about the background and history of these fossils that we're so lucky to have on our campus.

Kyahra Lingatong
sticker creator and winner

A graphic of a spotlight beam shining from the top left corner of the page, illuminating the text below. The beam is a light gray gradient that tapers as it moves down and to the right.

SPOTLIGHT

Interview with UC Merced Alum Eduardo Diaz

Eduardo Diaz, UC Merced alum ('22) met with us to share how his time at UC Merced impacted his career path, what his current work involves, and some spot-on advice for current Bobcats!

What is your current work and your favorite part of your position?

I am the Interlibrary Loan Supervisor at Santa Clara University Library. I oversee student employees, source materials for our faculty and students, and supply materials to institutions like UC Berkeley. Beyond my ILL responsibilities, I staff our Library's Help Desk. I dedicate 2–3 hours on weekdays and a full shift on Sundays. I also Chair our library's Popular Reading Collection known as POP. We acquire best-selling fiction and non-fiction books and make these titles easily accessible to our campus community to encourage leisure reading.

The aspect of my work I most enjoy is locating hard-to-find items. It evokes a hunt to locate materials, and that is really fun to me. I recall an ILL request for a dissertation written in Italian. After finding the citation on a CV and consulting with a colleague, I found the author's contact information and crafted an email message using Google Translate. I asked if he would be willing to provide his dissertation for one of our faculty members. He responded right away with the dissertation. Success!

I also enjoy working with our students. They give me life. I get to hear what is going on in their school activities. I have enough perspective to tell them that the drama they are experiencing now just won't matter! They seem to appreciate that my college experience was not that long ago.



As a student, what was your role at the UC Merced Library? What was valuable in that work?

At the UC Merced Library, I worked as a Digitization Specialist for three and a half years. I scanned a lot of materials for supplemental course resources. Book chapters were common. I also digitized archival materials, including posters, notebooks, and records, for an AIDS History Project documenting the San Francisco Bay Area's response to the AIDS epidemic. When we had new equipment or software for digitization, I tested workflows and provided feedback.

The knowledge I learned at UC Merced translated into my current role in Interlibrary Loan since we often provide materials to other libraries in the form of a scan. My job at UC Merced is the reason I have this job now. It gave me the direct experience I needed. There is a lot of learning from being boots on the ground for so long. I'm still a much faster scanner than my student workers, and I have learned tricks that I share with them to increase the readability of our digitized files.

My job at UC Merced is the reason I have this job now. It gave me the direct experience I needed.

At the UC Merced Library, we had a very strong digitization department. I really appreciated the equipment we had available. When I started at Santa Clara, I knew what was possible with the right equipment and skills.



Eduardo Diaz presenting on Film Screenings in an Academic Library at the California Library Association (CLA) conference, 2025.

When you were a UC Merced student, did you ever think your work in the Library might translate into a career?

I'm a Cognitive Science major first, but I knew I needed an advanced degree to work in that field. In my senior year, I was thinking about what I was going to do in the future and how much I really enjoyed my job at the Library and its impact. I was part of digitizing materials that someone would probably never touch again. We were putting these documents out there, on Calisphere, for everyone to access.

It felt good to make materials widely available for researchers or anyone interested in a specific topic. I thought, "maybe this is what I want to do." At the time, I talked to my manager Heather Wagner. She pointed me to a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program at San José State University (SJSU) and a job website called Archives Gig. I would periodically check its postings.

I am now in my last year of SJSU's MLIS program. I'll graduate in the spring. I discovered this career path because of my job at the UC Merced Library.

I was part of digitizing materials that someone would probably never touch again. We were putting these documents out there, on Calisphere, for everyone to access.

What advice do you have for UC Merced Bobcats? What would you encourage students to do?

Sometimes people have asked, "What was there to do at UC Merced?" I've told them, "It works if you work it." You have the chance to take advantage of opportunities that you wouldn't have at other schools. For example, I was doing research my first year.

Networking is really important. Don't just go to class and go home. Talk to your professors. Make sure that they know you. I had a professor give me a glowing recommendation that helped me get the job I have now.

Join a research lab. Join a club. Put yourself out there. Be known. Be ambitious. You never know when people will come back into your life. In 2-3 years, they could be the ones interviewing you. The further you step away from college, the more you will realize that this is good advice. Also have fun, be kind, and live life to the fullest!

I had a professor give me a glowing recommendation that helped me get the job I have now.

LIBRARY STAFF NEWS

Years of Service

20 YEARS

ERIC SCOTT, ASSOCIATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN FOR LIBRARY OPERATIONS

15 YEARS

ALISAK SANAVONGSAY, DIGITAL ASSETS PROGRAMMER

10 YEARS

HAIPENG LI, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

HEATHER WAGNER, DIGITIZATION COORDINATOR

5 YEARS

DEREK DEVNICH, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR DATA SERVICES

NATHAN GARCIA, INTERLIBRARY SERVICES COORDINATOR

OLIVIA OLIVARES, INSTRUCTION & OUTREACH LIBRARIAN



Staff

We welcomed four colleagues in 24-25.

PAULINA ALLENDE, LEARNING SERVICES COORDINATOR

TRACEY AUE, LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

SANG PARK, TECHNICAL SERVICES COORDINATOR

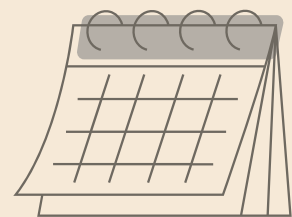
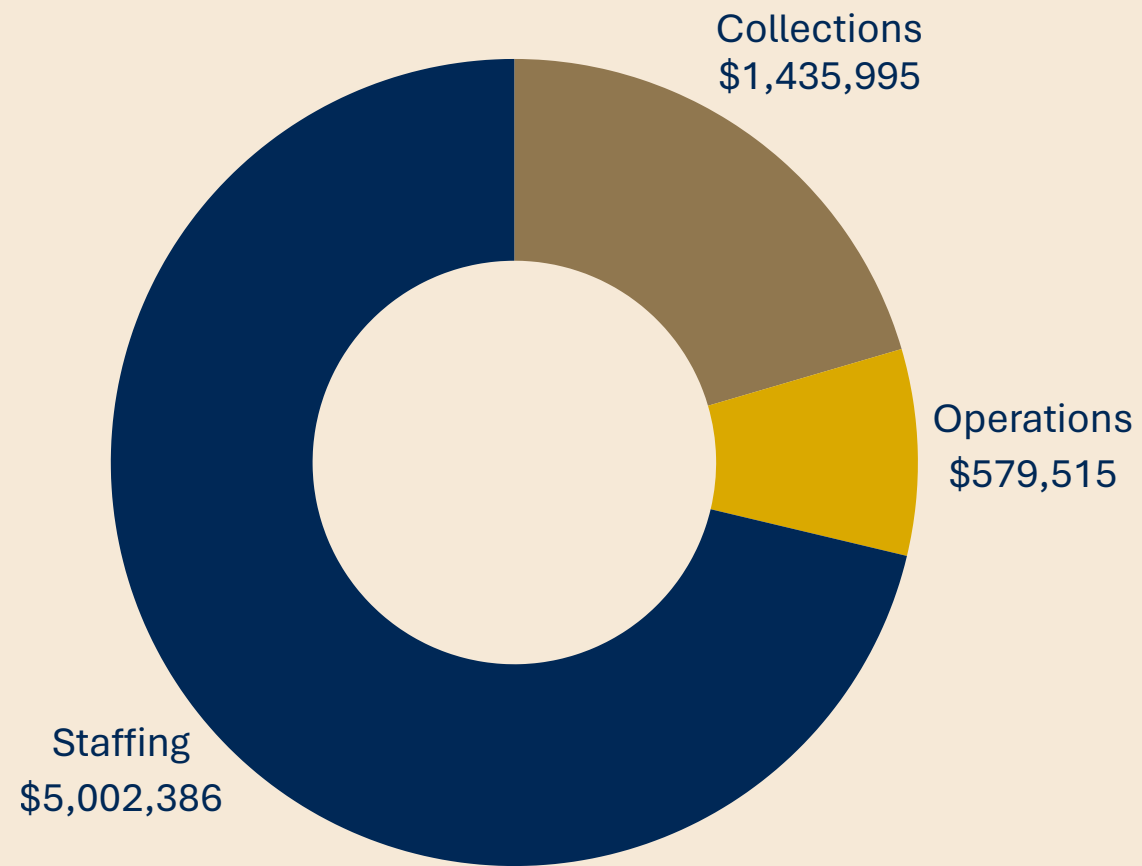
POLLY PERALTA, ARCHIVES SPECIALIST



FACTS & FIGURES

2024-2025

Library Budget



104
of weekly public service hours



Library instruction in courses
120 sessions
1,788 participants



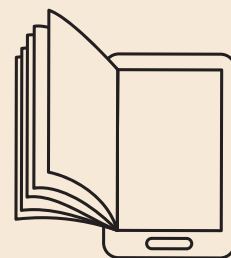
1,418
research inquiries
(chat, email, consultations)



3M
Electronic items
175,070
Print items



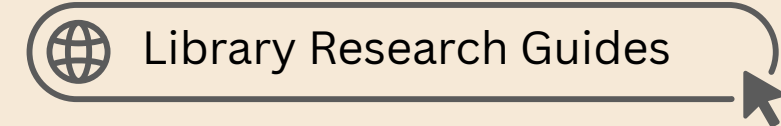
9,658
Check-outs of print items



3,601 Items borrowed
2,393 Items loaned



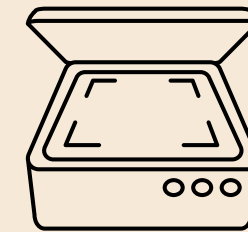
151,109
Library website visits



Library Research Guides
119,078
Visits



28 Digital collections
6.1M Digital collection page views



17,783 Pages digitized
from Archives & Special Collections



10,021
of views
of most popular Instagram post

THANK YOU

Your gifts support the ongoing work of the UC Merced Library. Thank you for partnering with us to offer learning opportunities, increase information access, preserve unique regional resources, and invest in students.

Cash Gifts & Pledges

Anonymous (2)

Belinda Braunstein

Jason Frisch

Olivia Olivares

Palaniappan Paramasivan

Steven M. Parkes

Gifts in Kind

Susan Porgans

Julie Rose

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Endowments

Carter Joseph Abrescy & Larry Kranich
Library Award for Student Research
Excellence Endowed Fund

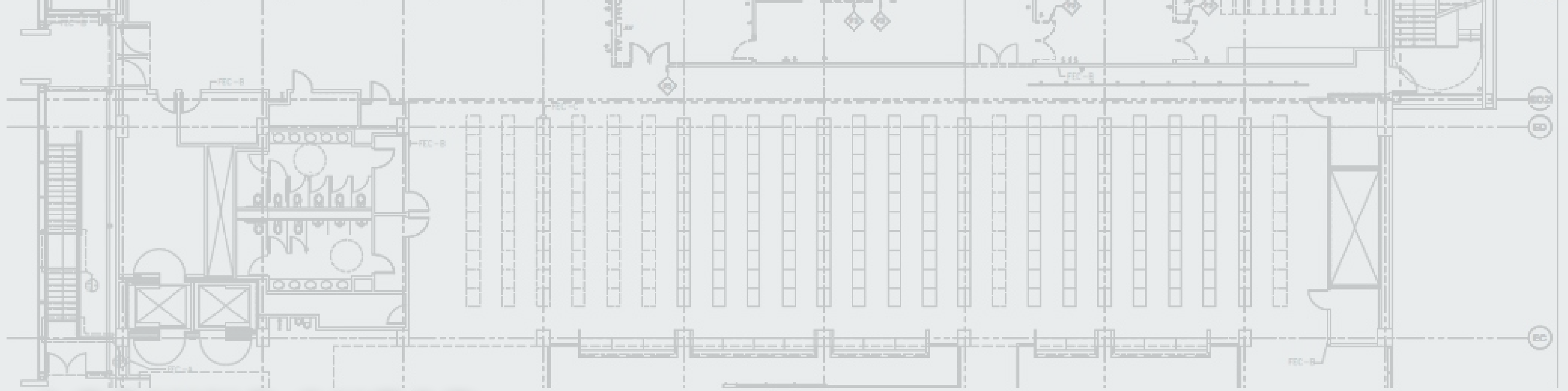
Ramicova Library Endowed Fund

Louis P. and Doris M. Gonella Discovery
Room Endowed Fund

McFadden / Willis Reading Room
Endowed Fund

Leo and Dottie Kolligian Library & Ed and
Jeanne Kashian Main Floor Endowed
Fund





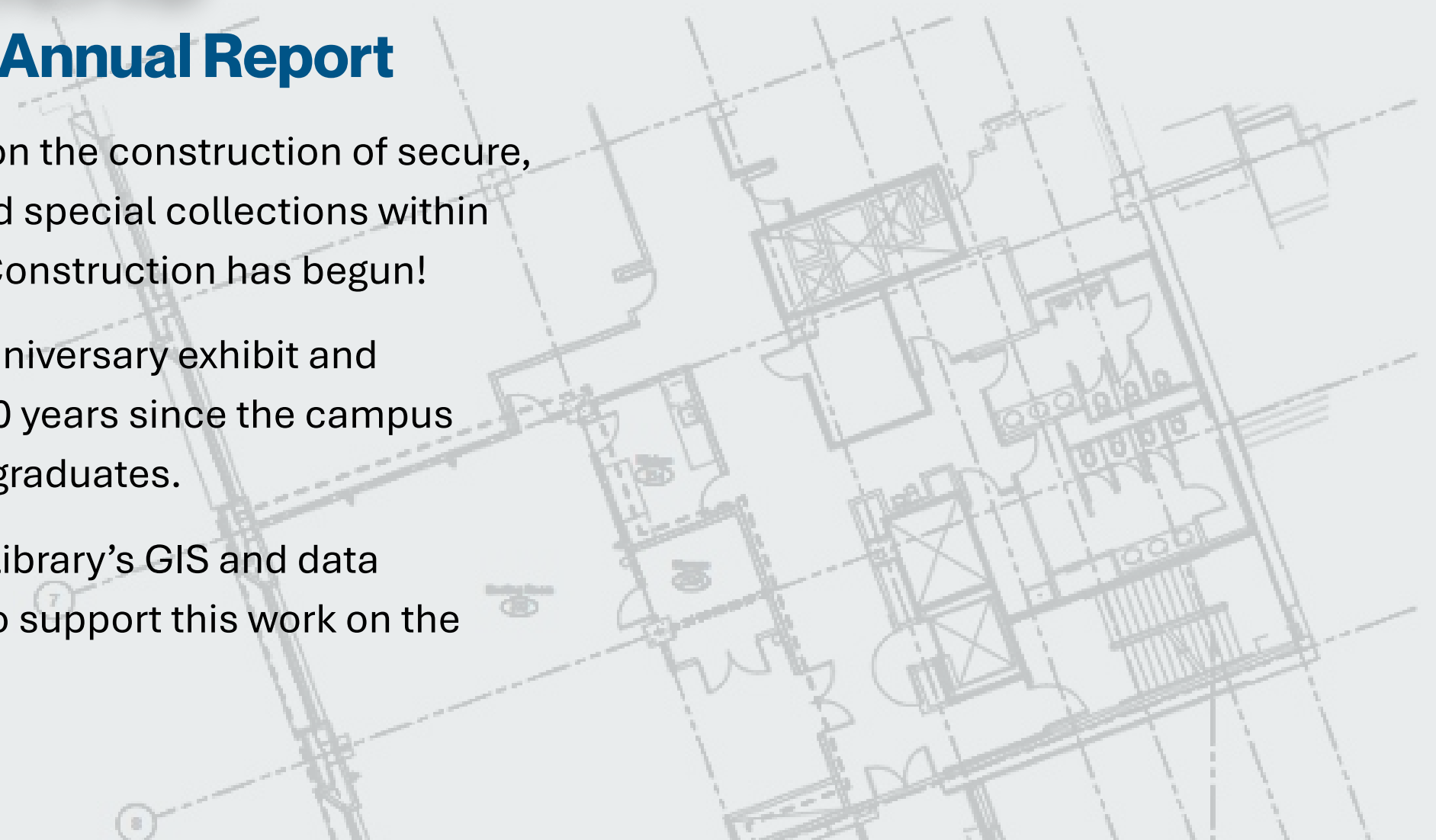
LOOKING AHEAD

Updates in Our Next Annual Report

We will have exciting updates on the construction of secure, climate-controlled archival and special collections within the Kolligian Library building. Construction has begun!

We will highlight our 20 year anniversary exhibit and celebration. It has been over 20 years since the campus first opened its doors to undergraduates.

We will share more about the Library's GIS and data services and new lab spaces to support this work on the 3rd floor West, Kolligian Library.





Acknowledgements

Photography: Chris Abrescy, Veronica Adrover, Paulina Allende, and Emily Lin