

UC MERCED LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024



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LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



Welcome to the UC Merced Library Annual Report of 2023-2024!

The UC Merced Library accomplished a great deal last year. Our mission to support research, teaching and learning is reflected in the activities and programs we sponsored, many of which are featured in this report. Examples include launching an academic integrity model in UC Merced's learning management system, continuing the Zero-Cost/Low-Cost Course Materials program, offering applied labor research workshops in collaboration with UC Merced's Community and Labor Center (CLC), and partnering with the Senate Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (LASC) to support faculty Open Access publishing.

Planning and design for the NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) renovation project continues to move forward this year. We anticipate construction to begin in early 2025. Once finished, we will have a state-of-the-art facility to house our valuable special collections and archives.

A highlight of last year was to award two outstanding undergraduate students—Darián Andrade-Diaz and Ashley Ratcliff-Winn—with the Abrescy-Kranich Student Award for Library Research Excellence. It's always inspiring to see students making progress and being successful in their studies. This award was made available through the generosity of the Abrescy-Kranich family for whom we are grateful.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters and donors who have been so instrumental to our success. I also would like to express my deep appreciation to our staff for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to our mission of supporting research, teaching, and learning.

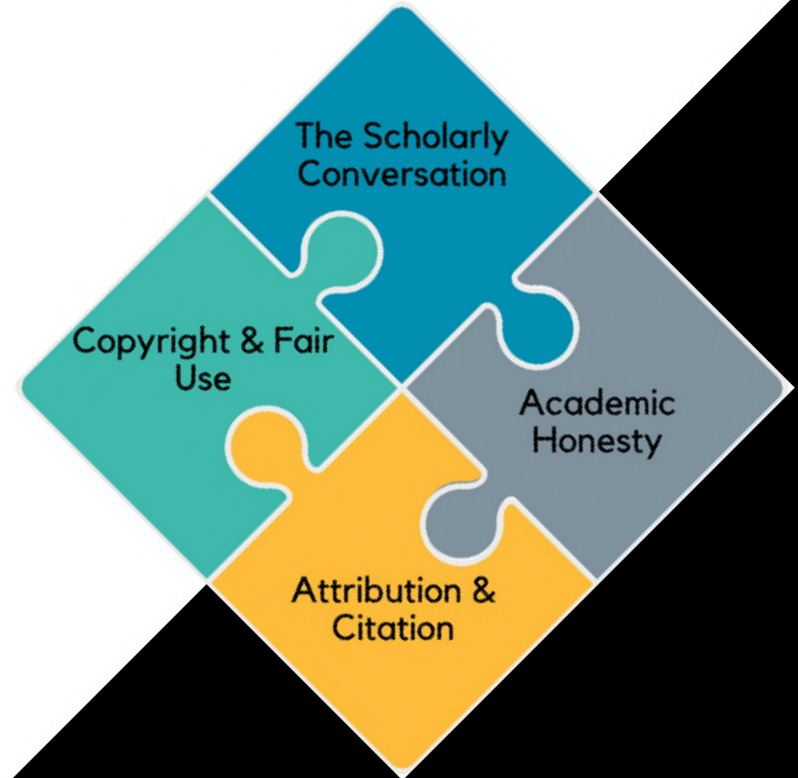
CONTRIBUTIONS TO STUDENT LEARNING

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY MODULE

This spring, Research & Learning Services librarians launched an academic integrity module in UC Merced's campus learning management system.

The contents introduced first-year undergraduates to four pieces of academic integrity: the scholarly conversation; academic honesty; attribution and citations; and copyright and fair use and encouraged them to apply academic integrity to their student practices.

Librarians Bronwen Maxson and Olivia Olivia created this module in collaboration with the Teaching Commons and in consultation with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. They received initial feedback from students and faculty.



"The CatCourses module on academic integrity provided students in my freshman seminar with a foundation for understanding how to conduct research at UC Merced. The resource was especially helpful to me in teaching about academic integrity in the face of emerging technologies like AI."

--Professor Courtenay Monroe, Political Science

APPLIED LABOR RESEARCH SERIES: A COLLABORATION

During the past academic year, the Library collaborated with the [UC Merced Community and Labor Center](#) to offer an inaugural series of applied labor research workshops hosted in the Library.

The four workshops all aimed at enhancing advocacy, organizing, and policy-related work. Faculty, librarians, and other experts led the sessions.

While also open to staff and community members, the workshops were designed to give students practical training to support their academic success and help them make a difference in their communities. Topics included legal research, analysis of Census Bureau data with SPSS (statistical analysis software), GIS mapping technology, and public information requests.

Future plans for this collaboration include expanding workshop topics and offering a certificate for participants who complete the series.



Participants learn how labor research can be used by law and policymakers to shape the future of California with Dr. Edward Orozco Flores, Faculty Director of UC Merced's Community & Labor Center.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

This year's awardees of the Abrescy-Kranich Student Award for Library Research Excellence were Darián Andrade-Diaz and Ashley Ratcliff-Winn.

Their winning papers are available in eScholarship :

[“Assimilating an Indigenous Perspective in Sequoia Kings Canyon National Parks”](#)

(Andrade-Diaz)

[“Prevalence of and Risk Factors for Nervios and other Psychological Disparities in Mexican Migrant Farm Workers”](#) (Ratcliff-Winn)



L to R: Mark Breland, Arlene Kranich, Darián Andrade-Diaz, Ashley Ratcliff-Winn, Haipeng Li, Kelli Breland, Julie Breland

At the [award reception](#), the awardees expressed thanks to the Abrescy-Kranich families for making this award available. They also shared inspirational remarks that called attention to the university's opportunities and the support they received from professors and librarians.

SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The UC Merced Library runs a one-day mini-conference style series of workshops as part of the Summer Undergraduate Research Internship (SURI) onboarding program.

SURI participants—current undergraduates from UC Merced and partnering universities—work in a research lab for a summer, receive training to prepare them for graduate school, and conclude their internship with a poster presentation.

This year Library staff presented to 175 students on a variety of topics.

Participants were able to choose the sessions they felt would be the most beneficial to their own development.

Themes included locating and accessing information, data management, and the publishing process.

Sara Davidson Squibb, Associate University Librarian for Research & Engagement, teaches about citation networks and tools to help navigate them.



LIBRARY TOUR

Designed for incoming undergraduates, librarians offered an engaging Library tour to introduce students to Library spaces and services.



Accessing the tour via their phones, students followed prompts to explore the Library with a cut-out of our campus mascot, Rufus!

Over 400 students from introductory writing courses completed the tour this year.

DONUTS AND DREAMS: EMPOWERING FIRST-GEN SCHOLARS

As part of First-Gen College Celebration Week and in partnership with the Calvin E. Bright Success Center, the Library hosted a gathering of first-generation undergraduate students to celebrate their accomplishments and welcome them.

Student participants played board games and trivia contests with library and campus staff. While enjoying refreshments, they engaged in lively discussions about their hopes, plans, and dreams for college and beyond.

Librarians also answered research-related questions and offered advice on best practices in library research.



The poster features a light gray background with faint donut outlines. At the top left is a large white donut outline. In the top right corner is the UC Merced Library logo, which includes a stylized 'M' with a donut icon above it and the text 'UC MERCED LIBRARY'. The main title 'DONUTS & DREAMS' is written in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below it, a dark blue horizontal bar contains the subtitle 'EMPOWERING FIRST-GEN SCHOLARS' in white. In the center, four donuts are displayed: a chocolate-glazed donut, a powdered sugar donut, a donut with colorful sprinkles, and another powdered sugar donut. Below the donuts, the date 'NOV. 7, 2023' is shown in a yellow rounded rectangle. At the bottom, the location and time 'KL 397 | 9:15AM - 10:45AM' are shown in a yellow rounded rectangle, with a white arrow pointing from the first donut to this box. A faint donut outline is also visible in the bottom right corner.

DONUTS & DREAMS
EMPOWERING FIRST-GEN SCHOLARS

UC MERCED LIBRARY

NOV. 7, 2023

KL 397 | 9:15AM - 10:45AM

DEEPENING RESEARCHER SUCCESS



DATA SERVICES

The Center for Data Services has engaged in a range of activities to foster open, accessible, and reproducible science.

Staff offered open workshops on Python, R, Julia, Unix shell, querying databases with SQL, version control, software project management, and data management. In addition, they taught custom workshops for individual labs and graduate groups on Unix shell, high-performance computing, version control, and project management. Over a hundred graduate students, faculty, and other researchers attended these workshops.

In addition to classroom pedagogy, the Center supported twenty local researchers by holding one-on-one consultations to help them implement best practices for managing and securing sensitive data, archiving research data, and reproducible software development.

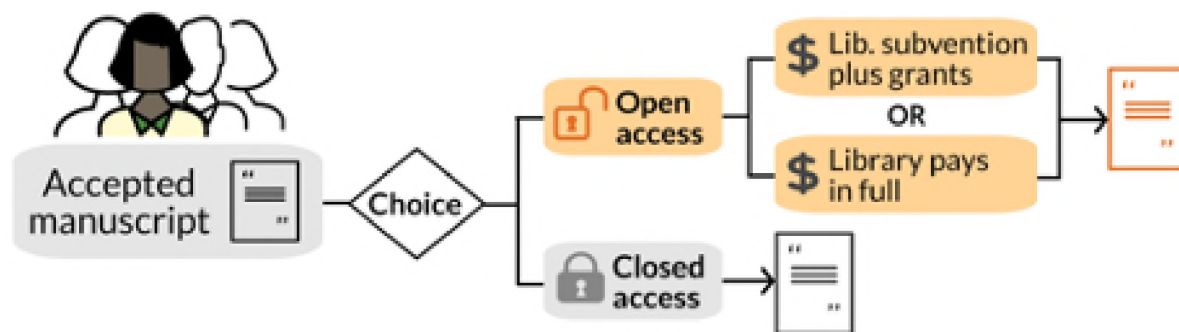
These data services further the University's mission to support reproducible research by ensuring that research products—data, software code, and experimental protocols—are publicly available in a form that people can find and understand.

PARTNERSHIP TO COMMUNICATE TRANSFORMATIVE AGREEMENTS

As part of the University of California's commitment to make UC publishing accessible to all, UC Libraries negotiate and implement transformative agreements and discounts. These contracts between UC Libraries and publishers support open access (OA) publishing *and* provide reading access to the general public. They mark a move away from standard subscription license agreements which keep publications behind a paywall.

To communicate this important work and surface OA publishing options for UC Merced faculty, Professor Maria DePrano initiated a faculty/librarian partnership. The launch event, a one-day OA Ambassadors' Retreat, brought together senate faculty from the Library and Scholarly Communication (LASC) committee and liaison librarians to deepen their understanding of these agreements.

Mark Clemente, Open Access Publisher Agreements Manager of the California Digital Library (CDL), provided valuable expertise on UC's open access beginnings, the transformative agreement model, author decision-making, licensing options, and existing challenges.



Once a manuscript is accepted, authors can choose whether or not to publish open access.

If open access is chosen, UC Libraries pay a portion and the researcher supplies the remainder.

If a researcher does not have funding, the UC Libraries pay in full.

Diagram illustrating how transformative agreements work. Provided by the California Digital Library (CDL).

Since that time, Academic Senate LASC members and librarians have visited several faculty department meetings to talk about transformative agreements and field questions. From 2022 to 2023, UC Merced boasted the largest decrease in open access drop-out rates of any UC campus—suggesting that this peer-to-peer outreach effort may be contributing toward higher open access participation rates.

This faculty/librarian partnership has served as a model for other campuses to communicate about UC Publisher agreements, encourage open access publishing, and make more UC research freely available to all readers. UC Davis Library has since adapted the OA Ambassadors program, with library liaisons taking the lead in presenting transformative agreement information at department meetings.

Many thanks to Dr. DePrano for her initiative in this area, University Librarian Haipeng Li for his support of this event and larger partnership, and to LASC committee members and librarians for their commitment to promoting transformative agreements.

Currently 55% of articles authored at [the University of California](#) are eligible for publishing Open Access (OA).

MAPPING GENTRIFICATION IN WASHINGTON D.C.

Communicating Research

UC Merced sociologist Dr. Tanya Golash-Boza spoke as part of the Library's Faculty Author Series in spring 2024. In her book, [Before Gentrification: The Creation of DC's Racial Wealth Gap](#) (2023), Golash-Boza shares her research findings on how ongoing disinvestment, redlining practices, and the War on Drugs displaced Black middle-class communities in Washington D.C. and resulted in gentrification.



Dr. Tanya Golash-Boza is Professor of Sociology, UC Merced & Executive Director, University of California Washington Program (UCDC)



In addition to her book, Golash-Boza has shared the findings of her research project through an online ArcGIS StoryMap titled [Mapping Gentrification in Washington D.C.](#) The StoryMap presents text, maps, and multi-media, including an approximate map location and an excerpt from interviews she conducted for the book. The quotes are from 31 Black men who returned to their Washington D.C. neighborhoods after a period of incarceration starting in the 1980s or 90s. These men reflect on the many changes in the neighborhoods they once knew.

The Value of Visualizations & Imagery

Golash-Boza became aware of geospatial data and tools as a way to conduct and communicate her research through other projects using maps to visualize disparities and inequities. These projects include [Mapping Segregation in Washington DC](#) by historians Mara Cherkasky and Sarah Jane Shoenfeld and [Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America](#), a project at the University of Richmond directed by Robert K. Nelson.

Sociologist Jackelyn Hwang's work at Stanford, using Google Street View imagery to observe neighborhood conditions over time, was also adapted as part of this project's methodology. This existing work informed Golash-Boza's decision to create [Mapping Gentrification in Washington D.C.](#)



Building a Team

To create a StoryMap using geospatial data and ArcGIS tools, Golash-Boza employed a team of undergraduate and graduate students. Coming from the disciplines of Anthropology, Sociology, and Engineering disciplines, they combined experience with geospatial information systems (GIS), an understanding of social justice, and a willingness to learn.

Accessing GIS Resources

The team accessed ArcGIS Pro software and conducted their work at the GIS Center's lab, where Director Erin Mutch provided knowledgeable support. Mutch helped the team successfully transition their work from ArcGIS Pro to ArcGIS Online where the StoryMap is currently hosted.

StoryMap Reach

Since its launch, [Mapping Gentrification in Washington D.C.](#) has had both casual readers and those who have spent much more time with the content.

Though Golash-Boza anticipated that people in Washington D.C. would be the ones most likely to access the StoryMap, interest has been broader. She is aware of high school teachers using the content for classes and a researcher using it as inspiration for their own study design. To date, [Mapping Gentrification in Washington D.C.](#) has had almost 40,000 views.

"This was an innovative and unique project that brought together the subject matter expertise of Professor Golash-Boza and GIS Center staff to mentor and train students on creating and analyzing data by leveraging mapping and geographic information systems technologies."

-- Erin Mutch, Director of the GIS Center

PRESERVING & PROMOTING REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE



PROCESSING UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION RECORDS

This spring Fabiola Chavez, Archives Specialist and UC Merced alum ('16), finished processing a collection of materials documenting the work and activities of the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR). The collection includes photographs, videos, and documents primarily from 1924-1989. Read more about Fabiola's work and the collection in this abbreviated interview.



What are the benefits of processing an archival collection?

While archival processing is important for documenting and organizing a collection for discoverability, it is also essential for preserving collections. In this case, many photographs were sticking together. To minimize any ongoing degradation, I placed individual photographs in archival Mylar sheets. With this care, photographs will be in great condition for viewing by researchers and for future digitization.



What decisions did you make as you processed this collection?

I had to thoughtfully consider how to best organize the collection. Did I want to organize the folders by locations, events, animals? While I retained the overall collection order, I chose to place the folders in alphabetical order. Some folders were renamed in the process to better describe the photographs inside. I also had to decide at what level I would describe the collection. I made extensive notes including dates and names in anticipation of what researchers might want to know.



What is your favorite find in this collection?

My favorite photograph from this collection is an image of a Happy Cows campaign photo shoot. I remember watching commercials with the slogan "Great Cheese Comes from Happy Cows. Happy Cows Come from California." I was surprised to come across this photo, courtesy of the California Milk Advisory Board, in a folder named *Computer* which is now more appropriately titled *Cow Commercial*.

California's "Happy Cows" star in four new "It's the Cheese" television spots, part of an advertising campaign sponsored by the California Milk Advisory Board. The 30-second spots have a tagline explaining why California cheese tastes so good: "Great Cheese Comes from Happy Cows. Happy Cows Come from California. Real California Cheese. It's The Cheese."

Photo courtesy of the California Milk Advisory Board

Contact: Context Marketing

(415) 289-7575

VCCC_Vcanr_Box3_Folder5

Cow Commercial

undated





What would you want others to know about this collection?

As someone who grew up in Tulare County and was involved in a lot of agricultural activities, I hope individuals will take advantage of this collection to gain insight into agricultural practices in the Central Valley. Individuals may be aware that the Central Valley produces a lot of food but may not know all the work that goes on behind-the-scenes.

How can others find these materials? What are the next steps with this collection?

I prepared a finding aid for the collection which is [posted at the Online Archive of California \(OAC\)](#). The finding aid details the collection's scope and arrangement along with information about individual Box and Folder contents. This overview allows researchers to more easily identify materials for viewing at our Special Collections & Archives. Some films have been digitized and are [available in Callisphere](#), and as needs arise we can digitize more photographs and documents for improved access.

NEH GRANT UPDATE

In 2023, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) awarded UC Merced an Infrastructure & Capacity Building Challenge Grant at the maximum amount of \$750,000. The grant supports the creation of vital facilities in the Library to protect and provide access to important collections documenting the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada.

Chancellor Juan Sánchez Muñoz has matched the challenge grant with funds from the 2022 Mackenzie Scott gift to UC Merced. The funds will contribute to the creation of secure, climate-controlled archives and special collections storage in the Kolligian Library building, a public reading room, and an archives learning and programming space.



Above: Space that will be refurnished into a reading room.

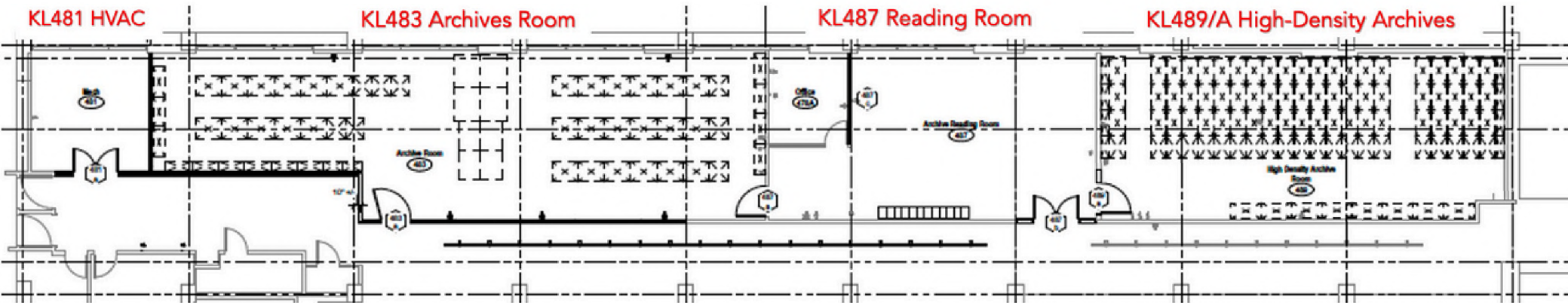
At right: New storage will be designed to better accommodate archival materials. Current shelving is not properly sized for record cartons and oversized material.



Expanded, Secure Storage

Archives and special collections require the right environment to ensure they are protected from damage and deterioration and are preserved for use. Without the proper temperature and humidity control, photographs can fade, paper can become moldy, and other forms of media will corrode. The original archives and special collections storage space in the Library was built without the required climate controls, and overhead plumbing lines present a risk of water leakage. A newly designed storage space with expanded storage capacity will include a dedicated HVAC unit to maintain appropriate climate control for the archives.

A preliminary architectural rendering for expanded archives and special collections space on the Library's fourth floor.



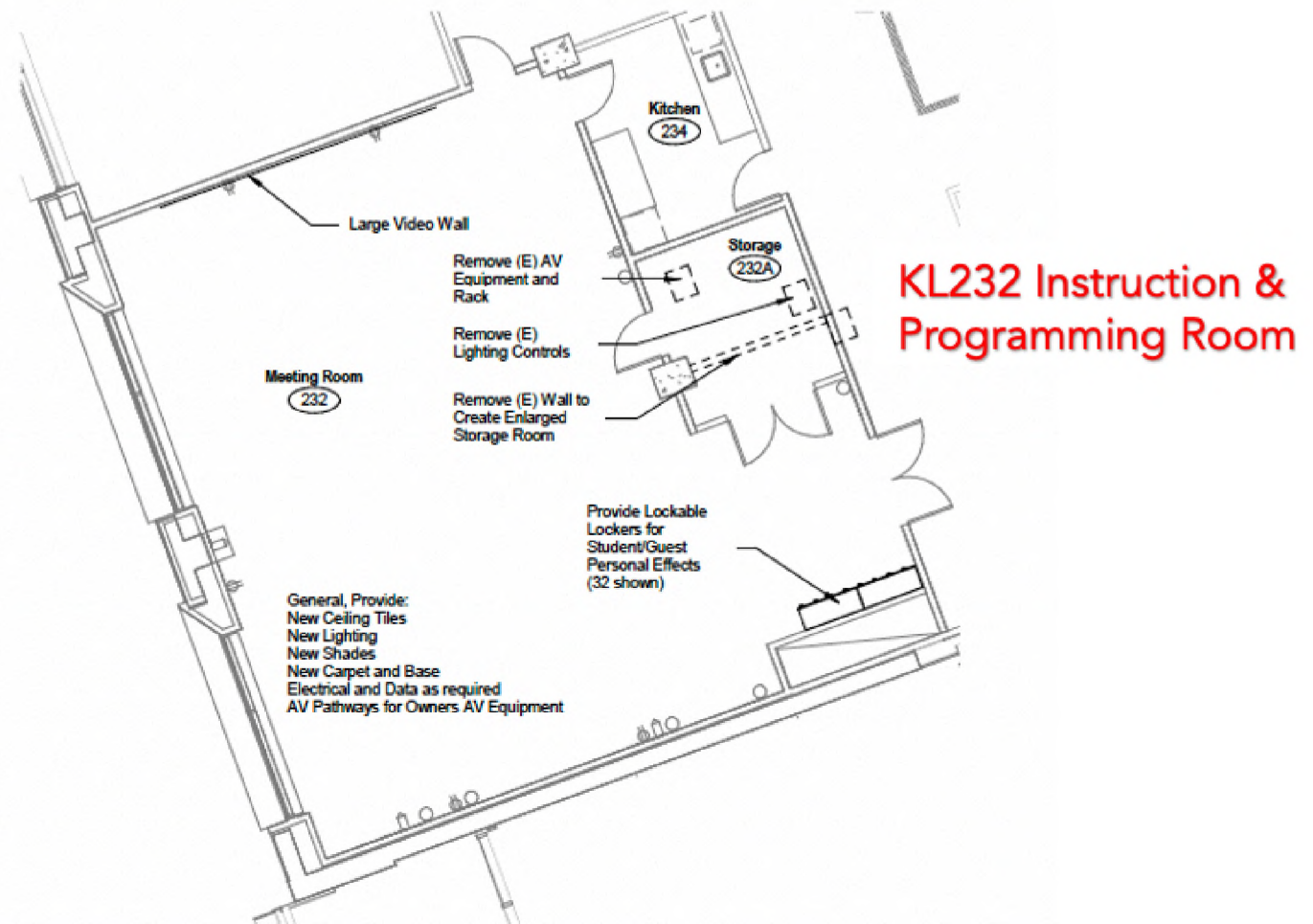
Reading Room

The project will also create a reading room where researchers can conduct research with staff assistance and supervision. The Library currently does not have such a dedicated space and has been using classroom or meeting space ad hoc to provide access to archival materials. A dedicated space will provide better security and a more conducive environment for supporting students, faculty, and the general public who desire to view and use our collections.

Learning & Programming Space

The primary instructional space in the Library accommodates a maximum of 24 students. To increase opportunities for students to engage with primary source materials, a large conference room will be refurbished as an instructional space that can accommodate classes of 30 students, with tables large enough to spread out archival materials.

With upgraded technology and flexible furniture, this room will also serve as a programming space for exhibition-related events, talks, and other public programs showcasing special collections and the region's history.



Renovation to Begin in 2025

The Library and campus Facilities Management have completed the project's study phase with local firm Darden Architects. Construction documents are being finalized and we anticipate the renovation to begin in 2025. Due to rising costs for labor and materials, we are seeking philanthropic gifts to complete the full scope of this project.

RESEARCH IN THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Emily Lin, Director of Strategic Initiatives & Archives and Special Collections connected with doctoral student May Kao Xiong to discuss the value of archives for Xiong's research and the research of future scholars.

Why is access to the archives so important to you?

As a doctoral student, my research relies heavily on archival sources. My dissertation is about the history of UC Merced so the Library's unique archival collection about UC Merced's formation and growth is essential for my research. Having access to this rich archive at UC Merced Library gives me the best of both worlds: being at the center of history and research through UC Merced's archives and the people who make the campus and community.

What if you did not have access to the archives?

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our lives both personally and academically. Among many difficult moments as a researcher, it was not possible to access the physical archives. At one point, I was concerned that not having access to the archives would delay my academic progress and impact my funding. I felt an urgency to reconsider using UC Merced's archival collection. However, I'm thankful for UC Merced Library's dedicated staff who supported many of us through the pandemic with our research challenges and they continue to find ways to give us access to institutional sources.

What excites you about the spaces we plan to create: an Archives & Special Collections Reading Room, a 30-seat flexible instruction space for Archives & Special Collections, and expanded collections storage?

As UC Merced continues towards its goal of becoming an R1 university, I'm excited to hear that it will soon have a reading room and instructional space for Archives & Special Collections in the Kolligian Library.

Having these accessible and conducive spaces for research and teaching is so vital to building a culture of institutional research and furthering knowledge. I look forward to the possibilities of different research sources that will be accessible with the expanded collection storage and the opportunities for emerging scholars to explore research in these spaces.



May Kao Xiong is currently a doctoral student in the Interdisciplinary Humanities program at the University of California, Merced. Her dissertation research is about the history of UC Merced.



HISTORIAL MEMORY, POLICY, AND THE FUTURE OF WATER IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

In September 2023, the UC Merced Library teamed up with UC Merced’s Secure Water Future program to host Central Valley author Mark Arax and Ellen Hanak, director of the Public Policy Institute of California’s Water Policy Center. The two participated in a conversation about “Historical Memory, Policy, and the Future of Water in the Central Valley” before an audience of campus and community members.

HISTORICAL MEMORY, POLICY, AND THE FUTURE OF WATER IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

A CONVERSATION WITH MARK ARAX AND ELLEN HANAK

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

ACS 120, UC MERCED DOORS AT 5PM

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC REGISTER AT [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/ARAXHANAK](https://tinyurl.com/araxhanak)

UC MERCED LIBRARY

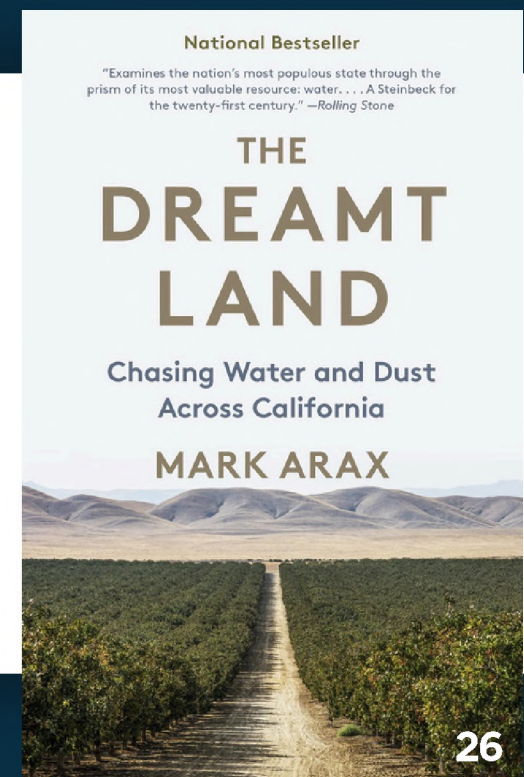
“If anything, the climate’s getting more variable and we’ve done a lot to tame it with this vast infrastructure,” Hanak began. “But we’re clearly at a crossroads in this region with water.”

Arax and Hanak discussed the “inherent variability” of climate in the valley, now intensified by human actions, and how the lessons of history can inform decision-making about water use, sustainable agriculture, and development.

Library staff held a book club to discuss Arax’s book in advance of the event. While on campus, Arax visited an undergraduate English class on “Theatre and Ecology,” and a graduate student and postdocs’ writing circle.

A pattern took hold in those wild swings between drought and flood. California moved only when nature moved. When the rivers were content, the people were content... In times of good nature, they cared not to be reminded of ill nature. In the desire to forget, their memories were able to play such tricks that when flood and drought returned, they were genuinely perplexed.

–Mark Arax, *The Dreamt Land: Chasing Water and Dust Across California*



The Library hosted an exhibit featuring Secure Water Future's interdisciplinary research in water management and measurement techniques and its work to foster an understanding of water issues among the next generation.

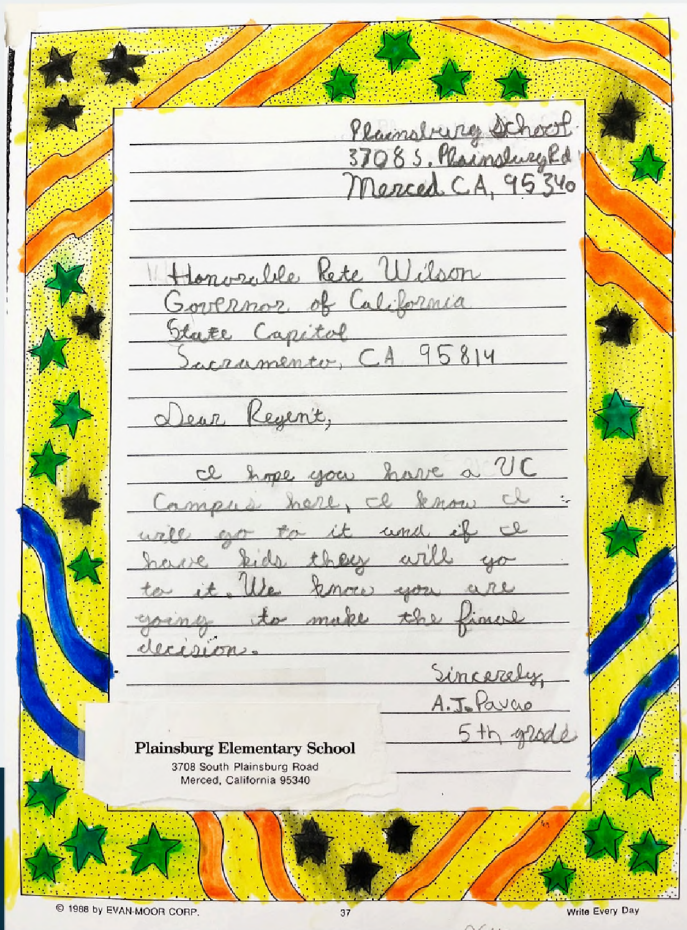
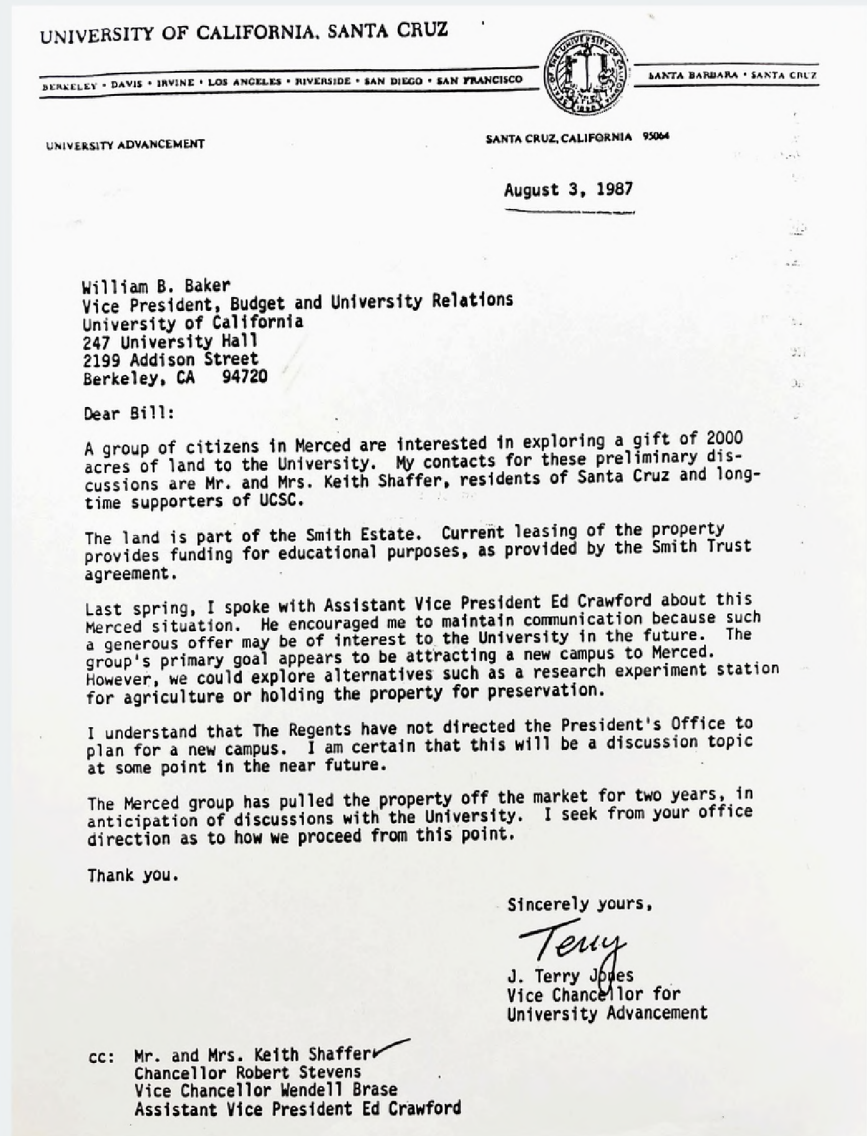


UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Continuing its efforts to document the history of UC Merced, the University Archives is working with campus External Relations to archive and preserve their collection of visual content. Thus far, the collection of material contains over twenty years' worth of photographs totaling over 150GB, and additions to the collection will be made annually. Bringing this content into the University Archives will ensure that the visual history of the campus—its growth, its events, and its transformations—is preserved into the future.



This past year, the University Archives also completed processing of the University of California, Merced History, 1988-2012 Collection. This rich collection documents the history of UC Merced, from a simple letter in 1988 addressing a plot of land near Lake Yosemite, into the first years of the campus's existence. The collection includes documents related to selecting a site for the tenth University of California campus, environmental reports commissioned prior to campus construction, and materials detailing the planning of UC Merced's academic offerings.



The finding aid outlining the contents of this collection can be found on the [Online Archive of California](#). The physical contents of this collection are available for researchers at our Archives & Special Collections. 29



ADVANCING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

REDUCING BARRIERS TO COURSE MATERIALS

In 2019 the Library, in collaboration with the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL), launched the Zero-Cost Course Materials (ZCCM) program.

This initiative encouraged the elimination of textbooks costs in UC Merced courses through offering faculty mini-grants to replace costly textbooks with open educational resources (OER) and/or library-available materials.

After the initial grant funding was awarded, the Library successfully applied for funding from the campus's Scholar Transformational Impact Fund. Now the program accepts not only zero-cost proposals but also low-cost course material (LCCM) proposals that result in significant cost-savings for students.

To date, the program has saved students over \$262,000.00 on textbook costs or an average of \$90.00 per student in an ZCCM/LCCM course.

Students appreciate and benefit from these savings. In a survey, UC Merced student respondents (50%) reported that textbook cost savings are *extremely important* to them. They also identify that any costs savings are used most often for food and tuition.

We anticipate this program will run through spring 2025.



For those interested in our formal assessment of the program (2019-2021), visit our article

[Measuring the Impact of an Open Educational Resource and Library e-Resource Adoption Program Using the COUP Framework](#) in

The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 24(4), 80–101.

LIBRARY STAFF NEWS

YEARS OF SERVICE

10 YEARS

Ross Anastos, Head of Access Services

Samantha Fort, Technology Services Coordinator

Jerrold Shiroma, University Archivist and Librarian for Special Collections

20 YEARS

Emily Lin, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Archives & Special Collections



L to R (clockwise): Samantha Fort, Jerrold Shiroma, Ross Anastos, Emily Lin

NEW STAFF

Isabel Ramos joined us this summer as Night/Weekend Supervisor and is part of the Access Services Team.



As UC Merced alum '23 and a former Library Student Assistant and workleader, Isabel brings much experience to her role.

She was most recently working for the Livingston School District.

PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHT

Bronwen Maxson joined the UC Merced Library as Head of Research & Learning Services in summer 2023.

Our conversation highlights how valuable a professional organization has been to Maxson -- as a place to both grow professionally and make contributions to a broader network of colleagues.

What is SALALM and how did you first get involved with this organization?

SALALM is the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, the oldest area studies professional librarian organization. It has been around for 69, going on 70 years. I got involved in SALALM because I heard about it through a graduate student listserv when I was getting my library degree. As a Spanish speaker with a double major in English & Spanish Literature, it interested me.

I attended my first SALALM conference in 2014 in Salt Lake City before I even had an academic library job. I've been a member since then, and it's been a wonderful experience. It's a very warm and welcoming community, so I felt right at home immediately and was invited to participate in the research and instruction services subcommittee. I became the co-chair and quickly moved into some leadership opportunities which helped me network and learn a lot about the profession as an early-career librarian.

You have referred to SALALM as your professional home. What has made SALALM so important to your work as a librarian?

SALALM has been integral to my work because it's given me professional development and leadership opportunities in a smaller and welcoming community. There are other librarian organizations that are much bigger, and they just don't have the same sense of belonging. In SALALM I was able to jump in and start tackling projects, getting the experience that I needed.

In my first academic library job, I was a Spanish and English Language and Literature Librarian at IU Indianapolis. Having contact with other subject librarians who worked with Spanish language materials and spoke Spanish was really helpful for me as I was coming out of a previous career in the legal profession and moving to a new state. Through the organization, I gained a mentor and training in collection development and other academic library skills.

Even though the organization is really specialized around Latin American and Caribbean information and research, SALALM members are still addressing the same questions that we deal with more broadly in the profession, such as how to do effective instruction, how to make an engaging tutorial, how to manage a budget, and how to manage a social media and web presence. But they also have added expertise in how to find rare and unique materials which sometimes our faculty need us to track down.

You recently attended SALAM’s 69th annual conference. What was your role in this conference?

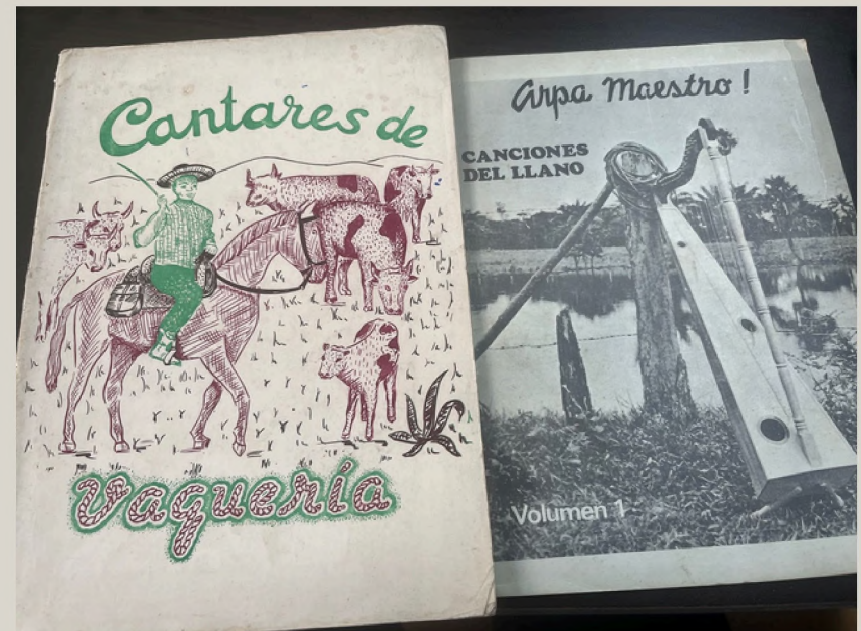
As a member-at-large, I attended the Executive Board meetings during the conference—participating in discussions, making decisions, and moving initiatives forward. For example, we secured funding for the APOYO committee (a subcommittee of Membership) that supports pre-tenured librarians with peer group mentoring around tenure and promotion processes.

I also proposed, organized and facilitated our Roda Viva panels which are lightning-style talks. We had enough participants to split into two panels with some remote presentations, so I worked to ensure a smooth experience for presenters and audience members.



Alejandro Herrera Prada, CBO of EnhaCore Books, Columbia and Bronwen Maxson at SALALM, 2024.

Herrera Prada located book titles to support UC Merced undergraduate research on Venezuelan llanos with Bristin Jones, faculty in Literatures, Languages & Cultures.



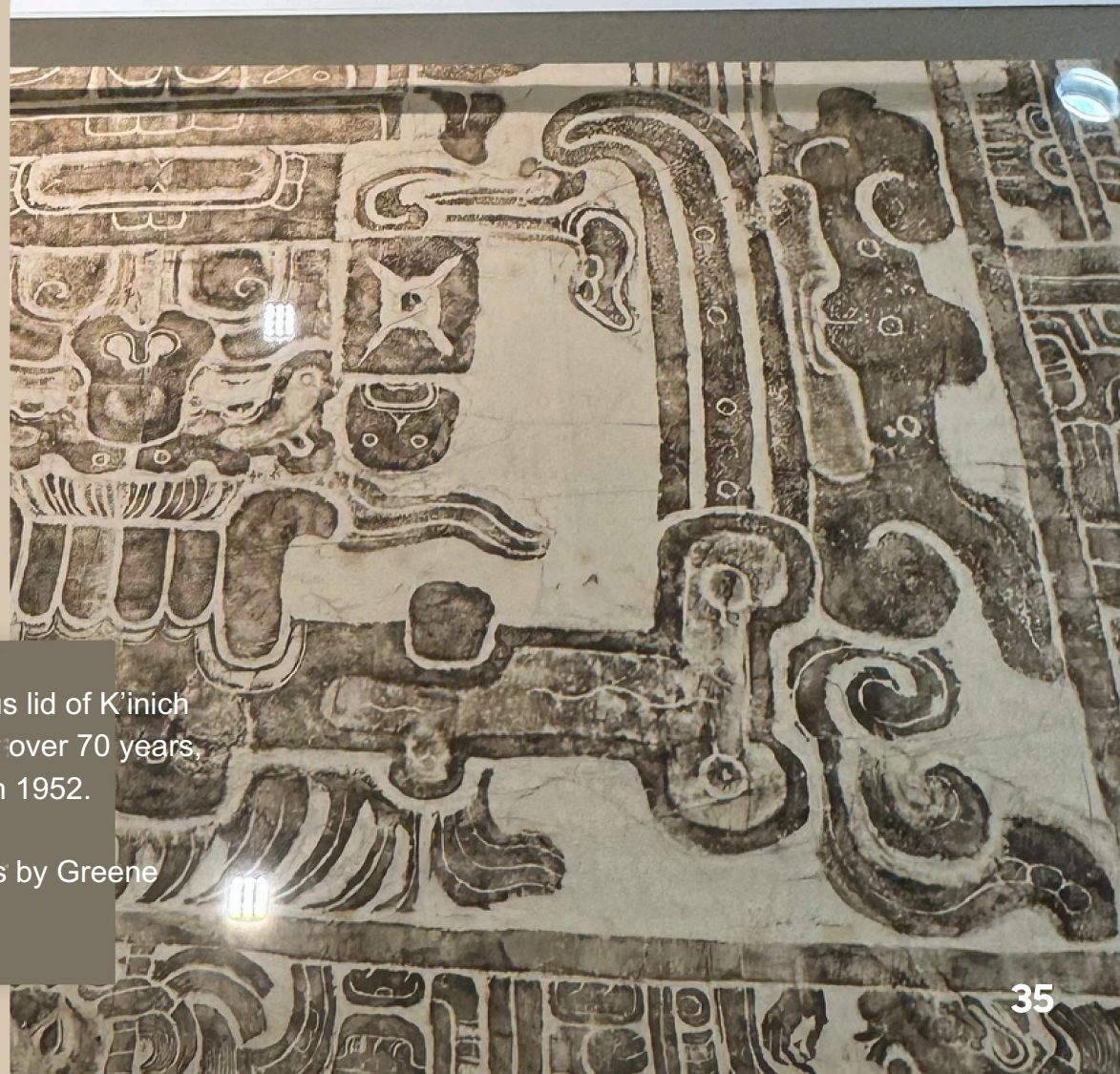
What were some personal conference highlights for you this year?

Earlier in the year, I had helped secure funding for the APOYO committee's meeting during the conference. Following the meeting, a few of the participants thanked me for my efforts because it was one of the few spaces at the conference where there was no agenda, but they could just meet each other and share ideas. They told me that they already started planning a panel for next year! It was really gratifying to me that I was able to create this space and opportunity for people to make the same kind of connections that I made when I was a new member.

A unique aspect of this conference was the opportunity to see some pretty amazing exhibits at Tulane University's Latin American Library (LAL) in celebration of its 100th anniversary. They had a massive Mayan rubbing on display as well as various artifacts and manuscripts that were part of the founding of the LAL and The Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies.

A rubbing by Merle Greene Robertson of the sarcophagus lid of K'inich Janaab Pakal, who ruled Palenque in southern Mexico for over 70 years, uncovered by archaeologist Alberto Ruz Lhuillier in 1952.

The Latin American Library holds nearly 2,000 rubbings by Greene Robertson, including Pakal's sarcophagus lid.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JASMINE NG '15

Jasmine Ng '15 is Clinical Research Operations Manager at the UC Berkeley School of Optometry & Vision Science. She graduated from UC Merced with a B.S. in Cognitive Science.

While an undergraduate, Jasmine worked at the UC Merced Library. AUL Sara Davidson Squibb caught up with Jasmine to reflect on her current work and past experience as a Library employee. Jasmine also provided some great advice for future Bobcats.



What does your current world of work look like as a Research Operations Manager?

I work with some of the leading contact lens manufacturers and those conducting ophthalmic research. Studies range from investigations of ocular health to medical devices. My work involves developing protocols, training new coordinators on good clinical practices, and interfacing with cross-functional teams through every step of a clinical trial.

I use my cognitive science background when I consider how to manage our workflows and update our systems. Right now, one of my projects is moving us to electronic data capture rather than paper. As I'm designing these tools for data capture and entry, I'm thinking about all our users. I'm in a lot of meetings to understand how people are using these tools including our research coordinators, research participants, and statisticians. In my undergraduate degree, we talked extensively about how we can design processes and systems in a way that makes them friendly and understandable. I'm putting that knowledge to work!

I still do a lot of the study coordination and communication with our sponsors. I complete site visits, track quality, manage a team of research assistants, and ensure our project timelines are being met.

When you were here as an undergraduate Library student assistant, what was your role?

I worked in the Library's Digital Assets unit and digitized materials for professors on campus including book chapters for use in courses. There was a lot of demand at the beginning and end of each semester.

I digitized [newsletters written by Japanese-Americans while they were imprisoned in Assembly Centers during WWII](#). The Kirtas machine (a rapid, robotic scanner) was my partner in crime. I also spent some time outside of Digital Assets, working at the 1st floor Help Desk.

What did you find valuable or learn from your work experience at the Library? Has it had any application to your current work?

I learned to be resourceful working with a high level of independence on projects with access to technology and tools. Being resourceful meant asking questions, figuring out who to consult, and getting things done.

I remember trainings throughout the year including a workshop you conducted on how to use the new search engine. Sometimes my Principal Investigator (PI) asks me to find research papers or gives me a task and no one knows how to do it. I need to figure it out.

Learning how to search for information with keywords or identifying who can help me— these skills come to mind as ones I learned at the Library and still use today.

What did you enjoy most about working at the UC Merced Library?

The people—the supervisors who were always available to advise me, not just the work that I was doing but also what was coming after college.

To date, my favorite job has been working at the Library with Emily, you, and just everyone. It was such a good experience, not going to lie. It was a healthy work environment. I felt like a staff member there even though I was a student assistant. As students we were trusted with more than tasks, we were trusted as adults.

By the way, I got to use really cool equipment and tools.

What advice do you have for future Bobcats? What would you encourage undergraduates to do?

I would tell students to be curious and utilize resources. If you feel like you're stuck, just ask! Start with the Library.

Also, take on more internships and work experience, visit the Student Career Center, and consider study abroad. You are already paying tuition so use what is available to you. I think the UC Merced mindset and culture offers a lot of opportunities that may not be available elsewhere. Again, be curious and willing to learn!

FACTS & FIGURES

348,385

VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY



8,493

COLLABORATIVE WORKROOM RESERVATIONS

177,603

VISITS TO THE LIBRARY WEBSITE



142,744

VISITS TO ONLINE LIBRARY GUIDES



4.08M

DIGITAL COLLECTION PAGE VIEWS

41%

INSTAGRAM FOLLOWER INCREASE



976

RESEARCH TRANSACTIONS

573

PARTICIPANTS IN LIBRARY INSTRUCTION



351

NEW ARCGIS USERS

976,000

ELECTRONIC JOURNALS

1.85 M

EBOOKS



161,000

PRINT BOOKS

3,579

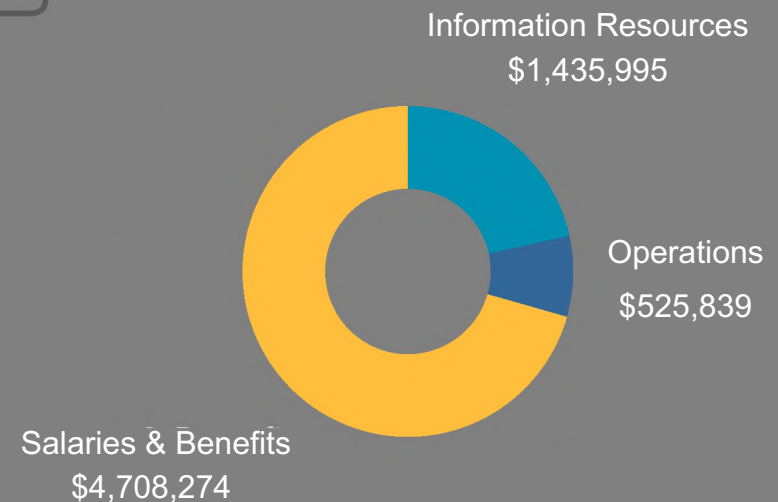
ITEMS BORROWED



1,620

ITEMS LOANED

FINANCIALS



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