

Celebration of Service April 19, 2005

Introduction

Last week, I completed my third year as Director of Libraries, and I'm pleased to participate in this, my *fourth* Celebration of Service event. How does this happen, you ask. Well, it's because my first Celebration of Service happened to come when I was barely three days old in this job! I believe it was my very first public event as your new Director. I thought at the time, how fitting it was to address you all in a celebration of the Libraries most important asset – its staff!

I'm very proud of how you all carry out your work with your customary standard of excellence, despite the challenges and uncertainties that we face. Your ingenuity, talent, and hard work, together with the continued support of others both on and off-campus who believe in what we do, are what make say that I enjoy my job (at least most of the time). YOU are the main reason why I can say that.

And now, I'm pleased to review some of the defining moments that we've shared over the past year. I give you my choice of outstanding achievements for 2004/2005.

- The Nutter Family Information Commons has proved to be among the most successful endeavors undertaken by the Libraries. On any given day, and at all hours of the day, scores of students are busy working, individually or in groups actively learning and discovering in the library. Our user head counts in Ellis Library are up almost forty percent from last year, and our most-often heard “complaint” is “Why don't you have more spaces like this?”

- On the same weekend that we dedicated the Information Commons, we also dedicated the west entrance to Ellis Library as the Wallace Atrium. Retired Chancellor Wallace was most pleased with the honor, and he very much enjoys inviting campus visitors (including potential donors) to visit him in his new office in the Ellis Library Admin Office suite.
- Also on the same weekend, we held the inaugural event of the Library Society, our newly-established donor society. We had over a hundred guests at a black-tie dinner, with MU alum Diane Glancy speaking about the importance of Libraries. (Brady Deaton, having been named MU's new Chancellor barely 48 hours before, attended with his wife, Anne. A busy weekend indeed!)
- This summer, for the first time, the MU Libraries were granted new funds from the Instructional Technology Fees paid by all students as part of their credit hour fee payments. This new funding, in part, enabled the Libraries to participate in the UM System's Electronic Resources Initiative, which granted the four campus libraries close to \$1 million worth of online journals and databases.
- Last year, we introduced the new classification and compensation program for our classified staff. This year, the MU Libraries were able to support twelve competency level increases using this new compensation scheme. These included nine persons raised from level three to level four, and two persons raised from level two to level three. We also had one person move from entry level to specialist level in the IT competency series. Congratulations to all, and I hope that we may have others to announce next year.
- In March, the Libraries presented the third in our series of Scholarly Communications programs, this time on Privacy issues in academe. Once again, the program was a success, with some 120 people attending from across the state. It provided an opportunity to partner once again with the Law School, ET@MO, SISLT, and the UM System Office of Academic Affairs, to bring nationally-known speakers to address important issues of the day.

- We have had a number of achievements in Archives and Special Collections worthy of note. In November, the Donald G. Sanders collection of political papers was donated to the Libraries. Don Sanders is perhaps best known for his role as deputy counsel for the Senate Watergate Committee, and it was he who uncovered the fact that there were tape-recording devices in President Nixon's Oval Office. In February, Special Collections unveiled a web-exhibit showcasing the several cuneiform tablets that date back 4,000 years to ancient Sumeria and Mesopotamia. Then, last month, the Charlotte Bronte manuscript website was unveiled and featured on the MU Libraries Gateway homepage.
- In November, the Health Sciences Library, in partnership with MU Extension and NLM, introduced increased access to consumer health care information with the advent of GoLocal, a web portal providing access to MedlinePlus and other resources. Missouri is only the second state to offer this access to its citizens. HSL also expanded access to digital resources via Article Finder, now the second most heavily used page on the HSL website, and Links@Ovid, providing full-text of over 6,000 articles in 2,300 journals.
- Over the summer, we opened a book sale area in Ellis Copy Services. Since its opening, book sales have amounted to more than \$7,000, which will go into the general book fund primarily to purchase replacement copies.
- The Bookmark Café continues to be among the most popular places for coffee on campus. With the single exception of the Applause coffee shop, which is open longer hours in Memorial Union, the Bookmark is the highest grossing coffee and beverage sales operation on campus. I might remind you that a portion of the proceeds from Café sales goes to the Library, and we have used these funds to restore hours of opening lost during budget cuts of two years ago. So keep buying lattes and help the Libraries!
- Finally, the Libraries Development Office unveiled in February, a new opportunity for private giving to the Libraries: the Honor With Books program. In just the past two months, we have received

donations of more than \$5,000 via this program, which enables donors to purchase books which will have bookplates noting names of both the donor and the honoree. In addition, our online catalog records also note both names. Many thanks to the staff in Technical Services for enabling us to offer this giving opportunity. [show brochures]

That ends my annual list of notable achievements. Thank you all for making them happen. I'm sure that next year's list will be equally impressive.