New Exhibit Showcases Botanical Art & Illustration
see page 12
Four New Leaders Bring Commitments to Collections & Communities

Within the space of a year, MSU Libraries have created and filled two new leadership positions and filled two open leadership positions, welcoming three new people into the Libraries and elevating one librarian into a new position. Communications Manager Cindy Hunter Morgan asked each of these four new leaders five questions.
Caitlyn Perry Dial
Director of Library Development

Caitlyn Perry Dial joined MSU Libraries in January of 2022 as Director of Development. She works collaboratively with colleagues throughout campus, across University Advancement, and internally with teams in the Libraries to ensure a holistic approach to building a comprehensive philanthropy program. Previously, Dial served as the Assistant Director of Development for MSU’s College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM). She also has served as the Executive Director of Michigan Women Forward: HERstory (formerly Michigan Women’s Historical Center and Hall of Fame) and has developed educational programs for the Michigan Women’s Historical Center and Hall of Fame. She lives in Brighton and serves as a trustee for the Brighton District Library. She earned a bachelor’s degree in history from Michigan State University, a master’s in history from Wayne State University, and a Ph.D. in history from Western Michigan University.

As we think about our own strategic plan and the strategic plan for the university, it’s worth acknowledging that the relationship between our fundraising efforts and our mission is critical. How do you hope to use your role in Development to help the Libraries support research, teaching, and learning in our local and global communities? And how can donors partner with us to support meaningful initiatives in accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion?

I am a big believer in mission-based fundraising, which means every gift I have the honor of bringing to the library will have an impact on our mission. I think that is what is the best part of my job, I get to make connections between donors and the library’s priorities. When a donor’s intent meets the library’s needs, it’s a beautiful thing!

In her poem, “The World Has Need of You,” Ellen Bass writes, “What if you felt the invisible / tug between you and everything?” That tug, I think, is a way of talking not just about connection but also about the spirit of responsibility and generosity that undergirds a decision to give. How do you cultivate that feeling in your own life?

My personal motto is “Work hard. Play hard. Do good.” I certainly feel that tug to do all the good that I can in the time that I am here on Earth. I am incredibly thankful for the opportunities afforded to me in my life and I feel that working in philanthropy allows me the chance to share that good with others.

We know and appreciate the importance of large gifts. We also know our work can’t be supported by a single donor. We need and rely on many people to help us support faculty, students, and visiting scholars who need our expertise, collections, and infrastructure. What is your message to donors who might be considering gifts of various and different levels?

No gift is too small, and every gift is appreciated. When I was Executive Director at the Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame, I remember being so thankful and surprised when a $500 check arrived unexpectedly. It’s easy to forget that feeling in a big place like MSU, but I strive to never forget how important that gift was to that organization. Every gift matters and if you are not sure how your gift will make an impact, ask me! I’m happy to show you.

— story continues, p. 10
Rachel Minkin, who most recently served as Head of Reference Services, was named Assistant Dean for Faculty Engagement at MSU Libraries last fall. This position was created to help the Libraries continue to invest in collaborative relationships across campus; support student, staff, and faculty partners; and explore new opportunities to connect people in various departments and programs with MSU Libraries liaisons. Minkin reports to Associate Dean for Teaching, Learning and Research Engagement Terri Miller. She joined MSU Libraries in 2011 as an Information Literacy Librarian and was promoted to Head of Reference Services in 2014. In previous roles, she served as Reference and Instruction Librarian at Lansing Community College (LCC); Acting Head of Public Services at Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California; Reference Librarian at GTU; Technical Services Intern at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary; and a Reference Para-professional at Duquesne University. She has an MLIS from University of Pittsburgh, a Master of Theological Studies from Vanderbilt Divinity School, and a bachelor’s degree in religious studies from Macalester College. She serves on several professional committees with the American Library Association, the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Big Ten Academic Alliance Heads of Reference, and the Michigan Academic Library Association. She has published widely and presented at many professional conferences.

You represent the Libraries in university discussions about curriculum development. This is a tremendously important conversation, and we need to think strategically about where and how our Libraries support this work. What are you learning in these conversations?

Curricular development is indeed tremendously important and happening at points all over the University, including tons of meetings I’m nowhere near. As someone new(ish) to a position that is a newish position, I am still learning where those conversations happen and who’s having them.

What I do know, with great certainty, is that liaison librarians have been, and continue to be involved in this work. As the outward facing subject specialists, their relationships with students, staff, and faculty give the Libraries access to departments (heck, whole MSU colleges)—and based on liaison expertise, they have been invited to be part of curriculum development conversations in varied ways. Curriculum development is such a larger umbrella—undergraduate? Graduate? Professional certificate programs? Revamping established curriculums or developing new areas of study?

Right now, at least, the strategic part in my mind is how to work with liaison coordinators (supervisory librarians over discipline areas) on how to describe that work first, the work liaisons are currently doing around things like curriculum development.

A two-part request. First, for those who are new or who may not know about these resources, please (briefly) list some of our instruction programs. Then please share a few (or one or two) of your goals for our programs.

Liaisons engage in instruction in so many ways, Cindy. We have one unit of liaisons, Information Literacy, providing instruction on not just how to use academic libraries but also how to critically engage with the information found. Working with a few thousand first year writing students every year, these liaisons provide a foundation for future research skills, for use in academia or in day-to-day life. Building upon this, subject liaisons see many of these students again in their undergraduate programs, in the classroom or virtually, demonstrating and raising general awareness in discipline-specific resources. Subject liaisons are also involved in graduate level research methods courses, acclimating students newly engaged in in-depth research. Additionally, these sessions underpin the relationships liaison librarians have with their students and faculty, reinforcing the expertise and material value of the MSU Libraries.

Besides these sorts of classes, sometimes referred to as “library instruction”, some liaisons teach for-credit courses within their discipline. These may be more akin to a research methods course only instead of a subject librarian dropping in for a session or two, they are the faculty on record for the course. Other liaisons teach modules within a curriculum at the behest of faculty, leveraging their expertise within a subject in addition to their knowledge of library resources related to the subject.
I want to reuse part of my answer above to answer the second part of this question. My role is new enough where I’m really focused on describing the landscape right now. Is there a “usual” sort of instruction? Are there new scenarios happening that will become new normal? Although it is tempting (for me at least!) to jump ahead to setting goals, I need to understand first and then with the liaison coordinators, we can work on goals.

The role of a librarian is always evolving, and it’s important for our community of partners to know how librarians can help. What do you most want our campus community to know about our liaisons?

Thank you for asking this question! Academic librarians choose to become liaisons; they are interested in how information is created, collected, organized, shared, discovered within a discipline. Liaisons dive deeply into their fields of interest to facilitate knowledge creation and discovery for their students and faculty. I want our campus community to know that liaisons are experts, connecting students and faculty with resources on campus and off. Liaisons make these connections by leveraging their expertise — in-depth knowledge of their subject areas, a broad view of the research and pedagogy landscape within a discipline, and in-depth knowledge of how all of this plays out here at MSU.

I seem to be thinking about various poems as I talk with each of you. Are you familiar with Philip Metres’s poem, “Hearing of Alia Muhammed Baker’s Stroke”? (Here’s a link: https://poets.org/poem/hearing-alia-muhammed-bakers-stroke.) It’s a powerful poem about the commitment of one librarian, and it makes me think of so many librarians I know and have known who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to the collections they steward and the people they help. It’s not fair or appropriate to try to compare our work at MSU to the work of a Basra librarian in wartime, but it is true our librarians are deeply committed professionals. Can you share an example or two of occasions when our liaisons have gone above and beyond what might be expected of them?

I was not familiar with this poem, thank you for sharing. So, I would agree that the work of a library in wartime is not at all comparable to our work. And I’d double down by saying some liaisons are bibliographers but not all bibliographers are liaisons. Liaisons do work with monographs, among other things, but saving books is a far cry from the liaison day to day! Liaisons love a good collection as it serves the needs of their users, but that collection is only sometimes books. Sorry, I’m ruining your beautiful question!

So what IS above and beyond for liaisons? This is a really difficult question. Because of the unique relationships between liaisons and faculty, liaisons and students, and the unique cultures that have evolved from discipline to discipline across campus (even within the same college, what constitutes “above and beyond” in one area may be the usual sort of interaction in another. Above and beyond takes on so many different forms: assisting faculty move courses online during the COVID lockdown, hunting down citations for a graduate student right before they defend, wading patiently through resources side by side with an undergraduate writing a first paper. In each case, the patron decides what’s above and beyond.

Finally, and because this information helps connect us to each other, what are you reading, and what are you cooking or baking or eating or building or sewing or playing or listening to in these early months of 2022?

Oh I always feel so under pressure on these sorts of questions, everyone else is reading, cooking, baking, building, sewing, playing, listening. Where do these people find the time?

We’re an active family of four and we’re in that awkward stage of many things to do and only two drivers to make that happen. But when not running around, I have recently rediscovered that I still enjoy playing music with others. I’m also active in the practical underpinnings of our religious community, both teaching and committee work. And yes, I am reading! I am (very slowly) reading Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari. Definitely enjoying it but I read at bedtime so the struggle to not let the book drop on my face is real.
Alexandra Rivera
Associate Dean for Diversity, Inclusion & Organizational Development

Alexandra Rivera was appointed Associate Dean for Diversity, Inclusion & Organizational Development for Michigan State University Libraries in 2021 and officially began her work here December 1. Rivera reports to the Dean of Libraries and is responsible for engaging library staff and the university community in the creation, iteration, and implementation of a diversity and inclusion-specific strategic plan. She joins a growing cohort of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) leaders on campus and within the Big Ten Academic Alliance, and she represents MSU on the national level. She coordinates the Libraries’ Residency Program and serves as a supportive guide and administrative liaison to the Libraries’ Diversity Advisory Committee. She also supervises several projects, people, and units, including the Libraries’ nationally recognized Accessibility unit, the Outreach and Engagement unit, the Communications unit, and the User Experience unit. Additionally, she provides oversight for the Faculty Excellence Advocate and the Head of Organizational Development, and oversees the creation and implementation of educational opportunities for all staff. Rivera comes to MSU from the University of Michigan Library, where she served most recently as Senior Associate Librarian for Student Success and Community Engagement and previously as Interim Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives. Prior to that work, she served as Assistant Librarian of Outreach and Instruction for University of Arizona Libraries. Nationally, she serves on the Executive Board of the American Library Association and the Joint Council of Librarians of Color, Inc. Board of Directors. She has a master’s degree in library and information sciences from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree in telecommunications/broadcasting/production from Northern Arizona University.

In many ways, our Libraries – and libraries in general – are well positioned to support diversity and inclusion because we are, at our core, a center for teaching and learning. We hold and celebrate repositories of different ideas and perspectives, and we collect and share information to fight misinformation. Even so, we have work to do to support and advance accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion. What are your priorities for this work?

MSU Libraries are an extraordinary resource that supports the important mission of learning and teaching, research, outreach and engagement, and personal and professional growth. And, we, similar to other libraries, also provide opportunities to deepen our own knowledge of the world around us. We do, indeed, have work to do to advance, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).

Having only been part of MSU and the Libraries since December 2021, I am in the wonderful process of learning of the important and impactful work that has been done by the MSU Libraries, particularly in the areas of DEIA. I have recently embarked on an exploratory tour of MSU Libraries to meet with every staff member to learn about them, their work, and my new professional home.

In this process I am seeking to understand how we, the Libraries, are currently meeting the goals of MSU’s newly created Strategic Plan, the correlating MSU Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, and the MSU Libraries 2019 Strategic Plan that included a reorganization and the creation of my new role and department. The priorities for my work will be determined by this analysis and will build on the strong foundation that currently exists.

It seems generally true that we must always imagine our future if we are to achieve it. What is the future you imagine for our Libraries?

When I imagine the future of our libraries I envision an environment that is welcoming and engaging for our employees, patrons, and the broader community to collaborate in the development of a better society.

While it may sound idealistic, libraries have long held core values that align with my vision and drew me to the profession of librarianship. These values include libraries as a public good, intellectual freedom, equitable access to information, social responsibility, sustainability, and, of course, diversity.
Also, we, librarians and library workers, are education partners. To be in the field of education we must believe in the ability to grow and adapt our minds and lives through learning. We are grounded in the belief that change is not only possible but necessary. Libraries help to foster change and growth through access to quality information and, more importantly, through assisting individuals to assess and utilize information to create new knowledge to advance our world.

In her poem titled “Poem,” Muriel Rukeyser wrote, “We would try by any means / To reach the limits of ourselves, to reach beyond ourselves, / To let go the means, to wake.” Rukeyser wrote that during the Vietnam War. It’s a beautiful passage, and it’s worth slowing down to consider what it means for our own lives today. When you think about your own dedication to advancing diversity and inclusion, how do you avoid stagnation and commit yourself to a continuous and active process of waking?

This is a beautiful passage and it invited me to find and read the full “Poem”. She was speaking of the turbulent times of the 1960s. This description resonates well with what we’ve experienced over the last couple of years with the fast changes brought on by the pandemic, social injustice, and general unease. The times call for us to be awake and aware, questioning, learning, and growing.

Thankfully, I embrace change. It is the one constant in our lives. To keep my mind fresh, I utilize the Buddhist practice of Shoshin which refers to fostering a beginner’s mindset that encourages examining life and seeking to learn without preconceived notions and with an open and interested attitude. I also believe in immersive learning. We learn best through applying our knowledge, testing its validity through questioning, and then incorporating new knowledge gained.

Your job here at the Libraries is a new position, and it’s true that many libraries are creating new positions to help advance diversity and inclusion. It’s also true that this work is everyone’s responsibility, not just yours. How do you hope to work with all members of the MSU community to build and sustain this work?

Working with members of the MSU community is essential to the creation and sustenance of our work. I am actively seeking opportunities to collaborate and learn from colleagues who do similar work across MSU. As mentioned earlier, there are strategic plans in place that drive this work and will inform my own activities.

MSU Libraries will create a climate that sustains our diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility values by ensuring that we incorporate them into all we do. We already have a strong foundation thanks to the efforts of the Library Diversity Advisory Council, a world class accessibility unit, and the many individuals and units who are actively practicing inclusivity in their work. MSU Libraries, in their strategic planning process, made a further commitment to this work through the creation of this new Diversity, Inclusion and Organizational Development Division and my position. The will is there and through coordinated strategic efforts, based on a shared vision, we will strive to ensure that the MSU Libraries is equitable for and inclusive of all.

Finally, and because this information helps connect us to each other, what are you reading, and what are you cooking or baking or eating or building or sewing or playing or listening to in these early months of 2022?

Being homebound has permitted opportunities for many to do more leisurely activities, me included.

Reading — I am always reading to stay current on topics related to my work and the Library profession, but I have made time to read for pleasure and just finished The Last Collection: A Novel of Elsa Schiaparelli and Coco Chanel by Jeanne Mackin.

Watching — I just finished the most recent series of All Creatures Great and Small and it was delightful. I plan to rewatch the original series.

And Cooking — Trying many different recipes, especially international. Some favorites — Tomatillo Shakshuka for breakfast, and Sweet potato and Red Lentil stew. I’m happy to share the recipes, just ask.

Several of my new colleagues have made excellent recommendations for cooking shows and I look forward to also visiting the MSU Libraries Special Collection on Cookery and Food for more inspiration.
Erin Stoddart
Head of University Archives & Historical Collections

Erin Stoddart was named Head of University Archives & Historical Collections (UAHC) in the fall of 2021. She leads the Libraries’ efforts to transform and invigorate archival services and build relationships to strengthen outreach, education, materials acquisition, access, and preservation. Stoddart comes to MSU from the University of Oregon, where she served as Interim Associate Vice Provost and University Librarian for Collection Services and, previously, as Strategic Projects and Grants Development Librarian. In other positions, she served as Head of Special Collections and Archives at the University of Idaho and University Archivist and Digital Collections Librarian at Western Oregon University. She has a Master of Science in Information with a specialization in Archives and Records Management from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree in history with honors and political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has published widely and presented at many professional conferences, and she has a strong history of securing grants for various projects and institutions.

University Archives & Historical Collections (UAHC) is part of MSU Libraries and cares for more than 160 years of Michigan State University’s history. UAHC was established in 1969 to collect, preserve, and make accessible MSU’s records of enduring historical and administrative value. Resources include original letters and diaries, photographs, and oral histories, as well as historical materials not related to MSU. Highlights include materials that document the physical campus and grounds, early student life, the lumber industry, and the Civil War.

University Archives & Historical Collections have an important role in the Libraries’ support of teaching, learning, and research at MSU. From your perspective, what are the benefits for students when they work with primary documents?

One of the things I missed most in my previous position was the hands-on part of my daily job supporting teaching, learning, and research. I am very excited about returning to this role at MSU. Students of all ages (K-12, undergraduate, graduate) can interact with and learn from primary source materials in a variety of ways, from in the classroom to a homework/research assignment to exposure on the job working as a paid student employee or intern in the archives.

The experience of working directly with primary source materials is magical; it is where the conceptual transforms into “aha moments” regardless of whether it’s a physical document or a digitized image. It’s where students can deepen connections to the past, learn about different perspectives on one topic, and how complex the past can be. Having that connection with students and knowing that you had a role is one of the best feelings I have experienced in my career.

I also love that we cannot anticipate where these transformative learning experiences may lead. My personal example happened as an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison while writing my honors thesis. I heavily relied on the university archives there to explore how political rhetoric was used around the 1970 bombing of Sterling Hall on campus. Seeing how primary source research weaves a web of facts and perspectives together was fascinating, and absolutely contributed to my passion for unique historical materials and wanting to become an archivist. Twenty years later, I currently look forward to building relationships and partnerships that allow for the expansion of formal, informal, and experiential research opportunities for students at MSU.

In Another Brooklyn, Jacqueline Woodson writes, “I know now that what is tragic isn’t the moment. It is the memory.” It’s a powerful assertion, made even more complex if we consider the statement through the lens of librarianship and the work of an archivist. As an archivist, how do you handle complex and difficult history that is both important to preserve and tangled with pain?

Unfortunately, there are numerous instances of complex and painful histories on college campuses, including MSU. Collecting materials related to difficult people and events can sometimes feel more activist in nature than archivist, but these are materials that will be examined in the future to help make sense of the past. Archival materials may also play a positive role in helping to advance and analyze important historical
movements: some recent examples include South Africa and anti-apartheid, Black Lives Matter, and the Women’s March in 2017. University Archives can help provide a glimpse into what attitudes and perspectives were voiced locally versus what was happening nationally or internationally.

Archives also play a role with difficult histories by serving as a base for patrons (and us) to contribute towards healing and work through painful topics through different interpretations of the past, including the creation of physical and digital exhibits, digital collections, events, workshops, memory books and scrapbooks, historic plaques, etc. One recent example in UAHC is their work in documenting the experiences of MSU students, faculty, and members of the campus community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another example I recently learned of was the MSU Museum’s exhibit on sexual violence survivors on campus. Through collecting people’s stories and getting the word out that these stories are worthy of being in the permanent historical record, archives can hopefully help in making a difference.

**We know about archival silences formed when some communities are not represented in collections. How will you work to resist bias and make sure many communities and perspectives are represented in our historical records?**

Resisting bias and searching out equal representation are things that we all continue to work towards and address on a regular basis. I think it starts with acknowledging that many gaps exist in our collections, especially when viewing through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. If you think about the hundreds of thousands of MSU students, faculty, staff, and alumni, and consider all their lived experiences across gender, race, and other identities, it can be overwhelming. But if we can break it down into small steps we can take each year, we can start to build a more diverse and representative collection today.

Inclusive collecting starts with building relationships across campus, conducting outreach to various groups to let them know we see them, we want to hear their stories, and that their stories are worth preserving. One goal would be for the MSU community to see University Archives and Historical Collections as a safe space for their donated materials and a safe space to conduct research. At the end of the day, I want students (and everyone part of the MSU greater community) to see themselves in the collection, in some capacity, and know that their experience matters.

This question also relates not just to what makes up our collections, but past and current descriptive practices, whether that is found in finding aids, catalog records, or other descriptive representations. I am very impressed with the work that has been underway at the MSU Libraries (Insights Spring 2021) that addresses harmful language and content found in the collections and look forward to moving forward some of these practices and statements in UAHC.

**What is your vision for the strategic direction of UAHC?**

After working at MSU for three months, I can articulate pieces of my vision, but acknowledge that it will be further developed over time with input from UAHC and others in the Libraries. One of the core principles I work from matches the service ethic found at land grant universities. In a nutshell, I want UAHC to be visible, accessible, and approachable to everyone.

Internally, I strive for building and retaining a cohesive team and work environment that celebrates curiosity and creativity - and hopefully have some fun, too. The staff that comprise UAHC are phenomenal colleagues with vast expertise to share with our new(er) colleagues in the Libraries. As we continue to work together, we will learn about workflows, teams, and opportunities within the Libraries that will help extend our capacity in many areas, such as, increased presence in digital repository collections, audiovisual and physical preservation, donor relations, and communications.

Externally, I am excited to contribute towards finding new ways of connecting University Archives across a spectrum of stakeholders, from alumni to donors to the surrounding MSU and local communities. I hope to build from successful partnerships UAHC has already developed across campus and understand how we can work together across various initiatives. Building new relationships with alumni and campus and community partners can help inform our efforts around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility of our collections and practices. I look forward to working with the Libraries’ development office and with new and existing donors to realize where our visions overlap.

**Finally, and because this information helps connect us to each other, what are you reading, and what are you cooking or baking or eating or building or playing or listening to in these early months of 2022?**

Many of my personal hobbies are related to fiber arts. I typically have multiple sewing and knitting projects happening simultaneously. I own a spinning wheel and enjoy spinning my own yarn. I am currently taking a multi-week Zoom class on the use of color guiding decisions when spinning yarn, and in turn am rereading parts of the book *Yarnitecture: A Knitter’s Guide to Spinning; Building Exactly the Yarn You Want,* as the author is the instructor. Otherwise, my husband and I have had fun making the most out of the snow, our first winter here since leaving the West Coast, and going snowshoeing and cross-country skiing directly outside our front door in Henry Fine Park.
It is important to balance a donor’s wishes with our Libraries’ needs. With that in mind, are there specific collections, spaces, or projects that need specific support?

Yes! There’s always a need at the Libraries. It’s no secret that there are many needs within our organization. I am probably most excited about the upcoming plans for the 3East project for the Special Collections and Archives. Bringing those two units together in a climate-controlled space is going to be so great – for the collections and the people involved in keeping our precious collections safe. I am very excited about the possibilities and the potential for other donors to get involved in supporting it.

Finally, and because this information helps connect us to each other, what are you reading, and what are you cooking or baking or eating in these early months of 2022?

Because I am a trustee at my local library, I feel like I have been reading so much during this pandemic, especially about the Progressive Era (my favorite period of history). However, I have decided to give my brain a rest from reading nonfiction and have totally absorbed myself in the Bridgerton series by Julia Quinn. I can’t help myself. I love a good historical fiction novel. And what am I baking? Usually, it’s banana bread. My boys love my banana bread and I feel like there’s always enough over-ripe bananas available to make it. If I’m feeling real fancy, I’ll add chocolate chips.

University Archives & Historical Collections
On the Shelf and the Big Screen

Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections is featured in two programs and a new memoir about the story of the first fully integrated football team in the United States. In 1963, Michigan State University (MSU) Head Coach Duffy Daugherty and 23 African American student athletes fought segregation on the football field. A recent PBS documentary and a new literary memoir, both titled “Through the Banks of the Red Cedar,” follow the legacy of the filmmaker/author’s father, MSU alum and Minnesota Vikings wide-receiver Gene Washington, from the segregated South to MSU alongside teammates Bubba Smith, George Webster, and Clinton Jones, who later made history as first-round picks in the 1967 NFL Draft. Filmmaker/author Maya Washington conducted primary research using archival photographs, film footage, and university records from MSU for her memoir and documentary. More information about both projects can be found at: https://www.throughthebanksoftheredcedar.com/. Additional footage was featured on the Tamron Hall Show on February 9, 2022, which can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKgU7pXKoAs&t=302s.

In a meet against Miami of Ohio, Clinton Jones jumps over a hurdle, to lead MSU to a 87-54 sweep, 1965. (A009961)

Gene Washington (#84) carries the football with teammate (#23) blocking him, 1965. (A009962)

Photos courtesy of University Archives and Historical Collections.
Now Available from MSU Press

Last spring MSU University Press merged with MSU Libraries, and this spring we celebrate a few recently released books. Check them out!

A Fine Yellow Dust by Laura Apol
ISBN: 9781611864021

In late April 2017, Laura Apol’s twenty-six-year-old daughter, Hanna, took her own life. Apol had long believed in the therapeutic possibilities of writing, having conducted workshops on writing-for-healing for more than a decade. Yet after Hanna’s death, she had her own therapeutic writing to do, turning her anguish, disbelief, and love into poems that map the first year of loss. This collection is the result of that writing, giving voice to grief as it is lived, moment by moment, memory by memory, event by event. While most writing about loss does so from a distance, Apol chooses instead to write from inside those days and months and seasons, allowing readers to experience alongside the poet the moments, the questions, and the deep longings that shape the first grief-year.

She Came from Mariupol by Natascha Wodin

When Natascha Wodin’s mother died, Natascha was only ten years old—too young to find out what her mother had experienced during World War II. All the little girl knew was that they were detritus, human debris left over from the war. Years later, Natascha set out on a quest to find out what happened to her mother during that time. Why had they lived in a camp for “displaced persons”? Where did her mother come from? What had she experienced? The one thing she knew is that her parents had to leave Mariupol in Ukraine for Germany as part of the Nazi forced labor program in 1943. Armed with this limited knowledge, Natascha resolved to piece together the puzzle of her family’s past. The result is a highly praised, beautiful piece of prose that has drawn comparisons to W.G. Sebald in its approach. Like Sebald, Natascha’s aim is to reclaim the stories of those who can no longer speak for themselves. The author is not only in search of her own family’s history, but she is also aware that she is charting unmarked territories: accounts of the plight of forced laborers and displaced persons are still a rarity within literature about World War II and its atrocities. Natascha’s personal homage to her mother’s life story is an important lyrical memorial for the thousands of Eastern Europeans who were forced to leave their homes and work in Germany during the war, and a moving reflection of the plight of displaced peoples throughout the ages. This is a darkly radiant account of one person’s fate, developing momentous emotive power—it’s subject serves as a proxy for the fate of millions.

We Kept Our Towns Going: The Gossard Girls of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula by Phyllis Michael Wong
With a foreword by Lisa M. Fine, Michigan State University | ISBN: 9781611864205

Michigan’s Upper Peninsula is known for its natural beauty and severe winters, as well as the mines and forests where men labored to feed industrial factories elsewhere in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But there were factories in the Upper Peninsula, too, and women who worked in them. Phyllis Michael Wong tells the stories of the Gossard Girls, women who sewed corsets and bras at factories in Ishpeming and Gwinn from the early twentieth century to the 1970s. As the Upper Peninsula’s mines became increasingly exhausted and its stands of timber further depleted, the Gossard Girls’ income sustained both their families and the local economy. During this time the workers showed their political and economic strength, including a successful four-month strike in the 1940s that capped an eight-year struggle to unionize. Drawing on dozens of interviews with the surviving workers and their families, this book highlights the daily challenges and joys of these mostly first- and second-generation immigrant women. It also illuminates the way the Gossard Girls navigated shifting ideas of what single and married women could and should do as workers and citizens. From cutting cloth and distributing materials to getting paid and having fun, Wong gives us a rare ground-level view of piecework in a clothing factory from the women on the sewing room floor.
New Exhibit Showcases Botanical Art & Illustrations Through the Ages

ON EXHIBIT
MAY TO AUGUST 2022

Botanical Art & Illustrations Through the Ages
EDWARDS GALLERY
MURRAY AND HONG SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Aim of Every Artist

In a 1956 interview in the Paris Review (“The Art of Fiction No. 12”), William Faulkner said, “The aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that a hundred years later, when a stranger looks at it, it moves again since it is life.” His assertion reaches across genres and mediums and is as true for the novel or the short story as it is for a portrait hanging in a gilded frame on a museum wall – and true, too, for troves of botanical art and illustrations.

For hundreds of years, the aim of many artists who have documented the shapes, structures, colors, and growth cycles of plants and flowers has been to represent species accurately and thoroughly for scientists who depend on those representations to advance understanding and scholarship. It’s art in service of pharmacology, botany, and agriculture – which is to say, art in service of life. Many botanists still prefer studying paintings to photographs for the way illustrations can reveal hard-to-capture details about roots, seeds, leaves, buds, branches, and blossoms; many artists still turn to herbs, flowers, and trees for inspiration; and many who are neither botanists nor artists still appreciate botanical illustrations for their beauty and their history.

_Dioscurides graeco-latinus: Vet. Chigi F. VII. 159._
Background illustration of May Apple from _Vegetable materia medica of the United States..._ by William P.C. Barton.
The Exhibit

As befits a library serving the nation’s first land-grant university, MSU Libraries have a strong collection of botanical art and illustrations, and a new exhibit in the first-floor gallery in the Main Library will showcase and celebrate this work. “Botanical Art & Illustrations Through the Ages,” on exhibit from May through the end of August, was organized by Librarian Suzi Teghtmeyer, who said the exhibit will showcase works across centuries.

“You don’t have to be a botanist to love looking at beautiful illustrations of plants,” Teghtmeyer said. “Plants are part of life, even if you’re a carnivore. They form the basis of what most of the creatures on our planet eat, and botanical illustrations have long been used to help us learn about what is safe and what isn’t safe to eat or use. Images of plants were drawn on cave walls, they were important for early and modern pharmaceuticals, and they continue to bring us pleasure and information. Our goal is to share rare and unique art, instruction, and illustration; and celebrate the integral role plants have in our lives.”

Highlights of the exhibit will include:

The Highgrove Florilegium
This is the first published British Florilegium about a garden in Britain, and it records the plants in the gardens at Highgrove, the family home of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall near Tetbury in Gloucestershire. The books are enormous (26.4” x 19.7”) and beautiful. This is one of two volumes, and it will be featured in the Sawyer-Koch case.

Emanuel Sweerts Florilegium
This work is a picture book of plants which served as an unpriced catalogue of plants and bulbs for sale at the Sweerts' shop at the Frankfurt Fair and afterwards in Amsterdam. It is said that his handsome renderings of bulbs contributed to the European cultural and economic phenomenon known as “Tulipomania.”

Work from Carl Linneus, Flora suecica...
Linneus is best known for implementing the binominal naming classification system. This work, trans. Flora of Sweden, is one of the first of what we now consider to be a flora in that it identifies the plants and their characteristics growing in a defined region.

Work from Asa Gray, Genera of the plants.
Gray, a botany professor at Harvard, wrote some of the first textbooks on botany. He was a contemporary of WJ Beal and Charles Darwin.

A letter from Charles Darwin to William J. Beal
Beal and Darwin corresponded about plant genetics and evolution through hybridization. Beal wrote first to Darwin on a matter related to the hybridization of corn, and Darwin responded. A facsimile of that letter, held by University Archives and Historical Collections, will be on display.

Peep Show by Martin Engelbrecht
This features layered illustrations, is described as a miniature theater, and is something like a diorama. It features representations of an eighteenth century ornamental hermitage.

Ladies’ botany... by John Lindley, with beautiful colored plates.
John Lindley, was a botanist who believed botany was an undervalued scientific discipline to be studied by men and women alike. This work illustrates the science of plants in an “unscientific” manner.

Dioscurides graeco-latinus: Vat. Chigi F. VII. 159
A facsimile of an illustration from fifteenth century Constantinople featuring colored illustrations on parchment.

Two early volumes of Curtis’s Botanical Magazine
Based on the premise that clients would rather purchase smaller botanical artworks than large ones, Curtis produced the Botanical Magazine in 1787 and is still published today.

— story continues, p. 15
Librarian Suzi Teghtmeyer

Teghtmeyer is a liaison for colleges and departments at MSU that focus on or include plant and agricultural sciences, sustainability, general tourism, and agricultural economics. Her expertise covers agriculture, botany, forestry, horticulture, natural resources, parks and tourism. In her work for the Libraries, she selects (and withdraws) materials to support research in these fields. Part of this work means that she's often coordinating purchases with other subject specialists. She also curates these materials, partners with MSU Extension and the Experiment Stations as part of the land-grant mission to serve communities throughout Michigan, and works at the reference desk (and on chat and email services) in the Main Library. She can be found there, behind the easy-to-find counter on the east side of the first-floor lobby, one of many smart, generous, helpful librarians who staff the desk and cheerfully answer questions for any who stop by with simple or complicated questions and needs. She also represents MSU Libraries and MSU through her membership and involvement in the Agriculture Network Information Collaborative (AgNIC), a partnership of people from many institutions who collaborate in the area of agricultural information and data management, and the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries (CBHL), a long-standing organization devoted to research and patron needs in botanical, arboretum, and plant science libraries across North America. MSU has been a long-standing member in both, served as CBHL President and USAIN Secretary, and Teghtmeyer's participation means she contributes to and benefits from conversations about issues and projects and attends annual meetings (often at the National Agriculture Library) to discuss and implement actions beneficial to member organizations and their patrons. She has written one book, co-authored another, published dozens of articles and reviews, presented at dozens of conferences, and received many grants and awards that have brought worthy recognition to MSU Libraries. She has a master's degree in library science from Emporia State University and a bachelor's degree in science (forestry) with a minor in agronomy from the University of Missouri.
Librarians to the Rescue

Teghtmeyer fields different kinds of questions at different times of the year, and topics range from issues related to agriculture and sustainability to questions about leadership, local politics, food preparation, 4-H, and crops. Hops and hemp are the two big crops taking root in Michigan right now, and Teghtmeyer said hemp is a recent and relevant example of how libraries are supporting industry.

“We can help you find what you need, and we can show you how to conduct research at a higher level.

We can search different sources, publishers, and formats.

We’re compassionate, and we really want to give you what you request, but you need to ask us for help.

We’ll never own everything, but we can generally locate and share what you need.

We have a trove of treasures in our Libraries. We can’t display everything, but what is out of sight should not be out of mind. You can request to see materials, and we’ll locate them and share them.

The exhibit is free and open to all.

— MSU Librarian Suzi Teghtmeyer
The Peer Research Assistant Program
Expanding Opportunities for Success in Classrooms and Careers

It’s probably fair to say that among students, faculty, staff, and community members, most library users know that reference services form an important part of the package of resources available through MSU Libraries. Our Reference Desk is located on the first floor of the Main Library near the south entrance. Librarians also are available through email or chat services, and individuals who want one-on-one research assistance can contact a subject specialist in their area. What many library users might not know is that MSU Libraries also offer a Peer Research Assistant (PRA) Program, which pairs up library-trained, library-employed students to support other students.

The PRA program began in the fall semester of 2013 under the supervision of Librarian Ben Oberdick (now head of Teaching & Learning) to provide basic reference assistance to students in four residence halls (Brody, Holden, Hubbard, and McDonel). Interim Head of Reference & Discovery Services Emilia Marcyk-Taylor, who took over the program in 2015, says offering the program in places where students live lowers some barriers to seeking help.

“Our target audience for this program is undergraduates, mostly first-year or second-year students who are required to live in residence halls and who are doing college-level research for the first time,” Marcyk said. “Lowering these barriers to research and reference services expands opportunities for students who seek help. Through this program, they can get help from their own peers in a place that is already familiar and convenient, which also makes some students feel more comfortable asking for help.”

Peer Research Assistants, who are also undergraduate students, can help other students learn to navigate the libraries and find and use information for class assignments. They work closely with the Writing Center, since many students need both writing and research support, and they can:

• Help students find and evaluate information for research papers
• Help students use different library systems to find different kinds of materials
• Answer questions about the libraries
• Help students create citations and understand citation styles
• Make referrals to connect students to librarians and other library services

The benefits for students who need research support are easy to praise, but the benefits for students employed through the Libraries as PRAs should also be celebrated. We know that employment offers many benefits for students. It can help students develop personal and professional skills, and it can help prepare students for the job market by giving them practical work experience. When students have opportunities to partner with professional colleagues, they build new and important relationships. Jobs can help students develop better time-management skills, and when students graduate and look for work, they have solid experience to list on a resume and discuss in interviews. All of these rewards and returns are general and arguably abstract, of course, so we talked with two former MSU Libraries PRAs to find out how their experiences working in the Libraries led to meaningful careers.

Through this program, they can get help in a place that is already familiar and convenient, and they can get help from their own peers, which also makes some students feel more comfortable asking for help.
What, for you, were the most valuable or meaningful aspects of your work as a Peer Research Assistant with MSU Libraries?

I was a Peer Research Assistant (PRA) from 2016 through 2018. What was really important during that time was being able to assist my peers in their research and help them navigate library resources with confidence. This was a really valuable skill as it taught me how to teach others what I had learned as well as use what I was learning in my own undergraduate research. I still use my research skills today and share them with the students I supervise in the Business Library.

When I assisted peers in their research, this typically meant that a student came to me (while I was also a student) for help finding resources or for help evaluating resources. We would search the library catalog and e-resources together and I would explain why they got the results they did and what might be beneficial for their research papers. I often talked with these students about using critical thinking and deductive reasoning (both skills needed when doing research) to determine what resources would work for their papers and how they could find those resources after our session. I would also answer a lot of questions about citations and show students how to format them.

I think my favorite thing during my student work was that I rarely helped the same patron with the same question twice, and this always kept me on my toes. What worked for one patron might not have worked for another, so there was never a dull moment during my work. This is still often true in my work at the Business Library.

How did your experience as a PRA for MSU Libraries shape some of your decisions about what you wanted to do and where you wanted to work?

Being able to talk with my peers about their experiences with the library and teaching them how to access information kind of shaped the type of librarian I wanted to be. I enjoyed helping people with their research and teaching information literacy, and I realized I wanted to go further with that by going to library school, which I did at Wayne State University. I took courses that I thought might be beneficial for subject librarianship: decolonizing the library, collections management basics, how to set up and implement instruction, information behavior & architecture, web development, and library administration/management, and many other classes. I graduated from that program in August 2021 with my Master's in Library & Information Science and was able to return here to MSU to work in the Gast Business Library.

How did your work here at MSU Libraries help prepare you for the path(s) you chose?

I was very fortunate to have some really great supervisors that helped facilitate my learning. This provided opportunities to learn more about our library services and gain a deeper understanding of how important the libraries are in student success and academics. As a PRA, I provided reference services, I learned how to scan items such as labor contracts and cookbooks for digital preservation, I coordinated various outreach & events, and I provided troubleshooting through discovery services. I also continued some of this work when I had the opportunity to go from a student employee to an on-call employee within the library. These opportunities helped a great deal while I was in library school because they gave me hands-on experience that improved my skills and expanded my understanding of library & information science.

Tell us a little bit more about what you’re doing now at the Business Library.

Currently I’m the student supervisor at the business library. This involves managing library projects to maintain our collection and continuing to provide services. I answer reference questions, and I contribute to a variety of other projects. A lot of what I do now requires the skills I gained as a PRA, and I hope I can continue growing & improving those skills as an information professional.
Peer Research Assistants

continued from p.17

What, for you, were the most valuable aspects of your work as a Peer Research Assistant with MSU Libraries?

One of the most valuable aspects of being a PRA for me was interacting with students and sharing search tips. It was great to show someone a libguide or how to do boolean searching and watch how excited they became. I thought that providing in-person reference service in the dorms was a great idea – it allows the library to meet the students where they are without having to trek through campus to meet someone in person. I think that is particularly valuable given the size of the campus.

How did your experience as a PRA for MSU Libraries shape some of your decisions about what you wanted to do and where you wanted to work?

I knew that I was interested in working in libraries before coming to MSU, but I believe my experience as a PRA made me interested in working specifically in academic libraries. The experience also increased my interest in helping students with their research and teaching students about how to use online resources. I started MSU as a transfer student from a community college and had never participated in workshops on how to use academic library resources. Our training sessions for the PRA program filled that gap and ever since then I have been interested in sharing library research tips with other students.

How did your work here at MSU Libraries help prepare you for the path(s) you chose?

While at MSU Libraries I also worked for the User Experience department and I believe both positions prepared me for pursuing a graduate degree in library science. During my time at the University of Michigan School of Information I was able to continue providing research assistance as a library assistant at the Ross School of Business library. I was an Anthropology major at MSU who knew nothing about business, but my time as a PRA helped prepare me to offer reference services to students of all academic backgrounds. My time in the UX department at MSU Libraries also helped me know what to expect in my user research and assessment coursework. Outside of the position duties, I am grateful for the people I worked with and their encouragement and advice regarding grad school (shoutout to Christine Tobias, Joshua Sanchez, Emilia Maryck, Emily Sanford, and everyone in UX!).

Tell us a little bit more about what you’re doing now.

My current title is the Assistant Research Scholar for Digital Initiatives at the library of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, a branch of the New York University Division of Libraries. In this role I help maintain and develop digital library projects such as the Ancient World Digital Library and our upcoming Digital South Caucasus Collection. I work with colleagues at Bobst Library to ensure the items in these collections are accessible and discoverable which includes making our item records available to other libraries. I also occasionally provide research assistance to the community and maintain a research agenda that involves studying the management of archaeological data.

What to Watch for in the Months Ahead

Blossoms. The MSU Seed Library sorted and labeled nearly 2,000 packets of seeds for students, staff, faculty, and community members this spring. Seeds included cucumbers, melons, flowers, greens, herbs, peas, beans, peppers, root vegetables, squash, pumpkins, and tomatoes, all shelved in an old card catalog outside of the MakerSpace on Two West. Several programs were offered to support the initiative, including an Earth Day event in the MakerSpace, which gave people a chance to make a “pizza garden” planter with tomato, basil, and oregano seeds; and a virtual Introduction to Gardening workshop organized by the MSU Seed Library, the Library Environmental Committee, and the Greater Lansing Food Bank Garden Project. Unlike books, the seeds don’t have to be returned, and if you happened to pick up a few packets, you can create your own botanical exhibit for late August or early September, just when the Library’s exhibit wraps up.
A Message from Dean of Libraries and Interim Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning Innovation Joseph A. Salem, Jr., Ph.D.

Dear Friends,

In the last several years, we have been busy in our Libraries working to support and advance teaching and learning. This work has always been central to our mission, and over the course of this academic year we have expanded our commitment to and involvement in these efforts through the Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation (Center for TLI), a recent initiative of the Office of the Provost. As the new Interim Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning Innovation, I am excited to lead this venture, which is part of MSU Libraries.

As Provost Woodruff outlined in a previous message to our community, this initiative represents a deliberate effort to locate fundamental support for educators at the academic heart of the university, the Main Library. Centrally located, and central to the lives of our faculty and staff, the Libraries are taking on this new role and added portfolio of services, bringing together outstanding faculty and academic staff from across campus who guide and advance innovative teaching and learning.

I’ll be sharing more information about the Center for TLI in the months to come, but one of the reasons that the Center is coming to the Libraries is the good work already underway to support student success. A good example is the MSU Libraries Open Educational Resources (OER) program. The OER Advisory Committee recently awarded a third round of grants totaling $28,500 to nine MSU faculty. These awards are designed to support the goals of our OER program, which helps instructors reduce costs for students, improve access to required texts, and increase student success. The investment we are making through these awards has the potential to impact more than 2,500 students and save these students $245,760 each academic year. That’s significant, and as we see other costs increasing — gas, groceries, housing — we also see the growing importance of this program.

We are delighted to share this good news, celebrate new exhibits, welcome new leaders, and recognize the importance of our Peer Research Assistant Program, which not only helps all MSU undergraduate students access reference support but also helps our own student employees find and chart paths to meaningful careers.

We are proud of the good work in the Libraries and proud of our partnerships. We want to share our good news, and we want, always, to share accurate information. In the Fall 2021 issue of INSIGHT, we featured a story on the Lesbian Legacies Endowment. We apologize for an error that appeared in that story. The Goldenrod Music collection was donated to MSU Libraries by Terry Grant, Goldenrod’s founder and president for more than 40 years. We are honored to hold these materials from an important time in the women’s and lesbian movements in this country, and we are committed to preserving the legacies of Goldenrod, the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, and the lesbian community in Michigan.

Thank you for partnering with us and supporting us as we work to promote equal access to information and spaces for all.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Salem, Jr., Ph.D.
Dean of Libraries

Cover Collage Images and Details
From University Archives & Historical Collections:
Darwin letter to Prof. William J. Beal, May 21, 1878. (A00223B).

From Murray & Hong Special Collections:
Barton, William Paul Crilón, 1786-1856. Vegetable materia medica of the United States... Illustrated by coloured engravings... done by the author. XX folio K377 .B37 1825.