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2021

UL Annual Report 2020

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ANNUAL REPORT



The University of Akron
University Libraries



WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED

University Libraries (UL) quickly made the majority of our resources and services available within the constraints of isolation and social distancing when COVID-19 caused the closure of the University of Akron (UA) campus in early 2020.

UL employees in all departments swiftly pivoted to assist UA students with digital resources and virtual services, and to support faculty with online course development. We began providing virtual expertise through Chat Reference, digitized course material and library resources, made those resources available through the learning management system, and offered a significant number of workshops and training sessions for faculty. UL then followed University of Akron guidelines and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's directives in planning the reopening of facilities and services for the fall 2020 semester.

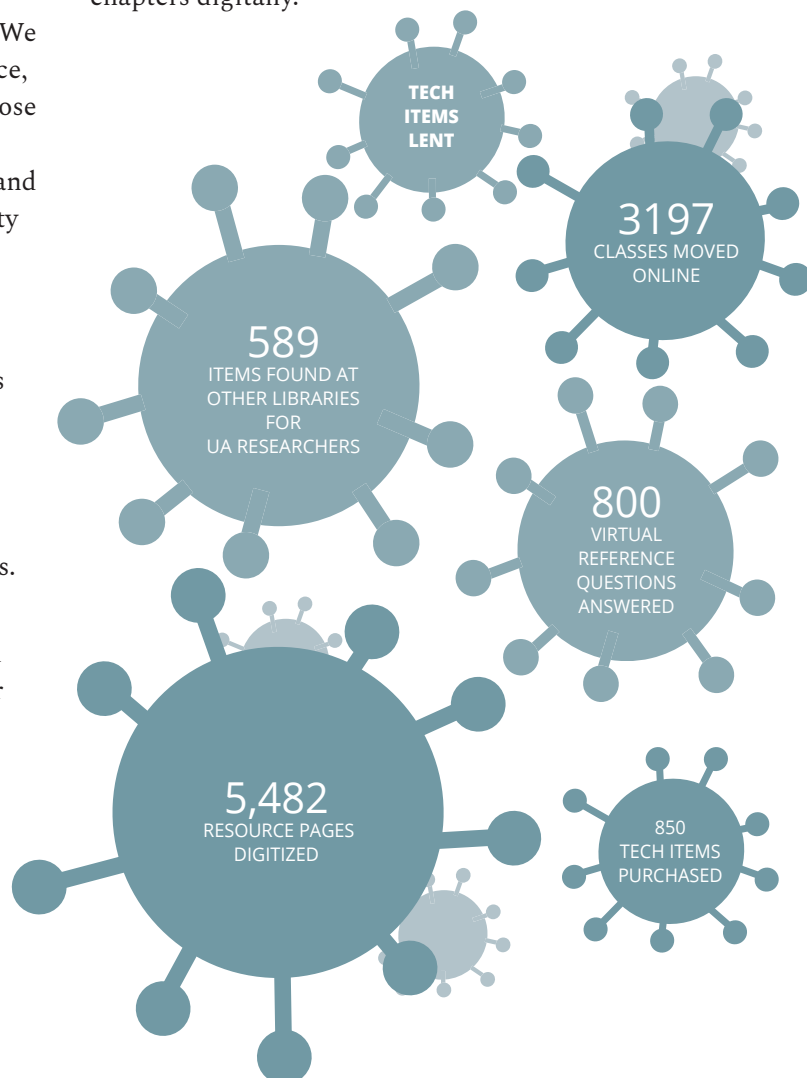
By July, we created a plan to reopen University Libraries that included establishing protocols to maintain safe and clean physical library spaces for library patrons and employees, increasing access to library services and technology, and continuing UA faculty training and librarian-designed online information literacy initiatives.

Our teaching, learning, and research services will continue to evolve as we focus on innovating digital and interdisciplinary research, and empowering students for success.

COVID 19 RAPID RESPONSE

March–May 2020

The University Libraries developed several initiatives for academic continuity during COVID-19, including partnering with ZipAssist to acquire long-term loan equipment for both teaching and learning, such as laptops, web cameras, and microphones. We made critical course materials available online, including assigned textbooks and reserves, and we delivered thousands of pages and chapters digitally.



Scan the QR code
to see our reopening
plan for UL!

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

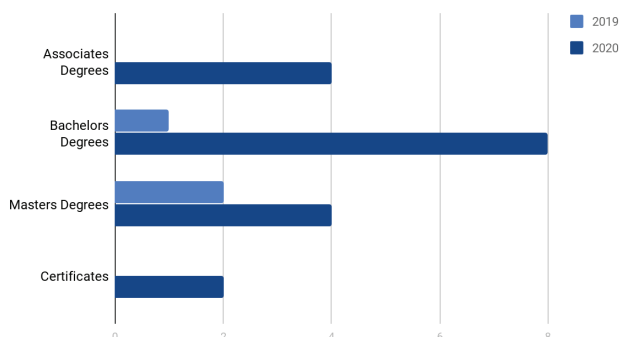
Partner with the University of Akron community to foster student success, inspire intellectual inquiry, promote scholarship, and disseminate knowledge.

AFFORDABLE LEARNING INITIATIVE: The University of Akron's Affordable Learning Initiative, led by the University Libraries, is supporting the second cohort of course development for open textbook adoption. We have saved students more than half a million dollars in just our first few years.

KEEP TEACHING BRIGHTSPACE: Developed by DDS, the Keep Teaching Community on Brightspace compiled recordings from training sessions, a wide variety of handouts, a developing list of FAQs, and most importantly, discussion forums to keep faculty connected.

UA ONLINE: We quickly created a business plan to drive online enrollment, beginning with Fall 2020. We saw a marked increase in all degree levels.

UAkron Online Programs



DISCOVERY & ACCESS

Optimize and increase the discovery of and access to services, resources, technologies, and scholarship.

The Libraries' collections are core research infrastructure that serve the entire university community across all disciplines. In 2020, there were more than 1 million measurable uses of the collection.

As a member of OhioLINK, the UL has invested in access to resources throughout the state. OhioLINK resources are accessed every 1.1 seconds.

LIBRARY 101: University of Akron librarians developed Brightspace content to teach information literacy, research skills, and lifelong-learning skills that students can transfer to other courses and apply beyond the University. These online lessons via Brightspace can be assigned in part or whole by course instructors or enterprising students can self-enroll. The first course, Library 101, was released in Fall 2020.

"I found the Library 101 workshop on the Brightspace Discover page to be incredibly helpful for the three research projects I had this semester. If more optional workshops like that were available during the semesters I think they could help students, including myself, with their academic success at UA. I think especially now with a lot of the instruction being moved online, these 'do-it-yourself' workshops are great at keeping individuals in the right headspace for school instead of getting distracted on breaks between classes with things at home."

CHAT REFERENCE: Launched in March, we provided 70 hours per week in chat reference and fielded 3,771 questions from UA students, faculty, and community members.

"I'm just starting the search. This is my first semester at Akron, so I'm not quite sure how to navigate your online database yet."

"Thank you so much! It is hard to narrow down what I need with so much information to look at."

"More than helpful. I didn't even know this existed. Thank you so much for taking the time."

"Thank you so much; I was so lost on what to do and have been dreading this paper."

"You just saved me 30+ minutes. Thank you SO much. You rock tremendously!!!!"

CREATING ACCESS TO ONLINE COLLECTIONS:

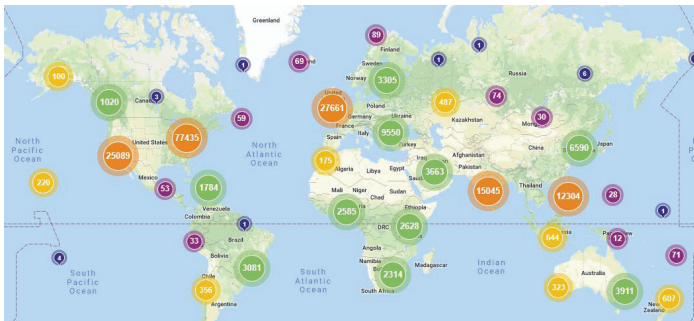
Collections and Content Strategies Librarian (Sean Kennedy) continues to juggle OhioLINK deals, negotiating deals for UA resources, and canceling resources when needed. He negotiated last-minute deals for emergency resources (for example, additional content to the Visible Body platform to enable remote classes to move forward). He also renegotiated the Kanopy streaming video deal so that we approve every purchase to keep costs in check.

OUTREACH & COLLABORATION

Cultivate relationships with the campus and the community to increase engagement with University Libraries.

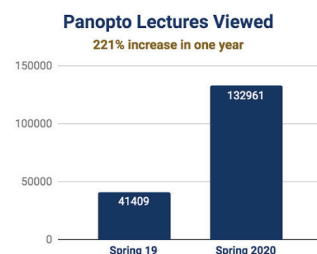
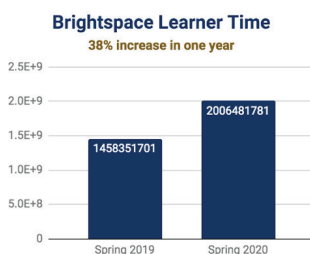
NEWS LITERACY GRANT: Mike Monaco was awarded a Library Services and Technology Act grant to support a free workshop on teaching news literacy for 17 Ohio librarians. The workshop was taught online by news media literacy expert Michael Spikes of Northwestern University. The class ran September 9–21 with a website Mr. Spikes created for the lessons and a Google Classroom for discussion and conferencing.

REPOSITORY: IdeaExchange, UA's institutional repository, was accessed by nearly 13,000 institutions from 209 countries, disseminating worldwide scholarly output from both students and faculty here at UA.



DDS WORKSHOPS/TRAINING: More than 770 people attended DDS's training in the 2.5 weeks of spring break. DDS staff dedicated 77 office hours during that time to move more than 3,000 classes online.

Throughout the year, DDS spent more than 500 hours participating in one-on-one appointments, in addition to multiple monthly workshops to support faculty teaching online. Staff from all over UL manually merged thousands of sections of classes to prepare for hybrid delivery.



VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT: We stepped up virtual engagement, connecting people to the resources they need while also just having fun!

We provided some light-hearted entertainment for our virtual visitors during National Library Week and finals, featuring library staff's snapshots in their at-home workspaces and pictures of pets. Our first ever Haiku and Two-Sentence Horror Story contests garnered dozens of entries from the UA community.



FACE SHIELDS: The Makerstudio lent 3D printers to the Summit County Public Health Department (SCPH) and local hospitals to produce and deliver hundreds of face shields. In coordination with the Summit County Emergency Management Agency, face shields have been provided to nursing homes, care facilities, and other health providers and first responders.

UA WORKS: UA Works, managed by Distance Learning Services since July 2020, is the system for synchronous and asynchronous noncredit professional workshops, certificates, and executive series offered by departments and colleges. It enhances the university's branding, grows in-demand programs, and generates revenue.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS: Distance Learning Services continues to grow its partnerships with local communities as it works with two-year and four-year colleges and 14 high schools in 8 counties to deliver graduate, undergraduate, and college credit plus classes. The Distance Learning Network generated \$3,050,868 for UA in 2020.

SESQUICENTENNIAL

University libraries played an integral role as UA honors its 150-year history, recognizes its present success, and looks to a bright future. Archival Services has provided research, photographs, and information for departments all over campus.

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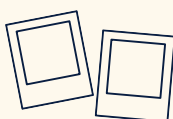
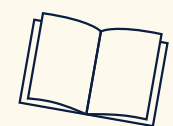


HAIL WE AKRON: The book created to celebrate The University of Akron's sesquicentennial, *Hail We Akron!: The Third Fifty Years of The University of Akron, 1970 to 2020*, gathers memories, impressions, and opinions of alumni, friends, stakeholders, and donors about Akron's hometown college since its achievement of state status, the third phase of its transformation from Buchtel College and a municipal university. A celebratory collection rather than a chronicle, it gives voice to those who worked and studied here, to the sports fans and concertgoers, the taxpayers and the angels, the employers of graduates, and the vendors of goods and services.

UA BLACK HISTORY: Archival Services actively collects and preserves the history of underrepresented communities, especially Black history at UA and in the greater Akron area. We also work to share that history with the public. The archives include information and materials from several exhibits that originated in the Dr. Shirla R. McClain Gallery of Akron's Black History and Culture, as well as Dr. McClain's Papers. Several robust collections that visually document the local Black community, including the Opie Evans Papers and Horace and Evelyn Stewart Photograph Collection, are also housed in our archives.



Scan the QR code
to see more!



BY THE NUMBERS

2020 Sesquicentennial Stats

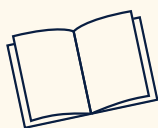
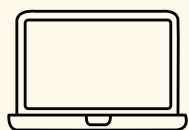
- Digitized all Tel-Buch yearbooks (98 volumes)
- Digitized and transcribed diaries of Buchtel College students Albert J. Laird and Chester F. Connor
- Digitized over 15,000 photographs from The University of Akron Photograph Collection
- Created metadata for and posted online 5,534 issues of the *Buchtelite* student newspaper



FACILITIES & SPACES

Provide inclusive, barrier-free physical and online environments for teaching, learning, and research that are responsive to the university community's needs.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic this spring, the Libraries adapted to provide expert help and services to students and faculty while the UL facilities were closed. We rapidly adjusted our equipment, procedures, and policies to provide semester-long loans of laptops and other tools to support academic continuity. Contact-free delivery options, like curbside service and mail-to-home delivery, got materials into students' hands efficiently and effectively.



BY THE NUMBERS

2020 (January–December)
Circulation & Facility Stats

- Gate count: 156,201
- Study room bookings: 9,193
- Semester laptop checkouts: 1,529
- 1-day laptop checkouts: 515
- Keyboard (in-house computer workstation) checkouts: 2,209
- Print reserve checkouts: 1,307
- Book/media checkouts (includes OhioLINK): 10,919



ARTWORK: Art has always had a place in UL. This year we added original works by students and community members. A mural created in partnership with the Art Bomb Brigade was installed in the cafe area, and an original painting by Cynthia Kaufman Rose now graces the newly dedicated STEAM lounge.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SCHOLARSHIP

Invest in ongoing workforce development of all University Libraries employees to enhance expertise, effectiveness, and engagement.

PRACTICUM STUDENTS: We hosted two Kent State University graduate students completing their Master of Library & Information Science degrees in 2020. Ms. Kiana Hardy-Butler joined Public Services during the Spring 2020 semester. She completed an audit of Public Services webpages and developed a framework to streamline and update critical information. Matthew Fisk completed a research project that included surveying University of Akron students and University Libraries employees. His paper in draft form is currently titled, “Adaptability through Adversity: A Survey on Academic Library Performance during the Pandemic.”

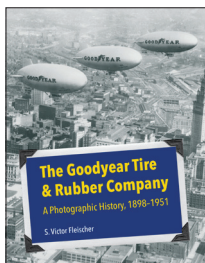
CONTINUING EDUCATION: The Friends of the University Library established a scholarship in 1997 as a means of encouraging professional education in librarianship through financial assistance to employees of University Libraries who are pursuing a degree in library and information science. This year’s recipients were Rita Sausmikat and Laracarina Suarez.



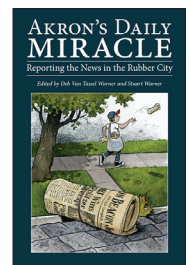
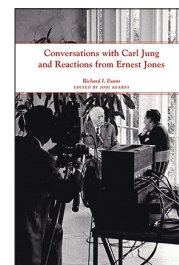
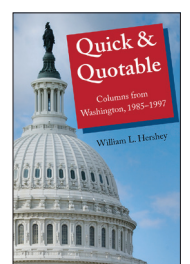
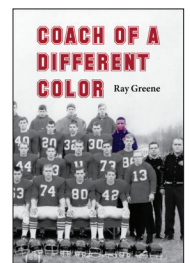
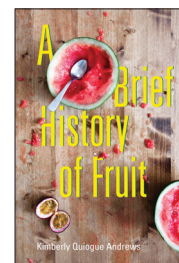
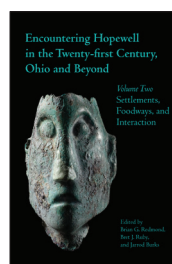
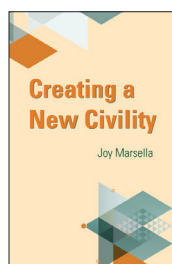
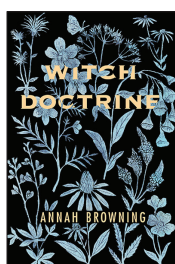
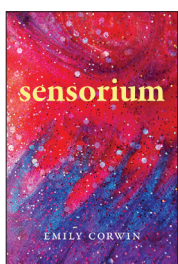
Clockwise: Fisk, Sausmikat, & Suarez

UA PRESS

UA Press 2020 Book Releases



FLEISCHER’S BOOK: Vic Fleischer, Head of Archival Services, and Associate Professor of Bibliography, wrote *The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951*. This book visually chronicles the rich and fascinating history of Goodyear, highlighting the products that helped make Goodyear a household name and Akron the “Rubber Capital of the World.”

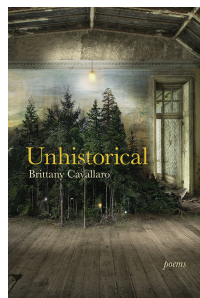


HONORS & GRANTS

We are very proud to showcase the achievements of our fellow employees at University Libraries. Their achievements are a testament to their dedication to our work.

AMY FREELS, the editorial design coordinator at The University of Akron Press, won a book cover design award for Brittany Cavallaro's *Unhistorical* in the Association of University Presses Book, Jacket, and Journal Show. This is the second time Freels has won that award for book cover design. Another of her book covers, for Tyler Mills' *Hawk Parable*, was a winner of The da Vinci Eye, which is awarded to books with superior cover art and design.

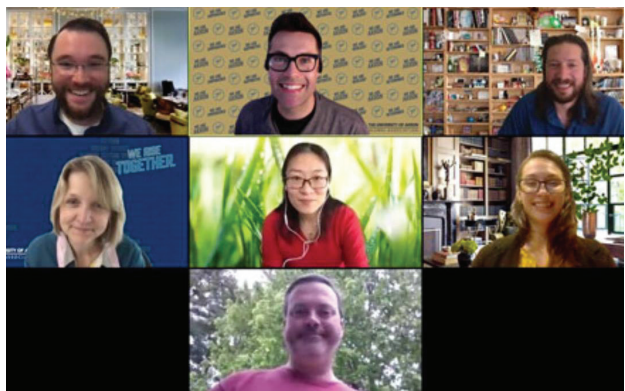
MARILIA ANTÚNEZ, Life & Allied Health Sciences Librarian, has been nationally recognized by the Medical Library Association (MLA) for attaining membership in the Academy of Health Information Professionals (AHIP). The Academy is the credentialing and career development program for health information professionals. Academy membership is based on three areas of achievement: academic preparation, professional experience, and accomplishment. Ms. Antúnez's membership was approved at the Distinguished Member level.



OCTOBER IS ARCHIVES MONTH. Archival Services' photograph of the Goodyear Moon House was one of the images selected for the Society of Ohio Archivists (SOA) Archives Month Poster. Each year the SOA decides on a theme for the upcoming poster, and Archives from around the state submit photographs or documents. Members of the SOA select their favorite images, and the Poster committee selects the top three to five images for the poster.

ZIPTASTIC: The amazing group of employees in our Design and Development Services department were nominated as a group by the faculty and staff from Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences as the SEAC Ziptastic Award recipients for May. The award recognizes the great work they accomplished transitioning UA to online courses in a matter of days.

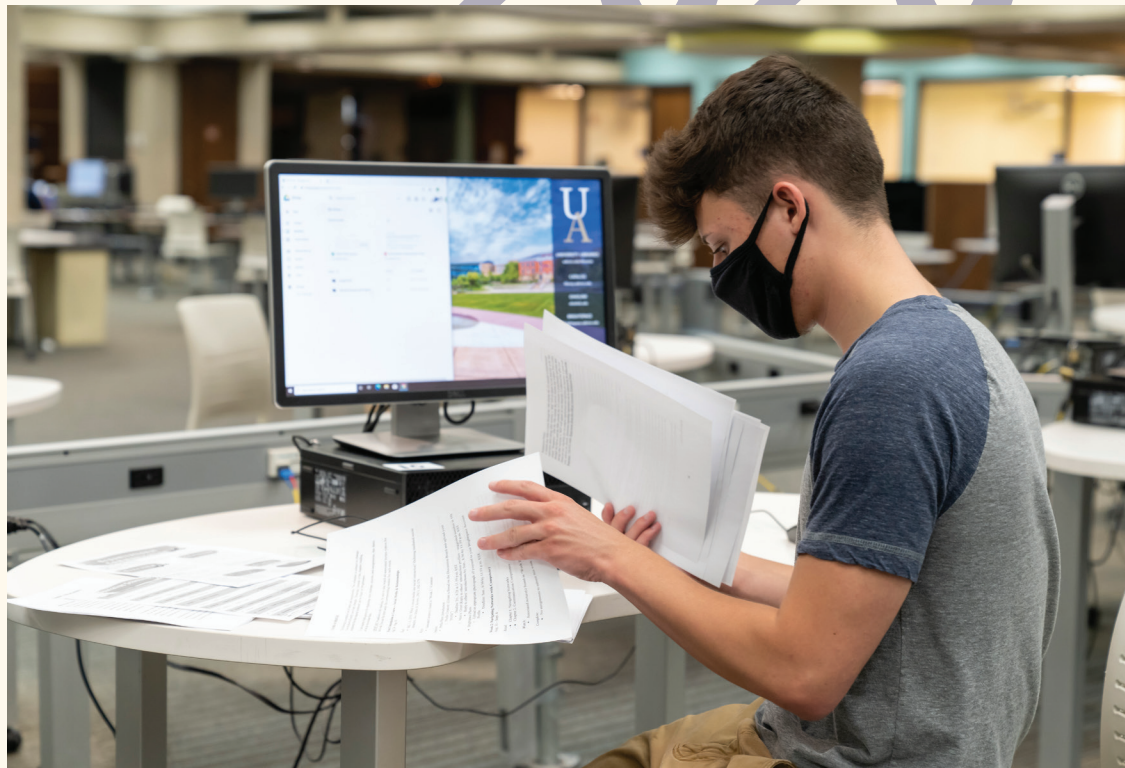
The August Ziptastic Award recipient was Donald Appleby, a library specialist in Access Services. He was nominated for this honor by Dr. Donald Visco Jr., professor of chemical, biomolecular, and corrosion engineering. Dr. Visco praised Mr. Appleby for his "quick and efficient manner" with solving problems. "Such an approach puts students first and is appreciated by all involved," said Visco. "It is the behind-the-scenes work like this that make things go smoothly for the students, which makes a difference at UA."



Above: Antúnez, Appleby, & Design and Development Services



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