

DiMenna-Nyselius Library Annual Report

July 2024 through June 2025

Executive Summary

In FY25, the penultimate year of the Library's Strategic Plan, 2022-2026, all staff advanced the Library's mission by contributing to working groups tasked with achieving the plan's goals. Over the course of the Strategic Plan, the Library has implemented 80% of the total initiatives devised to guide our strategic direction, while the remaining initiatives proposed by Goal Leads will be the priorities of FY26. However, strategic direction must allow for flexibility, and with the construction of six new classrooms on the third floor, Library Leadership played a central role in guiding the Library's agile response to major space changes during the final months of FY25. In preparation for the construction on the third floor, Leadership engaged in an intensive planning process to determine the scope of work, develop implementation plans, and coordinate logistics. This included attending regular meetings with Facilities Management and W.B. Meyer (the company who assisted with the move), developing a clear communication strategy for our staff, for Academic Commons partners, and for the University community, and developing workflows to ensure continued access to library materials during construction, as well as staff access to the building.

With strategic direction in place, staff conducted a comprehensive review of 20,000 books for removal. Technical Services, in close collaboration with the Faculty Partnership Program (FPP) Librarians, completed this major project in time for the start of construction (a three-month window). Because priorities shifted toward classroom construction and relocating circulating materials, we will relocate the fully redesigned Curriculum Collection in FY26, and the Library's collaboration with Facilities Management on a proposed expansion and redesign of the University Archives and Special Collections space is paused pending further review. Other enhancements to the physical space in FY25 include the renovation of our instruction classroom, and the creation of the Wellness Room, a new and necessary use of Library space to support students' holistic well-being.

The Library continued to evolve alongside the needs of the University community in FY25 not just in our physical space but also via the resources, programming, and services we offer. Following our commitment to fulfill the University's need for study skills expertise and instruction, the Library expanded our services in this area to meet student need, hosting over forty study skills events in FY25. In response to emerging needs around artificial intelligence (AI) usage, geographic information system (GIS) mapping, and disappearing government data, the Library developed targeted resources and programs to support information literacy in these areas. In particular, the Library became a campus leader on many aspects of AI. Library staff across the Technical Services and Public Services departments actively expanded their knowledge and expertise in AI to facilitate staff training, optimize coding practices, audit the catalog for outdated language, and create instructional opportunities for students and staff on appropriate academic uses.

We ensured that our collections and online resources supported University students, faculty, and staff in their learning, teaching, research, and personal exploration. This includes the addition of exciting new e-resources such as Overdrive (Libby) to acquire an audiobook collection, Berg Fashion Library, PhilPapers, SCOPUS, Zotero Unlimited Storage, and U.S. News and World Report Archive. To ensure transparency and consistency in our collection policies, the Library developed a Collection Development Policy and drafted an Archives and Special Collections Development Policy, scheduled for release this summer. Prior to the weeding of the collection for the classroom construction project, the Collection Development and Management Committee (CDMC) had already weeded approximately 6,000 low-use titles from the collection to resolve overcrowded stacks on the upper level. CDMC also created guidelines for appropriate materials removal which we relied on later in FY25. We enhanced the Library website to improve user experience and added a dedicated Giving Page to encourage donor engagement and support. In support of faculty and student research and dissemination, we added our first collection of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) and introduced Scholar Showcase, an improved faculty profile system that expands the reach and visibility of University scholarship.

Purpose: Articulate a clear purpose to guide the strategic direction of the Library

The Library's Strategic Plan aligns with the University's mission, supporting its ambitions for national prominence, growing enrollment, and research excellence. The Library's priorities for this past year and for FY26 (Appendix)



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were collaboratively set by Strategic Plan Goal Leads and Library Leadership with the University's priorities and direction in mind. In FY25, we expanded our research services to further advance the University's institutional dedication to research. Library staff developed a system to allow Bellarmine Campus students to check out books 24/7, increasing the efficiency and accessibility of this collection. Staff also updated the policy page for course reserves and simplified the online submission form. We also advanced the range of information literacy and technology guidance that Research staff provide including GIS mapping, navigating disappearing government data, and effective and ethical academic AI usage. Our staff's capacity to educate and foster conversation around AI extended to collaborating with a Fulbright Scholar professor to investigate AI tools appropriate for a West African university's audience, hosting multiple intellectual Library Salons where participants explore AI guided by their curiosity, and hosting focused workshops. The latter ranged from demonstrations of AI tools, building custom GPTs, and identifying how students are using AI before coming to college. In FY26, we will continue the AI programming series with new intellectual salons focused on topics like AI and the Jesuit mission, AI and relationships, and an open-topic salon shaped by participant conversation. We will also hold another AI Sandbox to provide an opportunity for the campus community to explore and test AI tools with faculty and staff from across campus.

The Library strengthened faculty support with new resources and increased outreach this year. FPP Librarians were visible and welcoming presences promoting research services at faculty meetings, in school newsletters, and in a School Student Advisory Board meeting. Librarians also supported and welcomed faculty in important transitions in their careers. This was done via outreach at new faculty orientation, as well as in overviews of Library resources which Librarians presented to cohorts of new tenure track faculty in collaboration with the Office of the Provost.

Guided by one of our key strategic principles, "Library as Place," we improved the in-person experience of the Library building via optimized wayfinding, new technologies, and intellectually and creatively stimulating programming. The Library used new and upgraded technologies to continue offering students, staff, and faculty the best possible service and resources. Our Web and Technology Lead performed an audit of existing technology and equipment, resulting in five new wall-mounted monitors for the Collaboratories, a new patron-facing overhead scanner, and new barcode scanners. We also upgraded the building's digital signage to align with the University's campus-wide software, OptiSign, improving communication about services, resources, and events.

To engage and inspire the University community, the Library launched *Scholars in Focus*, a new series that offers a window into the research of faculty and staff and an opportunity for conversation. Eight scholars from the departments of Public Health, Visual and Performing Arts, Education, Biomedical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, English, Campus Ministry, and the Office of Student Engagement presented their research in this series. Their diverse topics sparked meaningful conversations, cross-disciplinary connections, and increased visibility for innovative projects, highlighting our vibrant academic community. *Coffee and Collaborate* events were held in December, February, and May to promote open communication and collaboration across departments. These casual, drop-in events offered faculty and staff a space to exchange ideas on a wide range of projects from research to event planning. As a result, the events fostered stronger interdepartmental connections and helped several attendees gain valuable input and identify potential partners for future collaboration. Participants included ITS, Online Learning, Office of the Provost, CT Writers Project, Global Fairfield, Murphy Center, Arts and Minds, Quick Center, Recreation, Center for Social Impact, Bellarmine Transition Team, Center for Academic Excellence, DSB Career Center, DSB Student Success Coaches, and the Assistant Dean of CAS.

The Library's five FY25 exhibitions, curated by faculty, students, and staff, were integrated into both courses and programming. We partnered with Associate Vice Provost for Pedagogical Innovation & Effectiveness Jay Rozgonyi for an archival display on William Wyler and hosted a documentary premiere. On the lower level of the Library, we showcased a collection of Ukrainian children's artwork depicting their experience living in a war-torn region, and we hosted an event with the Ukrainian curator to screen a documentary profiling a female soldier's experience on the frontlines. In the spring, we mentored and empowered students to create exhibits as well. Staff worked with the president of the Black Student Union (BSU) to curate archival materials related to the



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formation of the BSU. Outreach staff also collaborated with a senior Art major to create the first “Art By All” exhibit of campus artists which included work from all five schools, Bellarmine, online learners, faculty, and staff. The final exhibition of this semester provided graphic design students the opportunity to showcase their book jacket designs to a wider audience.

In our efforts to make our digital environment as welcoming as our physical environment, we made significant improvements in the digital user experience. The Library website underwent extensive assessment and ongoing enhancements throughout the year including redesigning the [Give](#) page, creating a new interface for the [Library of Things](#) following a necessary re-cataloging of this collection, and optimizing the process for addressing and tracking user-reported broken links. We ensured easy user authentication and reliable digital access to the Library’s collections by migrating to the OCLC hosted EZProxy. An update and revision of [DigitalCommons@Fairfield](#) is in process with a goal to increase use of and engagement by the campus community. Changes involve improving the appearance and organization of the site and adjusting policies to better align with the strategic priorities of the University.

Future Goals:

- Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for FY27 and beyond to shape the Library’s future growth and align with institutional priorities.
- Provide opportunities and support for faculty and students to promote their scholarly and creative works.
- Expand and develop research and publishing support for faculty regarding the new faculty profile system, Open Access, and transformative agreements.
- Collect and promote the University-produced scholarly and creative works via [DigitalCommons@Fairfield.edu](#).
- Work with campus partners to coordinate and articulate the University’s approach to AI for teaching, learning, and research, and incorporate AI literacy into the Library’s teaching, learning, and research support.
- Formulate a plan for preserving institutional memory of the University’s web presence and born digital content.

Manage academic portfolio consistent with University and unit-level strategic priorities

Over the course of 2024, the Library created a new [Collection Development Policy](#) to precisely and transparently describe our policies to internal and external audiences. This new documentation which is on our website communicates our policies regarding collection scope, acquisitions, deselection, and gifts. We also reviewed webpages pertaining to collection development and extensively revised [InterLibrary Loan \(ILL\) Services](#) webpages to reflect current practices. In late 2024 we began drafting policies for Archives and Special Collections to continue this work of transparent communication about our collections.

Research Services launched a Peer Research Consultant (PRC) Pilot Project in which we trained students to conduct basic research assistance. After completing a six-hour training program combining in-person and asynchronous learning modules, PRCs answered sixty questions, 60% of which were research inquiries. PRCs used the READ scale to assess the complexity of questions and referred more complex inquiries to Librarians. The pilot of this service demonstrated success with high self-reported confidence levels among PRCs, positive patron feedback on their service, and the PRCs’ growth in four National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career-readiness competencies including communication, critical thinking, professionalism, and career development.

As part of the initiative to establish a suite of accessible and adaptable teaching and learning materials, Public Services attained access to the editing software Camtasia to create professional, attractive video tutorials, and asynchronous instruction modules. We have also expanded our workshop offerings on Zoom and are now recording workshops to preserve them for even greater accessibility.



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Throughout the year, the Library championed the importance of institutional memory by promoting the publication of *Success on the Sound: A History of Fairfield University*, co-written by University Archivist Elise Bochinski, Professor Emeritus Paul Lakeland, and Professor Emeritus Kurt Schlichting. From a book launch and donor event at Redwood Library, a presentation at a first-year seminar with President Mark Nemec and Dr. Richard Greenwald, a podcast with the authors, Provost Christine Siegel, and Dean of the Library, Christina McGowan, a book signing and panel at the Fairfield Store, to events during Alumni Weekend, and the Pequot Library, the Archives staff have demonstrated to the campus, alumni, and donors the value of preserving and sharing our institutional memory.

In FY25, the Library implemented innovative strategies to support research and information discovery, contributing meaningfully to the advancement of scholarly communication. A notable milestone was the launch of Scholar Showcase, the Library's new faculty profile system, introduced this past fall. This system offers faculty a centralized, virtual platform to list, describe, and increase the online visibility of their scholarly work. In parallel, the Scholarly Communication Librarian and the Associate Dean for Technical Services and the Budget collaborated with Vice Provost for Graduate, Continuing, and Professional Studies Walter Rankin, Dr. Anthony Santella, and Dr. Josh Elliott to establish workflows and policies for the submission, preservation, and open access of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). As a result, this spring saw the publication of capstone projects from the Egan School's Master of Public Health program and dissertations from the Doctorate in Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership program in the School of Education and Human Development on DigitalCommons@Fairfield. Looking ahead to FY26, the Library will begin accepting dissertations from the Doctorate in Business Administration program. Efforts will also be made to promote participation in this initiative across additional graduate programs, with the goal of expanding contributions from across the University. Complementing these efforts, the Library also provided 1,329 books and articles to our broader academic community through ILL, making our resources accessible to partner libraries and advancing scholarly inquiry through a shared knowledge base.

Thanks to the generous gift of a donor, the Library was able to partner with the Crowley Company to digitize key historical publications, including the *University Voice*, *Bellarmino Quarterly*, the *Bellarmino Letters*, commencement programs, the president's annual reports, and various literary magazines including *Frontiers*, *New Frontiers*, *Groundstar*, and the *Sound*. These will be accessible via DigitalCommons@Fairfield in Fall 2025. The Bennett Center Digital Archive project advanced significantly in FY25, preparing over twenty-five years of lectures and events for streaming on DigitalCommons@Fairfield. University Counsel assisted the Library by drafting permission forms, and initial contacts were made with participants to secure usage rights. The Archives, in collaboration with Technical Services staff, also began testing streaming services for integration with the institutional repository. An ad hoc group also began evaluating Archive-It, a web archiving service, to preserve Fairfield's digital presence. A pilot site was launched and reviewed, and the group will continue their research and peer outreach to inform a purchase recommendation next year.

Future Goals:

- Complete the roll out of initiatives from the Library's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.
- Assess the data collected during the Peer Research Consultant Pilot Program and determine next steps.
- Complete a sweeping inventory of collections while assessing for gaps and reconciling new material locations in the catalog post-construction.
- Create a suite of accessible and adaptable teaching and learning materials including asynchronous tutorials for graduate students and the Personal Librarian Program.
- Increase the visibility of the University Archives by integrating it into teaching and learning.
- Make the physical collections in the University Archives more accessible online.
- Optimize our current Library systems for improved discovery of and access to content.

Resource Allocation: Allocate resources to achieve strategic goals

In FY25, the Library excelled in creating efficiencies in workflows and refining resource allocation. To improve efficiencies in our cataloging systems and in our user interface, we established the Alma/Primo Committee. This



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group leveraged the hands-on customer support that is included in our Alma subscription, meeting with an Alma Success Representative to identify and implement the Library's goals as effectively as possible. Members of this group utilized the Alma Refine tool to incorporate linked data and updated subject terminology in our catalog records. This work makes the catalog more easily navigable and aligns with cataloging best practices. They have also contributed to the Library's ability to effectively serve the needs of Bellarmine campus students, ensuring that borrowing for students is correctly set up in our existing system.

The PRC Pilot Project served the purpose of responsibly allocating our staff resources, allowing Librarians to dedicate more time to mid- and high-level complexity research questions. The PRCs made it possible for Public Services to maintain a high quantity of questions answered while improving the quality of interactions that required more time and attention. Quality control measures for the PRCs' research support included transcript reviews and staff feedback to confirm that transactions were handled professionally and effectively. Following further assessment in FY26, we will determine next steps to leverage the talent of PRCs going forward. Also in FY25, Public Services implemented the Library-based system LibStaffer to regulate research coverage hours and serve as a more reliable scheduling system for appointments.

The Library utilized AI tools to create efficiencies in workflows across the board, notably with a shared ChatGPT Pro account which staff used to explore uses of AI within their respective areas. One successful use of this new tool was to rapidly audit the catalog for outdated and non-inclusive subject headings in a project to address language inequalities and inaccuracies within metadata. The Library's AI Working Group is further evaluating AI research tools and preparing strategic recommendations for their use in research and education.

A cross-departmental e-resources promotion working group, comprising staff from Technical Services and Public Services, was established to coordinate the effective promotion of electronic resources—primarily databases—to Library staff, Faculty Partners, and the broader University community. The group developed a structured communication plan and a standardized checklist for promoting new e-resources, which proved instrumental in supporting outreach efforts for the resources added during the year. Outreach staff also submitted the successful proposal to acquire the emailing system Constant Contact to widen the scope and improve the performance of outreach via email.

To optimize our collections budget, the Library implemented an evidence-based acquisitions program for Project Muse based on our existing program for JSTOR. Starting next year, we will extend this model to Cambridge Press titles. Additionally, we continue to utilize token-based access from Kanopy and Elsevier, providing a cost-effective solution that enhances resource availability for our patrons. CDMC streamlined the resource assessment process, reviewing e-resource usage twice this year to prepare for January and July resource renewal cycles. We were able to cancel subscriptions to several underutilized resources, and CDMC developed a workflow to communicate both cancellations and low usage to faculty. Assessing our usage statistics and cost-per-use for e-resources this year resulted in a reallocation of over \$5,000 for other resources.

Future Goals:

- Expand the Library's role in resource sharing and optimize current practices by assessing vendor E-book licenses, improving documentation workflows, and ensuring version control and longevity of coding practices.
- Maintain and update our collection resources to support curricular and research needs.
- Collaborate with Advancement to increase donor support.
- Update communication models with new technologies and resource accounts approved in FY25 to finalize the Library's Communications Plan and Brand Style Guide in FY26.
- Collaborate with Marketing and Communications to inform the community about the Library's work.

Personnel: Engage staff talent to achieve strategic goals

In partnership with the Office of Institutional Research, the Library cultivated a positive and high-performance work environment that values and inspires staff by administering the Library Staff Satisfaction Surveys in the spring of 2025. This biennial feedback gathering process guides Library Leadership's efforts to identify and



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respond to staff priorities, thereby maintaining a healthy and communicative organizational culture in the Library. The Organizational Culture Working Group expanded the existing biennial survey in FY25 to include a second survey addressing part-time staff satisfaction to foster a more equitable and positive environment for all staff. Analysis of survey results will take place over the course of the summer, and Library Leadership will be able to identify priorities for future action based on feedback.

The Library's departmental culture is one of professional growth, mutual encouragement, and the desire to learn. Library staff demonstrated strong commitment to professional development throughout the year, and we are proud to recognize and celebrate their contributions. Ann Victor, Matt Schirano, Lisa Thornell, John Novak, Brendan Aucoin, and Jennifer Mottolese authored or co-authored publications on topics such as collection management, library marketing and outreach, making library technical services more visible, inclusive cataloging, and professional development for library interns. Ann Victor, Brendan Aucoin, Jennifer Mottolese, Lisa Thornell, and Christina McGowan presented posters or gave talks at conferences held by the Connecticut Library Association, the New England Library Association, Ex Libris Users of North America (ELUNA), the Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors (CCALD), and the AJCU Library Deans & Directors. At the Martin Luther King Jr. Vision Awards, Lisa Thornell was honored for her commitment to the ideals of MLK Jr. in her service to the University community. Christina McGowan was appointed to the board of trustees of the Connecticut Library Consortium. Ivelisse Maldonado was appointed as the Connecticut State Representative for the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking. In late June, she will be a mentor leader at a roundtable event for the Spectrum Scholarship winners at the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference, demonstrating excellence in librarianship and helping to recruit underrepresented groups to the profession.

The Organizational Culture Working Group established a Teams channel for professional development which has been used regularly this year by Library staff to share opportunities for workshops, readings, and courses. The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B) Committee offered staff training on topics of neurodivergence and added best practices to the training materials for PRCs on inclusion, cultural humility, and implicit bias to ensure equitable and respectful engagement with patrons. Staff engaged in professional development opportunities outside of the Library at various workshops sponsored by Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Dr. Don Sawyer, such as the *Inclusive Excellence Summer Session, Our Mission in This Moment: Advancing Inclusive Learning in a Time of Pushback*. Library Leadership organized a retreat for supervisors to develop their individual leadership strengths. In collaboration with the Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality and Fr. Kevin O'Brien, the Library hosted two staff retreats this year focused on deepening engagement with our Jesuit mission.

The Library celebrated both an internal hire and a promotion: Matt Schirano stepped into the role of Scholarly Communication Librarian, while Emily Porter-Fyke took over his previous position as Teaching and Learning Coordinator. The search for a new Associate Teaching and Learning Coordinator to fill Emily Porter-Fyke's previous role began in the spring of 2025. This search will include new interview questions authored by the DEI&B Committee to center diversity, equity, and inclusion in our hiring practices.

Future Goals:

- Take intentional action towards improving our workplace culture and environment based on the results of the FY25 Staff Satisfaction Surveys.
- Prioritize staff engagement with Library, campus, and community events.
- Offer trainings that build staff capacity and knowledge related to DEI&B issues.
- The Scholarly Communication Librarian will collaborate with Faculty Partnership Program (FPP) librarians to support the dissemination and promotion of faculty scholarship.
- Hire an Associate Teaching and Learning Coordinator in FY26.

Student Success: Influence student enrollment & success to maximize University potential

The Library established itself as a home away from home for students in FY25 by meeting the dynamic needs of our users and community. We expanded our range of academic support for students on the North Benson and



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Bellarmino campuses by creating forty study skills workshops and events, including discipline-based research guidance at the Dolan Study Slam, the Engineering Summer Research Residence, and the STEM Success Series in collaboration with the Science Center. Librarians helped students reach their academic potential in the Library and elsewhere on campus, such as at SDMA Finals Madness. Overall, the Library hosted or collaborated on 190 events and 64 topic-specific study halls in FY25 with 4,647 in total attendance, not including orientation visitors. Through community building events like the lively Meet-and-Greet Librarian Ice Cream Social and the Café Con Libros series, the Bellarmine Research and Learning Librarian established herself as a crucial element of student success on that campus by forming personal connections with students. The Library presence at Bellarmine resulted in one Bellarmine student showcasing their creative work in the Library's 'Art by All' event and the recruitment of a Bellarmine student to serve as a representative on the Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB), ensuring Bellarmine campus voices were included in Library initiatives.

To facilitate students' academic goals, the Library provided information literacy and research guidance not just in the physical Library but in the classroom and online in various formats. Research Librarians provided information literacy instruction and research guidance in 365 appointments, 209 classes, and in 4,307 research transactions, with all three services seeing a steady increase since FY24. An additional 1,045 questions were answered after hours and over the weekend by the Library's chat service and AJCU library partners, ensuring that users were always able to get help. In post-chat feedback surveys, Librarians scored an average of 4.9 stars and users left glowing reviews such as: "Found what I could not find!"; "I continue to be amazed and in awe of the research skills of Fairfield University's librarians, and grateful for their responsiveness and support!"; and "This was INCREDIBLY helpful! I wish all students knew about the immediacy of access and help that our Library provides. Amazing resource."

We also strengthened Library resources that encourage student success through holistic wellness. In collaboration with Counseling & Psychological Services, we created a Wellness Room, a location where students now take breaks from long hours of study to emotionally regulate and engage in mindfulness and prayer. At the Bellarmine campus, the Library has supported wellness through programs that promote sustainability, community, and financial literacy. Highlights include a new Seed Library, an Earth Day planting event with Biology faculty, and a credit-focused financial literacy workshop in partnership with Bank of America and Career Services.

We are proud to share that the Library provided unique opportunities for Fairfield students while also creating partnerships with local high schools and public libraries this year. We celebrated the success of Fairfield students with the Library Research Prize, awarding one undergraduate student and a team of three graduate students monetary prizes for outstanding use of Library resources. Another undergraduate was awarded an honorable mention for similar excellence in research. Winners of the Library Research Prize thanked and named several Library staff as important figures in their research process, with special acknowledgement of ILL as a key service in their academic success. In another prestigious academic contest, a Librarian co-chaired the MLK Convocation Committee, serving as a judge for the MLK Essay Contest for Bridgeport middle school students and helping to plan MLK Convocation Week. In Access Services, we provided internships to two high school students through the Kolbe-Cathedral Marion Bridgeport Diocese Work-Study program. This program provided skill development opportunities for both our interns and the Fairfield student workers who mentored them. We also formed stronger ties with the Bridgeport Public Library and Fairfield Public Library, collaboratively educating students and community members through programming to leverage publicly accessible resources with their library access and to improve their media literacy.

Students told us what they loved about the Library in a Fall 2024 survey with many naming the building as their favorite location on campus, not only for studying and resources, but to feel a sense of belonging. They shared their own deep personal connections with space and staff, one student calling it "somewhere to collect my thoughts and be my best self," another saying, "What is there not to love about the Library? [...] I get to choose anywhere to go, and I know I always have a place [...] It is my safe space." We are proud to serve students in their academic missions and to be their home away from home.

Future Goals:

- Support the transitioning Bellarmine students as they acclimate to their bachelor's degree programs at the main campus.



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- Enhance our physical spaces to meet the needs and desires of our community by collaborating with Facilities, the Office of the Provost, and as part of the University's strategic financial planning process.
- Implement Springshare's LibMaps in Primo to provide enhanced wayfinding support through the updated Library space.
- Continue to lead the Academic Commons with intention, highlighting collaborative initiatives in future annual reports and in regular communications to demonstrate impact.
- Ensure the digital environment is as welcoming as the physical environment.
- Identify and meet the needs of online and distance students.

Cross-Campus Collaboration: Work collaboratively with colleagues across campus to advance areas of responsibility

Library staff consistently engaged with the broader University community in FY25, seeking creative and bold collaborations with over seventy other departments, student groups, committees, and campus community partners. Through these shared projects, our staff embedded themselves – and by extension, the Library – into campus life. Four staff members led first-years through their college transition by serving as Community Associates for the FYE program, and seven Personal Librarians were paired with sixty-one FYE sections to be their first contact with Library services and resources. In addition, eight staff served as a mentor in the Cura Personalis and Company Scholar student programs. Volunteers from the Library also assisted with on-campus events to support students such as Move-In Day, the Innovative Student Research Symposium, Commencement, and Senior Week activities.

In November 2024, Library staff participated in the University-wide Election Coordination Committee, published a [Civic Engagement and Media Literacy Guide](#), and hosted events to further facilitate civic literacy on campus. The Reading Challenge created additional opportunity for connection on campus with 249 total participants across the three seasonal challenges. Library staff also worked with the Office of the Provost on the University's Common Read initiatives by serving on the selection committee and creating programming, displays, and an online guide. Staff additionally offered their expertise to assist other departments in their strategic goals, such as the Alma/Primo Committee's creation of an inventory management system for ITS and the University Archives' partnership with the School of Engineering and Computing to showcase a centennial exhibit celebrating its history.

The Library's DEI&B Committee co-organized the third annual *Stags Share Stories: Conversations That Connect Us* event with the Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. This ever-popular program, in which "storytellers" share their personal experiences and perspectives on divisive social topics, builds bridges and offers the opportunity for connection in our University community. Through the FPP, the Library also worked with the Center for Social Impact to revive an event from several years past, the GIS Map-A-Thon. At this event, Library staff taught students, staff, and faculty how to effectively use open-source GIS software to support disaster-relief efforts in areas of Zimbabwe and Pakistan that are vulnerable to extreme weather. 30 participants who had never done GIS mapping previously successfully mapped over 1,300 buildings by the end of the event.

In FY25, we sought the expertise of other departments to improve and refine our own processes and services. The Web and Technology Lead and our Outreach staff worked with the Department of Marketing & Communications to create a standardized template for digital Library promotional materials. We also engaged the development expertise of the Office of Advancement to redesign the Library website's [Giving page](#) to better connect and communicate with donors.

Future Goals:

- Create an internal AI agent to serve Human Resources in their goal to optimize processes within their department.
- Post-renovation, collaborate with the Facilities and the Office of the Provost to optimize existing space for our students.
- Extend the Library's reach and promotion of our services by creating opportunities for further collaboration with the Department of Marketing and Communications.



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- Improve and standardize the University's researcher profile system in collaboration with the Department of Marketing and Communications, Information Technology Services, and the Associate Vice Provost for Research & Scholarship.

APPENDIX

Strategic Plan Priorities – FY26

Modern Academic Library

Goal: Reinvent the Library as the intellectual heart of the University, integral to student experience, collaboration, and the scholarly pursuits of our community.

Priorities:

- Objective C – Establish the Library as a home away from home for students.
 - Initiative 1 – Enhance our physical spaces to meet the needs and desires of our community.
- Objective D – Ensure the digital environment is as welcoming as the physical environment.
 - Initiative 1 – Identify and meet the needs of online graduate students.
 - Initiative 2 – Enhance user experience and accessibility.
- Objective F – Expand support of the research lifecycle for the University community.
 - Initiative 1 -- Improve research support.
 - Initiative 2 – Develop publishing support and solutions.
 - Initiative 3 – Provide opportunities and support for faculty and students to promote their scholarly and creative works.

Institutional Memory

Goal: Strengthen the role of the University Archives as the steward of Fairfield University's institutional memory.

Priorities:

- Objective C – Use technology to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and preservation of University Archives materials.
 - Initiative 2 – Develop a plan for preserving the University's web presence and born digital content.
- Objective D – Increase the visibility of the University Archives.
 - Initiative 2 – Integrate the University Archives into teaching and learning.
 - Initiative 3 – Make the physical collections in the University Archives more accessible online.

Teaching, Learning, and Research

Goal: Become campus leaders in information literacy and contribute to the University's teaching, learning, and research.

Priorities:

- Objective A – Establish the Library as an essential faculty resource for the enhancement of teaching and research.
 - Initiative 4 – Expand and develop research and publishing support for faculty



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- Initiative 5 – Incorporate AI literacy into teaching and learning as well as research support.
- Objective B – Expand Faculty Partnership Program Librarians’ capacity to teach various student populations in multiple modalities and geographies.
 - Initiative 1 – Create a suite of accessible and adaptable teaching and learning materials.

Collections

Goal: Ensure that our collections support University students, faculty, and staff in their learning, teaching, research, and personal exploration.

Priorities:

- Objective A – Develop a holistic and sustainable collection development strategy with an eye towards evolving University priorities and Library best practices.
 - Initiative 2 – Expand the Library’s role in resource sharing and optimize current practices.
 - Initiative 3 – Maintain and update our collection resources to support curricular and research needs
- Objective B – Collect and promote University-produced scholarly and creative works.
 - Initiative 1 – Increase use of and engagement with DigitalCommons@Fairfield among faculty and students.
- Objective C – Improve discovery of and access to content.
 - Initiative 3 – Optimize our current systems.

Communication

Goal: Increase awareness of the Library’s contributions to student and faculty success.

Priorities:

- Objective A – Develop a communication and public relations strategy.
 - Initiative 1 – Create a marketing and communications plan.
- Objective B – Leverage Relationships with the Department of Marketing and Communications.
 - Initiative 2 – Create opportunities to inform the Department of Marketing and Communications about the Library.
- Objective C – Build the Library’s brand.
 - Initiative 1 – Establish a brand task force.
 - Initiative 2 – Develop and maintain Library branded items for various audiences.

Organizational Culture

Goal: Cultivate a positive, healthy, and high-performance work environment where all Library staff feel included, valued, and professionally inspired and engaged.

Priorities:

- Objective A – Engage staff in assessment of workplace culture.
 - Initiative 1 – Establish a biennial staff satisfaction survey.
- Objective B – Empower staff to further develop skill sets.
 - Initiative 2 – Develop a Mentorship program
- Objective C – Identify areas for improved operational efficiency and quality.
 - Initiative 3 – Leverage technology to create efficiencies in workflows.



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