

DiMenna-Nyselius Library Annual Report

July 2025 through June 2026

Executive Summary

In FY26, the final year of the [Library's 2022–2026 Strategic Plan](#), Library staff focused on completing remaining initiatives while laying the groundwork for the next chapter of the Library's direction. With this five-year effort drawing to a successful close, the Library celebrates the fulfillment of its long-term goals, a strengthened culture of assessment, and a sustainable foundation — built in alignment with Fairfield University's vision as a Jesuit-Catholic institution of national prominence. Our work required pivoting at key moments — most notably last summer, when the Library navigated significant space changes with the construction of new third-floor classrooms. Throughout the transition, Library leadership coordinated closely with campus partners to support both staff and users. Enhancements to the physical environment continued with a focus on accessibility and student well-being, reinforcing the Library's role as both an academic hub and a support for the whole student experience. At the same time, the Library continued to evolve its services, resources, and expertise to meet emerging academic needs. The Library further solidified its role as a campus leader in conversations around AI, balancing exploration with ethical and pedagogical guidance. Investments in collections, digital infrastructure, and scholarly communication, strengthened the Library's support for interdisciplinary teaching, research, and intellectual inquiry. Ongoing assessment of user needs complemented these efforts and informed decisions about how the Library can best serve the University community. As FY26 concludes, the Library stands ready to carry forward the lessons, partnerships, and momentum of its completed strategic plan into a new strategic vision for the years ahead.

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

The Library's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan advanced the University's mission by supporting its goals related to national prominence, enrollment growth, and academic excellence. Strategic Plan Goal Leads and Library leadership collaboratively established FY26 Priorities (Appendix) in alignment with this institutional direction. While concluding the work tied to this plan, Library staff collectively engaged in the creation of a new five-year strategic plan, establishing a shared framework to guide the Library's direction for the years ahead. This collaborative accomplishment reflects the Library's value of broad staff participation and our commitment to a unified sense of purpose across Library departments.

Creating accessible and welcoming spaces for intellectual curiosity remained a priority this year, and Library staff advanced this work in both our digital and physical environments. To strengthen the Library's digital presence and improve user experience, the Web and Technology Lead and the Web Committee launched a new Library website design and implemented accessibility improvements across platforms. Feedback from the Faculty Library Committee (FLC), an undergraduate public relations class, the Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB), and via student surveys further informed these updates. Library staff reviewed and updated research guides, key web pages, and online learning objects to align with Title II requirements. The Scholarly Communication team finalized a [DigitalCommons@Fairfield](#) site redesign by adding new [FAQ](#) and [About](#) pages, including accessibility information to clarify repository content and policies.

We continued to enhance the in-person experience for our community. The Web and Technology Lead implemented new [digital library maps](#) and worked with the Outreach team to add digital signage to increase visibility of services and events and to improve wayfinding. Library staff solicited student perspectives on the physical space through SLAB, creating a wish list to inform annual budget planning. The Library leveraged its physical space to foster engagement, learning, and intellectual curiosity through 270 events in FY26, a 42% increase over our total programming in FY25. Programs included popular annual events such as *Stags Share Stories*, *Douglass Day Transcribe-A-Thon*, pet therapy, and *Pomodoro Study Sessions*; orientations and FYE credit opportunities; and a comprehensive catalog of workshops and discussions on topics ranging from study skills to scholarly communication. The Outreach team and the Library's Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging Committee (DEIBC) developed themed displays tied to key events and observances, including Banned Books Week, LGBTQ+ History Month, Indigenous Authors, the MLK Convocation, Campus Pride, and Right to Read Day. We also addressed on-site needs by working with Facilities Management and Human Resources to improve building accessibility, including adjustments to staff areas such as the installation of window treatments in high-glare areas to reduce light sensitivity and improve the usability of the space.



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As the University continues to grow its Graduate+ offerings through new programs, modalities, and geographic expansion, the Library has strategically extended its instructional reach and research support to align with the evolving needs of graduate students and faculty partners. In FY26, the Library achieved full integration into the online Executive Doctor of Business Administration (Executive DBA) program, delivering virtual library instruction during students' first and second years in the program and providing structured dissertation support through multiple required online consultations with a Librarian throughout their second and third years. Sustained engagement reinforces this embedded Library support model, including Librarian participation in cohort meetings, dissertation defenses, and end-of-year faculty retreats. Corresponding efforts to support the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) program included collaboration with program leadership to establish program-level information literacy standards and dedicated research workshops. Guided by feedback from student success coaches and emerging graduate student needs, the Library has prioritized strengthening its online presence through webinars, a graduate student library orientation guide, and more proactive communication of service updates, with new offerings receiving a positive student response. This included targeted efforts to expand awareness of Library offerings such as information literacy instruction and tailored research assistance with Austin campus partners and students.

Future Goals

- Finalize the Library's next strategic plan, establish and implement priorities for FY27.
- Integrate the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm into research and instruction services.
- Further improve the accessibility of Library collections to better support equitable access for all users.
- Ensure all online learning materials meet Title II accessibility compliance standards.
- Further integrate Library services into doctoral programs.
- 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

In FY26, the Library advanced work that supports our strategic goal of reinventing the Library as the intellectual heart of the University and as central to the student experience and the scholarly pursuits of our community. Information literacy was an essential component to the University's AI initiatives this year, and the Library served as a University leader in helping students, faculty, and staff build the critical skills needed to understand and use AI in academic contexts. Our *AI Salon Series* deepened this work through virtual workshops such as *Understanding AI* and *AI in Academic Research*, along with hands-on learning opportunities like the co-sponsored *AI Sandbox: Tool Testing Drop-In* with the Fredrickson Family Innovation Lab and the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE). Building on this, Curtis Ferree helped extend AI literacy conversations into the community, by participating in the One Book, One Town panel, *How Our Lives are Changing Using AI*, at the Fairfield Public Library, and by presenting at NERCOMP's *Libraries Leading AI: Emerging Practices, Partnerships & Innovation in Higher Education*. The Library convened and facilitated intellectual salons that explored AI in relation to institutional priorities, human dignity, the common good, and faith and reason. This programming included two collaborations with the Vice President of Strategic Initiatives on *The State of AI at Fairfield University* for faculty and staff, a *How Are You Using AI?* event for students, a salon co-facilitated with Counseling and Psychological Services (C&PS) called *Will AI Replace Human Connection?*, and a session on *AI and the Universal Apostolic Preferences* with Dr. Jason Smith, Meditz Associate Dean and Professor of Philosophy. The Research Services Coordinator and the Assessment Librarian collaborated with the Office of the Provost and CAE to organize the *AI Showcase for Teaching, Learning, and Research*, with a Librarian presenting and Library staff participating in the event. Concurrently, the Library contributed directly to the Provost's broader AI initiatives through leadership and service: the Dean of the Library co-chaired the University's AI Task Force on Teaching, Learning, and Research; the Research Services Coordinator additionally served on the AI and Future of Work Stream; and the Associate Dean for Public Services now leads the AI Faculty Learning Community. To support responsible, consistent AI practice across the institution, the Library created a guide on [AI Literacy](#). In parallel, the Teaching and Learning Coordinator partnered with Academic Computing to develop an AI Literacy and Responsibilities module for all University staff in Blackboard.



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The Library deepened support for faculty research this year; we elevated the visibility of faculty scholarship through the *Scholars in Focus* research sharing series with representatives from the Dolan School of Business (DSB), Center for Social Impact (CSI), DiMenna-Nyselius Library, Meditz College of Arts & Sciences, and the Vice Provost for Graduate, Professional, and Continuing Studies. The Acquisitions and Cataloging Strategies Librarian, Scholarly Communication Librarian, and Institutional Repository Specialist improved metadata quality and discoverability of graduate scholarship by applying Library of Congress subject headings to all electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) submissions in the institutional repository. The Scholarly Communication team further improved the collection and promotion of University-produced scholarly and creative output by expanding engagement with DigitalCommons@Fairfield and operationalizing proactive faculty outreach, including a faculty webinar each semester on how using DigitalCommons@Fairfield will increase the visibility and accessibility of their scholarly and creative work. As a result of these initiatives, in FY26 DigitalCommons@Fairfield became the official repository for all doctoral programs, currently housing dissertations from the Doctorate of Education (EdD) program in Educational Leadership and the Executive DBA program, with a plan and process in place to collect dissertations from the first cohort of the DrPH program. Additional graduate programs are invited to participate on a voluntary basis, including those in the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) and the Master of Public Health (MPH). The Library strengthened research and publishing support through Scholarly Communication Librarian-led programming (including dedicated consultation hours, presentations at new faculty and new adjunct orientations, and the development of a comprehensive [scholarly communication guide](#), and delivered advanced research database sessions tailored to faculty needs. To promote and celebrate faculty publishing activity, the Scholarly Communication team notified faculty when new titles were added, created displays for new titles, and maintained a rotating collection of recent Fairfield faculty publications.

The Library advanced archival access and engagement initiatives that expanded both the breadth and discoverability of Fairfield's scholarly and historical record. In the University Archives and Special Collections, staff digitized past issues of *Campus Currents*, select historical photographs, a personal letter of Saint John Henry Newman from Special Collections, and the *President's Reports* collection to increase visibility and online access. At the same time, the Research and Learning Librarian at Bellarmine actively collected campus photographs and began developing a plan to preserve Bellarmine campus's institutional memory. Outreach Librarians and the Dean of the Library partnered with University Archives staff to offer a "Virtual Tour of the Archives" through the Office of Alumni Engagement, introducing alumni to what the Archives and Special Collections preserve and how to explore digital collections; the program drew 120 registrants and received positive feedback from participants. In addition, the University Archives held a program at the Golden Stags luncheon, and due to its popularity, we were asked to provide a similar program in FY27.

Future Goals

- Review and revise the mission statement, collection policy, and procedures for the University Archives.
- Assess the user experience and content of the redesigned website.
- Implement a Library statistics collection system and documentation aligned with updated ACRL definitions of Library services and impact.
- Streamline joint workflows and communication between the scholarly communication librarian and faculty partnership librarians.
- Develop policies/procedures to guide Faculty Partnership Program librarians' support of faculty and graduate student research.

Resource Allocation: Allocate resources to achieve strategic goals

In FY26, the Library optimized technology and improved systems operations by strengthening infrastructure to support both staff efficiency and user-facing services. This included streamlining the Library's server environment with strategic removal of outdated servers, transitioning library services from Banner to Workday, and bringing the ChatGPT pilot program to a close. Library staff explored new instructional technologies by securing Camtasia licenses and developing a proposal, co-written with a student intern, for Articulate as a new tutorial software to expand online instructional capacity. The Access Services and Reserves Specialist



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additionally led a project to add ISBN numbers to records for the Student Donated Textbook Collection, establishing a stronger process for cataloging going forward.

Alongside the InterLibrary Services team's day-to-day work of fulfilling over 1,400 borrow requests this year, the Collections Strategies Librarian and the InterLibrary Services Specialist improved and updated the Library's resource sharing systems in FY26. They accomplished this by reviewing InterLibrary Loan (ILL) practices, enabling borrow requests from non-OCLC libraries, and clarifying policies to reduce overdue and lost materials. During the spring semester, they conducted a systematic review of license agreements to document digital ILL allowances and examined best practices for lending eBooks in their entirety to inform future vendor negotiations. This work established a strong foundation for enhancing digital resource sharing by increasing lendable content and identifying ILL priorities for future agreements.

Following post-construction shifts, the entire staff undertook a major, multi-phase inventory project to ensure our community could reliably find materials. The Web and Technology Lead introduced a new inventory scanner system, while the Access Services team led a full physical inventory review. Technical Services staff reinforced this work with record-level maintenance and materials processing by re-cataloging and re-processing all materials moved to new locations. Simultaneously, Technical Services staff collaborated with Faculty Partnership Program (FPP) Librarians to weed the print journal collection (342 titles withdrawn) and the DVD collection (1,014 DVDs withdrawn). Throughout, the Library also refined its rightsizing criteria to guide future collection maintenance.

The Collection Development and Management Committee (CDMC) continued its stewardship of the Library's collections. Complementing these efforts, the Library established a working group to evaluate emerging AI research tools and make recommendations, while CDMC assessed new AI components within existing database subscriptions. Ongoing evaluation of usage data and cost-per-use informed our decisions to discontinue underperforming subscriptions and invest in new resources based on faculty and student feedback including a one-year trial of Scite.ai, a scholarly AI research tool currently under review for adoption. The Library expanded access to digital content through targeted investments, upgrading its ProQuest eBook subscription to add approximately 400,000 titles, acquiring perpetual eBook and archival collections from Fordham University Press, NYU Press, Duke University Press, and SUNY Press, and securing *The Atlantic Magazine* archive (1857–2014). Other additions included new subscriptions to O'Reilly for Higher Education, a Cambridge Evidence-Based Acquisition package, and an Inside Higher Education site license, alongside ongoing assessment of patron-driven, token-based models such as Kanopy and ScienceDirect. We continued to grow the OverDrive/Libby collection by 107 audiobooks and 63 eBooks. In total, over 250 new users signed up for Libby access and checked out over 1,150 titles via on-demand access. Physical loans for FY26 amounted to over 14,700, a continuation of the steady growth in this area seen since the first year of the Library's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. The Library further strengthened operational efficiency and fiscal transparency in our collection management systems by implementing automated invoicing for EBSCO serials, streamlining acquisitions workflows, improving budget accuracy within Alma, and conducting a series of Alma module audits in collaboration with Ex Libris support.

To advance the Library's strategic communication and public relations goals, we operationalized outreach through targeted improvements to messaging, assessment, and design. The adoption of Constant Contact improved tracking and assessment for Personal Librarian and FPP outreach, while a redesigned [Beyond the Stacks](#) newsletter, developed with Marketing & Communications, enhanced visual consistency and clarity. Reviewing and revising the communication plan increased outreach frequency which contributed to higher email open rates and broadened campus collaboration opportunities. To support brand sustainability, Outreach staff developed a range of branded materials for diverse audiences, including four new postcards featuring archival imagery and contemporary photographs of the Library, as well as notecards highlighting a watercolor painting by a former student employee.

Future Goals

- Develop a University Archives component within the Library's marketing and communications plan.
- Enhance discovery and interoperability of cataloging workflows.



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- Create a backup code repository for the Library website to support easier future updates.
- Maintain and update our collection resources to support curricular and research needs.
- Transition all Library systems to ITS-supported servers for stability and sustainability.
- Collaborate with Advancement to further increase donor support.
- Establish annual approval plan and standing order review by Faculty Partnership Librarians.
- Continue to work with Office of Facilities Management and the Office of Accessibility to address accessibility concerns regarding the building.

Personnel: Engage staff talent to achieve strategic goals

Library personnel demonstrated strong professional engagement and leadership this year through contributions to scholarship, conference participation, and service to the profession. External staff achievements included leadership development and governance (Christina McGowan serves as trustee of the Connecticut Library Consortium, and was recently elected to the Executive Board as Member-at-Large; Ann Victor completed the New England Library Association's NELLs Leadership Cohort I, submitting a capstone project on Spanish-language cataloging equity; Kelsey Fuller-Shafer concluded a term on the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies Executive Board and served in multiple leadership roles for the 2026 Conference; and Tiara Arnold served as a representative on the CT Open Educational Resources Coordinating Council, contributing to the OER Summit planning committee and grant judging committee.); and professional presentations and program support (Catherine Findorak, who attended the *Electronic Resources & Libraries Conference* and presented a poster on transitioning from public librarianship to academic e-resources; Tolonda Henderson, who published a guest blog post on information literacy and presented at both the *Young Adult Literature Summit* and the *Children's Literature Association Conference*; Christina McGowan who presented at the AJCU Library Deans & Directors Conference; Lisa Thornell, who delivered multiple conference presentations on student advisory boards, study skills instruction, wellness and lactation spaces, and creative engagement, and who contributed to planning the ACRL-NE conference; and Tiara Arnold and Lisa Thornell, who led a professional workshop on expanding student support services called *Leveling Up Student Success: Librarians Take on Study Skills*). In addition, Lisa Thornell and Vic Johnson consulted for *Student Advisory Groups: CLIPP #49*, an upcoming book on student advisory boards for libraries. Collectively, these activities reflect the Library's sustained commitment to professional leadership, scholarly contribution, and service beyond the institution.

The Library intentionally engaged staff in meaningful assessment and dialogue to address organizational culture priorities and organizational systems. Organizational Culture Check-Ins, facilitated by Strategic Plan Goal Leads, created an ongoing forum for reflection, action, and evaluation as part of the Ignatian tradition. The Library continued to cultivate a strong culture of professional development and support by investing in staff growth, inclusive practice, and shared expertise. We streamlined onboarding while operationalizing our culture of mutual growth by formalizing a Library staff mentorship program. Other initiatives such as faculty publishing support professional development for FPP Librarians through the Scholarly Communication Librarian's Learning Series, staff training focused on emerging AI research tools, and virtual access for conferences for Part-Time Access Services staff expanded opportunities for professional learning. The Library further reinforced its long-term commitment to inclusive instruction through ongoing professional development in web accessibility and DEIB focused programming for all staff members.

In this fiscal year, the Library strengthened its organizational capacity by hiring Tolonda Henderson as Associate Teaching and Learning Coordinator, hiring Karen Tatarka as Associate Dean for Technical Services and the Budget, and recruiting for the new position of Head of University Archives and Special Collections. The Library also welcomed two new part-time staff, Research Librarian Mat Blaine and Instruction Librarian Jill Brown, to ensure consistent support for research and learning.

Future Goals

- Hire for the Head of University Archives & University Archivist positions.
- Provide management and leadership training, and skill building opportunities to Library supervisors and staff, based on best practices from the Office of Human Resources and other experts.



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- Develop procedures and capacity to participate in University experiential learning opportunities for students (e.g., onternships).
- Identify school-level and program-level newsletters and ensure Librarian Partners are featured at least once annually.

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

The Library supported student success this year through inclusive access initiatives, information literacy, study skills instruction, and experiential learning opportunities. Across all in-person and electronic contact methods, the Library answered over 4,300 questions from students, staff, and faculty; led over 220 class sessions with a total of over 4100 students in attendance; and provided in-depth guidance in over 500 appointments, a 34% increase over FY25. Of our asynchronous online resources, the Library Research Guides, Research Tutorials, Course Guides, and Citation Guides were viewed over 80,000 times this year. The Library reviewed research tutorials and will continue to expand video content based on student feedback, demonstrating our commitment to responsive, student-driven support.

The Library advanced its leadership in responsible technology use by integrating AI literacy into the Academic Integrity Tutorial, establishing clear student learning outcomes for AI literacy, and delivering AI instruction through virtual and in-person workshops as well as classroom visits that emphasized ethical and transparent use of emerging tools. The Research Services Coordinator partnered with the Company Scholars program and C&PS to deliver study skills and organizational workshops in support of student success. Through these partnerships, she coordinated a direct referrals program for students with complex academic needs with the Office of Accessibility, DSB Student Success Coaches and Faculty, Company Scholars, and C&PS. To highlight the Library's work, the Dean of the Library delivered a strategic presentation on library student success initiatives to high-level parent donors in partnership with Advancement and the Office of the Provost.

At the Bellarmine Campus, the Library fostered a strong sense of belonging and holistic student development through culturally responsive programming and community partnerships. The Research and Learning Librarian for Bellarmine hosted a *Hispanic Heritage Celebration* featuring salsa dancing, facilitated a REFORMA Northeast meeting at Bellarmine, and organized a *Lunch and Learn* with comedian Christina Wong addressing food insecurity, complemented by the launch of a seed library. Additional initiatives included coordinating a trip to the New York Public Library to view a bilingual graphic novel exhibition, collaborating with the Bridgeport Public Library to connect students with library cards and public resources, and partnering with faculty and campus colleagues on grant-funded experiential learning opportunities, including a Provost-supported visit to the Museum of Modern Art. To better support and represent ESL and bilingual students across all campuses, the Acquisitions and Cataloging Strategies Librarian, Acquisitions Specialist, and Cataloging and Metadata Strategies Specialist improved the inclusivity of our cataloging practices and the discoverability and accessibility of Spanish language materials as part of the *Change the Subject* initiative.

The Library created additional experiential learning opportunities for students in classes in Public Relations and Computer Science. In a collaboration with faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students in a Human Computer Interaction course, Librarians worked with students and faculty to design a bespoke website for the Library's Reading Challenges. Further advancing this unique type of learning, Librarians engaged a public relations strategies course, with students providing branding feedback that directly shaped improvements to study skills programming, the new Library website, and the Peer Research Consultant program.

The Library deepened our commitment to student success by offering opportunities to build career readiness. To support the development of future professionals, we engaged Peer Research Consultants and interns, including two MLIS interns from Southern Connecticut State University, and a DSB Marketing ontern. Access Services also partnered with the Trumbull ELITE vocational support program for young adults to provide a work site job training experience for one of their students. The Research Services Coordinator, Head of Access Services, and the Assessment Librarian mapped all student employee job descriptions to National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Standards, then created and implemented an end of semester assessment to align student workers' responsibilities with career skills development.



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Future Goals

- Develop a structured intern program framework to support meaningful experiential learning and mentorship.
- Deepen Peer Research Consultant and student worker engagement through intentional and holistic development practices.
- Develop working relationships with student success coaches across campuses.
- Strengthen targeted outreach and support for specific student populations, including Bellarmine transition students, Company Scholars, student athletes, etc.
- Further integrate Library services into doctoral programs

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

This year the Library advanced its role as a connector for the campus community in ways that directly reflect Fairfield's mission of cultivating imagination and creativity while helping students grow into socially aware and morally responsible people. As part of the First-Year Common Read committee, Library staff participated in text selection, facilitated access to chosen titles, created a campus resource guide, and developed programming including a CAE Faculty & Staff Book Club, Book Cafés, an Alumni Book Club, and integration into the Winter Reading Challenge. In the spirit of educating for justice and service, the Library also co-hosted our annual *Map-A-Thon* with the CSI that brought students and faculty together to contribute to humanitarian mapping work, an experience that highlighted both individual agency and the exponential impact of collective action, with participants mapping over 1,500 buildings in disaster relief zones in Afghanistan and Indonesia. Library staff additionally participated in other departments' initiatives that connected students with educators and mentors; this year, three Library staff members served as Community Associates for Student Engagement's FYE program, four mentored Company Scholars, and one staff member mentored a Cura Personalis student.

Librarians collaborated closely with a diverse range of departments to directly support the campus community, including academic units, student support units, and ITS. In partnership with the English Department's Core Writing team, Librarians redesigned the ENGL 1001 library session to address information literacy and critical thinking in the context of generative AI, with additional input from the FLC. Ongoing collaboration with the CAE and the Office of the Provost further positioned the Library as a key contributor to faculty development and institutional conversations around AI, including workshops, the University's *AI Showcase for Teaching, Learning, and Research*, and co-sponsored initiatives such as the *AI Sandbox*. FPP and Outreach Librarians worked with campus units such as the Career Center, Athletics, and the Science and Math Centers to integrate library expertise into events and programming that supported career readiness, wellness, and STEM engagement. We also utilized our expertise in service of our colleagues to support their departmental operations with the Head of Systems deploying a pilot project on behalf of ITS to advance improvements to their internal inventory management. The Dean of the Library and the Outreach team continue to collaborate with colleagues from Advancement to broaden our donor base using mailings, alumni webinars, and targeted correspondence. These efforts contributed to over \$19,000 in gifts this year – a record amount for the Library.

The Library partnered broadly to support civic and community engagement, inclusion, and institutional memory. Outreach and FPP Librarians collaborated with the Fairfield University Art Museum, the Fairfield Theatre Program, and academic departments to develop exhibitions and research guides connected to America250 and worked with DSB staff to display student projects from Fairfield Start-Up that will ultimately contribute to the University Archives. The DEIBC Committee partnered with Student Engagement, Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (SDMA), and student organizations to deliver high-impact programming and support campus events throughout the year, including *Stags Share Stories* and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest for Middle School Students. Beyond interdepartmental collaborations, Library staff contributed to the Campus Climate Survey Implementation Team and the University's Retention Committee, highlighting our commitment to the University community through meaningful participation.

In support of the University's mission to educate for the common good, the Research Services Coordinator and the Associate Dean for Public Services, in partnership with Don Sawyer, Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion, and



Belonging, and Bridgeport community nonprofit EMERGE Connecticut, secured a \$45,000 grant as part of the ReConnect CT: Digital Pathways Program through UCONN's Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy. This funding will help the Library provide digital literacy instruction and technology access to previously incarcerated people. Additional collaborations further underscore the Library's role as an engaged campus partner: the Office of Research and Grants (securing regular updates on faculty grant awards and a presence in the biannual Faculty Research and Scholarship Newsletter, with a Librarian set to present research and publishing support to incoming tenure-track faculty); Alumni Engagement (co-hosting a summer reading program for children ages 3–13); the Politics Department (hosting a banned books screening of *Banned Together*, followed by a faculty-led discussion on free speech, censorship, and the First Amendment); the School of Engineering & Computing (delivering two research sessions for the Undergraduate Summer Residency Program)—all bringing together scholarship, dialogue, and experiential learning to advance shared institutional goals.

Future Goals

- Develop and implement a cross-functional assessment plan for the Academic Commons's shared work of supporting student success.
- Collaborate with Academic Commons partners to provide specialized support for students with complex academic needs.
- Develop short tutorials and targeted consultations that help faculty optimize their Scopus and Google Scholar profiles in collaboration with Faculty Professional Practice.
- Partner with the Office of Access, Belonging, and Community Engagement and EMERGE, CT to successfully enact the Access to Technology grant-funded program



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 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
 - 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.



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- 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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