Executive Summary

In another year of unprecedented challenges and events, the DiMenna-Nyselius Library continues to move forward and meet the needs of our University community. The library building reopened to our students, faculty, and staff on August 27th 2020. We implemented social distancing protocols for the physical space as well as our collections based on University and state guidelines. Staff continued to collaborate effectively on a variety of projects both in-person and remotely.

New staff, position changes, and retirements occurred at the library over the last year. On July 1, 2020, Curtis Ferree was promoted to Associate Dean of Public Services and Coordinator of the Academic Commons Partnership, and Nina Peri was promoted to Associate Dean of Technical Services and the Budget. This structure makes up the library's leadership team along with the Dean of the Library and University Librarian, Christina McGowan. Nina Peri retired on June 18th 2021 and currently a search is underway for her replacement. Laura Cossette joined the staff in September 2020 as Web Services Librarian and was promoted to Systems Librarian in November 2020. Keith Engwall was hired as the Web & Technology Librarian in June 2021. Jonathan Hodge retired from his position of Head Cataloger on May 31st 2021 after nearly 30 years of service to the library and University. Search committees are currently in the process of interviewing candidates for Collection Strategies Librarian and Cataloging and Metadata Strategies Librarian and we anticipate a full staff by early Fall 2021.

The library staff has begun the task of crafting a strategic plan with the help of consultants from Organizational Performance Group (OPG). This process will result in a new library mission statement, values, and a strategic plan which will guide the library's priorities for the next few years. A planning team of four librarians is leading the development and writing of these documents. Crucial input from library staff has come through staff retreats that are facilitated by OPG. In addition, feedback from key stakeholders (the President, the Provost, the VP of Student Life, and members of the academic leadership team) has been collected through interviews and focus groups, also facilitated by OPG. The plan will be launched in late fall 2021, and will be socialized with different constituent groups, including the faculty, students, administration, and the wider community.

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

The library continued to support the University's pivot to a hybrid teaching and learning environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing the services and resources necessary

for our community. We provided a contact-free pick-up service during Summer 2020, and in the Fall of 2020 started a program to ship physical items to anyone learning /working remotely. Our technical services department coordinated and made accessible all vendor resources in response to the pandemic as well as provided access to new e-resources needed by faculty for hybrid teaching and learning. They also prioritized the purchase of e-books through a pre-approval plan which led to a 4% increase of our e-book collection. Instruction librarians conducted information literacy classes virtually both asynchronously and synchronously with multiple digital learning tools. Research assistance was also offered in a hybrid format with new services such as Zoom on-call hours and research appointments, in addition to our 24/7 chat. In-person appointments were made available upon request.

The Institutional Repository (IR) Team worked towards continual growth, and in collaborative relationships with departments across campus. Due to increased outreach to faculty, DigitalCommons@Fairfield hit a milestone of 500,000 downloads in April 2021. New collections were also added to the IR including the first issue of the DiMenna-Nyselius Library's Newsletter *Beyond the Stacks*, the first issue of *SANA: Self-Achievement through Nursing Art*, and 2021 Fairfield University Art Museum exhibitions.

Faculty Partnership Program librarians worked with faculty in providing consultation and support in the development of new degree programs including a new data analytics degree in the Dolan School of Business, the upcoming EdD degree in the School of Education and Human Development, and also worked with the Egan administration in their work to establish a satellite campus and program. Librarians are also providing their expertise on the planning committees for the proposed Bellarmine College.

University Archives and Special Collections contributed significantly to University projects that preserve our University history. These projects include *50 years of Women: Honoring the Past, Igniting the Future*, BEI (Bridgeport Engineering Institute) Oral History Project, and the Diversity Timeline from the President's Working Group on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. In addition, the Archives contributed a large collection of photographs and research to the branding team responsible for the interior design of the new Alumni Hall/Convocation Center.

The Academic Commons Partnership Committee held monthly, virtual meetings throughout FY 21. These meetings helped the Academic Commons units—some of whom were almost exclusively remote—keep abreast of building news and policies. Additionally, each unit gave an extensive presentation on their services, providing an opportunity for the members to develop

an understanding of the work being done in each unit, and to begin to identify areas where it would be appropriate to leverage resources or address shared concerns.

Future Goals:

- The library will be developing a strategic plan which will align with the University mission and vision as well as a set of priorities for the next 3-5 years.
- The University Archives will continue its research for a book on the history of Fairfield University spearheaded by co-authors Dr. Paul Lakeland and Dr. Kurt Schlichting. University Archivist will be contributing a chapter to the book on the history of co-education.
- All departments will continue to work together in support of online learning in our current workflows as well as implement best practices put forth by our Online Learning Committee.
- A comprehensive review of the print circulating collection will begin after confirming the University's plans and timeline for growing Online and Graduate programs.

Allocate resources to achieve strategic goals:

The project "Documenting the Fairfield University Experience During COVID-19 Project" was launched in April 2020 to document the stories of students, faculty and staff during an unprecedented time as part of the permanent University record. Submissions include written reflections, photos, videos and other digital files. More than 60 Fairfield University community members, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and parents contributed. This living history project was presented to the Board of Trustees at its spring meeting. The project will continue to accept contributions into the 2021-2022 academic year.

The Anti-Racist Resource Guide was created in Spring 2020 and continues to be updated with input from multiple stakeholders. This year we shared the guide with the University community as well as with other community partners, alumni and #BlackStagsMatter for further resource suggestions. A number of library staff also participated in campus diversity initiatives such as the Racial Justice is Social Justice group.

Librarians presented three different breakout sessions as part of Faculty Research Resource Day in Fall 2020, sponsored by the Office of Research and Grants. These sessions gave us the opportunity to showcase digital scholarship opportunities, resources to support faculty in their

research and publishing, and provide an overview of DigitalCommons@Fairfield. In the Spring semester, we once again partnered with the Office of Research and Grants, this time by hosting a celebration of faculty scholarship and facilitated a series of Zoom presentations by faculty who presented on their research. This was done as a way of engaging faculty across disciplines. In further support of faculty scholarship, Faculty Partnership Program librarians and Library Services staff assisted faculty in their respective disciplines who were applying for tenure. The work involved the digitization of materials needed to evaluate their candidacy. Materials included, but were not limited to, student course evaluations, letters of recommendation, and professional publications.

The library maintained access to quality e-resources and had consistent use of endowment funds to absorb reduction in the library materials budget. The collections librarians also successfully re-negotiated with vendors for lowest renewal rates possible.

A new library newsletter, *Beyond the Stacks*, was added to our communication portfolio. The first issue was published in print and online in January 2021 and the second issue will follow in September 2021.

Future Goals:
- The library will continue to gather research and best practices to better ensure both our services and collections are accessible and diverse.
- Archives staff will work on a migration of our archival digital collections from a non-hosted version of CONTENTdm to a new hosted platform in collaboration with the Systems Librarian and Web & Technology Librarian.
- The Interlibrary Services department will partner with Outreach librarians to design and implement a marketing plan for their services that would bring greater exposure to this area's offerings and benefits, streamline the user's experience, and identify customer needs with an emphasis on the growing remote learning community.
- A review and revision of the library's collection development policy will take place in alignment with our new strategic plan.

Engage staff talent to achieve strategic goals:

The library staff had to alter many of our services and workflows in order to accommodate the changes to hybrid teaching and learning. As a way of tracking these changes, staff created *Continuity & Creativity During COVID-19: A Timeline of Library Services During the COVID-19*

Pandemic to document how the library's work, programs, and services were impacted by the pandemic. This was created with a new platform, *Timeline JS*, and shared on our site and in various publications with our community.

Collaboration was seen across the library staff through a number of different projects: technical services staff became more comfortable and accustomed to our integrated library systems platform, ALMA, and made great strides in improving workflow efficiencies. Interlibrary Services staff partnered with Cataloging and Collections staff to identify holdings from our e-book collections whose publishers allowed for digital lending of chapters. This allowed our remote users to make requests for this type of content. A number of staff across departments worked to bring forth our new home delivery service of physical items for remote students, staff, and faculty. The staff also collaborated together in the publication of our first newsletter *Beyond the Stacks*.

The Faculty Partnership Program expanded to include three new librarians. This group continues to expand and deepen faculty connections through additional professional development, faculty workshops, and outreach to new and current faculty. They also continue to work closely with Collection Development staff to advise on e-resource purchases that align with University course content such as the new database *Sage Explorer*.

The Digital Scholarship Librarian began offering digital scholarship services through workshops held in partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences Fredrickson Family Innovation Lab. They also offered individual consultations, in-class instruction with library partners, and presentations to administrators and other campus stakeholders.

Future Goals:

- The Collections staff and faculty partner librarians will continue to work together to investigate other collaborations to ensure our resources are financially supported by the University and meeting the curriculum and research needs of our students and faculty.
- We will develop a platform for sharing library data and trends with library and the university community.
- A library-wide inventory project of our collections will resume in order to facilitate resource discovery and access for our users.

<u>Influence student enrollment to maximize University potential</u>:

In support of teaching and learning, and student success and retention, the library provides access to over one million e-resources and over 300,000 print sources in our collection. We also provided over 1,700 resources to students, faculty and staff through our interlibrary loan service. Library staff answered over 1,800 research questions from faculty, students and staff across our various services as well as taught 108 classes and conducted 168 research appointments. Our online research tools were used heavily: research tutorials were taken nearly 12,000 times, research and course guides were viewed 38,000 times, and citation guides over 66,000 times.

We hosted the 5th annual Human Library virtually via Zoom on October 23rd 2020 consisting of nine students, faculty, and staff who shared their personal stories as "human books", to challenge stereotypes and prejudices, with 35 "readers" who signed up for a one-on-one conversation to learn about their life experiences.

Librarians spoke on behalf of the library at virtual orientations for new first year students, new graduate students, transfer students, and international students over the 2020-21 academic year. We also participated in the in-person first-year orientation in June 2021. We regularly advertised our services to graduate students through the new *Graduate Chronicles at Fairfield University* newsletter sent by the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies.

The Personal Librarian Program, a program that assigns a librarian to each first-year student and transfer student, approached its 10th year at Fairfield and 2nd year partnering with the First Year Experience (FYE) program. A new lesson on Academic Integrity and a "Scholar Style" personality quiz was created for the "Academic Navigation week" in the FYE Fall 2020 curriculum in collaboration with the Office of Academic Support and Retention and the Student Library Advisory Board.

The 4th Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB) was selected from our largest pool of applicants and met throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. It was composed of 14 students who represent a variety of class years and academic majors. This group provided feedback in the following areas: research services, displays and events, and building signage. They were also integral in the creation of a book recommendation guide and in contributing content for our social media.

The 12th annual Library Research Prize was awarded to an undergraduate and graduate student in May 2021 for their outstanding work in using library resources and services to complete their research projects. Due to the strong pool of undergraduate applicants, two honorable mentions were also awarded.

Responding to the need for reaffirming a sense of community and connection during the pandemic, we offered reading challenges (Summer 2020, Winter 2020-21, and Summer 2021) and the Sent by Stags student letter exchange program.

Future Goals:
- We will continue to identify new campus partners to collaborate with on events, displays/exhibits, and programs that will meet our students needs and interests. To increase accessibility to our displays, exhibits, and events, we will continue to offer a virtual or web component when possible.
- A flipped classroom model was implemented for ENGL 1001 and was considered successful by faculty and librarians. We would like to pursue ways to integrate this model into other in-person instruction sessions as well as continue to expand our online tutorial selection.
- The public services staff will explore expanding the role of student workers in the library. This opportunity to cross train students can offer more meaningful learning and engagement as well as create a more dynamic and flexible student worker staff.