University Libraries responds to COVID-19 pandemic

In March 2020, Kent State University Libraries was voted “The Best Place to Study” by KentWired.com readers – a distinction earned for eight consecutive years. During the same month, health risks caused by COVID-19 forced the university to transition to a totally remote learning environment. This unprecedented crisis created a service/product delivery challenge for every college and department, including University Libraries.

During this time of mandated restrictions, University Libraries’ many resources have remained in high demand from students and faculty. University Libraries adjusted our services, spaces and the delivery of resources to ensure that users continued to have access to the tools and information needed to support their success while keeping them safe and secure.

The following is a snapshot of University Libraries’ pandemic-adjusted services:

• **Live Chat Service:** With expanded hours, our [Live Chat service](#) connects you to a librarian who can answer your questions and provide research assistance in real time. Just click on the chat dialog box that appears when you open the home page or click on the Ask Us icon, found on any page of University Libraries’ website. You can also reach out directly through email to the subject librarian best suited to your research topic. To identify the librarian assigned to a discipline, visit the [Subject Librarian Directory](#).

• **Access and Delivery of Physical Materials:** The Library’s [Services Desk](#) has made several adjustments to keep patrons and employees safe, including:
  - **Virtual Stacks Access:** While the stacks are closed to the public for their safety, you can search for materials and request them through [KentLINK](#) and [OhioLINK](#).
  - **Curbside Pickup:** After you have requested physical materials, you can use curbside pickup to make an appointment to have your items delivered directly to your car. At your appointed time, park in the designated spot behind the University Library and call our staff. We will be out shortly to drop off your items. You won’t even need to get out of your car. Just select “Kent Campus Curbside Pickup” as your delivery location when you request library materials via KentLINK or OhioLINK.
  - **Contactless Checkout:** To check out items at the Services Desk, you can use our self-swipe station, eliminating the need for staff to touch your FLASHcard.
  - **E-Delivery of Receipts:** We now email, instead of printing your receipts for loaned materials.
  - **Remote Computer Lab:** In collaboration with Information Technology, University Libraries now offers remote access to the first-floor computer lab through an [online portal tool](#). You can connect to an available computer in the lab and use any of the software that is loaded on your choice of Dell/Windows or Apple/macOS systems.
  - **Makerspace Accessibility:** The [Student Multimedia Studio](#) offers students access to their specialized equipment, including 3D printers, by appointment only.
  - **Socially Distanced Library Spaces:** University Libraries has taken care to remove extra furniture and space chairs and tables for safe social distancing. Our study rooms and booth seating are restricted to single occupancy for your safety.

This is a list of some of the key changes and adjustments University Libraries has made to ensure that our services and resources remain readily available to you as we all work together to navigate our ongoing public health crisis.
Welcome to the fall 2020 issue of the *Essential Library*. The staff and faculty of University Libraries, LaunchNET and the Kent State University Press have demonstrated a great deal of commitment and courage over the last six months, as together, we have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue focuses largely on how we have adapted our services, resources and spaces to safely serve the Kent State community during these tumultuous times.

One hundred and two years ago, the students, staff and faculty of Kent State (then known as the Kent State Normal College) found themselves in similar circumstances. Much was different to be sure, but like our times, theirs was scary and unpredictable with citizens conflicted about closing businesses, wearing face coverings and how to keep each other safe from the 1918 H1N1 flu virus. The 1919 *Chestnut Burr*, the Kent State student-produced yearbook, records three “flu vacations” that closed the university in the fall of 1918. The first ran from October 14 through November 17. Just six days later, the second flu vacation began and ran until December 2. On December 12, the Kent State Normal College closed for a third flu vacation, not to reopen until December 30 (see image from *Chestnut Burr*).

The cover article of this issue shares the many ways we have adjusted our services, resources and spaces to enable our community to safely continue their research and studies. As we continuously evaluate and adjust to our circumstances, do know that above all, we are committed to the health and success of everyone. To ensure that over one hundred years from now, historians and researchers will be able to study how Kent State University responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, our department of Special Collections and Archives has been and continues to be busy archiving your courageous actions. Be sure to read the article on “Archiving COVID-19 at Kent State” to learn more.

As always, we are grateful for your support and hope to see you, whether online or in person, in our libraries soon.

---

**Archiving COVID-19 at Kent State University**

The mission of University Libraries’ Department of Special Collections and Archives is to acquire, preserve and provide access to primary sources and rare materials that support the teaching and research programs of Kent State University. Throughout the decades, the department has archived significant historical events related to KSU in real time, from localized issues to those that shake the entire world (such as our May 4 Collection, which began immediately after the Kent State Shootings of 1970), and many, many incredible records in between. Often, future research use can only be imagined at the time, especially in the midst of uncertainty and crisis.

Such is the case with documenting Kent State University’s experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. Since early 2020, Special Collections and Archives’ personnel have been actively compiling documentation on KSU and this crisis. This developing project will continue as the journey of this pandemic and its impact on the university community evolves.

If you are in a KSU department or office that is creating original records related to the pandemic, please be especially vigilant with consulting the Records Retention Schedule on the General Counsel's web page. This site provides excellent details on the retention and destruction of your departmental records and how Special Collections and Archives weighs in on collecting materials of historical significance.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please email specialcollections@kent.edu or leave a voicemail at 330-672-2270.
University Libraries are at your service!

- To better serve patrons during the pandemic, the Geauga Library developed more digital learning objects for faculty support, including web materials, library guides, assignment guides and the Remote Teaching Library Guide.

- Use of existing online library services, such as interlibrary loan, ARES, embedded library instruction, which were in place before COVID, have increased.

- Virtual “group meetings,” utilizing software tools Microsoft Teams, Flipgrid and Unhangout, are offered to learners for safe collaboration.

- With nearly all courses at Stark being taught online or remotely, including all of the sections of FYE: Destination Kent State, the library’s FYE Tour initiative was reconstructed. The initiative began three years ago and has proven to be an effective retention tool. Freshmen who participate in the fall are significantly more likely to enroll for spring courses than those who do not. This semester, instead of physical tours, the library developed virtual, video tours and offered some of the same incentives, including fulfilling one of the three campus activity requirements for the FYE course.

- Stark Campus librarians are preparing to co-teach the Information Fluency for the Workplace and Beyond course (LIS 30010) in the spring of 2021. The course will be taught remotely with synchronous sessions once a week, fulfilling a degree requirement for Stark Campus students seeking a bachelor’s degree in communication studies.

- Ashtabula Library has been working closely with University Libraries’ staff and services, providing support for faculty through electronic resources, such as videos to integrate into Blackboard Learn.

- Students who are enrolled in library instruction sessions are receiving personalized research assistance from librarians.

- The Gelbke Library at Trumbull has made several adjustments to meet the needs of faculty, staff and students, while keeping them safe throughout this unconventional semester.

- In addition to modifying their physical spaces and hours, the library also made changes to our services, such as curbside pickup and drop off, providing instruction and assistance via Blackboard Learn and permitting students to check out laptops for the entire semester.

- Though many of the classes on East Liverpool and Salem campuses are being instructed remotely, the Academic Learning Commons continue to be at the center of student activity with high-use services, such as curbside pickup and loaned laptops.

- The group study rooms – which have been reconfigured to be individual study rooms – remain in high demand.

- Research assistance, technology troubleshooting and Blackboard help are being used via e-mail, telephone or scheduled in-person sessions.
With assistance from the Office of Student Success Programs, University Libraries received great participation from students who entered the Identify Your Subject Librarian drawing for first-year students.

Congratulations to Abigail Berry, fashion design and merchandising major, for winning a new pair of Apple AirPods Pro!

Each student has a Subject Librarian that will gladly help them navigate the libraries' vast resources. Connect with yours at www.library.kent.edu/subject-librarians-directory.

Students and faculty are encouraged to contact their librarian with any questions or needs that they have. Contact information for the subject librarians can be found on the back of this sheet.

With the help of generous donors, University Libraries has upheld our mission of contributing to student success by awarding $1,000 scholarships to numerous worthy undergraduate students for eight consecutive years. Read on to learn more about the 2020-21 scholarship recipients, and please consider supporting University Libraries’ Giving Tuesday campaign throughout the month of November to help more Kent State students afford a quality education. Every dollar is a contribution to student success.

Your contributions to University Libraries promote student success!

University Libraries serves students of all backgrounds and disciplines, striving to develop the whole person, assisting and encouraging them to meet their educational goals. We understand that many students struggle financially while earning their degrees. In fact, two out of three students enrolled at Kent State need additional financial aid.
Meet University Libraries’ 2020-21 Scholarship Recipients

Lilly Chevalier

In addition to pursuing dual majors in anthropology with a philosophy minor, Lilly works as a student employee in University Libraries’ Circulation Department. As a student employee, she knows firsthand how hard it is to make ends meet.

“My loans didn’t fully cover my tuition and the remainder had to come from my personal funds, so this scholarship really helped,” said Lilly, who expressed appreciation for donors who invest their resources in students like her. This achievement is an encouragement toward her goal of attending graduate school. “I would love to teach anthropology,” she says.

In addition to her job, the libraries have offered Lilly many useful resources. “I’ve struggled to pay for my textbooks, but I saved money using OhioLINK. It provided me with access to books from other libraries in the state,” she said. “More students would definitely use this service if they knew about it.” She also mentioned receiving assistance from other departments located within the library, including Tutoring Services and the Tech HelpDesk.

Moira Armstrong

In addition to pursuing dual majors in English and U.S. history, Moira works as a senior career peer in the Department of Career Exploration and Development. A junior from Warren, Ohio, she aspires to be a professor of queer literature, which will put their minor in LGBTQ studies to use. They are also the managing editor of Fusion magazine, Kent State’s student publication focusing on LGBTQ+ issues.

With all of their responsibilities, they didn’t need to add worrying about how to afford tuition. “I was concerned about COVID, so I decided not to live on campus this year, which means I have to pay for groceries, rent and utility bills,” says Moira. “With the award from University Libraries and other scholarships, my tuition is paid for the year! Now, I can focus my savings on other needs, such as a new laptop to help me with my online classes.”

Admitting to being a library person since a very young age, Moira says, “The Kent State Library is great and I spend a lot of time there. I’m very grateful for the interlibrary loan (ILL) system. Last semester, ILL helped me by tracking down six different translations of a book I was studying.”

Sophomore
Major: Anthropology
Minor: Philosophy

Moira Armstrong

Junior
Majors: English and
U.S. History

Sophomore
Major: Anthropology
Minor: Philosophy

Lilly Chevalier
Meet University Libraries’ 2020-21 Scholarship Recipients

Emma Greathouse

While working in University Libraries’ Communications Department as a student graphic designer, Emma learned about the scholarship opportunity. “It is amazing to be awarded this scholarship. Because COVID-19 happened, I wasn’t able to come back to in-person classes for the fall semester, so I lost my job in the library,” said the Buffalo, New York resident. “The art supplies that are required for my graphic designing classes are expensive. I wouldn’t have been able to afford them without the money from this scholarship.”

Emma is entering her senior year, majoring in graphic design with a minor in user experience design. Her professional goal is to work in a firm, utilizing the skills she has learned at Kent State to design packaging and branding. “Eventually, I want to start my own design firm,” she said.

Being a library employee made her aware of the many resources that are available to her. “I was able to explore the library’s services. It opened my eyes to learn about so much that Kent State offers its students,” said Emma. “I’m very grateful!”

Kelechi Victor Onyekwere

Kelechi is a senior public health major concentrating in pre-med who plans to use his Kent State education to contribute to the healthcare system in his native country of Nigeria. “I want to be a cardiothoracic surgeon,” he says. “I chose a broad major to open more areas in healthcare so I can help the people in my country, even if I decide not to become a surgeon.”

Throughout his years at Kent State, Kelechi has taken advantage of University Libraries’ many resources. “I discovered that this library was way more than I originally thought,” he says. “Access to the Kent State Library is just one way that this university gives students the keys to be successful.”

He is grateful to those who contributed to the library scholarship. “I felt overjoyed knowing that some level of recognition and appraisal came along with my efforts to better myself via frequent use of the library,” says Kelechi. “It was most pleasurable because I did not expect anything besides academic excellence to come of my efforts in the library, but the award was a welcome bonus that I greatly appreciate. Receiving this award has definitely motivated me in my senior year to keep pushing toward receiving my degree.”
During the spring of 2020, along with so many others, librarians at Kent State realized that we, as a nation and community, need to learn so much more about racism.

A group of University Libraries’ faculty and staff collaborated to develop three resources on race that present guides on Anti-Racism and the Black Lives Matter movement, as well a guide on Race and Anti-Racism created by a University Libraries’ faculty member at the College of Podiatric Medicine.

We encourage you to explore University Libraries’ resources on race at https://libguides.library.kent.edu/resourcesonrace.

Help diversify our collections, Hack the Stacks

Are you aware of resources that showcase work produced by underrepresented authors that are not currently in our collections?

Hack the Stacks encourages our patrons to suggest content purchases that will help University Libraries expand the representation of authors and ideas to educate and enrich our Kent State community.

Visit Hack the Stacks to suggest appropriate books and materials. The University Libraries’ Collection Development Team will review these requests monthly and add items to our collections as funding permits.

Introducing OAKS!

This past year, Kent State University Libraries converted its institutional repository (IR) platform, known as Digital Commons, to a free, open-source Islandora platform called Open Access Kent State or OAKS.

OAKS is a digital platform that collects, preserves and disseminates research and creative output. Examples include research papers, datasets, conference proceedings, symposium papers and posters, peer-reviewed journals, creative works and collections of other digital or digitized objects and documents.

OAKS serves each of Kent State’s campuses with collections that include books, journals, conferences and galleries, as well as communities grouped by college or division, and is browsable by author or subject. Kent State authors’ research citations can be listed on OAKS, including the full text of articles, if permitted by the original publisher. Frequently, pre-prints (research before peer-review) or post-prints (final, peer-reviewed copy) may be uploaded if the published version cannot. Each full-text article is carefully vetted for publisher policy before storage in OAKS.

To contribute your scholarly work or for more information on how OAKS can help grow your research and creative endeavors, contact David Elswick at delswick@kent.edu or visit https://oaks.kent.edu.

University Libraries creates resource collections to inform and educate on matters of racism

During the spring of 2020, along with so many others, librarians at Kent State realized that we, as a nation and community, need to learn so much more about racism.

As more voices are heard and ideals related to racism continue to evolve, these guides will provide helpful information for careful thinking, personal growth, interpersonal caring and positive action.
Kent State University Press publication earns prestigious literary award

Though there have been many award-winning books published by the Kent State University Press over the years, this spring brought perhaps the most prestigious award in the Press’ history when *Resurrection of the Wild: Meditations on Ohio’s Natural Landscape* was named a winner in the 2020 PEN America Literary Awards.

The book, a collection of literary essays by Deborah Fleming, Ph.D., professor of English at Ashland University, was declared the recipient of the PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay in a grand ceremony in New York City on March 2. Hosted by comedian Seth Meyers at The Town Hall, the event featured live music, celebrity presenters and more than $330,000 in prizes to authors in 13 different categories.

Fleming, who was rendered nearly speechless at the announcement of her name, began writing some of the book’s essays in the 1990s. She received high praise from the judges in her category; “In a field of writers eloquent about the pathologies of selfhood and modern life, Deborah Fleming’s *Resurrection of the Wild* stood apart,” they wrote. “Fleming’s . . . essays explore the zoology, botany and anthropology of her home ground with astonishing specificity and Thoreauvian passion.”

In accepting the award, Fleming told the crowd, “I love New York,” before continuing: “Today the woods and hills need the support of the people of the cities. We need you to speak out against destructive practices . . . . There’s only one water table, and it’s yours, too.”

Susan Wadsworth-Booth, director of the Kent State University Press, attended the ceremony along with Fleming. “It was a wonderful evening and great recognition for Prof. Fleming and the Kent State University Press. Awards like these often go to much larger publishers, but it was especially gratifying to see several small publishers, including ours, honored by PEN America and their panel of judges.”

A paperback edition of *Resurrection of the Wild* is now available, in addition to the original hardcover edition. For more information, visit [www.KentStateUniversityPress.com](http://www.KentStateUniversityPress.com).
Some have called the presidential election of 2020 the most important election in our nation’s history. For many of the young adult students enrolled at Kent State, it will be their first time participating in this civil act of democracy. University Libraries has endeavored to provide educational opportunities for the campus community on why voting matters.

On Constitution Day, University Libraries presented a virtual screening of the documentary *And She Could Be Next*, using the Zoom platform. The film follows the Georgia gubernatorial campaign of Stacey Abrams and the experiences of her volunteers and supporters as they were met with opposition in the form of voter suppression. Following the screening was an engaging panel discussion, moderated by University Libraries Dean Ken Burbanna and including filmmakers Grace Lee and Marjan Safinia, along with Kent State faculty members Denise Harrison, lecturer of Pan-African Studies, Joycelyn Harrison, Ph.D., associate dean of the College of Aeronautics and Engineering, and Janine Tiffe, Ph.D., assistant professor of ethnomusicology.

The Kent State Votes Coalition, a student-led organization, has partnered with University Libraries to encourage students to register to vote, volunteer at the polls and help other voters get to their polling locations. Visit [www.kent.edu/vote](http://www.kent.edu/vote) for information on voting.
**Share your story with the Kent State Shootings Oral History Project**

Since the 20th Commemoration of the Kent State Shootings in 1990, University Libraries’ Special Collections and Archives staff have recorded, archived and provided access to audio recordings of people’s stories related to the shootings and aftermath. This Oral History Project, which allows the narrators and their listeners to learn, grow and reflect, now contains more than 130 entries, all of which are available online.

While plans were in place to collect additional stories during the 50th Commemoration weekend this past May, the emergence of COVID-19 and Ohio’s stay-at-home order forced the cancellation of Kent State’s in-person events.

To honor and preserve the memories and poignant stories from that day, Special Collections and Archives continues its efforts by providing three ways to participate in the Kent State Shootings Oral History Project:

1. Schedule a facilitated recording session with a trained oral history team member;
2. Submit your own audio recording of your story; or
3. Submit a written narrative.

Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, all facilitated recording sessions are being done over the phone with a trained oral history team member. During these unprecedented times, the department’s goal is to allow participation to be as accessible as possible. During the 2019-20 commemoration year, more than 60 oral history interviews and over 20 written narratives were added to the collection. The number of participants during the 50th anniversary was at an all-time high.

Add your story about the Kent State Shootings and its aftermath to the Oral History Project at [www.library.kent.edu/may4oralhistory](http://www.library.kent.edu/may4oralhistory) and explore the collection of oral histories at [https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/may4oralhistory](https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/may4oralhistory).

---

**LaunchNET moves to new Design Innovation Hub**

In the midst of an already-unique season of changes, LaunchNET Kent State began the fall semester with an office relocation to the new Design Innovation (DI) Hub. LaunchNET, which assists students, employees and alumni with entrepreneurial thinking, ventures and projects, remains under the direction of University Libraries. The department will continue to serve as a resource for all, utilizing and supporting the innovative spaces and assets offered in the DI Hub.

“We are excited to be a part of this group of great new resources, labs and maker spaces,” says Zach Mikrut, LaunchNET’s interim director. “As we make plans for new programs and continue to be responsive to both our clients’ needs and the environment, we look forward to creating even more innovative ways to help students engage with the space.”

The DI Hub is also home to the brand new Marty Erbaugh (I3) Lab, where students will be able to participate in a cohort-based incubator program operated by LaunchNET and Design Innovation. The I3 Lab is generously supported by the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, in honor of Erbaugh, an entrepreneur, trustee and longtime advisor of LaunchNET.

“We are extremely fortunate to be able to relocate LaunchNET to the new DI Hub,” says University Libraries Dean Ken Burhanna. “From the conceptual beginnings of Kent State’s DI Initiative, LaunchNET has been a driving force in its adoption, and with the addition of the I3 Lab, LaunchNET will deepen its engagement with student entrepreneurs and contribute to advancing the DI Initiative.”

“Through LaunchNET’s efforts,” says J.R. Campbell, executive director of the DI Initiative, “we were able to bring together students, faculty and staff from across the university to develop what has grown into the DI Initiative today and has blossomed into an amazing DI Hub environment.”

While Kent State students will be the main focus for the activities in the DI Hub, LaunchNET will continue to collaborate with cross-campus organizations (RCET, the Fashion School and the College of Aeronautics & Engineering, to name a few) and external partners, including a variety of local companies and K-12 programs.

For more information about LaunchNET, visit [www.kent.edu/launchnet](http://www.kent.edu/launchnet).
Elizabeth Campion – As Special Collections and Archives’ May 4 archivist, Elizabeth coordinates the unit’s operations and programs relating to records and materials that document the shootings and their aftermath, assisting with public service requests and many more responsibilities relating to the 1970 shootings.

Michael Hawkins – Our new data librarian’s responsibilities include providing comprehensive data services in support of the university’s teaching, learning and research needs, leading University Libraries’ data management initiatives and collaborating with other units to define and meet research data needs. Michael is also head of the Map Library and supports the geography and geology department’s teaching and research programs.

Anita Slack – Accepting the position as the life and health sciences librarian, Anita is the subject librarian for biological sciences and biomedical sciences, as well as nursing and public health. She is responsible for providing information literacy instruction and in-depth research assistance to students in those fields.

Yuening Zhang – Hired as the STEM librarian, Yuening guides students in the academic areas of chemistry, biochemistry, computer science, physics, advanced materials, liquid crystals, mathematics, aeronautics and engineering through research projects and provides them with information literacy instruction.

BrowZine is an app for tablets and smart phones (iOS and Android), as well as for desktops and laptops, that allows you to access and browse journals from different publishers in one simple interface. BrowZine’s one-click access provides effortless journal browsing of the University Libraries’ collection. With powerful features like My Bookshelf and My Articles, you can personalize the experience to meet your own unique needs. Follow titles of interest, be notified when new articles are published and seamlessly save articles for offline reading. The app easily integrates easily integrates with our supported bibliographic services Mendeley and Zotero.

BrowZine also drives journal engagement using LibKey, a unique and powerful suite of one-click complimentary tools that includes:

1. **LibKey Nomad**, a browser extension that provides access to the library’s full-text PDFs from information discovered on the open web at sites, such as publisher pages, PubMed and Wikipedia.
2. **LibKey Link** delivers access to full-text PDFs from our popular databases, as well as Google Scholar.
3. **LibKey.io** is a unique search tool that allows users to search articles by DOI or PubMed ID and returns one-click access to the full-text article from our subscribed collection or Open Access options.
4. **LibKey Discovery** provides access to PDFs from our EBSCO discovery service and incorporates Unpaywall data to deliver Open Access versions when subscribed versions are not available.

BrowZine keeps your literary research current, providing you and your students with new and applicable knowledge – right at your fingertips. Explore this valuable tool today!

Congratulations to University Libraries’ new faculty

*At the beginning of spring semester 2020, University Libraries welcomed four new faculty to become part of the libraries’ mission to help the students, faculty and staff of Kent State University succeed. Please join us as we take this opportunity to congratulate them on their appointments.*
In August, the University Libraries community was deeply saddened by the sudden loss of Rochelle Gray, the serials and electronic resources manager in our Collections Department.

A dedicated Kent State employee for more than 25 years, Rochelle served in the Chemistry/Physics Library before accepting a position in Collections in 2012. She will be fondly remembered for her ever-present smile, pleasant attitude and quick sense of humor.

We will plan a memorial service to honor Rochelle when we are able to again gather safely. If you would like to receive details of the forthcoming memorial, please contact Mary Lovin at mlovin@kent.edu.