Generosity from its many supporters enables the LSU Libraries to award scholarships and assistantships, purchase digital resources and other collections, and plan for a collection of Southern Jewish history and cultural materials.

This year, LSU Libraries Special Collections awarded research grants to visiting scholars, curated exhibits of its unique material, helped with recovery efforts after the Baton Rouge flood, and added papers and oral histories to its collections.

LSU Libraries faculty and staff advance the mission of the university through their work, which is frequently recognized through awards and in publications.

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E-textbooks, exam week activities, musical events in the libraries, library instruction, and digital resources are a few of the diverse resources and services provided by the LSU Libraries.

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From the Dean

Everywhere in this year’s Impact Report we find glowing examples of the shared stewardship that lies at the heart of the LSU Libraries. You will of course find serious accomplishments by current staff, important additions to collections, and indicators of high use by faculty and students. These things are all impressive in their own right, but they take on another meaning altogether when considered alongside the extraordinary expressions of support and generosity by the Libraries’ larger community. The Libraries is truly a thing that has been handed to all of us by previous generations, with the solemn understanding that we do whatever is in our power to hand it on to the next generation, better than before. Forever LSU.

I invite you to read through this Impact Report to get a sense of how shared stewardship works among a community as talented and committed as ours. There are awards, exhibits, and excellent teaching, and the scholars who travel from far away to use our internationally recognized Special Collections. You’ll find students as learners and students as library workers, and see how difficult it is to distinguish between the two.

This year more than ever, I have a duty to call out for special recognition the faculty and staff of the LSU Libraries: we are so fortunate to have such a remarkable group of individuals, many of whom have strong national reputations of their own. As a group, they are a marvel of ingenuity, professionalism, and plain hard work. They are the spirit of the LSU Libraries, and the daily embodiment of the shared stewardship that carries it forward. It is the privilege of my life to work alongside them, and to work for the many communities who love our libraries.

Stanley Wilder
Dean, LSU Libraries
Joel and Kathleen Ory Professorship
The LSU Libraries e-textbook system was awarded the Best Customized System Award at the 2016 LOUIS Libraries Conference. The platform provides students with access to LSU-owned e-textbooks that are assigned to their classes and allows LSU faculty members to choose from over 250,000 e-textbooks that LSU Libraries would purchase for use as course materials.

The system also includes a database of e-books from academic publishers that are either available for textbook use, or available to request as a library purchase, allowing faculty to design courses with cost and quality in mind.

Key contributors to the project include David Comeaux, Web Development Librarian; Emily Frank, Instructional Technologies/Engineering Librarian; and Mike Waugh, Systems Librarian.

LOUIS (Louisiana Online University Information System) is operated under the Louisiana Library Network, which consists of more than 45 public and private college and university libraries.

Award winning platform

In March 2017, the Charlotte Initiative, a two-year project in which LSU Libraries has been instrumental, culminated in an open conference, hosted at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the project was led by leaders in academic libraries from across the nation.

Stanley Wilder, Dean of Libraries, was on the Project Team & Working Group, while LSU librarians Dave Comeaux and Emily Frank each participated on one of the initiatives research teams, to examine issues around libraries providing access to e-books being used in courses and user experience and satisfaction with e-books in an academic setting.

The project produced a complete, current, and accurate depiction of how academic libraries acquire and use e-books; identified publishers who have goals commensurate with library priorities; identified qualities and characteristics of scholarly works that are used for campus support including classroom and instructional use, and identified available platforms and services for e-book preservation.

National leadership

Charlotte Initiative
As LSU Libraries’ e-textbook program enters its 4th year, it has saved students a potential $2.7 million in textbook costs. This initiative provides students with free access to required textbooks through the Libraries’ website and course Moodle pages.

Zero-cost course

During the fall 2016 semester, 45 departments used the Libraries’ e-textbook service with 166 e-textbooks available to students. Richard Moscatello in the Mathematics Department was among several professors using the e-textbook service. Moscatello teaches two out of four sections for MATH 2065, or Elementary Differential Equations. The required text for the course, *Ordinary Differential Equations*, is available online from the Libraries, making this a zero-cost course for more than 230 undergraduate students.

$2.7 million saved

As LSU Libraries’ e-textbook program enters its 4th year, it has saved students a potential $2.7 million in textbook costs. This initiative provides students with free access to required textbooks through the Libraries’ website and course Moodle pages.

Moodle integration

This year, the Libraries launched e-textbook Moodle integration, automatically creating links to e-textbooks on the respective Moodle pages for every course with an e-textbook.

“Students always tell me at the beginning of the semester, ‘I don’t have my book yet,’” related Moscatello, “Rather than slow down the class, I just tell them to get the electronic copy right away.” The availability of e-textbooks has received wide appreciation from both faculty and students.

WWW.LIB.LSU.EDU/EBOOKS
Each semester, LSU Libraries hosts and participates in dozens of events reaching out to students. Student orientations, information fairs, the spring invitational for prospective students, international student orientation, Fall Fest, and others range in attendance from a few students to hundreds. During fiscal year 2016-2017, Libraries staff participated in 65 outreach events, reaching 15,381 students.

The annual LSU Libraries open house takes place each October in Middleton Library. Staff, students, and even Mike show up to this event in costume. Hundreds of students participate, learning about the Libraries’ resources and services, and earning chances to win prizes and enjoy refreshments.
Exam week at Middleton Library

Reaching more than one million visits a year, Middleton Library buzzes with activity year round, and it is never busier than during the midterm and final exam weeks of the spring and fall semesters. With thousands of students in the library and a 24/7 building schedule, the library offers extra services and activities to boost morale and encourage students during what can be the most stressful weeks of the year.

The most popular exam week activity is the pet therapy, a partnership with the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. Therapy dogs visit Middleton Library, with more than 1800 students showing up during this year to relax and enjoy the support from these furry friends.

Pizza night is a close second in popularity, and this year the Middleton Library finals committee gave away more than 2000 pizza slices to students studying late during exams. In addition to pizza, Student Government distributed cookies and coffee on one day, and the Student Health Center brought in healthy snacks on another.

Students also enjoyed downtime in a "relaxation room," outfitted with games, activities, and giveaways. Finals week ended this fall with a three-minute "rave" in the Middleton Library lobby, with dancing, lightsticks, and music.

In total, an estimated 5800 students enjoyed one or more exam week activities this year.

"Club Mid will actually be Club Mid for only three minutes"

Pictured: Social media posts by students in Middleton Library during the December 2016 finals week.
In today’s world of tweets, posts and fake news, information literacy has become more complex than ever, and library faculty are integral to the information literacy education students receive during their time at LSU. The Libraries offers a variety of instructional services to engage students and teach them how to identify, locate, evaluate, and access information, not only through the LSU Libraries, but also in preparation for life after LSU.

Our faculty’s instruction techniques promote critical thinking and information evaluation skills through coursework, workshops, consultations, online tutorials, embedded librarians, and engaging students where they are—at LSU or online.

This year, librarians taught more than 250 individual workshops and guest lectures, guiding nearly 6000 undergraduates and almost 600 graduate students through information literacy concepts, and teaching them about the use of library resources. More than 400 students, faculty members, and members of the public met with librarians for individual research consultations.

Librarians also collaborated with faculty from a number of departments across the university to become “embedded” in courses. They achieved this by adding links in Moodle, designing class assignments focusing on information literacy, and making presentations to classes both online and in person.

The Libraries’ website offers research guides that are accessed tens of thousands of times each semester, and online tutorials covering a number of topics.
LSU Libraries hosted several musical performances this year in Hill Memorial Library and Middleton Library.

Students in the LSU School of Music’s Collegium Musicum group performed music from historical prints and facsimiles of scores from LSU Libraries Special Collections. The pieces performed included “O Maria Salvatoris Mater” by John Browne from the Eton Choirbook, chant and organum from the Winchester Troper and Gisle Codex, music from the Codex Faenza and a 1774 edition of the Marburger Gesangbuch, and a piece from Joseph Ritson’s A Select Collection of English Songs. Following the performance, the pieces were displayed in the McIlhenny Room.

In April, the ordinarily quiet lobby of Middleton Library became a music recital hall for Music in Middleton, a concert event featuring students from the LSU School of Music, including performances by a string quintet and a cello duo. The quintet musicians were Mariana Krewer (violin), Chia-Shan Hsu (violin), Maricel Mendez (viola), Unusdian Errandonea (cello), and Carmen Rodriguez (double bass), and they performed “String Quintet No. 2, Op. 77,” by Antonín Dvořák. The cello duet included Wagner Duarte and Raudol Palacios, performing an original composition, “Apt. #106.”

Mikel LeDee, supervisor of Carter Music Resources Center in Middleton Library, and one of the event organizers, said, “it is the hope that a concert series like this would increase the awareness of recitals and other events at the LSU School of Music.”

Q: What’s your favorite library moment?

A: When I was invited to perform a cello solo for the open house.

Alvaro Angulo
Doctor in Musical Arts, 2017
Graduate Assistant for LSU Libraries Music Resources
Streaming video

The LSU Libraries purchased five streaming video collections from Alexander Street Press this year. These video collections are available to all LSU faculty, staff, and students from on and off campus.

The Diagnosing Mental Disorders: DSM-5® and ICD-10 (International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems) consists of 21 individual video titles covering topics such as eating, sleeping, addictive, and personality disorders. The collection provides “a means of understanding the diagnostic tools used by clinicians in practice”.

The purchase of Theatre in Video: Volume II expands campus access to an enlarged collection of plays, documentaries, interviews, and instructional materials. This includes materials from the BBC and the Shakespeare Global Theatre. Researchers studying in disciplines such as the performance arts, English, history, and sociology will benefit from access to this outstanding collection of videos.

Documentaries, interviews, archival footage, and select feature films are included in the LGBT Studies in Video collection. LSU community members such as anthropologists, psychologists, and political scientists studying topics such as culture, marriage equality, and global comparative experiences will appreciate access to this excellent collection.

The Filmakers Library Online: Second Edition collection provides access to films from independent filmmakers and prominent producers. Nearly three-quarters of the database content is exclusive to Alexander Street Press. Researchers from nearly all disciplines will enjoy exploring the issues, figures, and cultures contained in this database.

60 Minutes: 1997-2014 provides insights into documentaries, historical news and cultural pieces, and selected segments from the CBS news program Sunday Morning. This content enhances the scholarship activities of all faculty, students, and staff.
Published online by LSU Libraries, Civil War Book Review is the quarterly journal of record for new and newly reprinted books about the Antebellum, Civil War, and Reconstruction eras. Throughout 2016, the journal featured 136 full-length book reviews by both new and recognized experts.

Notable reviews included Professor David Cooper’s review of Matthew Karp’s acclaimed book This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy; and, Frank J. Williams’ review of Sidney Blumenthal’s much anticipated Wrestling with His Angel: The Political Life of Abraham Lincoln. With reviews such as these, the CWBR remained at the forefront of scholarship and popular writing.

In addition to offering timely reviews and relevant interviews, the journal also collaborated with LSU Libraries Special Collections to offer guest lectures and feature the library’s holdings to the CWBR’s readership. In each issue, Hans Rasmussen (LSU Libraries Special Collections) highlights an aspect of the library’s archival material on the Civil War and Reconstruction.

This year, the journal also began its partnership with Special Collections to host public talks on Civil War era topics. The inaugural talk featured Patrick J. Hayes, a respected archivist and religious scholar, and editor of The Civil War Diary of Rev. James Sheeran.

Interviews and original essays accompanied the journal’s review content. The CWBR interviewed T.J. Stiles for his Pulitzer winning book Custer’s Trials and David Egerton for Thunder at the Gates, co-winner of the 2017 Gilder Lehrman Lincoln Prize.

Endowing opportunities

The Civil War Book Review plays an important role in the student community. Each year, the journal’s endowment provides full funding for one graduate student to edit the journal, and a work-study opportunity for one undergraduate student. These positions provide their recipients with practical work experience in academic and digital publishing in the context of library science professionals.

Left: Tom Barber, LSU PhD candidate in the Department of History, has edited the Civil War Book Review since July 2016.
Historical university scholarship goes online

Historical dissertations and theses produced by LSU graduate students are now available through the LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses collection in LSU Digital Commons. The collection consists of more than 7,400 titles produced by graduate students between 1935 and 2001. LSU students have access to a wide array of dissertations and theses from most of the university’s departments for scholarly and research purposes. LSU alumni have the opportunity to access their own work, or may request the digitization of their work if it exists in the Libraries’ collection.

These historical documents represent a portion of the intellectual work produced by LSU since the 1930s and add to the existing collections of theses and dissertations that the Libraries added to its LSU Digital Commons institutional repository earlier this year.

The landmark project was a collaboration between LSU Libraries and the LSU Graduate School.

In addition to the historical theses and dissertations, LSU Libraries and LSU Graduate School have migrated the Graduate School’s Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) database to the new LSU Digital Commons platform. As of January 2017, 4,084 doctoral dissertations and 4,281 master’s theses are online, totaling 8,365 publications. The dates of the publications range from 2001 to 2016. The database is searchable and can be browsed by a variety of criteria, such as author, department, date and others. The full text, abstracts and recommended citations are freely available.

DIGITALCOMMONS.LSU.EDU
Yearbooks go online

Each *Gumbo* yearbook chronicles an entire academic year at LSU. In words and especially photos, the *Gumbo* shows the people, places, and events that make each year at LSU unique. In addition to formal portraits of schools and departments, the book contains hundreds of snapshots of students with their friends and dozens of pages highlighting organizations and events.

The Libraries digitized and uploaded *Gumbo* Yearbooks from 1900-1970, with more years currently being added.

Communications on Stochastic Analysis

In collaboration with LSU Mathematics Professor emeritus Hui-Hsiung Kuo, LSU Libraries has launched the journal *Communications on Stochastic Analysis* (*COSA*) on its journal-hosting platform. *COSA* joins *Journal of Latin American Geography* on the platform, with additional scholarly journals scheduled to launch in the coming year.

LSU Libraries offers a platform for university faculty members to host scholarly journals. In addition to hosting articles, the platform provides a workflow for editing, peer review, and publishing, and searching capabilities and a wider visibility for the journals.

Published quarterly, *COSA* was founded in 2010 and aims to present original research papers of high quality in stochastic analysis (both theory and applications) and emphasizes the global development of the scientific community. Kuo is the current editor-in-chief, and the journal has editorial board members from around the world.
Cynthea Corfah was the Spring 2017 recipient of the scholarship. Corfah is a 2017 LSU graduate who majored in Mass Communication with a concentration in print journalism. She worked at the LSU Libraries in the Access Services department from 2014 until her graduation. “I feel so honored to be the recipient of such an important award,” she stated. “To be rewarded for my hard work at Middleton over the last two years made me feel appreciated and valued.”

Rachel Shirley received the Fall 2016 General Syed Ali Zamin Memorial Scholarship. Shirley is a junior majoring in Theatre with a concentration in film. She has been a student worker in Circulation Services since she started classes at LSU in 2013. “I’m really honored to have won,” she says, “It means a lot to me that my supervisors felt me worthy of this award and I hope to continue to show the qualities associated with this scholarship.”

The General Syed Ali Zamin Memorial Scholarship was established in the fall of 2014 by means of a gift from the Zamin family. The scholarship seeks to recognize an undergraduate student employee in the Middleton Library circulation services unit who demonstrates the same work ethic and love for LSU that made General Zamin so outstanding during his time working for the LSU Libraries. Each $1000 scholarship recipient receives $500 for two semesters.

LIB.LSU.EDU/ABOUT/GIVING/ZAMIN

Working at the library has taught me about all the resources a library has to offer, helped me develop professional conversational skills and helped me to time manage. I’ve made many friends at Middleton and it’ll always be one of my favorite places from my college memories.

-Cynthea Corfah
Palpable passion

By Jennie Gutierrez, LSU Foundation, for Cornerstone Winter 2017 and Spring 2018

Accomplished informetrics scholar and retired LSU librarian Dr. Stephen Bensman has empowered LSU Libraries to build a unique collection of Southern Jewish history and cultural materials, with opportunities for related educational programming. Bensman hopes the gift, to be made through a charitable bequest, will reinforce LSU’s overall excellence in the humanities.

“Steve’s gift will allow us to go much deeper by way of documenting Southern Jewish communities, organizations and individuals,” LSU Libraries Dean Stanley Wilder shared. “The timing couldn’t be better—the most important primary source materials are still out there, but we know that they are disappearing quickly. This is just the way with archives and manuscripts: without libraries, they inexorably succumb to the ravages of time and climate, or neglect.”

Bensman was a part of the LSU Libraries team for 37 years, serving in a number of positions and retiring in 2015 as a technical services librarian. As a part of Original Cataloging, he used his expertise in informetrics (the use of statistical methods to study the impact of published works) and foreign languages to solve problems in cataloging and authority records, of which many solutions were applied to Special Collections. In addition, Bensman served as secretary of the LSU faculty chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Dean Wilder, Bensman’s former research assistant and co-author of their 1998 journal article on the optimization of scientific and technical serials holdings, described Bensman’s passion for information science as “just palpable,” adding that the impact of his gift will “stand the test of time.”

Bensman, who is of Russian Jewish heritage, noted that the role of Jewish people in Southern history is largely unstudied. “For example, Judah P. Benjamin was Jewish, a wealthy slave owner from Louisiana and secretary of war and secretary of state for the Confederacy,” Bensman explained. “My thought was that this could be a little pot of money to build a little niche collection, a supplement to LSU’s main strength: Southern history.”

Much of Bensman’s research focused on Britain’s development of a national scientific information system and the invention of science citation indexing by Eugene Garfield, whose authoritative website has posted many of Bensman’s articles. In recognition of his work, Bensman received the 2010 Scholar Librarian of the Year Award from the Louisiana Chapter of the Association of College & Research Libraries. Today, he continues to analyze new statistical methods such as the role of Pareto power laws in scientific productivity, measuring outcomes with Google Scholar.
Friends of the LSU Libraries

The Friends of the LSU Libraries was formed in 1962, and has supported the LSU Libraries for five decades. In recent years, the Friends of the LSU Libraries has been best known for its annual Book Bazaar, which brings in tens of thousands of customers each year. But the Friends is so much more.

In October 2016, a small board of directors met and passed the new bylaws and articles of the Friends, and made plans to revitalize the group into the member organization it once was.

Members of the Friends of the Libraries contribute to a better library through their volunteering and fundraising efforts; receive the LSU Libraries electronic newsletter 4 times a year; are a part of a vibrant and enthusiastic group that loves LSU. Information about becoming a Friend of the Libraries with a gift of $25 or more can be found at the website.

WWW.LIB.LSU.EDU/ABOUT/FRIENDS

MCKENZIE HONORED BY LSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Shelby McKenzie was inducted into the LSU Alumni Association Hall of Distinction in a special ceremony held at the Lod Cook Alumni Center on April 7. McKenzie is on the LSU Libraries’ Dean's Advisory Council and chairs the Friends of the LSU Libraries board.
GOODRICH TAYLOR ASSISTANTSHIP

The Goodrich-Taylor assistantship is endowed by funds raised by the Friends of the LSU Libraries, and was first awarded in 1992. The assistantship is named in honor of Chancellor Emeritus Cecil G. Taylor and Dean Emeritus Max Goodrich, who had distinguished careers as faculty members and administrators of LSU, and were instrumental in the successful revitalization of the Friends.

Kenneth Sutherland, a doctoral student in geography and anthropology, has held the Goodrich-Taylor assistantship since the fall semester of 2015. Sutherland, a New Orleans native, holds a BA in anthropology, a BS in physics, and a MA in anthropology, all from LSU.

“

The position has allowed me to learn how these types of special collections and research materials are archived, cataloged, and preserved, both at LSU in Hill Memorial Library and across the world.

”

Sutherland processes collections of manuscripts, personal and official correspondence, photographs, and other archival material in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, which are kept in Special Collections.

FUNDING FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The proceeds of the 2016 Friends of the Libraries Book Bazaar funded an important purchase: Parts III-V of the British Library Newspapers. The British Library Newspapers are digitized versions of key 19th century British newspapers. Parts III-V provide access to local and regional news stories, with Part V providing access to a concentration of titles from the northern part of the United Kingdom. With the addition of 94 newspapers, users can now research more than 160 newspapers. The collections support research in disciplines such as History, Literature, Victorian Studies, and Political Science.

IN MEMORIAM:
MARION CRAWFORD SPANN

Former President of Friends of the LSU Libraries, Marion Crawford Spann, passed away at the age of 90 on Thursday, January 5, 2017. The Baton Rouge native graduated from LSU in 1948. While at LSU, she was a member of Alpha Delta Pi Sorority and Alpha Beta Chi. After graduation, Marion worked at Standard Oil in Baton Rouge in the Administration Department where she met her husband Delroy Spann.

For more than 25 years, Marion treasured her volunteer work for Friends of the Libraries and served as the Book Bazaar Chair on numerous occasions. Prior to serving as president, she served as secretary. In 2001, the Friends of the Libraries honored her with the Rosalind B. McKenzie award. She was one of four recipients to receive the award due to her exceptional services for the organization.

She is survived by her husband of 62 years, her only son Robert Baxter Spann and his wife Patricia Rock Spann, two granddaughters, and a host of other family members and friends.
Gina Costello has been named Interim Associate Dean for Special Collections. She currently serves as Associate Dean of Technology Initiatives, and will fulfill both roles at Middleton Library and Hill Memorial Library. While the recent appointment is temporary, Costello has several years of experience with LSU Libraries to effectively serve at Special Collections.

Costello began her career with LSU Libraries at Special Collections in 2004. For nine years, she served in Special Collections as the first Digital Services Librarian and later the Head of Digital Services and Reformatting. She managed a number of digitization projects now available in the Louisiana Digital Library and directed grant projects such as the Digitizing Louisiana Newspapers Project, which is part of the National Digital Newspaper Program.

In 2015, Costello was promoted to Associate Dean of Technology Initiatives, where she is responsible for library-wide technology strategy and implementation. She oversees the strategic direction and oversight of the website, application and software development, systems and desktop support, digitization, and the digital scholarship lab. Under her leadership, the development and implementation of major software initiatives such as Archives Space and Islandora have helped modernize the metadata that supports the discovery of digitized special collections. In addition, she manages the Libraries’ ongoing Newspapers.com project.

“Special Collections is now and will always be firmly rooted in physical books and manuscripts,” said Dean of LSU Libraries, Stanley Wilder. “For all that, it’s also clear that while it has made enormous progress in becoming more digital in recent years, its future will only be more so. We are so fortunate to have her leadership for that critical agenda.”
In August 2016, the Amite and Comite rivers flooded after a storm dropped 7.1 trillion gallons of water on South Louisiana. While the university itself sustained only minor damage, many employees and students lost their homes to floodwaters that damaged almost 150,000 homes.

LSU Libraries Special Collections staff quickly came to the aid of the Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge, which sustained damage to its records. The close to 50 boxes of records and documents were stored in a walk-in freezer located in Hill Memorial Library. By freezing the documents, further deterioration was prevented until the Diocese was able to retrieve them and send them for conservation and repair.

LSU Special Collections staff members are experts in disaster recovery and are often on hand to help recover damaged material. In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, they assisted the Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans, the Notre Dame Seminary, and the St. Bernard Parish newspaper by providing freezer space for wet materials and safe storage for other collections in harm’s way. In addition, they helped the Louisiana State Museum triage and dry some of their affected materials.

Pictured, left to right: Tara Zachary Laver (LSU Libraries) with Amy Jones and Ann Boltin from the Diocese of Baton Rouge Archives, preparing flood damaged material in bagged boxes for freezing.

This has been my view for an entire month, the place where I met the archive fever and touched centuries old love letters. And I said goodbye. #louisiana #lsu #hillmemoriallibrary #archivefever
The LSU Libraries awarded travel grants to three researchers who will use the extensive historical material in its Special Collections for their respective research and book projects.

Dr. David Ballantyne, Keele University, Staffordshire, England, will conduct research for his book project, *Bloody Rapides: Reconstructing Central Louisiana*. Ballantyne's book will present a micro-history of the 1860-80 period in central Louisiana, especially majority-black Rapides Parish. Rapides and the surrounding anti-secessionist parishes of Winn and Catahoula provide a valuable case study for examining the contestation of black political and economic demands at the local level, the relationship between white wartime Unionism and postwar Republicanism, and the viability of a Reconstruction settlement safeguarding African American freedoms in the rural Deep South.

Dionne Ford is an independent researcher from Montclair, New Jersey. Her book project, entitled *Finding Josephine*, is a memoir inspired by a photograph from the early 1890s of her enslaved great-great-grandmother and her slave-owning great-great-grandfather. Various collections and family papers in the LSU Special Collections will shed light on this history. Ford’s book is under contract with Penguin Random House and is scheduled for publication in 2019.

Dr. Carin Peller-Semmens, a historian based in Edinburgh, Scotland, is working on a book entitled *Unreconstructed: Slavery and Emancipation on Louisiana’s Red River, 1820–1880*, which examines power, white supremacy, and the mentality of slavery in northwest Louisiana. Her book is under advance contract with the LSU Press as part of the Conflicting Worlds: New Dimensions of the American Civil War series. She will use three collections of letters and papers from the LSU Special Collections for her research.

Family papers are historical artifacts comprising a unique and important part of the Special Collections. Researchers from across the globe visit to explore the personal papers from families, including letters, diaries, photographs, and sketchbooks, which present first-hand accounts and viewpoints of their time.

**Who Do You Think You Are?**

The TLC reality series *Who Do You Think You Are?* returned to LSU Libraries Special Collections in 2016 to film an episode featuring actor Noah Wyle. This is the second time the show has visited Special Collections to research and film.

Wyle consulted items from three collections of family papers, viewing a letter, poem, and diary written by Sereno Taylor (1794-1867), one of Wyle’s ancestors. In his diaries, Taylor reflects on the Civil War and comments on his visits to wounded and sick Confederate soldiers in hospitals.

Wyle is best known for his leading role in NBC’s hit series “ER,” and currently stars in TNT’s “The Librarians.”
Special Collections has recently acquired the Wall family papers, offering a glimpse into the lives of the family from Clinton, Louisiana. Composed mainly of correspondence written between 1829 and 1921, a primary focus of the papers is the military service of four Wall brothers during the Civil War.

Wesley Wall, captured at the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863, was imprisoned at Camp Douglas in Chicago for nearly two years. Letters written during these years are particularly interesting. Family matriarch Mary wrote numerous letters to her son, as well as to military officials, seeking his release.

In an earlier, November 1860 letter, Wesley's brother, Benjamin, reacted to the election of Abraham Lincoln as President and commented on possible actions the southern states might take as a result. Other letters in the collection, most from Wesley, discuss family news and describe life in Clinton and other areas of South Louisiana.

In 1996, Judge William T. and Mary Fargeson Bennett’s children donated their family papers to LSU Libraries Special Collections. These papers offer scholars and students insights into the life, work, and political and civic activities of this prominent family, primarily Judge and Mrs. Bennett. The collection will foster research and discussion on a host of subjects from political and legal issues, to a variety of aspects of daily life and culture for a mid-twentieth century family.

This year, fundraising has been ongoing to enable the Libraries to catalog and organize the collection, digitize selections, record new oral histories, and mount an exhibition. Visit the website to learn more.

LIB.LSU.EDU/ABOUT/GIVING/BENNETT
T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History

The T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History is one of the largest oral history repositories in the South, and it continues to grow by producing fascinating interview collections that present perspectives of Louisiana history directly from individuals who lived it. Several large projects were completed and made available this past year.

The History of Louisiana Cooperative Extension Services (LCES) project was a collaboration between LSU Libraries, the LSU AgCenter, and the LSU College of Agriculture. A series of oral history interviews about the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Services, it includes personal stories told by professionals about topics including experiences in 4-H clubs, LCES’s impact on recovery after natural disasters, livestock shows, the role of research, and the impact of mechanization on farming.

The McKinley High School Oral History Project features the history of the high school, established in 1926 as the first Baton Rouge high school for African American students. The interviews focus on African American businesses during the period of segregation, the history and role of African American churches, the Baton Rouge Bus Boycott, and African American social organizations.

Also completed this year are collections of interviews with members of the Baton Rouge LGBTQ community, from the 1950s to the 2000s, Hurricane Katrina, University History, and Baton Rouge History and Culture. All of the oral histories are available to visitors to the Special Collections reading room.

272 Slaves

Jennifer Cramer, Director of the Oral History Center, partnered with Dean of the Ogden Honors College Jonathan Earle to teach “272 Slaves: Discovering Louisiana’s (and Georgetown’s) Past,” a spring 2017 course centered around the stories of the 272 slaves sold by Georgetown University in 1838 to plantations in South Louisiana.

Cramer trained and guided students, who conducted oral history interviews with the descendants of the 272 slaves. Students collaborated in teams to lead the interviews, conduct background research, ask the questions, operate the equipment, and take photographs. The coursework resulted in more than 20 hours of interviews and transcriptions from 18 people. The oral histories have been preserved for future research and will be available to researchers through LSU Libraries Special Collections.
The Mossville Oral History Project collection, a series of interviews that documented the history of Mossville, Louisiana, was completed this year, and launched online. More than 77 recordings of interviews can be watched or heard, in which 67 people share stories about their experiences in Mossville, discussing family histories, upbringings, and more. The African-American community, located in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, has received much attention over the years regarding civil rights and environmental justice changes. With the future of Mossville being uncertain, interviews were conducted over a two-year period to document and preserve the city’s historic role. The residents today are descendants of families who settled in Shoat’s Prairie, which was later named Mossville after James Moss, a descendant of original settlers. Many of the residents have relocated due to industrialization and buy-outs.

To fund the project, the LSU Libraries T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History received a grant of more than $217,000 from the Imperial Calcasieu Museum as part of a larger grant from the Sasol energy and chemicals company. A set of transcriptions, photos, and videos will also be made available to the public at the Imperial Calcasieu Museum, the McNeese State University Archives, and in the Louisiana Digital Library.

McKenneth Edwards (above) and Lillian Washington (below) were interviewed as part of the project.
Through the Valley of Death
A Special Collections perspective on the First World War

LSU Libraries Special Collections marked the 100th anniversary of U.S. involvement in “The Great War” with the exhibition, Through the Valley of Death: A Special Collections Perspective on the First World War, which ran from February 20 – June 2, 2017 in Hill Memorial Library.

The exhibition featured letters, documents, photographs, oral histories and published materials from the Rare Book Collection, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, and University Archives, providing a window into politics, propaganda, combat, home front activities, and social issues of the tumultuous era.

Life at LSU during the war, and the university’s efforts to honor the sacrifices of faculty, students and staff, through the building of Memorial Tower and the planting of the Oak Grove, were also explored.

“...whenever I have to think of poor Captain Craig and Captain Peters, two of my best friends, killed, one while I was giving him a cigarette, the other just after telling me he didn’t think the Bosche had a shell for him – then one can only know what utter hell this war is.”

Excerpted from October 11, 1918 letter from Lt. Hopkins Payne Breazeale, 358th Infantry, 90th Division, to his mother, from the Nita Sims Breazeale Family Papers, Mss. 2442
Libraries hosts screening with Louisiana Public Broadcasting

In conjunction with the WWI exhibition, LSU Libraries partnered with Louisiana Public Broadcasting to host a preview screening of The Great War: American Experience, on Thursday, April 6. Like the exhibition, the television series drew from “unpublished diaries, memoirs and letters” written by nurses, journalists, aviators, and others, to tell the story of World War I.

Soldiers’ letters numbered among the many publications and original documents on display. The letters transported exhibition visitors to the battlefront with humor, poignancy, and at turns heartbreak.

“The First World War touched the lives of millions of Americans and the people of LSU were no different. Many students, faculty, and staff went ‘over there’ to do their part; others bought war bonds, raised money for the Red Cross, knitted caps and scarves for the boys at the front, and adapted their lectures and assignments to include topics on patriotism and the importance of America’s cause. The records pertaining to LSU’s role in the war illuminate their efforts and the Memorial Tower and Memorial Oak Grove on campus are daily reminders of the ultimate sacrifice made by Louisianans and LSU alumni and students,” said Barry Cowan, Assistant University Archivist.

LSU Libraries Special Collections related to World War I were too numerous to show on two gallery floors. Additional materials include more books, letters, photographs, diaries and scrapbooks.

Many more documents and publications related to the First World War in LSU Special Collections await the intrepid researcher to pluck them from obscurity.

NEWS.BLOGS.LIB.LSU.EDU/TAG/WORLD-WAR-I
Oscar René Courrege Papers

Donated to the LSU Libraries Special Collections by the estate of Janet Marie Daboval Musso, represented by her daughter Pam Musso Braud on behalf of Stephanie Musso Ochello, and Richard Thomas Musso, the Oscar René Courrege Papers collection was processed and cataloged in 2017.

Oscar René Courrege was born on January 20, 1888 in New Iberia, Louisiana, the first of four children of Joseph Bertrand Courrege and Adele Crapé. He served in the United States Army during World War I, as a private in the 35th Service Co., Signal Corps, before his appointment to the rank of corporal in September 1919. His fluency in French enabled him to work as a telephone operator, a role he filled while stationed in Cheverny, France and Paris. Referring to himself as René during his early years, he married Amilda Renoudet on April 24, 1923. Courrege died in August 1970.

A large portion of the Oscar René Courrege papers consists of photographs and postcards pertaining to Courrege’s military service in France during 1918-1919. Groups of consecutive postcards make up letters written to his aunt back home in New Iberia. These letters, dated between October 31 and December 27, 1918, provide first-hand accounts of one Louisiana soldier’s experiences, observations and continued service overseas following World War I. The collection also contains about 90 black-and-white photographs mostly taken in post-World War I France, including Paris, Soissons, Crouy, Pinon, Anizy-le-Château, Vrigny and Reims. The identity of the photographer is unverified, but many of the photographs correspond to locations and situations described in Courrege’s letters. Photographic imagery includes post-war Paris, monuments for the victory celebration on Bastille Day 1919, former battle sites, and war-ravaged towns left in ruin.

More than 90 black and white photos were among Courrege’s postcards and personal papers. There was no documentation that Courrege was the photographer or in any of the photographs, but many photographs correspond to descriptions in his letters. LEFT: Notre-Dame de Reims Cathedral; RIGHT: Anizy-Pinon train station located in northern France at Pinon near Anizy-le-Château.
Special Collections commemorated Banned Books Week (September 25-October 1, 2016) with an exhibit curated by Meghann Wollitz and featuring a selection of materials from the recently-processed John Earle Uhler Papers, telling a colorful story of an incident that took place at LSU in 1931.

On September 22, 1931, LSU English professor John Earle Uhler’s novel, Cane Juice: A Story of Southern Louisiana, was published. The story details the experiences of Bernard Couvillon, a student hailing from Lafourche Parish, who works in the sugar industry and attends LSU, where he has a difficult time adjusting to an unfamiliar lifestyle and traditions.

The attention surrounding the book quickly expanded beyond its literary merit after a Catholic priest at St. Joseph’s Church in Baton Rouge, F.J. Gassler, publicly attacked it, writing that Uhler’s “whole being seems to be steeped in the miasmas of the crassest materialism,” and describing the novel as “a monstrous slander on the purest womanhood to be found in the United States” and “an insult to the intelligence of Louisiana’s Creole inhabitants.” He sent this criticism to numerous high profile citizens in the state, including Governor Huey Long and LSU President, James Monroe Smith.

Uhler issued a formal statement defending his writing—and accusing Father Gassler of misconstruing his intent. Yet in early October, after denying an announcement by President Smith that he had, in fact, resigned, Uhler was suspended from the faculty at LSU. This decision stood in contrast to earlier reactions to the book, which had included an Advocate headline describing Cane Juice as a “Tribute to [the] University.”

LSU Special Collections owns a copy of the novel that Uhler had given to Huey Long at the time of publication. Inside, a hand written message reads “with hearty wishes for a successful career in the United States Senate and a still more successful campaign for the Presidency of the United States and with profound admiration for his fighting spirit and ability to achieve.”
Achievements and awards

Kelly Blessinger received the 2017 Carolyn H. Hargrave Faculty Leadership Award, which recognizes an LSU Libraries faculty member who has demonstrated exceptional leadership to the Libraries through job responsibilities, research, and service.

Shaleesa Bynum was awarded a grant to attend the Identity, Agency, and Culture in Academic Libraries Conference at the Doheny Memorial Library at the University of Southern California Libraries in Los Angeles, California.

Cristina Caminita was selected as the winner of Wiley’s National Library Week Contest, receiving a travel grant to attend the Charleston Library Conference in November 2017.

Lauren Coats and Andrew Sluyter (Geography and Anthropology) were awarded a grant from the Omohundro Institute to fund the digitization of the Carlos Trudeau papers and the Vincente Sebastian Pintado papers in LSU Libraries Special Collections.

David Comeaux was named to the editorial board for The Journal of Web Librarianship, joining more than twenty academic and systems librarians from universities worldwide. The Journal of Web Librarianship is an international, peer-reviewed journal focused on all aspects of librarianship as practiced on the World Wide Web.

Jennifer Cramer delivered a keynote address at the “Forward USGBC Louisiana’s Symposium on Sustainability” in May. Cramer was also elected to the Oral History Association Council, and continued in her 7th year with The Oral History Review as Media Review Editor.

Row 1: Kelly Blessinger, Shaleesa Bynum;
Row 2: Cristina Caminita, Lauren Coats;
Row 3: Dave Comeaux, Jennifer Abraham Cramer;
Row 4: Emily Frank, Andrea Hebert
achievements and awards, cont.

Emily Frank received an Open Education Resources (OER) Research Fellowship through the Open Education Group with funding from the Hewlett Foundation, providing funding to attend the Open Education Conference November 2016, and support with OER-based research. Frank also received a full scholarship from the Association of Research Libraries to attend Open Con—an invitation-only conference that took place in November 2016—with the goal of catalyzing action on Open Access, Open Education and Open Data.

Andrea Hebert was accepted into and is taking part in the 2017 Institute for Research Design in Librarianship. IRDL is a yearlong program for academic and research librarians to complete a research project of their design.

In July 2016, Marty Miller assumed a two year term as President of the Association of College and Research Libraries, Louisiana Chapter (ACRL-Louisiana), following her term as Vice President & President Elect.

Sarah Simms, along with her former colleague Hayley Johnson, received both the ALA Carnegie Whitney Grant and the Newsbank/Readex/GODORT/ALA Catharine J. Reynolds Award for their research project titled “Through an Extended Lens: Louisiana, Internment, and the Geography of Chance,” which will investigate the internment of Japanese Americans at Camp Livingston in Louisiana during World War II.

In August 2016, Meghann Wollitz, Manuscripts Processing Archivist, passed the Certified Archivists exam, receiving certification from the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Pictured above, left to right: Marty Miller, Sarah Simms

Faculty publications


**New faculty & staff**

**Virginia Archer** joined the LSU Libraries as the Director of Development. Archer is an LSU graduate with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology and political science. She brings with her 8 years of non-profit administration experience, specializing in donor and events management, communications, board and volunteer management, and fundraising.

**Antonia "Tone" Aultman** joined the Libraries as the student supervisor for the circulation department. Aultman began her career in librarianship in 1988, where she worked as an acquisitions student worker in the H.T. Sampson Library at Jackson State University.

**William Conlin** joined the LSU Libraries Technology Initiatives department as a Data Analyst II.

**Meshelle Fargason** was appointed Assistant Dean of Administrative services. Fargason holds an MBA from LSU and is a Certified Public Accountant and a Certified Internal Auditor.

**Allen LeBlanc** joined the LSU Libraries as coordinator for the Research and Instruction Services department. LeBlanc supervises student workers and graduate students, assists librarians with projects, coordinates the departmental service points, and manages the RIS office.

**Amanda Moak** joined the library as a library associate. She has a BA in History and recently earned her MLIS from LSU.

**Elisa Naquin** joined the LSU Libraries as a Catalog Librarian. She holds a BS in geography, an MA in linguistics, and an MLIS, all from LSU. While earning her MLIS, Naquin worked as a graduate assistant in the LSU Libraries, and after completing her MLIS, she worked as a cataloging and research librarian at the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library at the Louisiana House of Representatives.

**Sarah Simms** joined LSU Libraries as the Undergraduate and Student Success Librarian in the Research and Instruction Services department. Simms will work with various undergraduate programs on campus to promote library services and resources, to engage faculty and students, and to deliver library and information literacy instruction.

**Nick Skaggs** joined the LSU Libraries as a library associate in the Research and Public Services department of Special Collections. He holds a BA in English literature and an MLIS with a concentration in archival studies.
**Staff changes**

Gina Costello was appointed Interim Associate Dean of LSU Libraries Special Collections (see page 18).

Rebecca Kelley was appointed Research and Instruction Services - Mass Communication Librarian in a tenure track with the rank of assistant librarian.

Mike Waugh was appointed Head of Technology Development & Management with a tenure track rank of assistant librarian. In his new role, Waugh will manage technology projects and supervise the staff working on them.

**Retirements**

Thank you and best wishes to William Armstrong, Stephanie Braunstein, Tom Brewer, Catherine Mungall, Susan Motsinger, and Brenda Vallance. LSU Libraries faculty and staff members who retired this past year. Together, they represent many years of service to the Libraries.

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