
E.H. LITTLE LIBRARY



ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries
Award Application 2020

DAVIDSON

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. DAVIDSON COLLEGE

According to its [Statement of Purpose](#), Davidson College is committed to assisting students in developing humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service, and believes fundamentally in the dignity and worth of every human being. Davidson is ranked among America's strongest and most selective liberal arts colleges. Located in the town of Davidson, North Carolina, the college serves a diverse population of 1,843 students (28% of the student body are domestic students of color; 8% are international students, with 48 states, the District of Columbia and 47 countries represented). The college offers 74 majors, minors, and interdisciplinary programs. The college is home to 21 sports at the NCAA Division I level.

At Davidson College, “inclusion” is an institutional value. The college has a history of addressing economic inequality through [The Davidson Trust](#) (a program designed to meet 100 percent of the calculated financial need of accepted students through a combination of grants and campus employment). Beginning with the class of 2021, each student completes at least one course to satisfy a Justice, Equality, and Community (JEC) requirement. These courses address the manifestations of justice and equality in various communities, and focus on methods and theories used to analyze, spotlight, or remedy instances of injustice and inequality. In addition to these initiatives, Davidson College faces a unique array of historical and social contexts as a residential liberal arts college located in the south, and the college has recently begun to research and reckon with its historical connections to racism, slavery, and unequal economic access as outlined in the [college's Commission on Race and Slavery report](#).

B. THE E.H. LITTLE LIBRARY

The [E.H. Little Library](#) advances the college's purpose in developing disciplined and creative minds by providing expertise, space, resources, and services for research, access to, and creation of information. Named after philanthropist E.H. Little, president and chairman of the board of Colgate-Palmolive Company and a Huntersville, N.C. native, the library building was constructed in 1974. Situated in the center of campus, it spans 100,000 square feet, and includes the college's Center for Teaching and Learning, technology enhanced classrooms, and group study rooms. Students are governed by the college's strong [Honor Code](#) and are committed to academic honesty and social responsibility. The trust engendered through the honor code allows for the library to remain open 24/7 (unstaffed in the late hours) throughout the academic year.

The library serves as a dynamic environment for students, faculty, staff, and the broader community to collaborate, explore, experiment, and grow as researchers, creators, and scholars. Our print collection includes more than 500,00 physical volumes. Our electronic collections encompass more than 2 million eBook titles, 860 databases, and over 155,000 electronic serials. The library's role in student learning and faculty teaching is central to supporting the mission of the college. Our team of instructional designers, research librarians, archivists, peer consultants, and digital learning fellows provide professional programming, course redesign, and individualized support across disciplines. We are most proud of how our expertise, programming, and resources intersect with and support the college's strategic priorities, especially those of access and social justice, and in the document that follows we outline how we have pursued these goals.

2. REIMAGINE THE LIBRARY

Davidson College's [public commitment](#) to racial equity and justice inspires our library to reimagine spaces, services, pedagogical approaches, and programming initiatives through a lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). As we indicate in the library's [anti-racism statement and goals](#), inclusivity is not merely a value but an opportunity. We have numerous occasions to implement and practice inclusivity in pedagogical, curricular, historical, and community-based efforts. To create an inclusive learning community and to reflect the diversity of Davidson experiences, library professionals collaborate on projects that reframe the narratives our college tells about itself, develop collections in partnership with students and faculty, and create community connections through art. Our staff acknowledges and embraces a special set of responsibilities as we articulate the college's relationship to the past, confront our present moment, and chart a hopeful future. We would like to highlight our exemplary efforts in the following areas: [Reframing Our Narratives](#), [Collecting as a Community](#), and [Connecting through Art](#).

A. REFRAMING OUR NARRATIVES

Davidson's recent [Commission on Race and Slavery report](#) asks our community to search for truth in "building a comprehensive understanding of the college's own history, which is intertwined with the institution and legacies of slavery and enslaved persons." Many of the report's recommendations rely upon work the Archives, Special Collections, and Community team has done to expand access to materials that uncover the college's complicated history, document the diversity of our community, and contextualize and preserve materials for future researchers. We are committed to challenging unexamined campus narratives about our history, and to providing opportunities for student research that reframes the way we think about ourselves as a community.

We engage our past by providing broader access to important materials that invite the community into the archives and into the college's history. We have digitized approximately 28,000 pages and 42 cassette tapes of [previously inaccessible materials related to the history of race and slavery at Davidson College](#), including important nineteenth century documents such as faculty and trustee minutes, church files, and plantation records. These materials, along with topical guides such as [Women at Davidson](#), [Integration at Davidson](#), and [Activism and Protest at Davidson College](#), have enabled students and faculty, in collaboration with the Archives and Digital Learning teams, to develop digital projects critical to confronting our current moment. For instance, [Disorienting Davidson](#) began as an alternative campus tour designed to highlight the history of white supremacy and anti-Blackness on campus by linking locations at the college to specific racist histories, and evolved into a senior thesis designed to increase dialogue around the legacies of colonialism, slavery, and white supremacy at Davidson. Similarly, [Inclusive Histories of Davidson College](#), directed by Assistant Professor of History, Rose Stremlau, is a multi-course project designed to investigate themes such as women's history that are not usually found in traditional and official college histories. The library's [curated guide](#) of Davidson College archival and library materials about local engagements with issues of race, discrimination, social justice, and equity has been accessed more than 2000 times since June 2020.

The library team also plays a major role in leading the college's *Stories Yet To Be Told: Race, Racism, and Accountability on Campus* initiative. This multifaceted work includes the development and support of [faculty and student initiated projects](#) which transform key campus spaces (virtual or physical) into interactive sites for interrogating race and racism. Spearheaded by our Digital Projects Fellow, Maurice J. Norman, and our Justice, Equality, and Community Archivist, Jessica Cottle, we are expanding on past projects (such as our [Shared Stories](#) archive of records documenting the contributions of local Black community members) and current efforts to document the contributions and experiences of Davidson's alumni, faculty, and staff of color. Working in close collaboration with the Office

of Alumni and Family Engagement and College Communications, the team has conducted multiple interviews, developed a digital storytelling platform, and is creating an internal supportive network around communities of color at Davidson in the process.

Our commitment to reframing the narrative has provided for semester-long engagements in courses like *Africana Studies 329: Women and Slavery in the Black Atlantic*, *History 259: US LatinX History*, and *History 396: Jews and Jewishness at Davidson*. In these courses, archivists have worked with students to identify and access relevant collections in Davidson's and other institutions' archives, offered context for how college history fits into broader national and international narratives, and provided training in oral history. Perhaps most notably, our Justice, Equality, and Community Archivist used her archival and public history training to provide students with opportunities for critical reflection on how communities navigate cross-national identities during a class trip to Barbados. These intensive collaborations have resulted not only in increased archival literacy for students; they have also led to the addition of valuable community collections and contextualization in our archives, including [Around the D blog posts on historical North Carolina primary sources](#), [oral histories on the history of Jewishness at Davidson](#), and oral histories about the LatinX experience at the college.

Our team's support of *History 396: Jews and Jewishness at Davidson* has contributed towards a deeper understanding of how religious identities on campus have shaped our history, leading to a student-initiated and archivally supported reassessment of the college's bylaws governing the religious requirements for trustees and the college president. This and the preceding initiatives are examples of how influential the work of the library can be in changing narratives by informing diverse understandings around issues of justice and equality.

B. COLLECTING AS A COMMUNITY

One of Davidson's central aspirations is to develop an inclusive learning environment that fosters free inquiry, discovery, and engagement. Diverse and accessible library collections are central to this goal. To diversify our collections, ensure inclusive perspectives, and provide broader access to our materials, we partner with college and community members in the collecting and curating processes.

The Justice, Equality, and Community Advisory Council, composed of students and alumni, was created to document and publicize the ways in which our community has engaged with manifestations of injustice and inequality at Davidson. This council works to encourage the understanding of archives and increase transparency around college documentation. One of its goals is to empower students to document their own stories and those of their communities, whether or not these collections are eventually added to our archives. Members of the advisory council and library staff created a workshop and a [guide](#) to teach students how to donate student records, which has led to the acquisition of records from the Organization of LatinX American Students and the student-led Asian-American Initiative.

Our Field Archivist Program provides students with the training and skills necessary to identify and collect materials of archival interest. Field archivists focus mainly on augmenting the archives with materials from student organizations, which can sometimes be difficult for archives staff to obtain. Through this program we have collected additional materials regarding campus musical groups, LatinX organizations, and LGBTQIA+ changes on our campus. One of our field archivists is currently collecting materials related to the student experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, which provides a perspective that would be impossible for archivists to gather on their own. In addition to the training provided through this program, our Archives and Digital Learning teams collaborate to provide training and guidance to students on [collecting oral histories and creating](#)

[podcasts](#). Based on this work, we have added a number of oral histories to our archives, including approximately 65 interviews with LatinX alumni, faculty responsible for the creation of the Latin American Studies interdisciplinary minor, Black alumni and staff, Jewish alumni, and women who came to Davidson after the college went co-ed.

Our efforts to establish community partnerships are exemplified in the work done by our Justice, Equality, and Community Archivist, Jessica Cottle. When the [Lingle Hut](#) of Reeves Temple AME Zion Church, a long-popular community space in town, was in dire need of repairs, Jessica stepped in to assist with fundraising efforts for this historic landmark. She hosted a panel discussion composed of church members and college employees who shared their memories of the Lingle Hut's role in the community. This conversation encouraged faculty and staff to understand the college's connection to the Black community in town, resulting in activism around the Lingle Hut's conservation needs. Phase one of the fundraising campaign has now been achieved and workers are shoring up the building's foundation, replacing log walls, and pouring a new floor.

Jessica has also worked with leaders from the Smithville community, a historically Black neighborhood in the area, to help highlight this community's distinctiveness. She worked to connect members from the Smithville CommUNITY Coalition with Dr. Takiyah Harper-Shipman, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Davidson. Through this relationship, students in Dr. Harper-Shipman's Africana Studies capstone course partnered with Jessica to conduct oral histories with Smithville community members. This collaboration has led to early planning among residents, the archives, and the Center for Civic Engagement in the development of a community history center.

In addition to these community-focused collaborations, we recently created [\(Re\)Collecting COVID-19: Davidson and Lake Norman Stories](#), a community curated collection of the experiences of the pandemic. We have received records such as journal entries, poetry about the pandemic, and photographs depicting pandemic life. Designed to locate and

collect the experiences of people throughout our region, this ongoing project works to document the ways in which the pandemic has impacted our college and the community.

One of our most successful community-college partnerships is with the town of Davidson's independent book store, *Main Street Books*. Located across the street from the campus, students are frequent customers of the shop. While in the store, students have the option to select titles for the library to purchase and add to our collection. This relationship supports economic access for students, helps us build a student-curated collection, and keeps the bookstore staff informed of students' current reading interests.



"Mask Selfie" Submission for
(Re)Collecting COVID-19 and
Lake Norman Stories Project

In addition to engaging with our community through collecting, we collaborate with students, faculty, and staff to incorporate library collections and services into effective curricular and co-curricular experiences for students. Examples include the following: We have worked with students and our Center for Diversity & Inclusion to curate an AIDS exhibit in the library. One of our Assistant Professors of Psychology, Laura Sockol, curated an exhibit on positive psychology books as connected to her course. Library staff led an interactive memoir exhibit connected to a lecture series organized by our Dean Rusk International Studies Program. In collaboration with the Dean Rusk program, our joint *Slice of the Writing Life* series provides an ongoing opportunity for students to engage with multi-cultural visiting authors (while enjoying a slice of pizza in the library) as well as inform the diversity of our collection development efforts.

C. CONNECTING THROUGH ART

At Davidson, art is quite intentionally integrated into our daily lives through campus exhibits, lectures, workshops, and cross-divisional programming. The library has formed a number of partnerships to elevate and promote art programming across the campus. For example, for the last three years, the library has worked with the Director and Curator of the Van Every/Smith Galleries, Lia Newman, and Assistant Professor of Art, Katie St. Clair, to showcase art in the library that reflects the diversity of the Davidson College experience. Because of this collaboration, we were able to successfully relocate the Presidential portraits from the library and replace these with works created by student artists at Davidson. In addition to highlighting this creative work, the library has also facilitated student art shows in the space. In this process, students gain new appreciation for the value of their own work and recognize the library as a community-focused space.

In fall 2018, [*Wind Sculpture*](#), a large-scale outdoor work by Yinka Shonibare, was permanently installed and dedicated on campus. In order to provide additional context for this new acquisition, the College's Art Galleries also presented Shonibare's *The American Library*. The work consists of a set of shelves filled with over 6,000 books bound in the artist's signature brightly colored Dutch wax printed cotton fabric. Embossed on the spines of over 3,000 of the books are the names of several generations of immigrants including some descendants of those who arrived to America's shores through slavery. The library team helped to celebrate and showcase this exhibition by working with over 25 faculty members to curate a corresponding "American Library" from books in our own collection as connected to Shonibare's exhibit. Faculty chose one name from Shonibare's listing, along with a book by or about this selected individual with context, for inclusion in the exhibit. In addition to this faculty curation project, we worked with our colleagues from the Galleries to host a series of book-making sessions in the library using scraps of Shonibare's beautiful Dutch wax fabrics. This collaboration brought increased contextual

awareness to the Shonibare exhibit, engaged faculty and students with our own print collection, and strengthened relationships between library staff, students, and faculty.



The Art Cart

Library staff work closely with colleagues from the office of Davidson Arts and Creative Engagement (DACE) on collaborative art projects and campus-wide initiatives. For example, DACE's *Art Cart* is a frequent presence in our building or on the library portico, offering creative study break activities and encouraging artistic practices in daily life. Even during the socially-distanced pandemic response, DACE has provided an opportunity for *Crafting for Connection During COVID-19* through a project developed by

Visiting Assistant Professor of Chemistry, Annelise H.

Gorensek-Benitez, and our Research and Academic Engagement Librarian, Meggie M. Lasher. Throughout the fall 2020 semester, Davidson College faculty, staff, students, and the broader community participated in decorating a blank fabric square commemorating an aspect of their life during COVID-19 to be incorporated into a community quilt. The completed quilt, which will be donated to the library's archives, will also support our [\(Re\)Collecting COVID-19](#) initiative. In addition to collaborations with DACE, we have partnered with the college's Makerspace on button making and laser-cutting projects, as well as offered book-making and book-snake making workshops in our Rare Books Room. The library's ongoing *Crafternoon* series provides students the opportunity to learn new skills, make new friends, and feel comfortable in the library as a place.

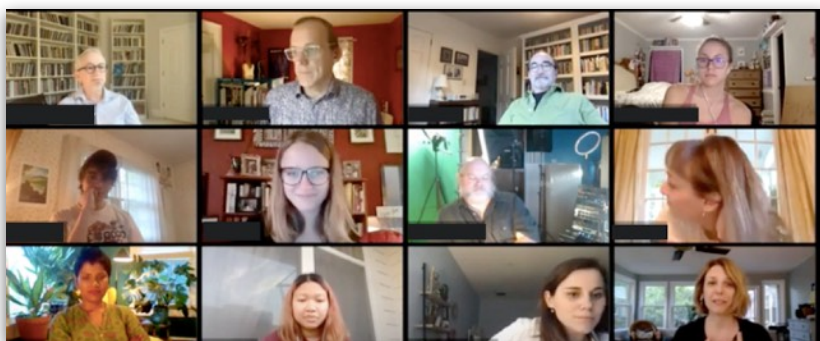
To showcase the library's special collections, and especially rare and archival material related to book history and book arts, our Archives and Special Collections team partnered with Assistant Professor of the Practice in Writing, Andrew Rippeon, in the college's Letterpress Lab (also directed by Rippeon) to present *Getting Your Fingers Inky: Gutenberg's Spirit Lives*. This opportunity provided students, faculty, and alumni the

chance to learn about the history of letterpress printing and to create their own holiday broadsides using images and quotations drawn directly from archival materials. This collaboration not only brought student attention to the letterpress lab (and course offerings in the history of the book), but also to the [library's collection of artists' books](#), which were on exhibit in the library to correspond with the lecture and workshop.

Our support of the arts extends to creative writing as well. When COVID-19 forced the college to remote status in March 2020, Alan Michael Parker, the Douglas C. Houchens Professor of English, reached out to Instructional Designer, Daniel Lynds, with an idea to create a virtual literary salon. The [COLD Open](#) series brings together students, faculty, and staff as a community—and also regularly invites alumni writers (such as the poet Clint Smith) to join for special performances. In addition to our team's work in helping to plan and implement this series, the

library's digital learning experts also create edited videos to share with open mic participants following each event. Because the library has become a place for increasingly creative social activities, it was a logical

next step for us to support the development of a new virtual open mic series.



Screenshot from "COLD Open" Literary Salon, April 2020

3. EXEMPLIFY EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

As twenty-first century research, teaching, and learning practices continue to evolve, so do the ways we collaborate to support richer teaching and learning experiences for our faculty and students. Through cross-campus and inter-institutional collaborations, we are able to broaden our perspectives, problem-solve, and develop new models to advance the liberal arts in the digital age.

The COVID-19 pandemic sent Davidson College into an emergency remote situation in March 2020. In these unprecedented times, the library's role in student learning and faculty teaching has never felt more tangible or imperative. As faculty rushed to adapt their in-person courses for remote formats and students also adjusted to the challenges of the pandemic, the library's teaching and learning experts worked to support the community at a scale that was previously unimaginable. With only a week's notice, the library team worked with faculty to successfully transition more than 700 courses to the online environment. Now more than ever, the library is the center of intellectual life at Davidson College—whether that role is performed in a remote manner or in a physical setting. We detail below our efforts in this area: [Leading During Crisis](#), [Engaging Our Community](#), and [Partnering for Teaching & Learning](#).

A. LEADING DURING CRISIS

As the pandemic continued, and the college announced plans to provide multiple course delivery options for fall 2020, the library's team of instructional designers, research librarians, and peer consultants took the lead in preparing faculty for online teaching through our *Digital Learning Institute* (DLI) in July 2020. During this intensive four-week program, more than 200 faculty members worked to fully redesign their courses for online learning.

...having all the tools of the DLI gives me a much broader toolkit. So, I plan, evaluate, and then replan. I'm probably still not there but I'm very excited about what I will do. I'm a better teacher. And, I'm the excited teacher that I like to be.

–DLI participant, July 2020

In preparation for supporting these courses, library staff spent June 2020 participating in an instructional design “boot camp” led by Assistant Director of Digital Learning, Sundi Richard. Focusing on instructional design topics such as making online courses accessible and equitable, creating community, and keeping students motivated and engaged, faculty and the library staff worked together to address the challenges of remote teaching.

...thanking the library staff for all their work and effort. I'm really grateful for the support, not just for teaching this past Spring but also the realities moving forward beyond the pandemic.

–DLI participant, July 2020

Working closely with teaching and learning partners, library staff led more than 20 additional topic sessions as part of the DLI faculty program, including performance techniques for Zoom, trauma informed teaching, diversifying the curriculum, communication tools, accessibility tools, annotation tools, and sessions on maximizing library and open educational resources. All sessions were recorded and added to a growing online library for faculty to refer to in the future. Since the beginning of fall 2020, we have continued DLI programming as bi-weekly coffee chats designed for faculty to share challenges and successes in the online classroom. Faculty have also brought in new topics for discussion around collaborative tools, virtual labs, open educational resources, inclusivity, and building community in online environments.

...the depths of labor, care, and attentiveness you all have given to DLI and all its associated work during these wild transitions are unsurpassed...

–DLI participant, July 2020

Like most libraries across the nation, the pandemic has pushed us to transform our core services to meet the needs of our students and faculty during these extraordinary times. We expanded our service model to offer chat, text, and Zoom drop-in and virtual appointments (with reported numbers of virtual interactions higher than combined virtual and in-person statistics when compared to the same pre-COVID time period). We redesigned our instruction model to provide engaging and inclusive online learning experiences; created a digitization center to meet the growing information needs of the remote community; moved to an entirely electronic reserves model; transitioned to a self-service check-out model; and reimagined how we provide print materials to our community via contactless pickup.

All the while, we have maintained close relationships with our students and faculty via continuous programming and interactive social networking and outreach. While we were not able to participate in the same traditional face-to-face orientation programs offered in the past, we have discovered new ways to connect with students. For example, we redesigned our orientation activities to include a video introduction for first-year students and offered services at a COVID-safe outdoor desk, staffed by library team members, under the library's portico during the first two weeks of classes. During midterms and final exams, we offer virtual study breaks via social networking, including activities such as interactive online games (*Library Bingo, anyone?*), puzzles and virtual tours. We continue to provide both physical exhibits and virtual displays connected to relevant topics such as information on voting and the 2020 election.

B. ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

While recent efforts have centered on leading *Digital Learning Institute* programming, our team provides support through other ongoing programs. We collaborate closely with colleagues from the college's Center for Teaching & Learning to lead the college's *Engaged Scholars Series* for faculty.

Featuring sessions on topics such as research data management, faculty publishing, object inspired learning, digital competencies, scholarly networks, open educational resources, accessibility and much more, the program has provided library staff the opportunity to develop programs that are both timely and relevant. We have built strong relationships with our faculty and have gained a deeper understanding of their research and teaching needs through these collaborations. This work has also helped us to identify areas for collaboration with our campus partners, resulting in a new working relationship with our Institutional Research Office around research data management and the re-envisioning of our systems librarian position to include research data management in their portfolio of skills.



Engaged Scholars Series Poster

C. PARTNERING FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

Davidson library staff challenge themselves to incorporate critical pedagogies into their own teaching practices. Inclusive pedagogy, and its aim to support *all* students in their learning, is a major focus at Davidson College. To support faculty in these endeavors, the library provides instructional design support and connects faculty to a variety of inclusive pedagogy resources. We discovered that while there is a wealth of research about

inclusive pedagogy in semester-long classroom settings, there is not much written about inclusive pedagogy in library-settings. To help fill this hole, three members of the Davidson College Library staff collaborated with nine other librarians from the Associated Colleges of the South to investigate how librarians can develop more inclusive and culturally competent teaching practices. This work resulted in the creation of a [shared guide](#) on inclusive pedagogy aimed toward teaching librarians, and strengthened the focus on inclusive pedagogies within our own instruction program.

Librarians and instructional designers routinely engage with faculty in research and course design to develop assignments that enable students to confront challenging concepts and to make meaningful connections outside of traditional research assignments. As part of first-year orientation, Davidson librarians developed an online-module, *Library Davidson 101*, to introduce students to research and the library. Designed to extend beyond basic search skills, librarians incorporated ideas connected to the overall rising level of misinformation and “fake news” to situate information literacy in a contemporary context. Research librarians Cara Evanson and James Sponsel used their experiences in *Library Davidson 101* to inform their research on the topic of fake news, as published in [Communications in Information Literacy](#).

Our focus on inclusive pedagogy has been magnified through our ongoing partnership with the college’s Center for Teaching and Learning. This relationship has resulted in our leadership of a two-day long Inclusive Pedagogy faculty workshop, multiple collaborative sessions with the college’s [FIRST initiative](#) (*Fostering Inclusivity and Respect in Science Together*) on using technology for inclusive pedagogy, and a multi-institutional National Science Foundation Grant to develop open quantitative skills modules. Our team also works to support the development of a self-based online course for introductory level Chemistry to make chemistry more accessible for all students. When COVID-19 forced the college to adopt new modes of instruction, our team of teaching and learning experts provided expertise and guidance to faculty and administration which informed the

college's adoption of inclusive instruction models for remote, hybrid, and online learning.

4. ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Over the past two and a half years, the library has undergone significant organizational changes in order to meet the continuously evolving needs of our students and faculty. These organizational changes, in alignment with the [library's strategic plan](#), have transformed staff roles to focus on outreach and engagement, the first-year experience, student employment, data services and digital scholarship. The expansion of our Digital Learning team to include instructional designers, librarians, digital learning fellows (post-baccalaureate positions), and a cadre of highly trained peer consultants serves as a model for collaboration and innovation. In addition to these important structural adaptations, we have moved to a cross-team working group model to ensure we are collectively moving forward in areas such as scholarly communication, digital scholarship, library systems, and outreach. These organizational changes have expanded our capacities to improve the student experience. As we support students in their preparation for lives of leadership and service, we believe that through innovative programming, the library can serve to connect students to the greater community and beyond. We share below selected examples of ways we have enhanced the student experience in the following sections: [Welcoming Our Wildcats](#), [Focusing on First-Years](#), and [Learning on the Job](#).

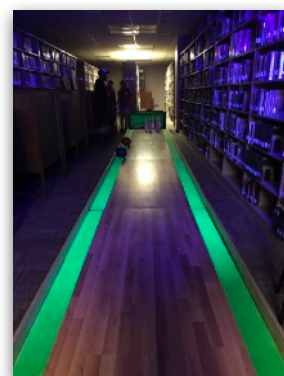
A. WELCOMING OUR "WILDCATS"

Fostering a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for our students begins before students even arrive on campus. Through social network messaging on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and coordinated e-mail communication, new and returning students are welcomed to the library and encouraged to engage with us before the semester begins. New collaborations with partners across campus have allowed us to expand orientation

programming in exciting ways. In fall 2019, our Research and Academic Engagement Librarian, Meggie M. Lasher, collaborated with colleagues in Student Life to reimagine what our first-year students' initial encounter with the library could look like. During orientation week, the library transformed its space to host a welcome event for over 500 new students. Staffed by library and student life personnel, we welcomed students to the library and offered a map of the library featuring a variety of creative activities in every corner of the space, including: a screen-printing station (where we used archival images of our Wildcat mascot to print on posters, t-shirts, and pillow cases), custom laptop sticker creation, a photo booth with props of Davidson memorabilia from our Archives, glow in the dark bowling between the stacks, a D.J., dance floor, and disco ball. Dinner was served under the library's portico and featured offerings provided by local food trucks.



Screen Printing Station



Bowling in the Stacks

Following the event, students shared that they felt more comfortable entering the library space and connecting with library staff; library staff also formed new connections with [first-year students](#) that carried over into the academic year.



First-Year Students & Food Trucks

My group of freshmen especially liked the library party and I think it was a really good way for everyone to meet new people and socialize without feeling forced to do so...

—Orientation Team Leader, 2019

Extending beyond the first-year experience, our team is involved in a number of initiatives that help to improve the student experience by fostering mutual respect and understanding. For example, we worked alongside faculty and students from Davidson's [Microaggressions Project](#) (designed to raise awareness about the campus climate as experienced by diverse members of our college community) to create a [portal for students](#) who are interested in research on the topic of micro-aggressions. Library staff have also provided leadership for the college's [Green Dot](#) bystander intervention program, designed to prevent power-based personal violence. Our Digital Learning team works closely with the college's [FIRST initiative](#) (*Fostering Inclusivity and Respect in Science Together*) to find ways to use technology to make STEM courses more accessible and inclusive, and also consults with Academic Access and Disability Services to provide guidance on inclusive technologies and resources. These efforts have forged mentoring relationships with students, and have led to stronger connections with colleagues and community partners.

Post graduation, the library plays an important role in welcoming our alumni back to campus during homecoming weekend. One of our most successful programs around alumni engagement efforts is our *Then & Now* photo project. During alumni weekend, alumni visit the library to peruse our year books to find their senior photo. They also sit for an updated photo to use in the project.

Library staff then combine the two images, which are shared via social networking and sent via email to alumni participants. In addition to this photo project, we offer alumni the opportunity to record stories from their time at Davidson via our *Alumni Story Booth* located in the library. This has been a fun way for alumni to connect with one another, understand the evolution of the college's history, build our archive of oral histories, and



"Then & Now" Photo Project

strengthen relationships between the library and alumni. One such meeting resulted in the addition of a new endowed book fund that might not have happened without this kind of creative engagement.

B. FOCUSING ON FIRST-YEARS

Library staff play a central role within [Davidson's Humanities Program](#), where we work closely with teaching faculty and fellows to develop learning experiences throughout this intensive first-year experience. The Humanities program provides natural connections to critical literacy concepts and many opportunities to partner with faculty on the design of research assignments. For example, students in the Humanities core studied King's letter from Birmingham jail alongside a *Green Book* held in Special Collections to more fully situate King's argument in a broader social and archival context. Before students start their first research assignment, students are taught about the inequities inherent within the information ecosystem, such as the fact that only those with the resources to participate in higher education settings have access to scholarship. Our team also works with students to understand the systemic inequalities within cataloging and search algorithms, and how these can reinforce biases. The library's involvement with the program gives ample opportunity to disrupt traditional ways students may think of information within their own lives and expand their perceptions of library personnel and libraries as institutions.

The level of detail and research that was put into last week's library session truly left a lasting impression and made me realize just how much I would like to be involved with the library in the future.

—Student, Humanities Program 2019

A central component of the Humanities program is the development of a digital portfolio project that each student in the program completes. Facilitated by the library's digital learning team, the digital portfolio gives students the opportunity to synthesize and

showcase the work that they have completed over the year. In addition to considering their own digital identities, students gain valuable web design and digital production skills that they utilize throughout their time at Davidson and beyond.

Our support for first-year students extends into co-curricular life in unique and meaningful ways. The library's Digital Learning team worked with colleagues from the Dean of Students Office and the college's health education program to develop and design two health courses, one on the topic of alcohol and drugs and the other on sexual health and misconduct, designed for first-year students. These mandatory first-year courses provide adaptable online instruction on these important (and often unspoken) topics. Feedback from student participation indicates that students found these experiences to be positive to their development as young adults.

As someone who never really received sex education, I really appreciated how in-depth, inclusive, normalizing, and informative this course was. I was talking to fellow Davidson class of 2023 wildcats and we think it would be really impactful to share this resource with other colleges and educational institutions as much as possible.

—Student, Sexual Health & Misconduct, 2019

This was a well done course and I appreciated that the creators of it went above and beyond to allow the students taking this course to choose for themselves what specific topics they would like to learn about regarding the overall general categories.

—Student, Sexual Health & Misconduct, 2019

When considering the student experience, examples such as these demonstrate the breadth of expertise library staff bring to the table in the creation of high quality curricular and co-curricular experiences.



Library & IT Partners On the Job

Library staff and peer consultants also work closely with our first-year Writing Program faculty on traditional support, such as the co-design of research assignments, research instruction, and teaching students how to avoid plagiarism. One of our most popular collaborations with the writing program is with the *Fake News, Real Science* class, taught by Professor of Biology, A. Malcolm Campbell. In this class, students produce 5 one-page, data-centered papers that dispel common misconceptions. These one-pagers are referred to as "TPs (toilet papers)" as they are posted in the library bathroom stalls throughout the semester. In the era of questionable news, the project has been a great way to highlight the importance of library research (see [LibGuide](#) created for the class by Research and First-year Experience Librarian, Cara Evanson), scientific data, and citing sources. Traditionally a paper based project, our digital learning team also worked with the class to create a [web based version](#) of this ongoing work—once again demonstrating the value of teamwork and collaboration.

C. LEARNING ON THE JOB

In 2019, we expanded the role of our Research and Instruction team to lead the planning and implementation of a robust peer tutor program. As a result of this charge, the group rebranded itself as the Research, Learning, and Outreach team and spearheaded efforts to redesign student employment in the library. These changes have resulted in unique

opportunities for students to gain valuable applied experiences that support their academic, personal, and professional paths.

The library offers students a variety of employment options such as Library Information and Research Assistants (LIRAs), Research Consultants, Digital Media Consultants, and Digital Fellows. While LIRAs take on a more traditional student employment role, staffing the library's front desk and virtual service points, they also collaborate closely with our partners in technology to address and refer library and technology questions. Students in these roles also lead special projects, such as the development of research guides, supplemental course materials, and the creation of tutorials to support classes. Research Consultants are trained to provide individualized research help to their peers and to collaborate with fellow peer consultants, such as Writing and Digital Media Consultants, to support student success. In their first year in action, the Research Consultants spearheaded a *Late Night at the Library* event to promote peer-to-peer services, resulting in increased student awareness of writing center, speaking, digital media, and math-science-economics support services.

Most unique among these experiential opportunities is our Digital Learning Fellow Program. This two year post-baccalaureate position, designed for recent Davidson graduates, provides space to learn how to be a part of a team, obtain specialized digital media skills, and expand professional networks. While fellows help the organization stay connected to a fresh student perspective, the program is designed to bridge the path from student to professional. Our 2016-2018 fellow went on to be a Design Manager at the Center for Academic Innovation at University of Michigan, while our 2019 fellow attained a full-time professional position as a Digital Communications Coordinator at Davidson College.

The Digital Learning Fellowship was the best possible place for me to land after graduating. I was given many opportunities to learn and grow not only as a member of a team but a lead on projects. I was trusted as a full member of the team - which compared to many other first possible jobs was a true gift. I was challenged and pushed to think beyond my conceptions of what a job in education could look like. I worked with such wonderful people on amazing projects the only downside was trying to find a 2nd job that could measure up!

—Annie Sadler, Digital Learning Fellow, 2018

Over the past two years, we have made transformative changes to our information desk service model to better support our students. In addition to our focus on peer-to-peer support, we have expanded [our collaboration with the college's Technology & Innovation support team](#), who are now situated at the library service point alongside library research assistants. This has allowed a more seamless support experience for students and faculty alike, who frequent the library's service point for assistance with library research and resources, as well as help with computer passwords and other tech issues. The information desk team is continuously identifying cross-divisional opportunities for joint collaboration and training, thereby strengthening the overall relationship between the library and technology partners.

5. EXPAND ACCESS

In support of Davidson's commitment to affordable and inclusive education, the library plays an important role in expanding access through consortial initiatives, advocating for equitable and sustainable access to information, and supporting the creation and sharing of digital scholarship. We highlight below some of the ways we expand access through the following sections: [Collaborating for Change](#), [Empowering Students as Creators](#), and [Showcasing Academic Excellence](#).

A. COLLABORATING FOR CHANGE

Shared resource collaboratives provide opportunities to expand access, discovery, and use of scholarly resources. As part of our commitment to preserve and expand access to scholarship, Davidson College participates as a member of the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust. Through this shared print initiative, Davidson is committed to retaining and sharing more than 55,000 titles, and joins more than 75 institutions in this project. The library is also participating in the Oberlin group's Universal Access working group to explore cross-institutional collaborative projects to expand Open Access (OA) and Open Educational Resource (OER) initiatives. Our library is shifting funding away from collections created through traditional publishing avenues in favor of supporting open initiatives such as *Knowledge Unlatched* and *HathiTrust*. We recently implemented *Leganto* as a tool for expanding equitable access to information through course lists. This provides an opportunity for the library to collaborate with the college bookstore, and Lula Bell Houston's Resource Center (providing textbook access to students in financial need) to streamline textbook adoption processes, reduce the dependence upon traditional textbooks, and encourage the adoption of open resources.

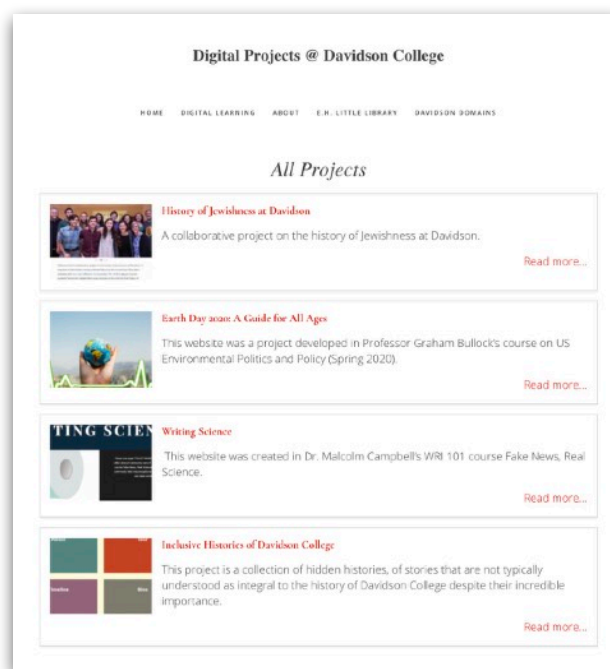
As the college continues to navigate the complexities of COVID-19, the library has adapted to faculty and student needs by securing digital texts, expanding Interlibrary Loan services to provide in-house digitization support, and building more robust streaming content collections. Despite the challenges presented to us by the pandemic, we have found innovative solutions to make physical resources available to those in need as well, as evidenced by a nearly 100% fulfillment rate for document delivery of books and articles. Our new [*Portico Pick Up*](#) service allows students and faculty to request print items directly from our catalog and safely pick these items up outside under the library's portico; between August 17 - November 16, 2020, 22% of our physical circulation transactions were conducted through this new service.

Our collaborative efforts reach far beyond the local community. Since 2013, our digital learning team has played a central role in supporting [Davidson Next](#), a college and Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district initiative that works to supplement Advanced Placement (AP) instruction with online modules designed for blended instruction and skill building for high school students and teachers in AP Calculus, AP Physics and AP Macroeconomics. Library staff also support the creation of online courses for another program, [DavidsonNow](#). This program offers free two-week long courses created by Davidson's faculty and staff, providing opportunities for adult learners to up-skill through courses such as [Essentials of Data Literacy](#) (total enrollment 36,788), taught by Visiting Assistant Professor of Data Science Che Smith, and [Analyzing and Visualizing Data](#) (total enrollment 1,427) taught by Pete Benbow, Team Lead for Analytics and Business Intelligence. These re-skilling opportunities, open to anyone, are powerful examples of Davidson's commitment to educational excellence and access.

B. EMPOWERING STUDENTS AS CREATORS

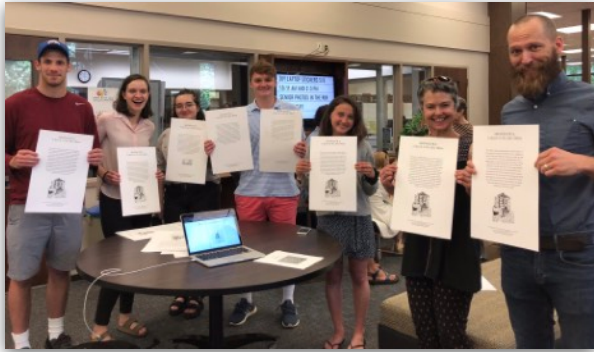
Many courses at Davidson work with library staff and resources to create public facing scholarship. Website creation is integral to multiple classes and majors at Davidson, expanding ideas of what research, learning, and assessment looks like for an undergraduate. Each year, approximately 40% of students design a website for a class or research project during their time at Davidson through our *Domain of One's Own* initiative. In this process, students become knowledge creators and make their work more accessible to non-academic and academic audiences using digital humanities methods. When they graduate, students are able to take with them the work they have created on their domain, resulting in a cumulative portfolio that documents their time at Davidson. Our team members are true partners in the teaching, learning, and creation process. [Digital Design](#) is a team-taught seminar designed by Professor of English Suzanne Churchill, and the library's Assistant Director for Digital Learning, Sundi Richard. In this course, students design their own humanities research projects from initial conception to

online publication via a WordPress website (hosted in Davidson Domains). In the process, they learn project design strategies, apply principles of UX-design, collaborate with peers and experts, and network with scholars. Examples of projects created include research on [combating tokenism](#) on college campuses and [refugee resettlement in Charlotte, North Carolina](#). To showcase and share these and other student projects more widely, [Digital Projects @ Davidson](#) was created. Projects such as [Earth Day 2020](#) have engaged over 1000 students and community members in learning about issues affecting the environment by reading, completing quizzes and other interactives, and earning badges along the way. [Inclusive Histories](#) is an ongoing digital humanities project that supports the college's commitment to uncovering our complicated histories and provides many opportunities for library staff to work with students and faculty in the process.



"Digital Projects @ Davidson College" Showcase

C. SHOWCASING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



Letterpress Projects, Verna Miller Case Research & Creative Works Symposium, 2019



Digital Projects, Verna Miller Case Research & Creative Works Symposium, 2019

In spring 2019, the library co-hosted the [*Verna Miller Case Research and Creative Works Symposium*](#), a campus-wide celebration representing the work of more than 850 students from across all disciplines. Throughout the year, librarians, archivists, and instructional designers provided research and digital design assistance for a number of projects which were showcased in the event. In addition to providing a venue for many research posters and group presentations, the library also hosted a student art show, digital displays, and curated archival exhibits.

In fall 2020, we launched [*Digital Davidson*](#), a platform designed to showcase archival collections and college scholarship. It currently contains more than 2,000 items, many of which have been digitized and

transcribed by our students, with additional materials being added on a regular basis. We aim especially to highlight scholarship being done by our students. [*Senior theses*](#) that have earned departmental honors are currently housed in the site and presentations from the spring 2021 Verna Miller Case Research and Creative Works Symposium will also be added to this growing collection. These showcases are important to expanding access to information, elevating the scholarly output of the college, and empowering students to contribute to the scholarly conversation.

6. CONCLUSION

Davidson College is committed to assisting students in developing humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service, and believes fundamentally in the dignity and worth of every human being. The library has been a crucial partner in the college's commitment to carrying out this mission. Our efforts have shown that the work of librarianship, no matter how quiet or behind the scenes, is the work of social justice. By the measure of the ACRL standards, Davidson College is exceeding all indicators of performance—but our efforts go beyond these indicators and demonstrate how every library can attempt to meet the challenges of our current moment. Our work at Davidson College shows that this project is ongoing, that this work is perfectable but never perfect, and that we have much more to do.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Forrest, the Leland M. Park Director of the Davidson College Library

[Our Team](#)

*Matt Ballard / Sharon Byrd / Jessica Cottle / Matthew Davis / Kelly Denzer /
Thomas Espenshied / Cara Evanson / Michael Forney / Joe Gutekanst / Ian Hicks / Jon
Hill / Shelby Hill / Tiffany Camp Johnson/ Trish Johnson / Molly Kunkel / DebbieLee Landi /
Meggie Lasher / Daniel Lynds / Maurice J. Norman / Madeleine Page / Emily Privott /
Jason Radcliffe / Sundi Richard / Denise Sherrill / Alice Sloop / James Sponsel/
Sara Swanson / Alexa Torchynowycz*

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LETTERS OF SUPPORT



December 3, 2020

Ms. Lauren Pressley
University of Washington Libraries
Chair, Excellence in Academic Libraries Award
Association of College and Research Libraries

Dear Ms. Pressley and Committee,

It is a privilege to offer this letter in support of Davidson College's E.H. Little Library nomination for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

As a lifelong reader, historian, and academic, I have long held libraries in the highest regard. As president of Davidson, I now have a fuller appreciation of the library's critical role in furthering the mission of the college as we strive to prepare students for thoughtful lives of leadership in service to humanity.

For many years the E. H. Little Library has provided extraordinary support to Davidson College, as a key partner across campus and the backbone of the academic experience. Today our academic librarians and library staff are a force for collaboration and innovation on campus. Never have these skills been more important than over the past year. In March 2020, the college made the difficult and abrupt decision to go remote. Our library colleagues partnered with faculty to get them back in their "classrooms" in five days. Library staff made sure students had access to their course materials no matter where in the world they were; they rapidly expanded digitization services, worked to provide textbook alternatives, and went entirely to an e-reserves model of service. They exemplified the college's commitment to the whole student by organizing creative outlets to help students and faculty and staff process the events of the spring. Over the summer, library staff worked with more than 80% of our faculty to enhance their digital capabilities for the fall, positioning us for success in the most unusual of semesters.

As a liberal arts college, Davidson has the responsibility to demonstrate the crucial value of scholarly inquiry to public life and to fulfill this country's promise. As the national grapples once more with its racial history, so has Davidson College, founded in North Carolina in 1837. The library has and will continue to play a pivotal role as we seek to better understand our history and work for a more just and equitable future.



I am grateful for all the ways the library has supported and will continue to support the college's commitment to the quest for truth and to our primary purpose of preparing students with humane instincts and disciplined, creative minds for leadership and service.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol E. Quillen".

Carol E. Quillen
President

30 November 2020

Association of College and Research Libraries
225 N Michigan Ave, Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Award Committee:

This letter is written in very strong and enthusiastic support of the E.H. Little Library at Davidson College's application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

As a Davidson College faculty member and administrator for two decades, I have had the pleasure of working with and benefiting from the expert knowledge and professionalism of the library staff, especially the information and archival specialists. The library is a dynamic environment for learning and community and Davidson because of its people – people who have extensive knowledge of finding material and data and sharing it with the campus and broader community. I've been particularly impressed with their efforts in promoting open educational resources as a justice issue, keeping costs down for our students and ensuring unimpeded flow of knowledge.

As the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, I have especially relied upon the expertise and passion of the library's Digital Learning team. Davidson was prepared for the pandemic last spring thanks to the foresight and preparation of the library team, and as we watched the pandemic unfold in January and February, they had prepared material ready to rapidly train our faculty in the shift to remote teaching. When the president asked how many days we needed to prepare for the shift, I could easily answer "3 days," from the advice that Library Director, Lisa Forrest, and Assistant Director of Digital Learning, Sundi Richard, had already provided. I have been further impressed with their continued assessment of our faculty's remote teaching during the spring, as they prepared two 2-week long summer digital learning institutes to greatly improve our teaching in multiple modes during the fall semester. I could not imagine how our college could have made it through our pandemic accommodations without the dedication and expertise of the library staff.

Even during these difficult conditions, the library continues its campus and community engagement with its strategic mission, especially its commitment to social justice. As both a faculty member and as Chief Diversity Officer, I find that the Archives and Special Collections team is always ready to work with our faculty and students engaged in this research, especially with our establishment of a college Commission on Race and Slavery. Through their expertise, the archives staff continuously exceeds expectations placed upon them by faculty and students

engaged in the development of historical research projects. The library's Digital Learning team partners closely with the archives on digital scholarship initiatives, making student research accessible through our Digital Projects @ Davidson portal.

The staff of the E.H. Little Library, under the dynamic leadership of its director Lisa Forrest, have made the library the center of intellectual life at Davidson College. From my review of the criteria for the ACRL Excellence in Libraries Award, I strongly believe that Davidson's Little Library meets ACRL's expectations for this honor. If you have further questions that I have not addressed in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "E. P. Lozada Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eriberto P. Lozada Jr.
Associate Dean of Faculty
Chief Diversity Officer
Professor of Anthropology and Environmental Studies
Chair, Chinese Studies Department
Director, Crosland Center for Teaching & Learning, Davidson College (USA)



Scott Denham
Charles A. Dana Professor of German Studies &
E. Craig Wall, Jr., Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Humanities

3 December 2020

Letter of support for the Davidson College E. H. Little Library application for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I write with heartfelt enthusiasm on behalf of my colleagues at the E. H. Little Library at Davidson. Their application for this award represents well the most recent work of our library colleagues. My own experience working with our library's colleagues and resources spans my thirty years at Davidson and my careful attention to most aspects of the library during that time. I have experienced our library not only as a teacher and scholar at Davidson, but also as a member of various relevant committees and task forces over the years, through collection development, and as a teacher who integrates members of the library team into my own teaching. I have also worked extensively with archives and in the collections at Harvard's Widener and Houghton libraries, the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach, and the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, to name a few I know well. By way of being a dad of former college students I have a basic sense of SLAC libraries (and how they've changed) at Williams and Wellesley colleges. I will focus here on just a couple recent projects I've initiated or led and how the library colleagues and their expertise and collections have helped our students in the context of the mission of the college. First, a specific project involving the archives, then second a much larger project related to a large interdisciplinary humanities course. In each case you will see how the library team embraced the challenges, taught well, helped our students produce new knowledge, and furthered ethical, just outcomes for our students.

In the wake of Charlottesville, in the fall of 2018 Davidson College and some Davidson students were targets of antisemitic, racist, and homophobic on-line harassment perpetrated by two students on campus. In response to that attack I, as the faculty member on campus with expertise in the study of antisemitism and Holocaust denial, became a go-to resource for students seeking solace, knowledge, and advice on how to act in response. Questions arose about the history of Jews and the Jewish experience at Davidson and a group of students and I turned to the archives in the library. Finding no organized files or stories, no record, I organized a group of seven students who began a project to find and tell the stories of the Jewish experience at Davidson. The digital archivist and justice, equality, and community archivist enthusiastically agreed to guide the students through the project, which grew into a substantial contribution to the history of the college, with archival quality oral histories that live in the college archives, artifacts, framing essays, images. Without the enthusiastic teaching and guidance of the archives team this would not have been possible. They took on this work with the urgency it required, with the grace to lead the students but let them learn on their own, with utmost professionalism and the highest standards, and—this is important—in addition to their normal workloads. They met with the students and me weekly for a semester, then supported them over the next year and an additional summer (with funding I was able to scrounge from a couple college sources) as they moved to bringing

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the students' work into form ready for both the archives and the public. See that work [here](#). The site is also highlighted in the application, but this backstory is important so that you can see how the archives and special collections team and the digital learning team supported a fully student-initiated and student-created project. This work by the students has become part of a broader dialogue among students, faculty, staff on campus and alumni and trustees off campus. Two of the students presented their archival work to the board of visitors in 2019 and one of them presented the work to the board of trustees this year. The support of the archivists supporting our students will help bring about a more open and self-reflective college community. The archives team's awe-shucks modesty is the stuff of legend here, but they really enabled this learning to happen for our students and the students' work has enriched Davidson's history and informed current directions of Davidson's progress toward becoming a more just and equitable institution. The archive speaks with authority about the Jewish experience at Davidson now because the archivists helped students teach it to tell a new story.

The first-year humanities program at Davidson has a long history. Fifty years as a Western Civ, great-booksy course of what was seen as the best that been thought and said, for gentlemen, by gentlemen. (I taught in that course for years.) The pedagogy was ex cathedra in plenary lectures with small discussion sections. A day for Petrarch, a day for Cervantes, a day for Locke, et cetera. Librarians and the library had no integrated role in the course. The close reading assignments lacked context; the research papers were disconnected. Over the last twenty years some faculty have worked to make "The Western Tradition" course, as it was called, into a dynamic course in critical, interdisciplinary thinking, reading, writing, and performance. I happened to be in the position to lead the revolution in the structure and focus of that course, beginning in 2017. One of the first structural changes I made was to begin the year with a humanities course pre-orientation, to build the learning community for the year. I asked library colleagues—librarians, archivists, and digital learning team members—to be a part of that learning community as peers, co-teachers, collaborative intellectual workers on campus, pedagogues and scholars like the rest of the faculty. I was very keen to introduce students to the library as a place for intellectual, political, critical, and creative work and collaboration, *led by intellectual workers and pedagogues who are like faculty*. We took about 90 of us—new students, peer leaders and tutors known as Humes Fellows, library team folks, faculty—to a retreat center in the mountains for three days about a week before regular orientation began. Three days of workshops, readings and discussions, presentations, library intros about everything from the politics of the archive to the hidden agendas of search algorithms to digital identities to the beauty and awe-inspiring power of a rare textual artifact. We call the pre-orientation *Sapere Aude*. (Yes there are t-shirts.) Walks in the woods, all meals in common, name games, lots of time for getting to know each other. The library team followed up throughout the year by taking part in study trips, workshops, plenary lectures in class, in dialogue with faculty in class discussion, and hands-on, one-on-one advising and research consultations with these first-year students—who all felt like they each knew at least two or three librarians really well. I heard students say "I'm booking a time with my librarian to talk about the paper." "Oh, who's your librarian? Mine's soandso." Really. They developed personal relationships with faculty folks and librarian team folks at the same time, in the same learning space, with the same goals in mind. At the end of the year, the students in the course all presented their work in a digital portfolio, built also with the support of the digital learning team folks *in the library* whom they all got to know way back in August during the pre-orientation. The results of this learning community for our students have been revolutionary. The current course is [here](#); the digital portfolios from last year are down the page [here](#). Students see the library, the archives, the digital resources and tools as a welcoming space (in person and more recently online and in zoomland) full of people they know and they trust. The library team, needless to say, took on all this extra work with energy, grace, rigor, and enthusiasm. I am very pleased with how the humanities course can serve as one example of a transformative paradigm shift and a cultural shift in the role of the library and the good people in the library at Davidson.

This is perhaps out of the ordinary in this context, but I would like to give you the chance to see the library team and their contributions in this playful [video reprise of last year's course here](#): the

preorientation at 0:26, a student-led discussion of the archive at 2:48, prepping for archival work at 3:00 (“Hey, my librarian!”), working through the semiotics of images in digital spaces at 3:51, teaching about the politics of intellectual property at 4:10. A faculty colleague presents an image at 4:40 with the words “This is our artifact.” At that moment, all the students are immediately taken back to the workshop led by library colleagues at *Sapere Aude* in August, where each of a dozen tables of five or six students each was presented with artifacts from the archives and first presented with “the motivating question for this course”—“what do you need to know to understand this artifact?” The library team began the year for the students by introducing them in a hands-on workshop about artifacts in context, in power relations, through observation, framed by description, and connected by discovery. The artifacts they chose aligned with the college’s new commitment to justice, equality, and community: pamphlets and posters and broadsides from early LGBTQIA+ organizations and movements on campus, evidence of racist structures and acts documented in twentieth-century student publications and in nineteenth-century faculty papers, for example. This habitus of critical questioning about context and voice and power inhered for students throughout the year and was evident in their year-end digital portfolios. What do we need to know to understand this artifact? Ask a librarian—not for the answer, but to point you to the tools, and more importantly, the critical position, to find out for yourself.

There is much more to say but I hope that these stories can inform your work as you evaluate the revolutionary change, the tangible paradigm shift the E. H. Little Library has begun over the last few years.

Just today at the faculty meeting the library’s aspirations for the future were unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed by the full faculty. The deep faculty support of the work of our professional colleagues and peers on the library team is palpable and real. There is excitement about the library like I have never seen before. I hope the stories above can show some ways that excitement has roots in the hands-on work of professional librarianship, archival work, digital design, critical library thinking up close with students. The work students have produced and the learning they demonstrate have been and will continue to be transformative for Davidson and for the broader community.

Thank you for your attention. I’m happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Scott Denham

December 3, 2020

Ms. Lauren Presley
University of Washington Libraries
Chair, Excellence in Academic Libraries Award
Association of College and Research Libraries

Dear Ms. Presley and Committee,

As a Senior Studio Art major and Digital Studies minor at Davidson College, I write to express my sincere gratitude for the library's Digital Learning team's support as the College has transitioned from in-person classes to almost fully remote. The Digital Learning Institute (DLI), launched this past summer, has had a noticeable impact on the ease at which students can access and participate in remote learning. This alone has made Davidson College a more equitable and welcoming place for students of all backgrounds. The Digital Learning team has aided both professor and student projects through its online trainings and one-on-one support for course-building using Moodle or Davidson Domains. Davidson Domains grants all students and faculty the opportunity to create their own websites. Ultimately, students and faculty can enhance their digital presences by sharing their work. Under the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Digital Learning team's work has proved invaluable in maintaining Davidson's cross-disciplinary collaboration. A true liberal arts practice, this cross-disciplinary collaboration remains at the heart of Davidson's culture- even behind screens.

Davidson Domains continues to be a tool for students like me, who continually have work to share with others and potential employers. I was introduced to Davidson Domains as a first-year student in a Humanities and Digital Art class. Prompted to compose online portfolios using Wordpress, I quickly learned with the help of the Digital Learning team, to build a website without having any prior knowledge of code. In my first year at Davidson, I found this to be such a rewarding experience and tool to have, that I decided to help train my peers to pursue their own. Since taking a position as a student Media Consultant, I have built websites for professors to share resources with students, as well as websites enabling Zoom lectures and Youtube Livestreams as the pandemic first began in the US this past Spring. Davidson Domains and the help of the Digital Learning team has kept Davidson's culture of critical thinking and interdisciplinary collaboration going.

Because of Digital Learning's work moving all courses and projects online, I feel safe continuing my education and I could not be more thankful. The E.H. Little Library team has successfully engaged students, faculty and staff with educational resources and MOOC platforms during a particularly challenging time. For its ability to provide Davidson with stability during this unprecedented semester, I believe the E. H. Little Library is truly deserving of the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Adelle Patten '21



December 3, 2020

Ms. Lauren Pressley
University of Washington Libraries
Chair, Excellence in Academic Libraries Award
Association of College and Research Libraries

Dear Ms. Pressley and Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer a letter of support for Davidson College's E.H. Little Library nomination for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

As a staff member at Davidson College, I am deeply grateful for the partnership of the library on several different fronts. I work with our Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations, and the creativity, commitment and accountability of library staff has made our task of developing, applying for, and implementing significant grants in support of the college's aspiration a real pleasure. In particular, recent grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation were only made possible because of the library team.

I also had the privilege of staffing the college's Commission on Race and Slavery. The archives and special collections team embraced the daunting task from the start, offering orientation for the volunteer committee, helping to answer questions, and providing support and encouragement along the way. As important as their role was in helping the Commission with its report, the real work lies ahead as we continue to work to fully understand the college's history to build a better future. Library staff will play a leadership role.

Best wishes as you consider all your candidates, and thank you for your consideration of the worthy program at Davidson College.

Sincerely,

Stephanie R. Glaser

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30 November 2020

To the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Committee,

My family moved often when I was growing up. One of the first places in town my mother would take me was the library. The town library became a safe haven and a place where my imagination could roam. The librarians were my fairy godmothers. When I left home for Davidson College, my expectations were that I would make a leap and become not just a seeker of thrilling new realms or a reader of historical fiction, but the E.H. Little Library would help me become a scholar.

That late summer day in 1985 when I stepped into E.H. Little Library, Dr. Chalmers Davidson was there to greet me and others, to walk us around the library, and to share intriguing bits and pieces of Davidson College's history. Over the next four years, Dr. Davidson shared insight for researching family history. Dr. Leland Park was the library director then. He is who I think of when I create a nest for myself where I can do research or write. He made me realize that a study carrel isn't the only place where one can study in a library and that librarians are more than people who help me find the perfect book to read.

When I was a student, Sharon Byrd would help find resources for my papers: ordering various titles from libraries in Arizona, Massachusetts, Virginia; pointing out titles I had overlooked in the college library. Thirty years later she is still assisting me with my research. She listens to where I hope to end up and helps me navigate my way there, sometimes sending me in a direction that I hadn't considered.

Researching the early alumni of Davidson College is one of my passions. Those who have helped build the foundation of my research are those who work in E.H. Little's Archives, Special Collections & Community: Sharon Byrd, DebbieLee Landi, Jessica Cottle, and Emily Privott. Each has supported me in slightly different ways so that I have the best possible outcome: Sharon helps with the initial and ongoing research; DebbieLee pushes me to tell the stories of the people I research and to document all the information; Jessica asks questions to make sure that I am staying on the track I want to be on and provides technical support in terms of documentation; and Emily finds the most interesting little tidbits that enhance what I am researching as well as randomly causing a breakout of giggles. As a group they have helped me determine what information to seek in order to fill out who the early alumni were as well as how to organize it. My part is sharing all the documents that I gather with E.H. Little Library.

Over the past decades, my view of what a library has expanded. Much of that has occurred while Lisa Forrest has been director of the library. E.H. Little has become more than a place to check out books and study quietly in the carrels that line the walls. E.H. Little is the library where students, faculty, and locals can come together. It is not a library that expects whispered silence. E.H. Little is vibrant. It beckons one to come in, to inhale the scent of old books, to lean into the vibration of technology, to join the multiple discussions, to laugh from the joy of discovery, to create art, where one can seek assistance navigating all the library has to offer, where new connections are made constantly.

I remember seeing the library being built on Davidson's campus when Dad and I went to a long-ago football game. I remember hours spent studying in my spot in the library. I remember my younger daughter calling me to tell me how one of my professors was holding court on the second floor. I remember standing in the Rare Book Room telling Sharon Byrd that I wanted to research the college's earliest alumni and how she handed me a copy of the "Alumni Catalogue of Davidson College" that covered the years 1837-1924 and said it was just to get me started. I remember how she came out with a pushcart to help me get my research from my car into the library. I remember how nervous I was to present some of my research to a small audience, but all the librarians who had been helping me along the way were there to support me.

E.H. Little Library is committed to helping those in the community who walk through the doors. That commitment is for a lifetime.

Warm regards,

Elizabeth Kirkland Sickles
Davidson College 1988