

David and Lorraine Cheng Library, William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ ■ Fall 2020, Volume IX, Issue 1

Cheng Library Leads 'Real Men Read' Initiative

The Real Men Read program originated over a decade ago out of the Chicago Public School system (CPS), the third largest school district in the United States. CPS launched the program to help students improve their reading skills and introduce them to men who value education and serve as positive male role models in their communities. The program has achieved great success with men from diverse career backgrounds including doctors, lawyers, politicians, and clergy volunteering to read to elementary and middle school students.

By taking the idea for the Real Men Read program from CPS and similar Real Men Read programs across the country, the Cheng Library started a new initiative here in the northern New Jersey region. Volunteers in the Real Men Read program were able to read to classes at ten different schools, including six elementary schools in the Paterson School District, the 3rd largest school district in the state.

Read Across America Week, March 2-6, 2020 served as the kick-off to the initiative which is led by Curriculum Materials and Education Librarian Neil Grimes. The support of the Library Dean, Edward Owusu-Ansah, Library Assistant Director of Access Services, Nancy Weiner, and the College of Education Dean, Amy Ginsberg and Assistant Dean, Dorothy Feola was vital in helping the idea become a reality. By establishing a partnership with the College of Education, and the Office of Professional Development & School-Community Partnerships led by Nancy Norris-Bauer the Library made connections with school districts and schools throughout the northern New Jersey region to become participants in the program.

The Library sought volunteers from the University community, including Librarians, Faculty, Staff, and Administrators who, with the help of the College of Education, were matched with a participating school. Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs Josh Powers and Dean Edward Owusu-Ansah were among the first volunteers who read to students at elementary



Curriculum Materials and Education Librarian Neil Grimes reads to students in the Paterson School District as part of the Real Men Read Initiative

schools in the Paterson School District.

The Real Men Read initiative has the potential to reach more elementary schools in the region, obtain more volunteers from the University community, and inspire more elementary and middle school students to grow their love of reading and interact with positive male role models.

The COVID-19 global pandemic presented challenges during the launch of the program, but the program persevered. Several volunteers arranged to record their readings which were shared with students. As educators and students continue to overcome the obstacles presented by the ongoing pandemic, the Real Men Read initiative will also adapt and adjust to continue the goal of spreading the joy and value of reading.

For more information about the program contact Neil Grimes at grimesn@wpunj.edu.

Cheng Library Embraces and Rises to the Challenge in Traditional and Not So Traditional Times: A Message from Dean Edward Owusu-Ansah

David LaGesse (“Tapping the Power of the Local Library Anytime, Anywhere,” 2009) noted over a decade ago: “Doing research in our pajamas is a huge benefit of the Web and modern computers. But committed readers and researchers still want access to local libraries, with their vast troves of books, periodicals, and reference works. The best of both worlds? Tapping into your library over the Web, 24 hours a day.” The need for anywhere-anytime access to academic library collections has become widely acknowledged, even if obstacles to full realization remain. At Cheng Library, where emphasis on digital collections to enable such access is a priority, our accelerated actions to enable such transition continued, even before the arrival of COVID-19, which made such commitments and their defense a no-brainer. The urgency of the moment forced us all to prioritize virtual contacts and remote operations. But the fact was never lost on information disseminators and mediators such as libraries, that access to information and knowledge would remain an important part of what we did as a nation and as academic institutions. Libraries and those who support and operate them have always understood the important role access to information and knowledge plays in the advancement of science and civilizations.

We began the spring 2020 term with the enthusiasm we have always brought to the service of our



Dr. Edward Owusu-Ansah
Dean of Cheng Library

William Paterson community, and looked forward to executing our goals for the 2019-2020 academic year. We hoped to improve student awareness of library resources and programs through the regular use of pop-up libraries across campus. To that end, we provided weekly embedded librarian visits to Valley Road for the colleges of Education and Business. We sought to enhance the University’s presence in the local community by supporting area schools in their information literacy education of their students and supporting teachers. Those efforts led to some significant achievements from the beginning of the fall 2019 to the middle of spring 2020. We offered 40 library instruction classes for high school students in the Paterson Area School District, 3 professional development sessions for teachers, and visited 10 schools in Passaic County under a Real Men Read initiative to read to 32 classes and 2 Clifton Middle School classes un-

der a complementary Real Women Vote initiative. Overall, more than 600 high school students, over 320 elementary and middle school students and 50 teachers were engaged by WP librarians in these outreach, instructional, and professional development activities. To support the information literacy education of William Paterson students, the library conducted almost 300 instructional session requested by WP faculty for their classes and in support of the Will.Power.101 and Will.Power.102 first year experiences.

The library continued to expand its digital footprint to support anywhere-anytime access and concurrent multiple use through increased spending on its e-collections. It continued to leverage partnerships and consortia solutions for cost efficiencies by working with NJIT, Rowan University, Stockton University, and TCNJ libraries to establish joint working groups for technical solutions, sharing expertise, and improving resource sharing. Proportion of acquisitions budget dedicated to patron-driven options was increased. To support the personal and professional growth of faculty and staff to enable their valued contribution to the University mission and vision, the library reaffirmed its commitment to curating and publicizing faculty scholarly productivity by working on enhancements to WPSphere, William Paterson University’s digital repository. Cheng Library continued to administer and promote WPUNJ’s program for supporting

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open access publishing by faculty through funding for article processing charges.

Then came March 18, 2020. The fast-moving events and evolving decisions that emerged as universities, states, and the nation adjusted to changing information and directives amid an unfolding pandemic compelled the Cheng Library to close its doors. Its services to clients, however, never missed a beat. Preparing for and consistently developing protocols to support online access to our resources and services, coupled with the continuous expansion of our digital footprint allowed for a smooth transition to an environment in which the library's support for teaching, learning, and research would become almost exclusively virtual. With digital holdings now matching the size of the library's traditional print book collection, streaming media services a mainstay, and the periodicals collection overwhelmingly digital, the transition to serving a client base that could not come into the library building was rather seamless. While some traditional functions could not be moved online, reference and research consultations with faculty and students continued online mainly via chat, with such transactions seeing a 98 percent boost post March 18. Collection development activities continued, with the ordering and processing of e-books and streaming media. Librarians worked relentlessly to connect faculty and students to many extra resources made available by publishers free online for a defined period, including course materials.

Access to textbooks on the physical reserve desk became challenging due to copyright provisions and book quarantine requirements. This, however, reinforced the argument for adopting open educational resources to provide greater access and cost containment for students. The library created and deployed resources and tools to facilitate faculty adoption of such solutions. Cheng Library continues to believe that in these challenging times for higher education and our students, all teaching faculty should strongly consider the use of open educational resources in their courses to ease student access to course materials, overcome the challenges and limitations of course reserve collections, and help mitigate textbook costs for students. As Maura Valentino ("Donor Funded Open Educational Resources: Making the Case, 2015") notes, "textbook costs have become a serious burden on students and have become an unfortunate barrier to education for students from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds." Valentino concludes: "Replacing expensive textbooks with free resources can help to ensure that no student earns a poor grade, chooses not to take a class or leaves school due to high textbook costs. These are important objectives." Cheng librarians stand willing and able to help their teaching counterparts navigate the selection process for such materials. It is a solution best achieved through collaboration with the various library liaisons to the academic departments.

We are on campus again for

the fall 2020 semester and delighted to be at the service of our students, faculty, and staff. We have reduced hours, but not reduced resources or services. For your safety and ours, we are following enhanced cleaning, disinfection, and social distancing protocols. You will notice signs throughout the library, on walls, doors, and tables asking you to maintain required social distancing. Other signs reiterate the need to wear face masks. Please always make sure the masks cover your nose and mouth. Wipes and sanitizers are available on the floors and to personnel in their office spaces. Paper towels have been installed in the restrooms. We are counting on every one of us to protect us all, in a spirit of collective responsibility and accountability. We continue to engage our user community even as we maintain an alternating schedule that allows us to properly socially distance in our workspaces. Seating and computer terminals throughout the library have been reduced to 43 percent of original capacity to ensure adequate distancing for library users. Our virtual services continue without pause.

We encourage you to avail yourselves of our resources and services, and to work with us as we support your academic success and continue to provide the resources and services that ensure the intellectual vibrancy of our academic community. Welcome back – in person, and virtually!

Satasha Williams Appointed Access Services Librarian

Satasha Williams joined the Cheng Library staff in February 2020 as the Access Services Librarian. Satasha is responsible for the planning, organizing, and coordinating of the Library's department of Lending Services which handles all library circulation activities, Course Reserves, stacks and building maintenance, and related patron services. She also serves as the Library Liaison to the Languages & Cultures Department.

After acquiring a Bachelor of Arts in English degree from the College of New Rochelle in New York, Satasha worked in the banking, commercial finance, and commercial lighting industries concentrating on project management and customer service and relations. She

then transitioned to work in public and academic libraries where she later matriculated into the Master of Library and Information Science program at St. John's University. After graduating she gained valuable experience working at the Mother Irene Gill Memorial Library at the College of New Rochelle and the Rittenberg Law Library at St. John's University.

Prior to William Paterson University, Satasha was an Adjunct Reference Librarian, a Law Library Assistant and Weekend & Evening Supervisor for the College of New Rochelle and St. John's University. Satasha looks forward to building on this experience and utilizing her knowledge and skills to enhance and promote Library services and



Satasha Williams
Access Services Librarian

resources.

In her spare time, Satasha enjoys traveling, comedy shows, music, movies, and reading books by Stephen King, Agatha Christie and J.R.R. Tolkien.



CONNECTIONS

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Dr. Edward Owusu-Ansah,
Dean of David and Lorraine
Cheng Library

Gary Marks, Jr., Editor
Contributors, Library Staff

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This newsletter is also available
online
www.wpunj.edu/library/connections

Your Library in Action

Neil Grimes (Curriculum Materials & Education Librarian) presented *Library Outreach and Instruction of National History Day* at the NJLA-CUS 2020 Summer Workshop.

Gary Marks, Jr. (Reference & Outreach Librarian) presented *Escape rooms: Campus partnerships & student engagement* and presented *Supporting inclusion through our libraries' marketing and outreach efforts* at the 2020 VALE/NJ-ACRL/NJLA-CUS Annual Users' Conference.

Linda Salvesen (Systems Librarian) presented *Technology Solutions in the Virtual Environment* at the NJLA-CUS 2020 Summer Workshop and *Know Your Why: Set Your Intention* at the NJLA-CUS 2020 Mini-Conference.

News & Announcements

Cheng Library Operations:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library will be taking additional precautions in the Fall 2020 semester to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff. Please visit our Operations website for details and updates on Library Hours and Services. www.wpunj.edu/library/operations.html

Chat Reference Service:

The Library's 24/7 chat reference has recently expanded, offering more places to get help from a live librarian anytime, day or night! Now, in addition to finding a chat button ("Chat with a Librarian") on our homepage, you can also get assistance within our three main search options: *Search All*, *Find Articles*, and *Books & Media*.