Financial Literacy @ Your Library

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MoneySmart Week allows college students and the rest of the campus community to attend sessions about making smart financial decisions at any stage of life. One workshop will be held each day, Monday through Thursday, with topics ranging from loan and credit card debt management to investments and budgeting. Stay tuned for the schedule of speakers and other activities that week.

>> UPCOMING EVENTS <<

Welcome Back Cupcake Social – Tuesday, February 7, 3-4 pm, Langsdale 2nd floor

Inspired Discoveries: A Symposium of Undergraduate Research & Creative Works
April 27
Lucy Holman, Library Director

Happy New Year! Welcome back to a new semester and the latest issue of the Langsdale Link. We’re excited about a number of programs planned for the spring, and we’re happy to report a number of accomplishments this past fall.

We’ve recently finished our first semester with the library’s new website, integration in the ubonline learning management system and the use of students’ UB ID to log into all our databases. We believe that these changes facilitate faster and easier access to Langsdale resources on or off campus.

In the fall we offered a number of programs such as the Baltimore ’68 book signing party, the second Faculty Author celebration, M.F.A. readings, and our annual November book sale. We have a wonderful slate of programs this spring as you’ll soon read – MoneySmart Week, continued M.F.A. readings and our third annual Inspired Discoveries: A Symposium of Undergraduate Research and Creative Works on April 27.

We are extremely excited to launch two new initiatives funded by UB’s Technology Grants. You can read about our plan to offer games in the library here in the Link. We are also working with Office of Technical Services to offer faculty a mechanism to stream videos through their online classes; we hope to procure this system during the spring in order to pilot the program in the summer and offer it to faculty in Fall 2012.

The spring also brings welcomes and fond farewells. We will greatly miss Ted Kruse, associate director for Technical Services, who is retiring in February after more than 20 years at Langsdale. We look forward to hearing about his new adventures near and far as he departs UB. We also welcome our newest archivist, Phil Deloria, university archivist, who comes to us most recently from Minnesota. We look forward to his contributions to Langsdale and the University as a whole.

I hope you’ll find this Link informative; I thank the editorial staff who are dedicated to providing information to our community. As always, I would love to hear from you about what you think. Contact me any time at lholman@ubalt.edu or 410.837.4333.

M.F.A. Readings

If you haven’t had a chance to enjoy the Library Basement Reading Series, there will be more opportunities this spring semester. Each reading features original poetry, fiction and non-fiction by six students from the Creative Writing program. The series was created and organized by Heather Moss, a student in the M.F.A. program at the University of Baltimore. Langsdale hosts the Library Basement Reading Series as part of our effort to support students’ scholastic work. The next reading is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 8:15 p.m. There’s also open-mic time at the end to share your own creative works-in-progress or poetic masterpieces. All of the readings are free and open to the public. For more information, visit http://basementreadingsatub.wordpress.com/.

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So far, our images on Historypin include markets, schools, firehouses, landmarks, public housing, and residential areas from twentieth century Baltimore. We selected some photos where the comparison to the present is nearly identical, and some where the urban landscape has radically changed. For archivists at UB, one of the fun things about this project is repurposing existing digital content (in this case, photographs that were already scanned) for use in new ways. We’ll continue to add digital content about Baltimore’s history to applications, projects, and websites in the new year, and we hope you’ll add your voice to collaborative sites like Historypin, too!
New Chat Service

Regardless of how busy they are, Langsdale’s reference librarians always have time to chat. In fact, they’re hoping that new upgrades to the library’s real-time reference interface (which patrons can find at http://langsdale.ubalt.edu/) look to the right side of the page, and click the yellow “Ask a Librarian” button will make chats with inquiring patrons more immediate, accessible and effective.

Currently the popular chat service is staffed by the librarian on duty at the first floor reference desk. Although business is pretty good (Michael Shochet, head of reference says that they normally field about 3.5 chat questions a day), the Reference department is looking for the new Library help feature to allow them to field questions from the Reference office, as well as at the Reference desk. This way, patrons can get answers with a tad more immediacy. Also, Library help’s interface is a bit more intuitively designed and improves the visibility of multiple simultaneous conversations. Library H3lp should be in place by the beginning of the semester.

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Games in the Library

The focus of any academic library should be to provide resources-say, the building blocks-that will construct a foundation for learning. In the case of a new collection proposed for Langsdale Library, these “building blocks” may, in fact, be actual blocks-as in Jenga pieces, dominos, or even tetrominoes (the digital shapes that are strategically shuffled around in a session of Tetris.) As first reported by library director Lucy Holman in the December 19, 2011 edition of Langsdale Library’s blog (http://langsdalelibrary.blogspot.com/2011/12/games-in-library.html), Professor Anastasia Salter-along with librarians Mike Kiel and Bill Helman-have been awarded an internal technology grant by UB to develop a special collection for Langsdale’s patrons focusing on games, both analog (as in checkers or Mystery Date) and digital (Angry Birds or Grand Theft Auto, anyone?).

According to Salter, an assistant professor in UB’s Science, Information Arts and Technologies Division, the idea for this unconventional scholarly collection arose from a need to give her students access to certain texts for her History of Video Games class. Unfortunately, some games just weren’t accessible to everyone, either from a logistical or financial standpoint. Salter also notes in her recent post in The Chronicle for Higher Education’s “Profhacker” blog (http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/games-in-the-library/37667) that quite a few libraries around the country-University of Michigan the foremost of these in terms of the breadth and depth of their holdings-have established their own games collections. These factors inspired Salter to approach Holman about her idea; Holman suggested that reference librarian Kiel and integrated digital services librarian Helman would be a natural fit to help Salter pitch her grant proposal, and then consult with her about realizing the collection.

Mike Kiel cites that one of the conditions for the grant is that the start-up money must be spent by the end of May 2012, so putting together a core collection of games, buying storage equipment, and establishing a gaming space within the library are on the fast track for this spring. Most initial acquisitions will target resources that are pertinent to class work, but the team hopes to build on and expand the collection’s scope to include analog games, supplemental materials, and other implements of fun and sport (which means that the seemingly unattainable dream of having Skee ball in the library may not be far from becoming a reality).

Besides the outright purchase of desired items, Salter, Kiel and Helman are hoping another key acquisition model-donations from very generous Langsdale supporters and patrons-will help beef up the library’s holdings. So, don’t let that twee-by 12-sided set of dice, the elaborate Rube Goldberg-device that is an assembled game of Mousetrap, or Mattel’s pocket electronic football game circa 1978 take up any more shelf space in the back of your closet; drop them by and show Langsdale that you’re a player.
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NEW STAFF <<<<<<<<<<

Philip Deloria, University Archivist

Birthdate: July 22

Hometown: Petoskey, Michigan

My first Job: Paper Boy

Hobbies: bookbinding, painting in oils

Favorite books: The Well at World’s End, William Morris; The King of Elfland’s Daughter, Lord Dunsany; Volsungasaga

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What I like best about Baltimore: The variety of ethnic restaurants! I’ll never want for a new culinary experience.

What I like best about UB: The urban campus

One guilty pleasure: dark chocolate seafoam candy

If I didn’t work in a library I’d probably… I would either be a starving artist or a professional student.

One interesting fact about you that no one would really know if they didn’t know you well (something you wouldn’t mind sharing of course): In my youth I hitchhiked cross country on several occasions.

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TRANSITIONS <<<<<<<<<<

Ted Kruse, Langsdale’s associate director for Technical Services and Budget, retired on Feb. 1. Ted’s been part of the Langsdale family for over 21 years and during his tenure has overseen all of the duties of the Technical Services Department and supervised its staff. Ted’s known for organizing the annual book sale with gift book donations for the library. Through the years much of the Langsdale staff have memories of Ted traveling to various places all over Maryland and Washington, D.C. to pick up books for the library. If you’ve ever been in the Library after one of his trips you have seen him physically hauling in boxes and boxes of books to be organized by him and his staff for the book sales or to add to the library’s holdings. Commenting on one area where some books were stored in the library Ted recalls, “Over the break one year there was a major leak in Special Collections but the water stopped just short of where a rare accounting book collection was shelved. This collection had been sold and was awaiting pick-up after the library opened in the New Year. The proceeds from the sale of these rare accounting books created an endowment to support a scholarship in the Accounting Department and Langsdale’s Herwood Accounting Fund.”

In retirement, Ted will devote much of his time to a charity he has started, “Neighbors Near and Far,” to support food banks in Baltimore and an orphanage in Haiti. His immediate plans include a trip to Morocco later this year to meet his son-in-law’s family in Fez. Ted stated, “That will be an adventure because the family speaks mostly Arabic and French. I learned a smattering of Arabic 30 years ago but in a Saudi dialect. My wife speaks a bit of French!” He’ll also travel to Haiti to the orphanage supported by his church. “I have not visited Haiti since the earthquake,” he added.

Ted has many adventures planned and although we will miss him at Langsdale Library, we are excited for him as he starts his “next chapter!”

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