3-1-2007

Annual Report 2007

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Traffic in the Library has *doubled* since the Learning Commons opened in 2005.

Help Desk stats are up *150%* over last year.

In a recent survey of students, *79%* said they visit the Learning Commons either daily or more than once a week.
Lorrey and Kathleen Bianchi Pledge to Special Collections

Kathy and Lorrey J. Bianchi ’69 appreciate libraries. “I can remember going to libraries in elementary school, being absolutely amazed, and thinking I have to read all the books” recalls Lorrey Bianchi. His wife Kathy’s appreciation of libraries also started early on: “In my family, a library visit was considered a normal part of life—you go to the grocery store, you go to the library.” The Bianches have made a commitment to help the Library take its place among the top research libraries in the U.S. The Library is expected to receive a gift with a multi-million dollar value from the Bianchis. The gift will create the Lorrey and Kathleen Bianchi Library Special Collections Fund to endow support for the Special Collections and University Archives Department.

Kathy and Lorrey J. Bianchi have been longtime supporters of the Library. Prior to this pledge, the Bianches have given over $1.75 million to the Library, including a $1 million gift for the Learning Commons, the 2005 renovation of the Library’s main reading room. A previous gift in 2001 helped the Library purchase the headphones that make the Learning Commons such a popular spot.

Kathy and Lorrey J. Bianchi are not alone in their dedication to libraries. As students, they were inspired by libraries and are continuing their tradition of giving back to libraries.

We achieved great things this year.

Here are some of the highlights:

- Welcomed an all-time high of over 1 million visitors to the Library - doubling the number since opening the Learning Commons in 2005
- Received a record high of over $1.5 million in donations, a total of 7,845 gifts from 6,216 donors in fiscal year 2007
- Created a comfortable reading room with a new collection of over 7,000 books on a wide variety of topics
- Received a large gift of over $300,000 from the Class of 1957
- Hosted a dinner and reception for President Jim Falvey and his wife, Carol, to celebrate the opening of the Learning Commons

Every day, Special Collections & University Archives grows, thanks to gifts from our donors. From cookbooks to historical documents, rare books to scholarly manuscripts, it is our honor to make these treasures available to students and scholars.

Here are a few highlights from the past year:

- James Ellis Theatre Collection
  - Renowned Mount Holyoke College English Professor James D. Ellis donated his large and important research collection, adding over 7,500 items to our already rich holdings for the performing arts. Throughout his career, Ellis collected books, broadsides, posters, and letters pertaining to the English and American stage, 1750-1915.

- Gittings-Lahusen Gay Book Collection
  - Kay Tobin Lahusen donated an extraordinary collection of over 1,000 books documenting the history and culture of homosexuality in America. Kay and her life partner, Barbara Gittings, were gay rights pioneers for several decades starting in the 1950s. The collection includes psychology, novel, periodicals, and examples of pulp fiction.

- Solidarity Collection
  - Barbara Jakubowska donated her extensive collection of underground literature amassed during her years as a member of the democratic opposition to the Communist regime and the Solidarity movement in Warsaw, Poland from 1977-1989. From early on, Jakubowska recognized the importance of the Solidarity publications and she went to extraordinary lengths to collect publications and preserve them.

In the last two years, Library use nearly doubled from 606,000 users in fiscal year 2005 to over 1.2 million in 2007.