



MILNE Library

State University of New York at Geneseo

ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Application

2018

Introduction

The State University of New York at Geneseo (SUNY Geneseo) is a public liberal arts institution and one of 64 institutions that make up the State University of New York system. SUNY Geneseo’s mission is to combine “a rigorous curriculum, transformational learning experiences, and a rich co-curricular life to create a dynamic and inclusive scholarly environment.” As such, our campus is guided by and committed to the values of learning, creativity, inclusivity, civic responsibility, and sustainability.

The staff at Milne Library personify and embody the values of Geneseo through our service and leadership to the campus community and profession. It is our mission “to connect the College community to information, ideas, and works of imagination.” In the pursuit of this mission, we have increased access to information through innovative initiatives such as the IDS Project, an award-winning resource-sharing initiative; developed and fostered collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, and students on digital and publishing projects; engaged the campus and surrounding community through outreach efforts; and developed and implemented an innovative information literacy program that extends to students and other librarians, which includes the award-winning program Access Opportunity (AOP) Summer Library Research Academy and the Library Instruction Leadership Academy.

However, we know that it is not only our responsibility to connect our patrons to information, but also to promote social justice and create an environment that is inclusive, encouraging, and accessible to all of our patrons. This is evidenced in our library displays like “Never Neutral,” through our Textbooks on Reserve program, and our leadership in open educational resources. The staff at Milne Library are passionate, creative, innovative, collaborative, and engaging. We encourage our patrons to challenge themselves and to use our resources and services to explore their intellectual curiosities to become better-informed individuals and ultimately the people they want to become. We know that our efforts have a lasting impact not only on our campus and local community, but on our colleagues, within the SUNY system, and nationally. This is why we strive to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today.

—Ben Rawlins, Milne Library Director

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Creativity, Innovation, & Leadership

Open SUNY Textbooks

Open SUNY Textbooks was an open textbook publishing initiative established by Milne Library and other State University of New York libraries, and supported by SUNY Innovative Instruction Technology Grants. This initiative, which began in 2012, published high-quality, cost-effective course resources by engaging faculty as authors and peer reviewers, and libraries as publishing services and infrastructure.

To date, Milne's Open SUNY Textbooks initiative has published 20 books, representing faculty from 10 SUNY institutions. The texts have been downloaded over 260,000 times, used in high-profile massive open online classes (MOOCs), and remixed with other online open material. The books are consistently rated 4 or higher out of 5 on the Open Textbook Library site, a catalog of peer-reviewed, open textbooks used internationally.

Beyond supporting faculty authors and contributors, this project established Milne Library as a major contributor to open access within the SUNY system, and set the stage for the creation of SUNY OER Services.

SUNY OER Services

SUNY OER Services helps institutions establish, support, and maintain sustainable OER programs, providing mentoring, collaboration, technical support, and access to a broad catalog of open textbooks, including SUNY Open Textbooks. It offers campuses user-friendly technology to adopt, adapt, and tailor existing OER for individual needs, as well as providing guidance for creating and distributing new materials. SUNY OER Services partners with local practitioners to present workshops on incorporating OER in the classroom, using and remixing content, and understanding open licensing, as well as supporting campuses at the curricular level through seminars and other educational services. SUNY OER Services also plays a crucial role in working with SUNY campuses to best utilize the \$4 million investment for OER that New York State allocated in its budget as part of the Excelsior Scholarship.

SUNY Geneseo Mission

Dedicated to learning, SUNY Geneseo is a residential public liberal arts college with selected professional and graduate programs. We combine a rigorous curriculum, transformational learning experiences, and a rich co-curricular life to create a dynamic and inclusive scholarly environment. The entire College community works together to advance knowledge and inspire students to be socially responsible and globally aware citizens who are prepared for an enriched life and success in the world.

SUNY Geneseo at a Glance

Enrolled students: 5,521
1st- to 2nd-year retention: 87%
Campus residence: 55.6%
Full- and part-time faculty: 361
Academic departments: 20
Majors offered: 45

Milne Library Mission

The mission of SUNY Geneseo Milne Library is to connect the College community to information, ideas, and works of imagination. To support the College as a center of excellence in undergraduate education, we provide instruction and expertise in the organization, evaluation, and use of information resources. We strive to create an intellectual environment that promotes the search for knowledge and a passion for lifelong learning.

Milne Library at a Glance

83.6% of Geneseo students used library resources in 2016–2017.
Total space: 70,591 square feet
Annual visitors: 741,956
Research questions answered: 1,784
Library instruction sessions: 432
Print resources: 516,700
Current serial subscriptions: 1,500
Computer workstations: 90
Multimedia classrooms: 5
Staff members: 30

At SUNY Geneseo, SUNY OER Services partners with Open SUNY's Center of Teaching Excellence (COTE), the Center for Professional Development (CPD), and the SUNY Press to expand professional development opportunities related to OER, as well as access to high-quality printed versions of custom course textbooks at affordable prices. These efforts have led to 20 faculty members across nine courses to commit to using OER in the Fall 2017 semester and work with the SUNY OER Services team, librarians, and CIT to redesign their courses to effectively integrate OER into their curricula. The result was approximately \$122,000 in savings from low-cost and free textbook alternatives. Across the 24 SUNY institutions reporting in this area, over 26,000 students are enrolled in OER-supported courses with an estimated savings of over \$3,051,000 in textbook costs when compared to previous academic years in similar courses.

SUNY OER Services recently earned a "Recognition of Excellence" award from Lumen Learning to acknowledge its contribution to OER development and impact as a national OER leader.

Information Delivery Services Project (IDS)

Milne Library has a proven track record of being a creative leader on campus and within the library community. One example is the development of the Information Delivery Services (IDS) Project, a cooperative that provides tools and support to make efficient and effective resource sharing possible for all libraries, regardless of size and/or financial status.

The IDS Project grew from the original 12 SUNY comprehensive libraries in 2003 to its current 108 libraries, including SUNY, CUNY, New York State private libraries, the New York Public Library, the New York State Library, and 25 other libraries across the country. Our mentor program is nationally renowned and our software is used by all member libraries and another 19 subscriber libraries, including Cornell and Yale.

The IDS Project staff's most recent creation is IDS Logic, which was designed to create a real-time dynamic method to determine availability and to automate actions in ILLiad. IDS Logic provides libraries the ability to set up complex configurations of rules to apply to situations where staff previously needed to open requests and determine what actions to take based on library policies. Through the IDS Logic server add-on, the actions staff would typically take to determine availability can be fully automated. For this calendar year (January 1, 2017, through November 22, 2017), IDS Logic performed 3,646,855 transaction touches (or automated actions) on the interlibrary loan transactions of the 120+ member and subscriber libraries. Based on an annual staff salary of \$40,000 at a 37.5-hour workweek, we estimate a savings in staff time across all institutions using IDS Logic of approximately 26,720 hours, which equates to staff salary savings of approximately \$548,000.

The IDS Project demonstrates creativity in the resource-sharing world by analyzing disparate departmental workflows, identifying and combining areas of overlap where applicable, and providing systematic, intelligent technology resources to solve complex workflow issues. It leads the field due to its close working partnership with members that results in the creation of tools and professional development opportunities, which in turn results in exemplary service to libraries and library users.

Statistics Collection (DataPortal)

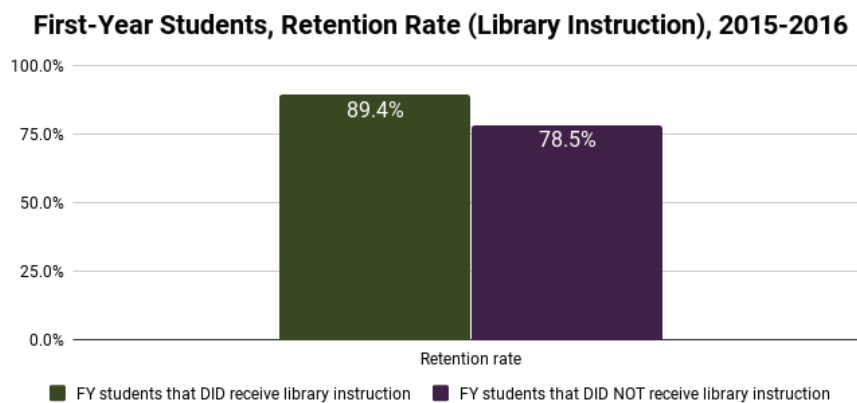
Originally, Milne Library relied on three different systems for tracking questions and answers, consultation and instruction sessions, and headcount/gatecounts, which were written in different languages and hosted on different servers. The systems stored data in inconsistent formats, had separate logins and passwords, and did not capture certain types of data that the library staff needed. Additionally, there were privacy concerns with the third-party systems and how they used and stored user data. Working closely with the librarians, the Milne Library Web Developer coded a

centralized data collection system, DataPortal, integrating the functions of a staff portal, LibStats, and a headcount/gatecount application.

Data entry is now much easier for librarians, student workers, and staff to record interactions, and entries are more accurate due to the straightforward and user-friendly interface. Because the application is in-house, tech support and troubleshooting is much more responsive than it would be with third-party applications. The system is used to analyze gaps in our instruction areas and in student worker competencies; in particular, it has been vital in assessing the effectiveness of our research assistance model. Statistics are also used for annual reporting purposes, and feed into Milne's Student Success Project, connecting library services to students' learning outcomes, success, and retention while maintaining privacy and confidentiality.

Research Instruction Program

Milne Library's research instruction program is built upon the principles of active learning and delivering meaningful learning experiences that challenge students' viewpoints regarding the information they consume. Our instructional philosophy supports SUNY Geneseo's mission by "...advanc[ing] knowledge and inspir[ing] students to be socially responsible and globally aware citizens who are prepared for an enriched life and success in the world." Our eight research instruction librarians serve as liaisons to 20 academic departments on campus and deliver 400+ research skills instruction sessions per year. Our dedication to leading the development of our students' research skills is supported by our assessment data. According to our 2016–2017 statistics, our instruction reaches 51.4% of our student body. Thanks to our collaborative relationship with Institutional Research, we can report a positive correlation between research skills instruction, student retention, and higher grade point averages.



The Research Instruction librarians' focus on teaching research concepts and engaging students has earned them respect as campus leaders of teaching and learning. While the librarians provide many one-shot sessions, they are also embedded into courses at various levels. Some provide weekly sessions; others teach several in-depth instruction sessions over the course of the semester; some librarians participate in online modules essential to students' successful completion of coursework. Beyond instruction sessions, the librarians regularly work with faculty on assignment design, assist faculty in adopting emerging technology, and collaborate with faculty on the design of experiential learning courses that focus on helping students gain real-world experience.

The librarians' success in developing their collaborative relationships with faculty is largely attributed to their understanding of instructional design. Each Research Instruction librarian understands fundamental instructional design principles and incorporates these concepts into their lesson plans. The librarians' background in instructional design has led to many collaborative relationships. One

example is the pairing of librarians with the College's Computing & Information Technology Department to develop online instructor training. Another example is our relationship with the College's Teaching and Learning Center, in which the librarians develop workshops based on pedagogy and topical issues, including "fake news" propaganda. The librarians have been able to share their expertise beyond the campus with the creation of the Library Instruction Leadership Academy (winner of the 2011 ACRL Innovation Award) and the 2017 ACRL publication, *Creative Instructional Design: Practical Applications for Librarians*.

INTD 105 Research Skills Instruction

A large component of Milne's instruction program is participation in the campus first-year writing seminar, INTD 105. The Research Instruction librarians collaborated with the professors heading this interdisciplinary program to require that each instructor in the INTD 105 program assign at least one research paper during the semester and have their students receive at least one class taught by a Research Instruction librarian. These research skills instruction classes focus on three goals, revised in Spring 2017 to align with the ACRL framework: Locate (information in and out of Milne), Evaluate (quality and appropriate use of sources), and Integrate (materials from research sources in an appropriately cited manner). The themes of each section of INTD 105 vary widely, from "Myths & Religions in the Near East" to "Family Histories" to "Childhood in International Films," thus requiring individualized instruction and close collaboration with the professors. Over the last several semesters, we have achieved 100% participation by the INTD 105 faculty in the research skills instruction program, ensuring that all students learn the research skills that will be of use not only in their INTD 105 class, but in many future classes during their college careers and beyond.

AOP Summer Library Research Academy

For more than a decade, Research Instruction librarians have collaborated with SUNY Geneseo's Access Opportunity Programs (AOP) staff to meet the needs of underrepresented students. The centerpiece of this collaboration is the AOP Summer Library Research Academy, winner of the 2016 ALA-LIRT Innovation in Instruction award.



Students at the AOP Summer Library Research Academy Poster Presentation Event.

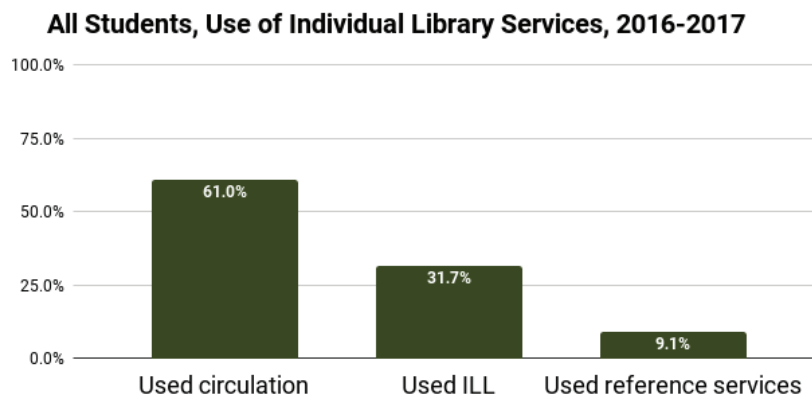
The Research Instruction librarians are embedded in the AOP Summer Scholars Program, which is designed to acclimate incoming first-year students to the rigors of college, and to familiarize them with the academic library and its many services and resources. Working with course instructors to build relevant research experiences, Research Instruction librarians lead students through a four-week crash course in college-level research skills. The curriculum includes a library scavenger hunt, an annotated bibliography, a collaborative research paper, and a culminating academic poster session in which students present their research and newfound abilities to staff, faculty, and administrators from across the College. The 2017 iteration of the program had approximately 120 participating students, and covered a variety of topics under the umbrella of diversity and social justice.

Data collected as part of Milne Library’s Student Success Project shows that students who have participated in the summer program use the library and its services (circulation, research consultations, and interlibrary loan) more frequently than other first-year students.

Student Success Project

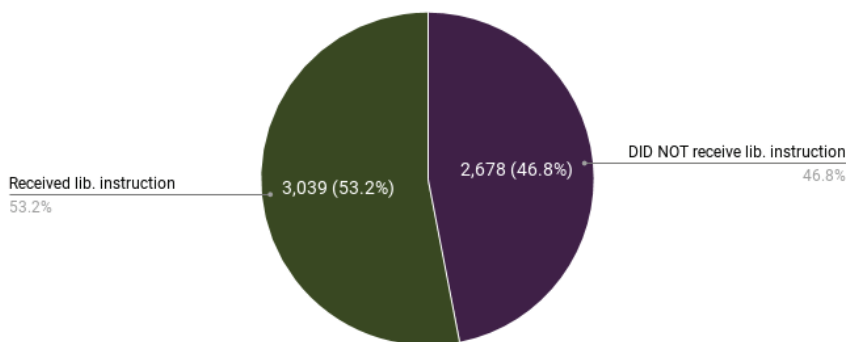
Early in the summer of 2014, Research Instruction librarians began investigating ways to connect use of the Library’s services to various measures of student success, such as GPA and retention. Inspired by Nackerud et al.’s (2013) methodology, the librarians planned a similar assessment system to use at the College. Discussions among the library staff grew to include representatives from the College’s departments of Computing and Information Technology (CIT) and Institutional Research (IR). By Fall 2014, a working system of assessment was created.

Four major library services were chosen for the assessment: circulation, interlibrary loan, research consultations, and library instruction. Library staff pull relevant pieces of data (username, service type, and date/time) from existing library systems. With the help of CIT, this information is placed in a table in Banner. Once in Banner, IR anonymizes the data, and appends demographics and other information onto the existing records.



Data from this system has increased our understanding of the campus’s use of library resources. For example, we know that 81.7% of all students used one of the above-listed library services in

All Students, Library Instruction, 2015-2016



the 2016–2017 academic year at least once; 30.4% of students used library services nine or more times during the same time period. Additionally, 31.7% of the student body used interlibrary loan during the last academic year, and Research Instruction librarians engaged with 51.4% of all College students in a classroom

setting.

These general numbers are only the tip of the iceberg, however. We can break down these same statistics (as well as numerous others) by class, major, and dozens of demographic indicators. These statistics are already being used to inform decisions across the organization, and we are constantly discovering new ways to use the data.

Outreach & Community Engagement

High School Instruction

One of the oldest forms of outreach by Milne Library is its high school instruction program. The school library media specialists at local high schools are contacted each year by the First Year Experience Librarian to invite them to send students to Milne to learn what it is like to do research on a collegiate level. Each year Milne hosts at least a dozen classes, ranging from senior AP students researching authors to eighth and ninth graders participating in the National History Day competition. Students receive a short presentation on how to structure searches and use Milne's databases, get a tour of the library itself, and spend the rest of their time working on their own projects with a Milne librarian available to assist when questions arise. Feedback from the school library media specialists and teachers is uniformly positive; one AP Literature teacher has said that year after year her students say the experience at Milne is one of their favorite days of the year, and when they're in college they find themselves repeatedly using the skills they learned at Milne.

LEGO Workshops

In an effort to focus on community engagement, Milne Library staff paired up with the Rochester LEGO Group to host a LEGO workshop in Fall 2016, which entailed letting children free-build for two hours. The event was hugely popular, with over 180 attendees. Given this success, a second workshop was held in Spring 2017; this time college students from Greek Life and the School of Education volunteered their time to help with planning and execution of the event.



This workshop expanded from just a free build to include a tutorial on how to build a Micropolis and use a LEGO computer software program to design virtual LEGO creations. This event was even more successful; the workshops' attendance has totaled 450 community members. These events have given Geneseo students the opportunity to connect to children and parents, as well as allowing parents to experience an academic library. During one of the events, a staff member overheard one of the parents say to their spouse that they were so impressed with the College that they wanted to send their children to Geneseo. Future iterations of this LEGO event are being developed in partnership with Wadsworth Public Library.

Story Time Series

Five years ago, Milne staff developed a monthly story time event to encourage families from the local community to utilize the Library's resources. As the event grew, future teachers participating in the Young Children's Council (YCC) became more involved, initially serving as volunteers and then taking over the planning, marketing, and implementation of the event. This provides the future teachers an opportunity to experience working with children outside of the classroom and allows them to practice talking to parents outside of a traditional classroom environment. In return, the program exposes the parents and children to a college environment and gets them to engage with a variety of picture books, games, and puppets available in the Teacher Education Resource Center (TERC). An average Story Time event brings in about 20 attendees, who have noted that they "love" checking out the Library's resources. This collaboration has led to the YCC receiving the President's Outstanding Achievement Award in Spring 2017 for their contributions to the community.

Experiential Learning

Internship Program

Milne Library hosts several interns in different contexts. There are four primary groupings: research instruction, editing and publishing, special collection/archives, and the Imaginarium. These internships offer undergraduate students an excellent opportunity to gain important skills relevant to the field of librarianship, and have been instrumental in advancing many projects across the Library.

Research Instruction interns assist with the day-to-day operations of research and instruction while learning the basics of the profession. The program is an opportunity for Research Instruction librarians to exercise their mentorship skills and to prepare a cadre of students for a potential future career in librarianship. To that end, the skills students learn include the creation of LibGuides and tutorials, lesson planning, instruction, and research interviews. Additionally, each student completes a project of some kind that materially benefits the Library.

Editing and Publishing interns work with Library staff to create and publish *The Proceedings of GREAT Day*. This is a vital outlet for student work and supports the larger institutional commitment to the publication of undergraduate student research.

Archives interns collaborate with the Special Collections staff on a variety of tasks, including archival processing, digitization and metadata creation, collection management, and research involving Milne's various special collections.

Imaginarium interns maintain the Imaginarium, a hands-on curriculum development library, and the TERC collection. This involves running programming, cleaning, promoting the space and its contents, and maintaining its identity as a useful and targeted space. Their efforts make it possible to keep the Imaginarium open.

Additionally, the Library sometimes hosts graduate student interns from outside the College. These students earn course credit towards their practicum requirements while assisting (at a higher level) in the operations of the library, including library instruction, research consultations, and various special projects. They also work on rewriting and strengthening the undergraduate research instruction intern curriculum.

Supporting Digital Humanities

The digital humanities (DH) projects based at Milne Library involve a collaboration between teaching faculty and Library staff to develop experiential DH courses. These courses blend information

literacy with teaching skills and technology that allow students and faculty to approach research in exciting ways while creating new knowledge. The Library's commitment to open access promotes a culture of sharing this knowledge. Several of the DH projects Milne has been involved with over the past several years have been awarded SUNY Innovative Instructional Technology Grants, including the nationally recognized Digital Thoreau project and OpenValley.

Milne Library plans to play a role in developing more faculty-student DH projects in the near future, including one involving ancient and medieval texts and one centering on locally held WPA paintings. As interest and activity in DH grow on campus, library staff are collaborating with CIT, the Provost's office, and others on a larger, campus-wide program to develop standards, efficiencies, workflows, and technical infrastructure to better handle demand and streamline the process for those needing support.

Responsiveness to the Community

"Never Neutral" Display



Following the aftermath of the events that happened in Charlottesville, VA, in 2017, the Library staff were struck by the failure of many institutions to condemn hate speech and actions. In order to send a clear message that Milne Library staff value inclusivity, the staff worked together to develop a display called "Never Neutral," which highlights examples of literature from the Library's collection that represent the resistance to oppression and a commitment to social progress. The display's name helps emphasize that the decisions made within academic libraries are not neutral and that

the way we develop collections and services reflects our values. This semester-long display has been one of the Library's highest-circulating collections since its introduction.

Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program

Milne Library's efforts to serve SUNY Geneseo's underrepresented students extend beyond the Library's walls. From September 2016 to March 2017, one of Milne's faculty librarians worked diligently with four other campus representatives on a grant application for the Department of Education-funded McNair Scholars Program, a campus-wide program designed to prepare students from underrepresented backgrounds for PhD programs and careers in STEM fields. The application was accepted in October 2017, and the Library will be continuing its support of the program by having a faculty librarian serve on the program's advisory board, offering research services, and developing collections that support the scholars.

Computer Coding Series

Milne Library has partnered with the College's Computing and Information Technology Department and Wadsworth Public Library to develop a workshop series designed to engage the Geneseo

community in computer coding. The program involves teaching SUNY Geneseo students how to use various types of technology, including the Oculus Rift, littleBits, 3D printing, and computer coding, and having them design workshops to deliver to the community. The programming is specifically geared toward young women and introduces creative ways of incorporating technology into STEM subject areas. This program once again illustrates the Library staff's forward-thinking approach in addressing a need in the community beyond the College campus and creating service-learning opportunities for the College's students.

Conclusion

The projects and services described in this document reflect the innovative thinking that has risen organically from the Milne Library staff's desire to improve the Library for the College community. Because of our leadership and ability to establish collaborative relationships, the impact of these projects and services extends far beyond the College. For these reasons, Milne Library serves as an exemplary model for other academic libraries to demonstrate what can be accomplished when library staff come together in support of the communities they serve.



Milne Library: The intersection of innovation and learning.

Special thanks go to Keith Walters for the images of Milne Library; to Allison Brown for the cover design and layout format; to the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Working Group, Brandon West, Daniel Ross, Alan Witt, & Sherry Larson-Rhodes; and to the Milne Library staff, for all of their hard work that makes what we do possible.



The State University
of New York

Office of the Provost

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www.suny.edu

December 1, 2017

To Members of the Award Committee:

Please accept this letter of recommendation in support of SUNY Geneseo's, Milne Library's application for Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. Milne has been an innovative leader within the library community in SUNY for decades and has earned an international reputation in Library Instruction, Resource Sharing, and Open Educational Resources (OER). The efforts made by the Milne librarians and staff is an inspiration to their colleagues across the 64 campuses within SUNY and I believe that are a superb nominee for ACRL to consider for this auspicious award.

Milne has always had a robust library instruction program, but what makes their efforts so unique is their focus on teaching strategies and pedagogy. Milne's librarians were one of the first libraries I encountered that actively sought out teaching training opportunities for their library instructors. Milne quickly became recognized as the leader in information literacy instruction, as well as assessment. Other libraries began to follow in step and that is a recurring theme within SUNY libraries. Where Milne goes the rest follow.

The library has also earned the respect and admiration from colleagues outside of SUNY and the program that has earned them the most accolades in academic libraries is the IDS Project. IDS is a volunteer-driven library program focusing on interlibrary loan, resource sharing, with a reputation for technological innovations. IDS was initially created in response to a growing need to develop innovative technologies in libraries that assisted in the sharing and acquiring of scholarly materials. But what has been most impressive is how IDS has created a community focused on professional development and teamwork. The IDS community is a people first collective that has transformed libraries and the careers of the staff within those libraries.

Previous to my current role at SUNY Administration, I was a library director in SUNY, where I served on the IDS Advisory Council. As a member of the council I would often hear first-hand from colleagues in SUNY about the transformative nature of the IDS project on their staff. The IDS team would work on training librarians and library staff on new technologies and workflows to improve user experience for students and faculty. IDS works to provide face-to-face and virtual

To Learn
To Search
To Serve



trainings for their member libraries and this approach results in continuous professional development opportunities, as well as a true sense of community from members of the project. IDS is an exemplar model of library innovation and entrepreneurship.

Another innovative project that comes from Milne is the SUNY OER Services (SOS), a program designed to increase access to high quality, open educational resources that can save students hundreds of dollars in additional educational expenses, while also providing a personalized learning experience. SOS grew out of the success of another OER endeavor, called the Open SUNY Textbook Project. This open textbook publishing initiative publishes high-quality, cost-effective course resources by engaging faculty as authors and peer-reviewers, and libraries as publishing service and infrastructure. The Open SUNY Textbook continues to receive national and international acclaim from the Open Education community. Due to their success with the open textbook program, when the SUNY Provost's Office decided to develop a sustainable OER program within SUNY, they looked no further than Geneseo and the Open SUNY Textbook Project.

The SOS is a program designed to assist campuses in SUNY with their OER adoption activities by providing professional development, community engagement, and technical integration services. Milne again is leading the system of libraries through another innovation in education. SUNY is fortunate to have a library and a campus that we can call upon when we need to stand up a service to move our colleges through and model for delivering innovative services.

As I review the criteria for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award I believe Geneseo's Milne Library meets the expectations ACRL seeks when considering the libraries the bestow with this tremendous honor. Milne and the team of librarians and library staff deserve to be formally recognized by their colleagues and peers in the academy.

With regards,

Mark McBride
Library Senior Strategist
The Office of Library and Information Services
State University of New York
mark.mcbride@suny.edu



Department of English

Geneseo

30 November 2017

To the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award Committee:

I write with the greatest possible enthusiasm to support Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo's application for the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

As a Geneseo faculty member who has served several stints in academic administration — as associate dean, department chair, and, most recently (2016-17) as interim provost and vice president for academic affairs — I've had the opportunity, over more than three decades, to observe, work with, oversee, and benefit directly from a library staff and leadership at Milne who embody Geneseo's commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service, and who work both tirelessly and effectively to advance the college's values of creativity, inclusivity, civic responsibility, and sustainability.

Since 2010, I have worked in active, continuous, and close collaboration with the library on a scholarly digital project centered on the life and works of American author Henry David Thoreau, a project featured in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 24, 2014), in an article accompanied, tellingly, by a photograph of me flanked by five librarians who have been, at various stages, instrumental to the project's success.

The creativity and innovation that these librarians have brought to Digital Thoreau exemplify an expertise in, commitment to, and excitement about exploring new directions in librarianship that is, I suspect, unusual for an institution of our size, type, and budget. This expertise, commitment, and excitement are also visible in the leadership role Milne has played within and beyond SUNY in developing, through its IDS Project, widely adopted digital tools for resource-sharing. And it is on display again in Milne's spearheading of SUNY's efforts to bring down the cost of higher education through developing, and promoting the use of, open educational resources. It is no accident that when SUNY system administration was looking for a campus to serve as home base for a new executive director of SUNY OER Services, they chose Geneseo, which had already forged a path for system-wide OER development through its enormously successful Open SUNY Textbooks initiative. Alexis McMillan-Clifton currently serves in this key system-wide role.

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245-5501**

A final example of Milne's spirit of innovation is its digital publishing initiative, through which it has put its imprint on a series of Genesee Valley Historical Reprints and several works by Genesee authors. Having worked closely with Digital Publishing Services Manager Allison Brown on a forthcoming reprint of late Genesee professor Walter Harding's important annotated edition of Thoreau's *Walden*, I can attest personally to the high level of care, in both design and execution, that goes into the library's publishing efforts.

Again, my faculty colleagues and I have no right to expect, at a public liberal arts college with such modest resources, a library that is as ambitious, active, and forward-thinking as Milne Library. I'm immensely grateful for my good fortune.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PS' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Paul Schacht

29 November 2017

To the members of the awards committee,

It is my honor and privilege to support the application of Milne Library at the State University of New York College at Geneseo for an Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

I have been working closely with Milne Library staff for almost 10 years now, and am convinced that we have one of the most professional, innovative, and supportive academic libraries in the 64-unit SUNY system (though I know that their reach and reputation for excellence extends far beyond the walls of SUNY). Initially, my work with the library consisted of some common planning for online research database instruction for my graduate level Educational Research Methods course. As time progressed and I realized the wealth of knowledge available to our campus through this venue, I began seeking advice on a number of instruction and technology questions that I had. I was looking for some ways to infuse some new strategies, content, and technology instruction into my undergraduate Teaching Science and Math to Children course and my experiences working with library staff in my grad class confirmed that this could be my source of one-stop shopping for all of my instructional design needs.

Because so many of my undergraduate students began to rely on Michelle Costello, our Education and Community Engagement Librarian, for help with assignments for my course, it seemed natural to begin doing some purposeful course planning with her in an effort to coordinate and streamline what we had been doing together, yet separately, for some time. As a certified elementary level teacher, her knowledge of both library resources and pedagogy made her an invaluable resource for us all. It also became increasingly evident that collaborating more closely with Michelle would allow me to better meet the needs of my students while simultaneously exposing them to all of the resources that Milne Library has to offer. Michelle is now fully embedded in my undergraduate courses. My work with her was really the beginning of my enduring relationship with the library and its staff, and is the way that I became aware of this unique gem that we have on our campus.

The idea of inclusivity is directly in line with our published college values that state “the Geneseo campus community is guided by our beliefs in and commitments to... inclusivity – fostering a diverse campus community marked by mutual respect for the unique talents and contributions of each individual” (see [Geneseo Mission, Vision, and Values](#)). Because of the diversity and extent of the talent available to our campus community through Milne Library, we can rest assured that someone is there to help when we feel as though we are venturing beyond

our comfort zones. As a preservice teacher educator, this is valuable to me for a number of reasons. First, I am able to expand the world of resources available to my students, who have come to view the library staff as partners in their learning journeys. Because of the mutual respect shared between faculty members on campus and the library faculty and staff, our students view the library as the source of a wealth of knowledge that extends beyond the traditional classroom, and they have come to appreciate the high quality of the formal and informal instruction they receive there. They know that the expertise of any individual is naturally limited, but that the sum of the collective knowledge held across campus is greater than any of its individual parts.

Second, my relationship with the library serves as a model that my students can employ when they are teachers themselves. Having an instructional librarian embedded in courses models for them the ways they too can seek the assistance of the librarians in the schools in which they will teach. Fortunately, my course is not the only one in which instruction librarians are embedded – faculty members from across campus, from History to English to Sociology work closely with instruction librarians to improve their own teaching for the benefit of our students and their own continued professional growth.

Through these collaborations, I believe that our students see an increase in our creativity – another of the values to which our campus is committed. Our collaborative relationships naturally serve to affirm “a spirit of innovation that inspires intellectual curiosity and problem solving” ([Geneseo Mission, Vision, and Values](#)). This enables our students to view us as lifelong learners, which is paramount to any institution of higher education.

Milne Library also houses several innovative, cost-saving, and noteworthy programs. The SUNY OER Services program, a SUNY system-wide initiative, is housed in our library. This program is designed to support faculty as they move toward using open educational resources in their courses. As part of the state university system, our students (like students everywhere) are faced with bearing the burden of the ever-increasing costs of higher education. By showing a willingness to use OER in our courses, our students witness firsthand our commitment to trying to ease that financial burden for them. Additionally, because we have the advantage of having this program in house, several faculty members have taken advantage of this initiative to work with Milne Library faculty and staff to create open educational resources *with* the students in their courses, allowing students to graduate as published authors.

The Information Delivery Services (IDS) project also has its headquarters in Milne Library. This project was created as a way for over one hundred member libraries to share materials to which they otherwise would not have access (at considerable cost savings). In addition to greatly expanding the number and variety of resources available to everyone on our campus, this initiative relieves a huge financial burden for all involved. Coupled with this, students as well as faculty members can request that Milne Library *purchase* materials to add to the library collection, a service that comes as a surprise to my colleagues at other campuses, as it seems to be unavailable at similar institutions.

In my time at Geneseo, I have been extensively involved with the Milne Library – using the many resources there for classroom instructional support, serving on search committees for library positions, presenting at conferences with instruction librarians, and working on library outreach programs to name a few collaborations – and I believe that nowhere on campus is the spirit of our mission better illustrated than it is at Milne Library. The SUNY Geneseo mission statement asserts that

We combine a rigorous curriculum, transformational learning experiences, and a rich co-curricular life to create a dynamic and inclusive scholarly environment. The entire College community works together to advance knowledge and inspire students to be socially responsible and globally aware citizens who are prepared for an enriched life and success in the world ([Geneseo Mission, Vision, and Values](#)).

The commitment of the Milne faculty and staff to working collaboratively with faculty members and students across our campus is a testament to the value they place on contributing to a dynamic and innovative learning environment. I believe there are few other academic libraries that are able to boast a list of accomplishments as long and transformative as Milne Library and I am proud to be associated with them!

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 585.245.5325 or via email at rommel@geneseo.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,



Katie Rommel-Esham
Professor of Education

11/20/2017

To The Awards Committee,

Please accept this letter in support of Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo as a candidate for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. Although Milne Library serves a mid-size comprehensive college, the library has been, for the past decade, a regional, state, and national leader in a variety of areas. Milne is a part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system, which encompasses 60 campuses, ranging from community colleges to research universities. Milne has led movements both within SUNY and regionally in resource sharing, open education, library as publisher, instructional design, digital humanities, and collection strategies. Without knowledge of the SUNY system or the capacity of Milne Library, it would seem to be enough that Milne is a thought leader in many areas. However, it is truly extraordinary and almost inexplicable that Milne continuously moves beyond being a thought leader and has become a center to drive state and national movements forward. Milne is able to do this because they have continued to have a team-based atmosphere that is entrepreneurial, collegial, and future-facing. Notably, Milne houses the SUNY OER Services initiative, which is moving SUNY forward as an international leader in Open Education. Additionally, Milne also houses the nationally recognized IDS Project, a resource sharing and research and development cooperative that has over 110 members. For the IDS Project and the SUNY OER services initiatives, the larger state systems rely heavily on Milne to solve major problems in libraries and higher education, and to work from very little start-up support to sustainability.

Milne is asked to lead major initiatives because at SUNY Geneseo the library is truly the heart of the campus. Milne can be relied upon to find willing faculty partners to try innovative programs, and can be trusted to work in creative ways with their administration from the Provost to the President, to bring needed programs to scale. What is most impressive is that, although Milne is a state and national leader in many areas, the library, librarians, and staff are highly connected to campus life in Geneseo, and contribute to student research, information literacy, faculty engagement, and improving the local campus experience at Geneseo. I frequently see a variety of faculty, administrators, and staff from Geneseo in SUNY wide meetings and conferences, and each time I meet someone new from Geneseo, I hear of a new local initiative that the Milne library is deeply involved with. Some examples are helping Geneseo grow its undergraduate research opportunities, which now includes an undergraduate conference in which 1,000 of the 5700 students participate, and local research grant program that awards over \$100,000 annually to students. Additionally, initiatives such as the Digital Thoreau Project have been made possible by the support and involvement of the library. In reviewing Geneseo's Values: Learning, Creativity, Inclusivity, Civic Responsibility, and Sustainability, it's clear that Milne Library is one of the major contributors to the campus's goal to be "widely recognized for demonstrating the enduring power of a public liberal arts education." Milne Library, although it is housed in one of the smaller comprehensive liberal arts colleges in SUNY, is engaging with the local Geneseo scholarly and educational community to improve public education and higher education in New York and beyond.

Last, although every single staff member deserves individual credit for the success of Milne Library, there is an exemplary culture of teamwork and collaboration that keeps Milne moving forward, even as personnel change. Naturally, Milne has seen many high achieving administrators, librarians, and staff move through its team. Milne staff and librarians are always in high demand, and move to highly successful careers as directors, deans, and department heads at various other libraries. Many of the Milne staff have created award winning programs and greatly improved other libraries in NY and across the nation. The effect of the culture of Milne, and how well Milne develops librarians and staff has improved countless other libraries and campuses. I've been involved with initiatives where Milne has been involved for more than a decade, and have seen 4 different directors, many different department heads, and many different staff. What's most impressive is that Milne never skips a beat, and keeps improving and reinventing itself to provide consistently excellent local, state, and national leadership.

Please contact me if I can provide any further information to support Milne Library's candidacy.

Sincerely,

Shannon Pritting, SUNY Polytechnic Institute Library Director and SUNY Libraries Consortium Technology Project Director

HONEOYE FALLS-LIMA

Central School District

High School

Office: (585) 624-7050

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It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation in support of Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

I have been teaching Advanced Placement Literature and Composition at Honeoye Falls-Lima High School for twenty-five years. A part of my curriculum involves a research project on authors who are part of, or bound for, the classical literary canon. A major tenet of the assignment involves research, and as an A.P. class, the students are introduced to the collegiate level process. We have been fortunate, in the past decade or so, to make many trips to Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo to facilitate this project.

The staff at Milne is always welcoming, prepared and invested. As a result of the longevity of our relationship, the librarians are aware of our needs and the students' background. We are introduced to Milne's catalog and databases, and taught many nuances of advanced searches. This is a priceless, transferable skill the students use continually after our visit. Students also learn how to get materials which may not be on site or complete. During our four to five hour visit, the students receive one-on-one assistance from the collegiate librarians, further honing their own search skills and results. They also go on a tour of the library, learn about the library's collections and what they may yield generically, and specifically for this project. One of the things which has impressed me the most, is Milne's investment in our students and their research. Oftentimes, after our visit, the librarian(s), most recently Sherry Larson-Rhodes, will send me e-mails, making the students aware of additional resources found which may benefit them. Their commitment has proved invaluable in helping our students complete quality, collegiate level research.

Another reason I appreciate Milne and its librarians so much, is the recognition the students provide. Year after year, students return to visit, and we discuss what the most valuable lessons were in A.P. Literature and Composition. The majority of them list this field trip as one of the top experiences. They share that it put them ahead of the game, with knowledge of not only how to research, but how to be proactive and successful working within a college library. It provides them with an awareness and comfort level many incoming freshman do not have.

It is with great confidence that I recommend Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo for the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Tura".

Honeoye Falls-Lima High School
English Teacher
585-624-7050

Maya Bergamasco
1752 Beacon St.
Brookline, MA 02445

November 13, 2017

ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Awards Committee
Association of College & Research Libraries
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2788

Dear Ms. Champion Riley,

I am writing to the committee to commend the faculty at Milne Library, State University of New York at Geneseo (SUNY Geneseo). Their strong connection and support to SUNY Geneseo students—as seen in their programming and instruction—is worthy of recognition and praise. I had the pleasure of being a research librarian intern at Milne Library for the spring 2017 semester. I had expressed interest in pursuing a career as an academic librarian, and was immediately met with enthusiasm and support from the library faculty.

In keeping with the college's mission of fostering a dynamic learning environment, my responsibilities as an intern were wide-ranging, flexible, and tailored to my academic and professional interests. While in the internship program, I co-taught library instruction sessions, learned about search strategies and information retrieval, helped students with reference questions at the reference desk, created a library tutorial for Geneseo students, and developed a library subject guide for a college class.

Throughout my time at Milne Library, the librarians encouraged me to ask questions and explore my options. Whenever I asked for help with a patron or had trouble with a certain task, the librarians were eager to offer insightful and valuable advice. The internship struck an ideal balance of inspiring creativity and problem solving while also promoting inclusivity and teamwork.

As I begin my master's degree in Library and Information Science, I have continued to use the skills I learned at Milne Library. The library internship program successfully prepared me for graduate school, and I often apply concepts and experiences from my internship to class discussion and assignments. I highly recommend the faculty at Milne Library for an ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award, and am grateful to them for their support. You are welcome to contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Maya H. Bergamasco
M. S. candidate, 2019
Simmons College School of Library and Information Science
American Library Association Spectrum Scholar 2017-2018
bergamas@simmons.edu

Amy Elizabeth Bishop
c/o Dystel, Goderich & Bourret LLC
1 Union Square West
Suite 904
New York, NY 10003

November 8, 2017

Dear Awards Committee,

As a former intern with Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo, I am delighted to be writing a letter of support on their behalf, as they pursue the Excellence in Academic Libraries award.

I had the opportunity to work especially closely with Milne Library under the direction of Daniel Ross, the Academic Excellence Librarian, and Allison Brown, the Digital Publishing Services Manager, as the Student Editor for the academic journal, *The Proceedings of GREAT Day*. This journal compiles and publishes promising student work presented at SUNY Geneseo's GREAT Day symposium. Milne Library was also essential to the Editing and Production Workshop class for the school's literary journal, *Gandy Dancer*, which I also took part in, serving as one of the Managing Editors.

Working on *The Proceedings of GREAT Day* taught me a significant amount about different aspects of publishing—from editing, copyediting and proofreading, formatting and laying out work, and light graphic design. Ms. Brown's tutelage during the Editing and Production Workshop class reinforced both those skills and my interest in the field of publishing. I currently work as a literary agent at Dystel, Goderich & Bourret in New York City, and I firmly believe that working with Milne Library helped both prepare me for my career and offered me valuable experience on my résumé.

Without Milne Library and its talented and dedicated academic librarians and staff, the Geneseo community would certainly be at a loss, especially as Milne continues to be innovative and creative in seeking out ways they can further improve the services and resources they offer to students. I highly recommend Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo for the Excellence in Academic Libraries award. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any further information.

Best regards,

Amy Elizabeth Bishop

October 30, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is meant to support SUNY Geneseo's Milne Library for nomination of the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award. As a 2016 SUNY Geneseo graduate, I had the pleasure of working with Mrs. Michelle Costello in the Imaginarium and Education Curriculum Materials Center as the Curator Intern in Milne Library. I was in this position for the entirety of my senior year and was responsible for creating displays to showcase materials for Education students' assignments, holding office hours to support Education students' with their lesson planning and materials, and to create and evaluate surveys and feedback to improve the space.

As the Curator Intern, I learned how to use the Ellison machine and die cuts to create window displays that engaged Geneseo students, as well as displays that would be engaging in an elementary classroom. These window displays changed monthly and challenged me to be creative and incorporate current events and holidays within the display. During my student teaching placement, I was responsible for creating a door display for the month of October. I created a fall theme display, "Welcome to our patch," with the school's Ellison machine and had each child's name displayed to build a sense of community. This display forced me to be creative, as I was not allowed to include anything in reference to Halloween. Being creative is something I learned and practiced during my internship. I took a photo of this door display, as well as all of my displays in the Imaginarium, and they are a part of my teaching portfolio.

In addition, I created table displays within the Imaginarium. These displays were focused around a particular lesson and showcased TERC materials students could check out of the library. For example, one display was math-focused and displayed a math trade book from the library, as well as math materials, such as math fact flashcards, fraction manipulatives, a classroom money set, and dry erase clock faces. Creating these displays helped me to become a better teacher because it gave me experience with instructional materials that engage students in a lesson that goes beyond paper and pencil. I recently implemented a trade book with a hands-on science lesson as a long-term kindergarten substitute; an idea I took from my internship experience. I believe that my exposure to and familiarity with these materials has helped me to create more effective lessons for my students. I am grateful for this unique internship and the skills I gained that I can now use in the professional education field.

Sincerely,



Jessica Mogan