University Libraries
Prepared for Challenges of Ball State’s Next Century

On 30 July 1918, the Muncie Evening Press reported that Hazel Armstrong, first librarian of the newly-opened Indiana State Normal School, Eastern Division (the future Ball State University), was working to expand a small collection of books, periodicals, and newspapers and installing a card catalog of the newly-classified materials to serve the institution’s inaugural class. With just over 1,500 items, the modest library was housed in a room on the 2nd floor of what is now the Frank Bracken Administration Building, and students were responsible for charging out their own materials, ostensibly to “acquire a knowledge of library work that will be valuable to them if they ever have small school libraries under their supervision” (p. 71). Hazel Armstrong and her students could not possibly have imagined the changes a century would bring to the collections, facilities, and technologies of their fledgling library!

Today, the University Libraries contain over 1.1 million titles and annually welcomes over 1.4 million visitors to Bracken Library and branches in Architecture and Cooper Science. In addition to our robust physical collections, dedicated study spaces, and excellent learning technologies, the Libraries provide 247/365, global electronic access to millions of articles, e-books, pamphlets, newspapers, images, archival materials, and streaming videos. Our physical spaces are vibrant, and our virtual collections are available to learners wherever they are.

Through the work of our dedicated staff, the Libraries are significantly advancing the teaching, learning, and service mission of Ball State University. In this newsletter, you will learn about the many ways in which the Libraries are invested in our campus and community. From our work as teaching partners with our faculty to develop the sophisticated information and digital literacy skills of our students to our community engagement efforts, making a difference in Muncie and beyond, the University Libraries are committed to creating learning opportunities and enhanced knowledge environments for those we serve.

As Ball State University celebrates its proud past and anticipates its bright future during this centennial year, the Libraries reflect on a century of growth and impact—we have been there from the beginning. But today our reach has expanded well beyond a small collection of books and periodicals to include expansive access to scholarly resources, knowledgeable staff, and innovative services and spaces. With the support of the Friends, the Libraries are prepared to address the challenges of our next century of service, improving and innovating to advance student success, faculty productivity, and the ambitious mission of Ball State University.

From the Dean of University Libraries
Matthew C. Shaw, M.L.S., M.A.

Alma Platform Adopted, Increases Efficient Access to Libraries Resources

Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, librarians at Ball State University tirelessly applied their expertise and knowledge to implement the Alma cloud-based integrated library services platform developed by the Ex Libris Group library software company. The adoption of Alma provides access to innovative management tools that have greatly enhanced the acquisition and description of print and electronic library resources at Ball State University Libraries.

Bringing together a plethora of formerly separate service platforms, this new system will also greatly improve our patrons’ experiences searching for print and digital research materials in the Libraries’ newly-branded integrated OneSearch/CardCat discovery tool. These improvements will empower students, faculty, and community members to more efficiently find the scholarly resources they need to support research and creative projects, leveraging tools that are both sophisticated and simple to use.

Alma also provides Ball State University’s librarians with advanced data regarding trends and patterns in patron’s use and discovery of electronic databases and online subscription journals. This information will equip Libraries with a large bank of data to inform decisions regarding the purchase and acquisition of resources that are most useful in supporting research and teaching at Ball State.

Dear Friends of Bracken Library,

An exciting year is upon us at Ball State University as 2018-2019 marks the centennial anniversary of the University’s founding as a public institution of higher education. The centennial celebration’s theme, “Beneficence: Proud Past. Bright Future” embraces a bold vision rooted in a steadfast commitment to transformative education while celebrating a proud history of innovation and philanthropy.

An examination of the University’s history and its transformation from a regional branch of a teachers college born through the generosity of the Ball Brothers to a world-class research institution reveals the unique and remarkable degree to which community engagement and philanthropy have propelled Ball State to extraordinary success. Ambitious fundraising efforts and magnanimous gifts have repeated transformed the growth of the University’s campus. Contributions from donors and friends have provided for vast, invaluable cultural resources on the campus. And alumni and community members have routinely served with dedication on numerous advisory boards and committees. “Better Together” is not merely a slogan frequently invoked at the University but rather a long-held truism that has defined Ball State’s successful century.

At Ball State University Libraries, this spirit of community engagement and philanthropy continues to be crucial to sustaining programs, resources, and services to advance meaningful scholarly and creative work by our students and faculty. Contributions and gifts in kind provide invaluable resources for our students, faculty, and community members who use library resources to create new knowledge through scholarship and engage in real-world projects that improve the quality of life in their communities.

My colleagues and I thank you earnestly and sincerely for your ongoing support of our work here at Ball State University Libraries. I look forward with gratitude to your continuing contributions this centennial year. The University has planned an exciting lineup of enriching and engaging programming for our centennial year—I invite you all to join us on campus to celebrate our successes, our legacy, and our promising future.

Sincerely,

Michael Szajewski
Executive Secretary

www.bsu.edu/library

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NEWSLETTER 2018

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KEEP UP TO DATE with the Friends of Bracken Library news on the web!
www.bsu.edu/library/friends

CHECK OUT the Ball State University Digital Media Repository for photographs, videos, and more!
libx.bsu.edu/
Financial donations by the Library Friends to existing Ball State University Foundation accounts supporting the University Libraries totaled more than $11,000. The following donors made contributions of $100 or more for fiscal year 2017-2018.

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University Libraries Commits Time, Expertise to Community Initiatives

Through the “Better Together” initiative, Ball State University has doubled down on its commitment to partner creatively and innovatively with the Muncie and Delaware County community to improve quality of life and place in the region. Students, faculty, and staff prioritize seeking and fulfilling these mutually-beneficial opportunities through research, learning, professional service, and volunteering.

Ball State University Libraries has undertaken several major projects this past year that contributed valuably to this initiative. Through the Muncie Community Schools Barcoding Initiative, over 10 University Libraries staff members committed over 540 volunteer hours to community elementary school libraries to apply barcodes that improved inventories of collections of books and media. Distributing their time between West View, North View, Longfellow, and Grissom Elementary Schools, these library staff members applied their expertise to make library collections more accessible and usable for K-12 students in Muncie.

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Financial Donations Support the University Libraries’ Collections, Services, and Programs

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