



R. BARBARA GITENSTEIN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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REMOTE HELP FOR PATRONS

THE LIBRARIAN IS... ONLINE

By Erin Ackerman, Interim Assistant Director for Public Services
and Social Sciences Librarian

We may not be in the library building right now, but TCNJ librarians are still available to support students and faculty in the current virtual context.

WRAPPING UP THE SEMESTER



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Through our [Ask a Librarian service](#), TCNJ librarians are available to answer questions on-demand from faculty, staff, and students. This service has always offered a variety of modes for contacting librarians, including email, chat, and texting, but many might associate this service the most with visiting with a librarian at the Reference Desk on the library's first floor.

Since that location is not an option right now, librarians have been active in promoting virtual reference so that our patrons know they can get the research help they need when they need it. They have also added new functionality to the service including screen sharing and Zoom consultations. Humanities Librarian David Murray feels that librarians' "use of Zoom and other virtual reference tools has expanded patrons' options in terms of service delivery. For example, I can seamlessly switch between synchronous chat and a full-blown Zoom interaction to conduct what librarians call the 'reference interview,' the goal of which is to discover the patron's true information need. In terms of reference and research services I believe our patrons have been very well served during the pandemic."

TCNJ librarians have also been facilitating remote library instruction using a wide variety of synchronous and asynchronous approaches. Information Literacy Librarian John Oliver says, "It's been exciting to re-imagine how we teach information skills and concepts. Librarians are keen to help empower people to find the info they need in self-directed ways. We constantly and repeatedly refine our teaching, but the current context has really accelerated our progress." Through real-time virtual class visits, pre-recorded video lessons, and custom online guides, librarians are helping students and faculty navigate their information needs for this semester's classes. Education Librarian Rebecca Bushby describes how she worked with a professor to encourage student engagement and participation in the virtual classroom during library



instruction: "To accommodate virtual instruction, we incorporated two elements of online education: flipped learning, where students viewed a video about library resources prior to our virtual session, and small group instruction, where students were assigned to one of two groups for the interactive session."

Library faculty and staff have also been active in making sure TCNJ community members have the resources they need for teaching and research in the remote context. Our reserves, document delivery, and interlibrary loan staff have made digital versions of material accessible to faculty and students, while subject librarians have worked to identify and purchase digital resources for use by our patrons. Contact your [subject librarian](#) to recommend additions to our collection.

As we look toward the busy finals season and the flex format in the spring semester, TCNJ librarians will continue to innovate and find ways to work with our patrons, wherever they are.



LIBRARIAN SPOTLIGHT

MEET THE ARCHIVES LIBRARIAN

Deb Schiff

In February 2020, the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library welcomed its first Archives Librarian, Deb Schiff. We are excited to introduce Deb and share how she will serve the TCNJ community in this role.

What is an Archives Librarian? According to Deb, “While the title is Archives Librarian, my function is as College Archivist. Specifically, my purpose is to ensure that the Archives collects and preserves materials created at TCNJ and by TCNJ students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Generally, materials dealing directly with TCNJ during any time of its history are fair game. The overarching goal is to document and communicate the history of the school in a way that’s accessible and useful to researchers. As an archivist, my responsibilities focus on two primary areas: preservation and organization. I ensure that all of the items in the Archives are cared for, arranged, and described according to archival standards.”

Deb has the experience, expertise, and enthusiasm to accomplish these goals. Prior to joining TCNJ, Deb was the Local History Librarian at Chester Public Library. She has held librarian and archivist positions at the Piscataway Public Library, Plainfield Public Library, and the Park City Museum (Utah). She also has a consulting business providing archives services and preservation needs assessments in the tri-state area.

Earlier in the year, Deb received the Susan G. Swartzburg Preservation Award from the New Jersey Library Association. The nominators recognized her work creating and implementing basic preservation workshops statewide for non-archivists just approaching their collections for the first time. Her background and work has been featured in a podcast on the careers and work of archivists:

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/archiviststale/episode-11-the-big-project-debra-schiff>.



What is fascinating about archives? “What I like most about being an archivist is telling the whole story. So much of our collective history is hidden in collections that haven’t yet been made accessible to researchers. When I say ‘researcher,’ that could be a college or high school student working on a project, faculty member looking into how a course was taught in the past, staff member working on a press release, author writing a book, journalist researching a newspaper story, or amateur genealogist seeking family history information,” says Deb. She adds, “Importantly, archivists create finding aids for the collections. These describe not only what the collections contain, but why they’re important to researchers and the school as a whole. They provide context for the collections. They also help the researcher and the archivist locate materials quickly.”

Deb is in a unique position where she is the first and only Archives Librarian hired at TCNJ. “What attracted me to the position at TCNJ was the challenge of caring for and making so many unprocessed materials accessible and useful to researchers. Because no other professional archivist had worked with the collections previously, I knew it would be a very long-term effort with many exciting uncoverings and rewarding moments.” She added, “I look forward to being able to share all of these materials after they have been processed and described, as well as offer opportunities for faculty to teach with them and their accompanying finding aids.”

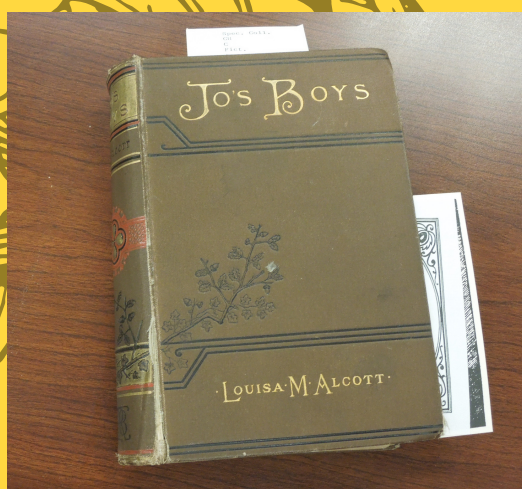
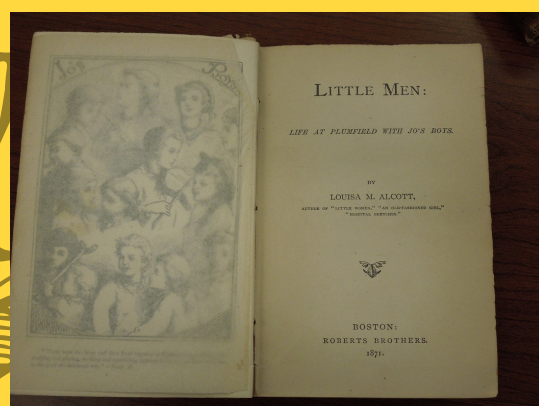
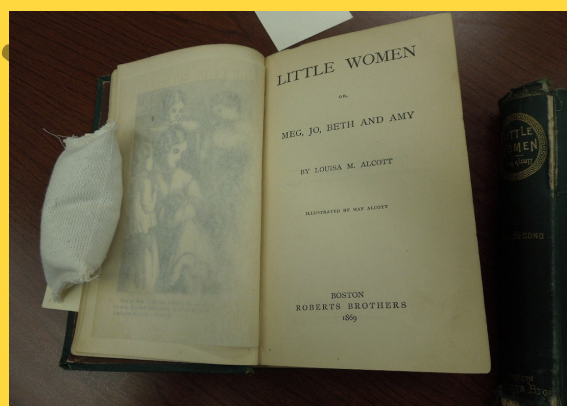


The majority of research inquiries are for photographs of people and locations on campus. For that reason, on the days Debra is in the Archives, she focuses on processing photographs that are part of what she is calling the College Relations Collection. She notes, "There are some great candid shots of students around campus just being students. There also are files of visitors to campus, such as former governors, musicians, and artists. Since September, when we returned to campus, I have processed and accessioned into the collections more than 1000 photos spanning more than 20 different topics."

What are some other interesting finds in the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library's Archives? "As far as the books go, I researched some of the very large and rare books in the collection, including *Une Centaine de Peintres* (vols. 1 and 2). Those two very heavy books measure 19 x 23 x 3.5 in., and contain steel engravings of master artists' works. They definitely fall under the heading "Rare" in that the printer limited the run to 1200 sets. TCNJ's is no. 791. There also are first editions of Louisa May Alcott's most famous books, *Little Women*, *Little Men*, and *Jo's Boys*," remarks Deb. (See photos.)

Lastly, maintaining an appropriate environment is a fundamental aspect of preservation. How does an institution preserve all these materials? Deb has researched grants because much of the work here requires rehousing of some sort during processing. For instance, "archival housing materials cost significantly more money than typical folders and boxes/containers. There are approximately 5,000 rare and/or fragile books in the Archives and Special Collections, and most require custom housing to slow down the degradation process. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that to rehouse the whole book collection will take upwards of \$20,000. That doesn't even include the cost of my time or anyone else's working on that project. Preservation grants are a great way to fund that kind of work," Deb stresses.

In her down time, she can be found hiking, bicycle riding, gardening, and exploring new places. The best way to reach Deb for assistance is via <https://library.tcnj.edu/research-help/ask-a-librarian/>.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

For Lizbeth Veliz, working in Access Services paid more than just an hourly rate. She learned outside of the class what she wanted out of life. Now, she could not be happier as Licensed Practicing Counselor. "To be honest, I always reference it as the type of environment where I want to work. Whenever I interview at a location, I always ask how their environment is, because having a work place that feels like home (as the library did) is key for me. It shaped what I perceive as a good supervisor. Debbie Bailey was my supervisor when I was a student worker, and she set the bar high. I think the customer service skills and detail focused tasks we did are vital in many jobs, especially in a helping profession such as a counselor," says Lizbeth.

As an undergraduate student, Liz was debating on whether or not to go down the counseling track post-undergrad or social worker track. "I remember asking counseling grad students at the library when they were checking out books (that is how I knew they were counseling graduate students because of the books they were checking out) about what they thought of the counseling program."

"Every student I asked ONLY said positive feedback to me about their professors, program, and coursework. That is when I really knew that I wanted to be part of the counseling program, specifically at TCNJ."

Liz was recently promoted to Senior Social Service Coordinator at Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), where she will be creating programming for social services interns throughout their offices nationwide. She is currently helping the Border Team at the Mexico/US border with some cases.

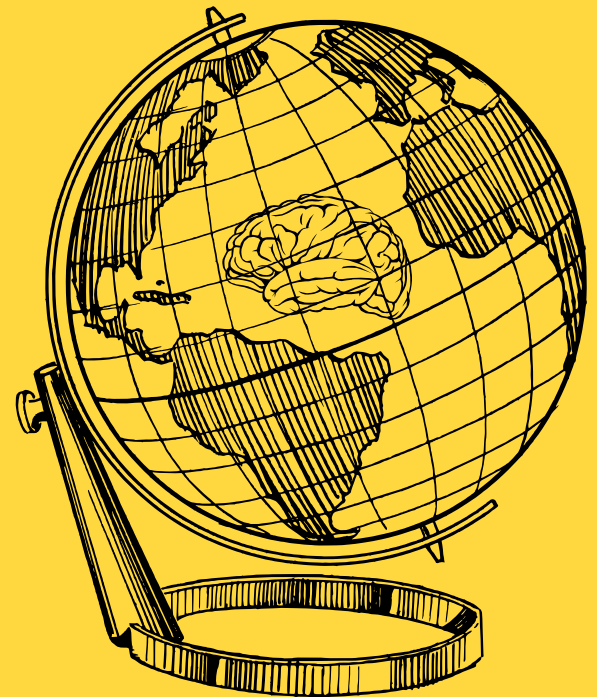
Liz's advice to TCNJ students is take internships when possible, study abroad if you can, and it's okay to change your mind.

"College is the best time to explore your interests so you can choose the right career path for you. I do think experiences help to educate in a different way than classes do. Internships are so vital to learning what you do and don't like in your possible chosen profession. I also have never studied abroad and I think that is the one thing I wish I would have done when I think about my college career," she adds.



Lizbeth Veliz
Psychology Major
Criminology and Deaf Studies Minor
Class of 2010 - Undergraduate
Class of 2014 - Graduate- Marriage and Family
Counseling

Access Services Worker
2007 - 2010



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LIONS ROAR!

FOCUS ON STUDENT WORKERS

EACH SEMESTER, R. BARBARA GITENSTEIN LIBRARY EMPLOYS A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENT WORKERS WHO WORK IN ACCESS SERVICES, MEDIA SERVICES, INTERLIBRARY LOANS, LATE NIGHT, LIBRARY AUDITORIUM AND LIBRARY DEAN'S OFFICE. LET'S GET TO KNOW ONE ACCESS SERVICES STUDENT WORKER WHO IS WORKING AND TAKING CLASSES DURING THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES.

SOFIADEL GAIZO

SPECIAL EDUCATION/ELEMENTARY AND I-STEM (5-YEAR PROGRAM)
CLASS OF 2023, BACHELORS
CLASS OF 2024, MASTERS



Interviewer:

Sofia, thanks for taking a few minutes to tell us about yourself. First, what brings you to TCNJ?

Sofia: I knew I wanted to come to TCNJ. I enrolled as an early decision applicant in the I-STEM program. My goal is to teach middle-school math. Teachers run in my family. My grandmother taught Kindergarten and Special Education.

Academically, this is a great school. I was impressed with TCNJ during my Lion's Day visit. I played field hockey in high school, and I was happy to hear that TCNJ has a field hockey club. My high school hockey coach went to TCNJ. The classes here are challenging. At the same time, the environment is friendly. Working in the library has been fun too. I also enjoy working in the library with my co-workers, and our supervisor, Andrew D'Apice.

Interviewer: Please share an interesting fact about yourself?

Sofia: I have studied Spanish for ten years. Plus I am a triplet. I have two brothers the same age. They are at different colleges.

Interviewer: That is amazing. Because your brothers are not at TCNJ, gaining your independence takes on a new meaning for you, right? What advice would you like to share with incoming TCNJ students?

Sofia: I do miss my brothers, but I am seen as an individual with few comparisons. I would encourage incoming students to make new friends. It may feel awkward to introduce yourself. Just go for it. Get involved in activities. In life, everything happens for a reason!

Interviewer: How are you handling this semester remotely?

Sofia: It definitely been an interesting change. It is upsetting that we can't be on campus meeting new people and attending classes. I am happy to still be able to work at the library, even though the job is very different now. Zoom classes are very long, but I am glad that professors are up for the challenge of teaching online. My advice to others about online classes is to try not to stay stuck behind a screen all day. It is hard to sit on Zoom all these long hours, so finding time to relax and not stare at the computer screen as much is important.

Interviewer: Thank you, Sofia! Glad you are with us in the library! A very proud roar to you!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Meet Library Access Services Supervisor Andrew D'Apice

Who is that masked man? That's R. Barbara Gitenstein Library's Access Services Supervisor, Andrew D'Apice. Andrew oversees circulation functions including borrowing, creating and monitoring library users' records, shelving of library materials, and course reserves.

Andrew is the one library employee who has been working on campus since June 15, 2020 when Governor Phil Murphy permitted libraries to allow curbside pickup for materials (Phase 2 of NJ COVID Openings). Andrew spent his workdays retrieving hold requests from TCNJ faculty for books and materials.

According to Andrew, during the summer "the turnaround time was 24 hours and the drive-through pickup was the only option.

For safety, once books and materials are returned to the library, they need to be quarantined for four days before they are placed back on the library shelves." The library has been able to expand its curbside pickup options to include a walk-up access point and to shorten the turnaround time on requests. For more information about curbside services, see this [guide](#).

Now back on campus, Andrew and the entire Access Services staff are on the front lines for keeping the library community safe. "Access Services has advocated safety first for anyone who enters the library. There is an employee at the library entrance who makes sure patrons have completed their daily health screening, scans into the building, wears a mask, and socially distance in the building," said Andrew.



Andrew has been with TCNJ since 2013, and he enjoys working at TCNJ, fulfilling people's need for information. He especially enjoys interacting with the students. "It is rewarding to see the students change over the four years, to watch them come into their own. School is their world right now, and it is their experience. Students are more resilient than they give themselves credit." He adds, "Remember the strength of TCNJ.

We foster sense of community. We are all here together, things will go smoothly."

Unmasked and during his free time, Andrew enjoys traveling, watching science fiction movies, and spending time with his son.



Access Services Desk located on the first floor of the library building.

CATALOGING DURING COVID-19

Like many working at TCNJ, employees at the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library have found effective and efficient ways to work remotely in 2020. For the majority of the remote-work period, from mid-March until late August, the library's newly acquired physical materials were not being processed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon returning to work, these items seemed almost foreign. While Cataloging and Metadata Services utilized their remote time to improve various services, they are now facing the challenges from a six-month closure.

For those unfamiliar with Cataloging and Metadata Services, this department works to support the mission of Gitenstein Library by providing thorough, accurate, and expedited resource management services. That is, the department ensures the ongoing maintenance activities of the library's physical and electronic collections, including the areas of cataloging, processing, and database management. In short, this department assures your experience with materials is satisfactory. Colin Bitter manages this department of six employees.

Colin says, "While working remotely eliminated the possibility of working with physical materials, it did free up time to improve metadata for electronic resources and execute database cleanup." For example, Colin and his staff retrospectively converted over 4,000 e-book records, which involved enhancing bibliographic metadata for e-books. Cataloging and Metadata Services also corrected and enhanced legacy metadata for thousands of electronic government documents, using both batch processing and manual revision.

The library reopened on August 24, 2020. For safety precautions, Cataloging and Metadata Services, like all other library units whose employees must spend at least some of their time on site, utilizes a combination of flexible/rotating schedules and remote work assignments in order to limit the time that employees spend in the building. In general, only two department members are in the office at any given time. The department is mindful of and adheres to all safety guidelines.

Colin notes, "Returning to campus presented a number of difficulties: There had been a buildup of physical materials, including monographs and serials. Additionally, many print serials were cancelled during the remote work period, necessitating extra attention from staff."

Additionally, Colin commented on the challenges of limited in-person hours. "Acquisition of electronic resources (especially e-books and streaming videos) increased, so we had to balance processing of print backlogs while providing attention to electronic resources. With all department employees working fewer in-person hours, almost all special projects for physical materials had to be put on hold in favor of attending to backlogs. Serials staff continue to tackle the serials backlog, giving top priority to academic journals. Monographs staff catalog print monographs and help reconcile dozens of items requiring cataloging review," adds Colin.

While the workload is demanding, Cataloging and Metadata Services will continue to meet these challenges through their exceptional teamwork. As the late American industrialist Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."



CONTACT YOUR LIBRARIAN

Librarians can help you wrap up your semester! With reading days and finals coming up, remember there is more than one way to contact a librarian. You can find Virtual Reference hours on our website at <https://library.tcnj.edu/about-the-library/hours-of-operation/>.

Text your Question: SMS: (609) 482-3981



Librarians are available during Reference hours.
Regular text messaging rates apply.

Schedule a Virtual Research Consultation



Librarians are available for virtual research consultations and instruction. Check the list of *Librarians by Subject/Major* (<https://library.tcnj.edu/research-help/contact-a-subject-librarian/>) for assistance.

Submit your Question by E-mail



Librarians will respond during Reference hours.
For questions submitted after hours, librarians will respond when Reference opens.

Ask Your Question by Chat



Librarians will respond during chat hours. If chat is unavailable, you may ask your question by email instead.



CLICK HERE TO ASK A LIBRARIAN



REGULAR LIBRARY BUILDING HOURS

Main Library Building

Monday-Thursday 7:30 AM - 8:00 PM

Friday 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Saturday 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday 12:00 AM - 8:00 PM

For hours of other services & library special hours, please visit:

<https://library.tcnj.edu/about-the-library/hours-of-operation/>