



# R. BARBARA GITENSTEIN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

TCNJ Librarians Attend ACRL  
2023 Conference • P. 1

Jersey Strong: Gitenstein Library's  
Collaborative Partnerships • P. 4

One Reader to Another • P. 6

Librarian Spotlight • P. 7

Where Are they Now • P. 9

Focus on Student Workers • P. 10

Staff Spotlight • P. 11



## TCNJ LIBRARIANS ATTEND ACRL 2023 CONFERENCE

By Erin Ackerman

Eight TCNJ librarians recently attended the 2023 conference of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). The ACRL conference is held every two years and is the premier conference in academic librarianship. This year's conference, "Forging the Future," was held March 15-18 in Pittsburgh, PA, as well as via a virtual conference.

For many librarians, ACRL 2023 was their first in-person conference since the pandemic and that made it a particularly gratifying event. As Music & Media Librarian Linda Dempf explains, "connecting with colleagues from other institutions seemed particularly valuable this year, having not been to a live conference in several years. Remote conferences can be great, but connecting in person, both formally and informally, I learned so much about what other similar

academic libraries (public, undergraduate-focused) are doing." In-person attendees were excited to see old friends and make new connections.

The virtual conference offerings also created opportunities for connection. Health & Life Sciences Librarian Rebeca Jefferson says her favorite part of the virtual was "the other attendees! This conference was a great opportunity to attend panel sessions and hear what other librarians are working on, from many different perspectives all over the country. It was also really fun to see some of the same virtual attendee names pop up in event chats, and have the opportunity to get to know each other. I think not enough is said about the value of the 'side chat' in a virtual conference space... There is a sweet camaraderie to the virtual side chat and commentary during a session. It forms an immediate bond between attendees with the same interests, which persists throughout the conference as you see each others' names again and again. Virtual chats also allow for fast sharing of resources: It's so easy to copy and paste a

link into a chat, and not worry about phones or paper or bad memories!" Jefferson also praised ACRL for offering social and networking opportunities specifically for virtual attendees, including virtual wellness sessions and social events. Jefferson says, "A particular high point was the ACRL-sponsored virtual trivia night, which was actually better organized than a number of in-person trivia nights I've attended. This event gave me a chance to meet academic librarians from all over the country, and make professional connections with them in a more casual setting. I think there is a temptation now, especially with the Covid fatigue that I think we are all experiencing, to view a virtual conference as a sort of 'lesser' option. But I did not find this to be true. I found the virtual conference experience overall to be very rich and rewarding!"

The ACRL program is jam-packed with workshops, panels, roundtable discussions, posters, and papers, so much so that it is challenging for individual librarians to select one highlight from the conference. Gitenstein Library Dean Taras Pavlovsky and Dempf both noted sessions on copyright and academic libraries as particularly rewarding. Business & Economics Librarian Terrence Bennett highlighted a session that "described an investigation into how instruction librarians have become more deliberate about infusing privacy literacy—that is, a deeper understanding of the pervasive assault on personal privacy, and the actions that students might take to counter this invasion—into more traditional information literacy instruction." Education Librarian Ewa Dziedzic-Elliott gravitated to the poster sessions and roundtable discussion formats because "they were very versatile, well planned and well thought out. It was great to hear from many other librarians instead of one presenter. The multitude of voices and perspectives was very inspiring." Interim Assistant Director for Public Services and Social Sciences Librarian Erin Ackerman was particularly energized by a roundtable discussion of middle management in academic libraries, from which a community network is emerging post-conference.



David Murray and Ewa Dziedzic-Elliott

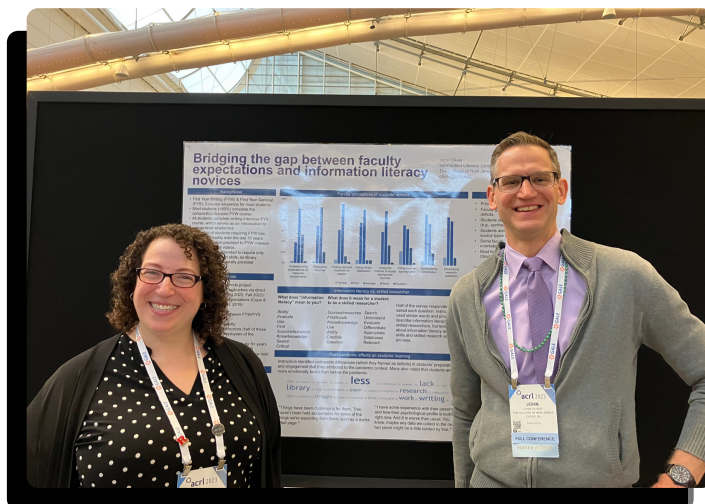


Erin Ackerman, John Oliver, Taras Pavlovsky, Terrence Bennett, and Linda Dempf in the ACRL exhibit hall

Dempf notes that "whether it was library space, collections, library research guides, so many sessions that I attended addressed aspects of diversity and inclusion, which was pretty exciting, as our profession takes some deep dives into these issues." Humanities Librarian David Murray agrees and at ACRL 2023 he co-organized a roundtable on mentoring in academic librarianship with a colleague from Ohio. He was particularly pleased that the group included BIPOC librarians and addressed mentoring of academic librarians from minoritized groups.

In addition to Murray, several other TCNJ librarians presented as part of the ACRL 2023 program. Bennett notes that "it was very heartening to see my colleagues generate so much interest in their work at this national conference. One particularly noteworthy example was the enthusiastic response (at 8:30am on a Saturday!) to TCNJ Education Librarian Ewa Dziedzic-Elliott's presentation about the work that she and other academic librarians in New Jersey have undertaken in partnership with school librarians." In this panel entitled "College Readiness: Academic & School Library Partnerships, An Organizational Approach," Dziedzic-Elliott and co-panelists from William Paterson University described a partnership that the ACRL-NJ Chapter/College & University Section of the New Jersey Library Association developed with the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL). Dziedzic-Elliott explains that through this partnership, they "hope to assist students in their transition to college, as well as opening lines of communication about research readiness between high school and academic librarians."

Information Literacy Librarian John Oliver and Ackerman presented a poster on “bridging the gap between faculty expectations and information literacy novices.” Oliver says, “It was great to see that there was so much interest in the poster we presented at the conference. The poster reported some preliminary findings from a research project exploring the expectations that instructors have about first year students' skills and knowledge. Conversations with fellow librarians (like the ones we had during our poster presentation) always help me see new perspectives, even in a subject area that's my professional specialty. I find it genuinely thrilling to consider a new way to view the findings we've spent years collecting and analyzing.”



Erin Ackerman and John Oliver present their poster on “Bridging the gap between faculty expectations and information literacy novices”



View of Pittsburgh from the Duquesne Incline Upper Station by John Oliver

The conference host city, Pittsburgh, also got high marks from conference attendees. Pavlovsky praised the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, which overlooks the Allegheny River, as “the nicest conference venue I've ever seen, due to all the outdoor space on the 4th floor.” Oliver is a self-described “big fan of Pittsburgh and a repeat visitor. One of my favorite things about visiting is the food. It's a fantastic city for strolling and eating. On this trip I tried Peace, Love, and Little Donuts for the first time. They take the donuts straight from the fryer and top them on the fly as you order them. They were maybe the best donuts I've ever eaten. They're baby donuts, which is extra fun trying different flavors!” Murray, who is originally from Pittsburgh, enjoyed being in his hometown and showing it off to colleagues. He took several TCNJ and other librarians to a vegan Polish restaurant, Apteka, which impressed everyone, including Dziejdzic-Elliot, who is originally from Poland and says it was a “fantastic meal that took me back home.”

ACRL, both in person and online, was an enjoyable and enriching experience for the TCNJ librarians attending. As Bennett summed it up, “Academic librarianship is a constantly evolving profession, and I inevitably come away from this conference energized and enlightened by the interesting initiatives underway at other colleges and universities.”



A selection of delectable donuts from Peace, Love, and Little Donuts in Pittsburgh, PA

# Jersey Strong: Gitenstein Library's Collaborative Partnerships

By Linda Dempf

Cooperation has long been a tenet of libraries in the United States, going back to the 1880s. Gitenstein Library is a part of this long tradition, and belongs to several consortia in the state and region. We also cooperate nationally with many library partners and professional organizations, and these collaborations touch nearly every aspect of library operations.

One important recent collaborative project was Gitenstein Library's joining forces with William Paterson, Stockton, NJIT, and Rowan to migrate each of our library systems from the old-style Integrated Library System (ILS) to the next-gen cloud-based platform, Alma, which unifies end-to-end management of print, electronic resources and digital collections. TCNJ Systems Librarian Yongming Wang says that this cooperation between institutions has continued, and that "systems librarians from all five libraries continue to meet virtually to discuss issues and problems related to the new library platform and find ways to solve them cooperatively."



Since the 1970s, academic libraries have been participating in library consortia to foster cooperation in the purchase and licensing of electronic resources. TCNJ participates in several consortia, including NJ VALE, WALDO, and Lyrisis. Jia Mi, TCNJ's Electronic Resources Librarian, explains that "being part of these consortia increases purchase power in negotiating pricing with publishers for our electronic resources, such as scholarly databases, ebooks, journals, streaming video, and other digital content."

Gitenstein's Interlibrary Loan (ILL) department participates in multiple cooperative arrangements, making our Interlibrary Loan deliveries quick and efficient for library users. Bethany Sewell, Access Services Librarian, describes our Information Delivery Services, known as IDS Pod, as a "grass roots powerhouse...it is what makes everything in our interlibrary loan system work beautifully." Totally automated for many requests, IDS Pod has 124 cooperating libraries that work together to achieve unmediated borrowing. Bethany points out that not only do users get their materials quickly, but the more automated the system, the more time that library staff have to work on individual, difficult to fill items that our researchers often need. Another ILL cooperative,



OCLC Worldshare (which may sound familiar to those of you who use WorldCat), is the oldest system for cooperative loaning between libraries, and its platform shows who owns what materials throughout the country. Several years ago, Gitenstein Library staff created a custom holdings queue, which looks for materials first from New Jersey libraries, followed by lending partners on the east coast who are “LVIS” Libraries (pronounced “Elvis,” aka “Libraries Very Interested in Sharing”). Gitenstein Library is also part of the RAPID Pod system, which fosters cooperation with New Jersey libraries and beyond. Over the past four years, RAPID Pod facilitated borrowing from 49 New Jersey libraries, borrowing 4312 library items for TCNJ library users. TCNJ also participates in the New Jersey VALE (Virtual Academic Library Environment) reciprocal borrowing program, a cooperative onsite borrowing agreement among 50 participating VALE member colleges and universities in the state of New Jersey. Under this agreement, faculty and staff from participating institutions who are in good standing at their home library can borrow materials at each other’s libraries.

Gitenstein Library’s Cataloging and Metadata department also collaborates with many libraries beyond TCNJ. Yuji Tosaka, Cataloging and Metadata Librarian, explains that catalogers have traditionally shared metadata, and this cooperation has been an integral part of cataloging. TCNJ actively participates in the training of new catalogers, as part of the Name Authority Cooperative (NACO) which is part of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging within the Library of Congress. In this program, TCNJ collaborates with other small and medium sized libraries to train and review catalogers’ work in order to mentor new catalogers to create name authority records.



Overseeing much of this active cooperation between New Jersey libraries is the VALE (Virtual Academic Library Environment) Consortium, a grassroots organization whose goal is to develop connections between institutions and foster collaboration among New Jersey’s academic libraries. Gitenstein Library Dean Taras Pavlovsky is a past president of the NJ VALE consortium, and currently serves on its Executive Board. One of the main responsibilities of VALE is the negotiation of electronic resources, and VALE is currently reworking many of its fiduciary relationships with publishers.

It was Aristototle who said that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” and like many other institutions, Gitenstein Library is greatly enriched by its partnerships and collaborations in New Jersey and beyond.



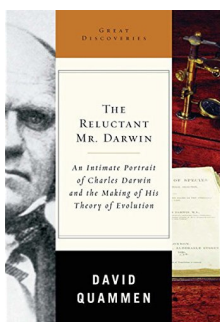
# One Reader to Another

As part of a recurring column, we're asking faculty members to share a book that has had a profound effect on the way they think about their profession or about life in general. For this newsletter issue, we feature Jarret Crawford (Psychology) and Benny Chan (Chemistry), each of whom was recently the recipient of one of TCNJ's inaugural Faculty/Librarian Recognition Awards. Crawford received the Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activity, and Chan received the Innovation in Teaching Award.

To share your recommendations in a future issue, please contact John Oliver at [oliverj@tcnj.edu](mailto:oliverj@tcnj.edu).



**Dr. Jarret Crawford (Psychology) recommends:**



"I loved how the author captured the humanity of Darwin. It paints a complex portrait of a man who struggles with his ideas and what they might mean for religion and society, against the backdrop of being a scientist and family man. It inspired me enough that I ended up naming my son Charles Darwin Crawford, and got a tattoo on my arm to celebrate Darwin's insights and achievements."

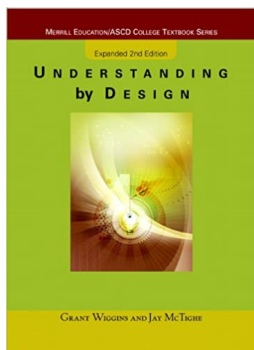
**The reluctant Mr. Darwin: An intimate portrait of Charles Darwin and the making of his theory of evolution.**

By David Quammen.

Available at Gitenstein Library. Call number: [QH31.D2 Q35 2006](#)



**Dr. Benny Chan (Chemistry) Recommends:**



Dr. Chan received the Innovation in Teaching Award for his work designing, piloting, and refining a new teaching model that improved student learning outcomes in the General Chemistry course. The effect of this model has been dramatic, improving student achievement among all demographic groups. "I would have to say this book is where it all started. The first time I saw a presentation on this made me understand assessment in a deep way. And then adding social justice on top of it through an approach of skill development is the magic touch that's perfect for the current discourse."

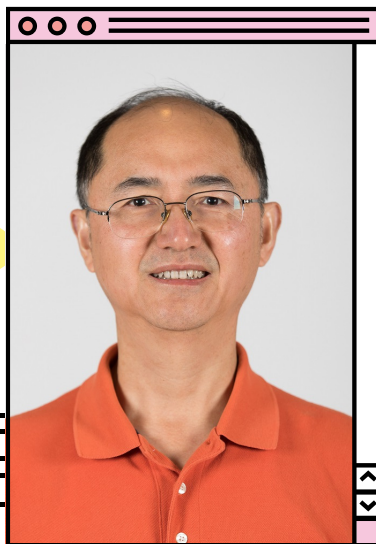
**Understanding by design.**

By Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe.

Available at Gitenstein Library. Call number: [LB2806.15 .W54 2006](#)

# LIBRARIAN SPOTLIGHT

## MEET OUR SYSTEMS LIBRARIAN!



**Yongming Wang**

By Erin Ackerman

Everybody who uses TCNJ's Gitenstein Library benefits from the work of Systems Librarian Yongming Wang, but most library users probably do not realize that. As Systems Librarian, Yongming's job is to manage and maintain the library's systems that make it possible for the library to perform most of its key functions and services. The most major of these is Alma, a cloud-based library management system, through which the librarians and library staff handle acquiring resources like print books and ebooks, as well as managing the library's budget, cataloging materials so that TCNJ users can find them, and allowing the TCNJ community to borrow and use library materials through the system's circulation and fulfillment modules. He also works with the analytics function in Alma to generate reports that inform decision making in the library. In addition to Alma, Yongming works on systems through which the library manages interlibrary loan services (ILLiad), streaming video licensing (CORAL), and the digital repository (DSpace). With each of these systems, Yongming configures servers and settings, manages updates, troubleshoots, and interfaces with vendors and his fellow librarians. Some of the systems use open source software, such as the [digital repository](#), which hosts the library's Digital Archive and the TCNJ Scholars collection, in which the library collects and shares faculty and student research, such as posters, articles, and datasets. As Yongming says he's "really working behind the scenes on a lot of things.

Library systems are basically like a backbone. You need them to make the library work."

Yongming has been a Systems Librarian for almost twenty years. He joined TCNJ in 2008, after having worked in systems for libraries at Georgian Court University and former UMDNJ. Before that, he worked in Mercer County College library and public libraries in Piscataway. "My favorite part of being a librarian is that I'm embraced by all the books. I have liked reading since I was a child. So working in the library was always my dream," Yongming says. "Another thing is that I like to help people. Library users, they are trying to seek knowledge and I'm very happy to help them. Also the colleagues and coworkers in libraries create a very nice environment and community."

Yongming is very active with the [Chinese American Librarians Association \(CALA\)](#), both at the association level and with its Northeast Chapter. CALA has approximately 700 members, mostly in the US and Canada and is an affiliate of the American Library Association (ALA). CALA hosts an annual conference and is active in library events and conferences sponsored by ALA. Yongming was part of the CALA team that six years ago founded the open access, peer reviewed journal, the [International Journal of Librarianship \(IJoL\)](#), and currently serves as IJoL's co-editor.

Yongming's research interests include information technology in libraries, data science, machine learning and AI. Like many others, he is following the discussions around ChatGPT and considering what it could mean for the work produced for class assignments and academic journals. "It's a big question that I don't think anyone is prepared for," he says. When Yongming is not working, he likes reading, listening to music, and traveling. His family is considering an upcoming trip to Japan and/or Taiwan. Among his favorite past trips is a 2016 adventure to the western part of the United States. "We had about 10 people--my college roommate and our families. We flew to Colorado and then rented a big van and drove for two weeks to Yellowstone, Utah, and the Grand Canyon. We ended in Los Angeles. I think the west is an amazing place. I just enjoy the views and people." Yongming is also known from library parties and potlucks as an excellent cook. "I think cooking's fun. It takes my mind off of other things. And also when you see people liking what you cook, you feel very happy."



## Welcome Back, R. Barbara Gitenstein!

The TCNJ Community was in for a wonderful visit this past fall when our 15th president, Dr. R. Barbara Gitenstein read from her new book *Experience Is the Angled Road: Memoir of an Academic* in the auditorium. A book signing and refreshments concluded the celebration. Congratulations!



Photo courtesy of Kara Pothier



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Paula Rainey

## Nurturing Others & Building Community

Being warm, inclusive, trustworthy, and able to develop people – these qualities are essential for any manager to ensure that their employees excel in their goals. Building long lasting, authentic relationships creates a sense of mental peace and a positive atmosphere at work. All these qualities describe Marcus Allen, 2021 graduate, who brings his working team together at Panera Bread. Marcus is the Team Leader Manager and Chanel Services Manager at the Campus Town location. “A good manager truly needs to be a good listener and try to understand where their employees are coming from. Most importantly, employees need to feel safe. This means mutual respect and trust in which people are comfortable being themselves,” emphasizes Marcus. “We are all human. We need to help each other and bring out the best in one another at all times.”

Marcus has always been dedicated to serving others. In spring 2021, Marcus humbly received the Office of Student Involvement’s Unsung Hero Award. This award is dedicated to individuals who demonstrated great service to the campus and surrounding communities; people who are pillars of change within their organization(s) and communities, and people who should be recognized for their involvement, purpose and drive. He also became a Brother of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Iota Iota Chapter, where he served as secretary and historian, and a member of the Black Student Union Association of Students for Africa (ASFA). In addition, Marcus was voted King of the Black Student Union’s Black Excellence Ball in 2020.

Marcus first studied journalism with the aspiration of giving others their true voices. “I wanted (and still want) to give people of color, especially African Americans, the chance to share their stories accurately. So often the media distorts its reporting, especially for historically marginalized groups.” Marcus participated in many class activities which enhanced his desire to make a positive difference in others’ lives. Marcus was one of 24 students featured in the 2019 Docu-Story Project, “[I Am TCNJ](https://docustory.tcnj.edu/)” (<https://docustory.tcnj.edu/>). This documentary explored students’ experiences at TCNJ. At the 2019 Community Learning Day, Marcus welcomed author Darnell Moore to the stage. Moore’s book, *No Ashes in the Fire*, was chosen as the summer reading book which was a coming-of-age story about being a queer Black working-class male.



**Marcus Allen**

**Major: African-American Studies  
Minors: Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies,  
Professional Writing - Class of 2021**

**Access Services: from May 2017 to March 2020  
Media Services: June 2019 to March 2020**

**“A GOOD MANAGER TRULY NEEDS TO BE A GOOD LISTENER AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHERE THEIR EMPLOYEES ARE COMING FROM. MOST IMPORTANTLY, EMPLOYEES NEED TO FEEL SAFE. THIS MEANS MUTUAL RESPECT AND TRUST IN WHICH PEOPLE ARE COMFORTABLE BEING THEMSELVES.”**

“I was lucky that I interacted with wonderful professors who guided me with wonderful experiences. For instance, for one of my classes, we interacted with the Lucas Brothers. I was able to participate in an intimate screenwriting master class with these TCNJ alums about their film *Judas and the Black Messiah*. We discussed scenes from the film as well as any research needed for its development,” explained Marcus.

“Yet school sometimes was stressful for a number of reasons. For one, my mother was experiencing health issues,” Marcus says. He notes the importance of professors encouraging their students, getting to know them, and being sensitive to their noticeable and unnoticeable struggles. “I practically grew up down the street from TCNJ, and Professor Kim Pearson, from the Journalism Department was one of my neighborhood residents.

My parents also worked for TCNJ.” Marcus’s mother is ShaRon Allen, who worked in Operational Services, and his father is Aaron Allen, who worked in Facilities. “Professor Pearson is someone who advocates for the wellbeing of all students. For me, she was an angel because she kept me afloat, encouraged me to not burn out. She was always right around the corner. Again, professors do not always know what students are going through at any given time.” comments Marcus.

Marcus is also a caregiver to his mother. Working at Panera gives him the flexibility to care for her and continue his writing. His blog, Marcus Allen,

specifically represents Africa and its descendants and culture through ways of media: articles, blog posts, pictures and videos. Lastly, Marcus would like to go to grad school in a program where his unique talents are best utilized such as education or social work.

His advice to current and future TCNJ students, “Stay true to yourself to never forget who you are. Continuing on your education at a place of higher learning, there are so many things, experiences and material that is being thrown at you. Never lose sight of who you are, why you do what you do and how that all comes together to push you forward, your experiences and others around you. You never know how your experiences are going to change another’s life!”

# 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 DEAN’S OFFICE STUDENT WORKER!

### DANIELLE JOUKHADARIAN

PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR, MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT MINORS  
LIBRARY DEAN’S OFFICE  
CLASS OF 2024

#### Paula Rainey, Interviewer:

Hi Danielle. Thank you for sharing your perspectives with us. Since you work in the Dean’s Office with me, I know you as an amazing student worker with a good head for business. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your career goals.



**Danielle:** I graduated from Pascack Hills High School in North Jersey. I am majoring in psychology because I am truly interested in the human mind. For instance, why do people act the way they do? I am minoring in both marketing and management because I like business, and psychology plays a big part in consumer behavior. I also like entrepreneurship – having a vision and marketing the product.

**Interviewer:** Have you always had such a strong interest in business?

**Danielle:** Yes! In high school, I was part of the Robotics team where my role was to market the product and team. In 2017, our team placed 4th in the World Festival of Champions. Being part of the Pascack Pi-oneers FRC Team of 1676 helped me hone my marketing skills. Even though I was not one of the engineers on the Robotics team, the overall team was responsible for marketing the product. This is a reason why teamwork is so important. Every member has an important role. When one member is not dedicated to their role, the team can fall apart.

**Interviewer:** That is very impressive. How do you think minoring in management will assist you in your career? You seem like a natural leader.

**Danielle:** I enjoy motivating others and helping others keep focused on the tasks necessary for the end result to be successful. I feel like I am a good leader in my group projects. I understand

that no one can do things by themselves, especially business persons (and students working on group projects). I am also learning how to understand organizational behavior. How do people interact inside the workspace? Studying management will help me see the picture. There are so many parts to an organization (technical, marketing, sales, etc.).

**Interviewer:** How else is TCNJ preparing you for your career goals?

**Danielle:** I will be interning this summer at a company working on the company's SEO (Search Engine Optimization). SEO is a type of digital marketing that improves web pages for search engines like Google and Bing. It is a form of digital marketing.

**Interviewer:** Name a fun fact about yourself.

**Danielle:** I have a twin sister named Mireille and I will be interning with her in the same company this coming summer. Also, I recently got accepted into the International Honor Society in Psychology at TCNJ, Psi Chi!

**Interviewer:** That is awesome and congratulations! What do you like most about TCNJ and working in the library?

**Danielle:** TCNJ has a homey welcoming feeling. I've met some great people at TCNJ, so I would say the community and connections that can be made. I have also had some wonderful professors who have guided me in my journey.

**Interviewer:** Last question—what advice do you have for current and future college students?

**Danielle:** Don't be afraid to put yourself out there – talk to your peers for their perspectives. That is what college is all about. You learn a lot about the people around you. College is what you make of it. You can make mistakes. It is a safe place to make mistakes. It is a learning curve.

**Interviewer:** Spoken like a confident, future businesswoman. Thank you so much, Danielle. You Roar!

ROARING

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## Meet Tabitha Hilliard Principal Library Assistant



### The Cataloger by Paula Rainey

One of those behind-the-scenes staff in the library world is the “cataloger.” The cataloger may seem like they have an easy, or mechanical processing job, but cataloging is highly intellectual work that requires knowledge and training in organizing the collections.

Just ask Tabitha Hilliard, one of the R. Barbara Gitenstein Library's catalogers. “There is a saying in the geographic information sciences (GIS) world, ‘a map is only as good as the data used to build the map. Well, I tend to think, ‘a library collection is only as good as its catalog.’ What I mean by that is, generally speaking, if a catalog is

poorly maintained (i.e. if the catalog isn't easily searchable, if records are missing, if records are present that shouldn't be, or if there are other issues with the catalog) then the usability of the collection becomes compromised. I like knowing that my contributions in the Cataloging and Metadata Department helps to ensure that our catalog is accessible to everyone."

Tabitha explains that "My department colleagues and I share a common goal: to make sure that our catalog represents the contents of the library collection as accurately as possible on any given day. Although each of us has separate responsibilities, our shared goal ensures that we continue to work cohesively as a team. I think of it as, we are each producing our own squares of fabric and sewing them to the same quilt. "

Traditionally speaking, library's consider "Public Services" departments those that interact directly with patrons. Tabitha explains that working behind the scenes is also hugely important for library users. "I have always leaned towards working in public services, and although [cataloging] is very much 'behind the scenes,' I still feel as though my work benefits the public. The library catalog, in many ways, functions as a sort of backbone to the library collection. The catalog aids the library in its ability to provide services to the community; without the catalog, it would be difficult for patrons to gain access to library resources."

Tabitha acquired her unique skill set over time. Prior to joining the R. Gitenstein Library six years ago, she worked at a cultural resource management firm as an archeologist and a geographic information systems specialist. Tabitha joined the library with a background in geospatial analysis and cataloging; as an archaeologist, however, she was cataloging artifacts instead of library resources. She holds a master's degree in anthropology, and is currently attending San Jose State University's online master's of library and information science program, where most of her coursework relates to digital asset management. Tabitha also earned a Certificate in Disability Access and Inclusion from the Library Juice Academy.

While Tabitha may use different skillsets that she developed in anthropology and archeology, as a staff person, TCNJ allows Tabitha to put her soft skills to use, especially in library governance! "Anthropology is the study of human communities and culture; it's the study of what makes humans human. Library governance offers me an outlet to engage with issues that affect the library community as a whole, through an anthro-informed lens. I think my background in anthropology helps me to evaluate the current state of an issue at hand, and also formulate possible solutions to any problems that may have been presented to the committee or ad hoc group I'm serving. I served on the Library Steering Committee between 2018 and 2022. Today, I'm a member of the Library Accessibility Task Force. I hope to join another governance committee this spring." adds Tabitha.



In addition to the different skill sets that she developed in anthropology and archeology, Tabitha also put her soft skills to use, especially as a staff representative in the library's shared governance system. "Anthropology is the study of human communities and culture; it's the study of what makes humans human. Library governance offers me an outlet to engage with issues that affect the library community as a whole, through an anthro-informed lens. I think my background in anthropology helps me to evaluate the current state of an issue at hand, and also formulate possible solutions to any problems that may have been presented to the committee or ad hoc group I'm serving. I served on the Library Steering Committee between 2018 and 2022. Today, I'm a member of the Library Accessibility Task Force. I hope to join another governance committee this spring." adds Tabitha.

Both at the library and beyond, Tabitha is an advocate for individuals with disabilities. She works part-time as a certified therapeutic riding instructor, certified by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH, Intl.). She teaches adaptive horseback riding lessons to individuals with disabilities (all ages and all abilities). She teaches at Riding High Farm once a week as an employee and she also volunteers a few additional hours each month to assist the program with fundraising or facility maintenance projects.

When Tabitha is not working or studying, she enjoys spending time with animals. She has three cats: grumpy Bear, sweet Gracie and little Merlin. If she is not leashing-walking her three feline fur babies, you might find her at the barn riding Free. As a lessee, Tabitha pays a monthly fee to Free's owner who allows her to ride Free twice a week.

The person Tabitha enjoys spending the most time with her husband, EJ, whom she married in June 2022. One of her favorite memories with EJ was taking her first backcountry hiking/camping trip in 2017. EJ and she hiked with friends for 30 miles in the Grand Tetons across three days--it was epic. "I would love to do a longer trek, maybe someday," says Tabitha.

Tabitha also attributes her strict vegan lifestyle to her husband. "When I moved to New Jersey in 2011, I was not a vegan. I became a vegan after meeting my now-husband, EJ, in 2013; he was already a vegan. EJ introduced me to the book *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer; it's part memoir and part investigative report. This book inspired him to 'go vegan.' We listened to the book in 2014 on one of our trips to Virginia (yes, I resisted reading it for about a year). I decided that I was done with eating animals before we finished the book. This decision came as a HUGE surprise to my family in Virginia. My parents were both food service industry workers, and my father was raised in a family whose relatives maintained working farms well into the 1960's. Simply put, my dad was taught that farmed "food" animals could be friendly, but they weren't friends; I was raised with the same social norms. Meeting EJ and listening to Foer's book triggered a massive paradigm shift for me."



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Saturday 7:00 PM - 2:00 AM  
Sunday 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
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