



# A Campus Hub

*Weinberg Memorial Library plans for the future (and welcomes fun and spontaneity).*

The Weinberg Memorial Library just got loud, and the librarians aren't even complaining. Construction on the first floor contributed to the clamor this summer, but — going forward — the Reilly Learning Commons will be abuzz with activity: a campus hub, complete with a computer lab and the latest software.

Stacks of old print journals have made way for a redesigned space for group study, collaboration and exploratory learning, with satellite locations for the Writing Center and Technology Support Center. There are lounge areas and a soundproof presentation practice room equipped with lecture capture, as well as collaboration spaces outfitted with outlets and ports for the easy integration of laptops and tablets. "We wanted to create a new, dynamic student-centered learning space," said Charles Kratz, dean of the library and information fluency.

A student-centered space meant a good deal of student feedback, some of which was critical of the traditional look and feel of the library. The new space is bright and modern. Students even tested and approved the chairs.

Future plans for the Reilly Learning Commons include visualization tools and 3D printing. "We wanted to provide a space where students have the opportunity to experiment with new technology and try out new tools in an unstructured environment," said Kristen Yarmey, digital services librarian.

The Reilly Learning Commons transformation is just one aspect of what is being called WML+10, a project conceived after the Library's 20th anniversary last year. The report lays out a vision for the Library's physical spaces, collections, services and staffing for the next decade. It brought together input and ideas from

faculty members from each academic college, graduate and undergraduate students, representatives from the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, and Library faculty and staff.

"We really have a cohesive vision of where we want to be in 10 years and we're making good progress toward it with the Learning Commons," said Yarmey. "Our central mission has not changed. We're just interpreting it in new ways."

The Library will continue to provide important, quality information that meets the needs and standards of faculty and students while integrating new technology and expanding digital collections. The WML+10 team imagines the University community being able to access collections and resources from anywhere, on any device, using new tools with visual interfaces (such as a digital bookshelf), which, according to the report, will allow for the "serendipitous discovery of Library resources."

"It's a really exciting time in libraries. Things are changing so rapidly," said Bonnie Oldham, public services librarian and information literacy coordinator. "We're not just this place that stores books. We're becoming learning communities."

The WML+10 participants want the Weinberg Memorial Library to be seen as a resource center, a place that cultivates learning, rather than, as Oldham put it, just a place that stores books. According to the report, the Library will "foster creativity by welcoming fun and spontaneity."

Librarians describe the need for a careful balance between maintaining print collections and embracing new technology, noting the importance of faculty and student input in the Library's plans for the future. It might take time for patrons to let go of the traditional way as new students beg for innovation, but


Seating areas like these are a feature in the Weinberg Memorial Library's new Reilly Learning Commons.

WML+10 promises to serve a dynamic and diverse crowd: the independent studier, the group leader, the artist, the history buff and the tech addict. There is room for each one of these learners, along with plenty of books, in the new Library, as well as faculty and students from every college and discipline.

David Dzurec, Ph.D., associate professor of history, thinks of the Library as the CAS lab. "The Library serves as a research lab for many of us in the humanities," he said. "There is just as much research going on in the stacks of the Weinberg Memorial Library as there is among the beakers and test tubes of the Loyola Science Center."

Part of any lab work, of course, is collaboration. Marian Farrell, Ph.D., professor of nursing and chair of the Library Advisory Committee, is one who thinks it is important that students aren't only reading books or researching on the computers, but also interacting with their peers and mentors. "The Learning Commons helps put into place *Eloquentia Perfecta* as part of the academic commitment to helping students learn how to incorporate speaking eloquently," she said. "The new space and tools are going to help them do that."

The winner of this year's graduate library research prize, Caroline Swift '12 G'14 (now a Ph.D. candidate at Penn State University), spent long hours in the Library using Google Scholar (which can link students to full-text articles in Library databases) and statistical packages, as well as printing and scanning. "Having all of these resources in one place was an ideal environment for study and research," she said.

Having served as a student representative on the Library Advisory Committee, Swift is thoroughly convinced that the Library has a bright future. "Personally, I don't see the role of the library diminishing, only changing. I think the WML is well-equipped to handle this transition." 

## The Reilly Family, A Scranton Family

The Reilly family, whose gifts have made the Learning Commons possible, has a deep connection to the University. It all began when Joe Reilly took a job in the University's maintenance department when he was still in high school. He loved Scranton so much that he stayed on for 43 years (with a stint away to serve in the military).

Joe's sisters Katherine "Kay" '53 and Evelyn '52 attended the University's night school, Dexter Hanley College, and were two of the first female graduates in business. After graduation, they helped draft the charter that formed the Women's Alumni Society and served as its officers for many years. "Evelyn and Kay were trailblazers," said Carol Maculloch, director of leadership gifts in University Advancement. "Their commitment and loyalty to their alma mater has remained a top priority throughout their lives."

Kay and Joe established a scholarship in 2002, the year that Evelyn passed away. Joe, who later funded another scholarship, passed away in 2012 and donated part of his estate to the Library. When Kay witnessed the beautiful space under renovation in memory of her brother Joe, she made a generous donation to help enhance the Learning Commons. "I wanted to invest in an area that would help each and every student with his or her education and the Library was the perfect place to make an impact," said Kay, who is now 92 years old. "Having a great library with state-of-the-art technology on campus is so important to a Scranton education."

Kay is looking forward to the dedication of the Reilly Learning Commons on Sept. 17, where she will see how the space has been transformed with all the bells and whistles, including two plaques commemorating her family's commitment to the University.

## The Library's Mission

"The University of Scranton Weinberg Memorial Library provides superior resources, services and programs that meet the dynamic scholarly, cultural and social endeavors of the University and the community at large. We are committed to a culture of innovation, assessment and sustainability through the support of teaching and learning. We preserve and promote the history of the University and provide access to rare cultural resources."