

The Scranton Journal

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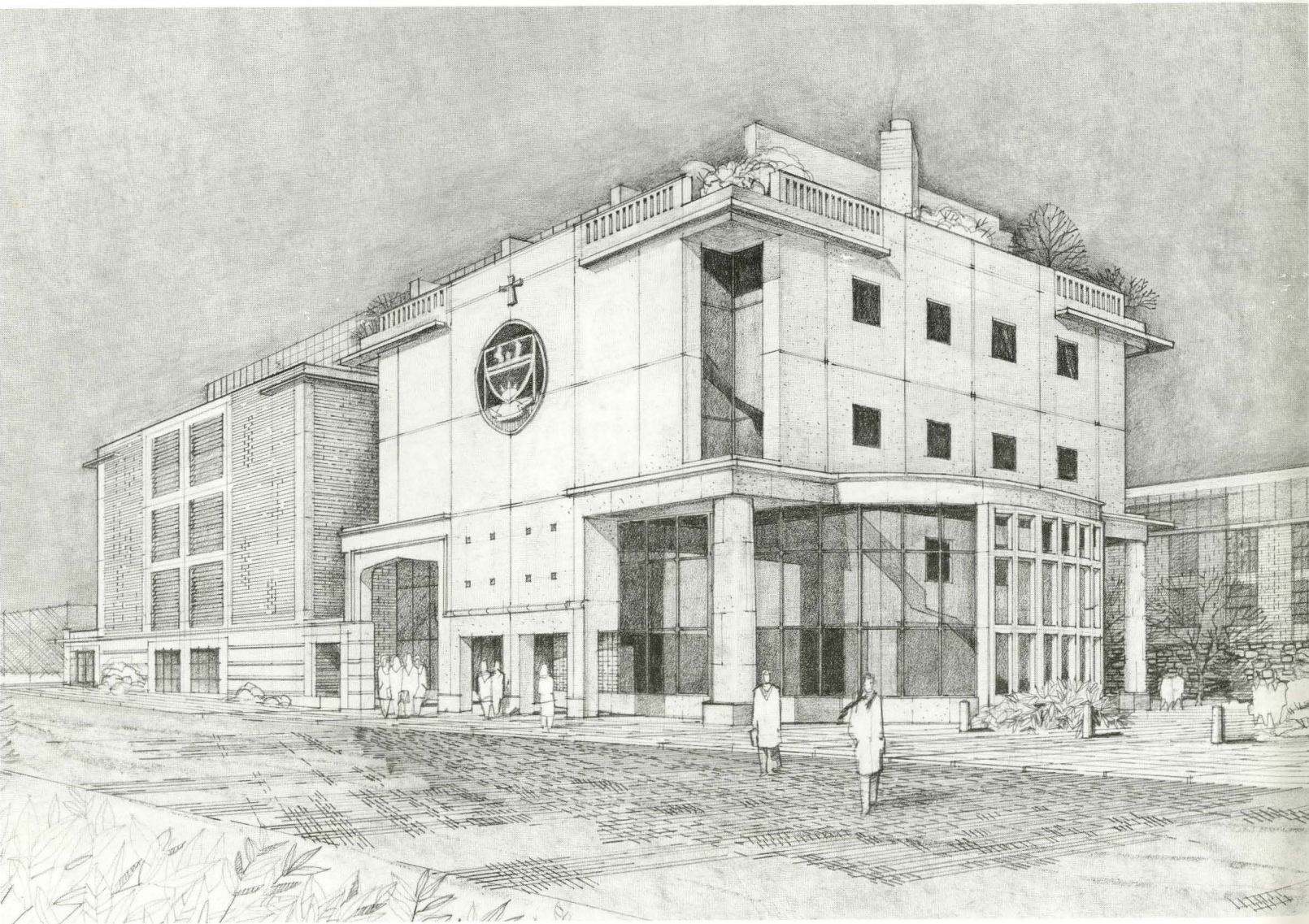
The Magazine

of the University of Scranton



The New University Library

A Resource for the 21st Century



Construction is scheduled to begin this summer on a University library designed to meet the needs of the 21st century.

In addition to housing the University's library collections and archives, the \$13.3 million structure at the foot of the University Commons on the corner of Linden Street and Monroe Avenue will be a resource and information center linked to major libraries nationwide, giving students and faculty access to vastly expanded sources of material.

The present Alumni Memorial Library, built in 1959, was not constructed or wired to accommodate the technological advances of the last two decades, and it is simply out of space to handle even necessary additions to the collection.

"The present collection is inadequate for the University," according to library director John Stalker, and he adds, "We wouldn't, however, be able to fit an adequate collection into the current building."

In fact, despite weeding, converting of periodicals to microform and installing compact shelving, Alumni Memorial Library has reached the point that each new addition means an older volume must be removed from the shelves.

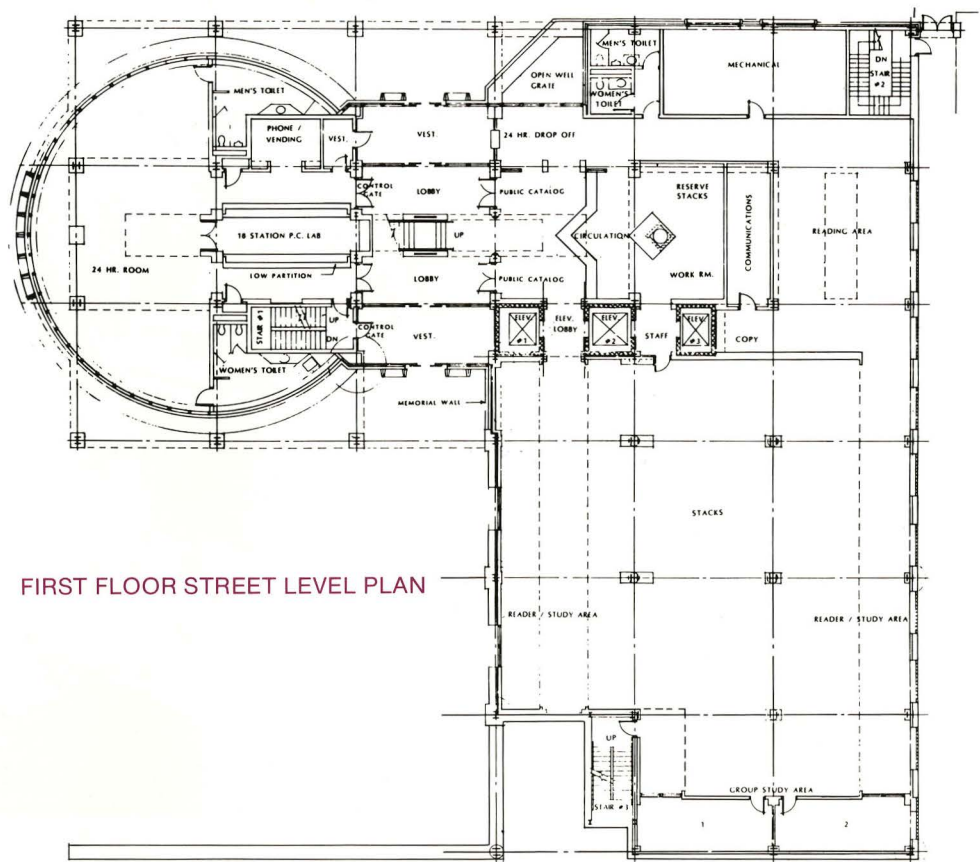
The Board of Trustees authorized construction of the new building in 1990 because of its importance to the continued excellence of the University's academic programs.

Library expansion was urged by the Middle States Association accrediting body in 1967, 1977 and 1987 and by the Academy for Educational Development in 1983, but the growing inadequacies of the current library were tolerated in recent years so the University could concentrate on building facilities that were then totally lacking on campus.

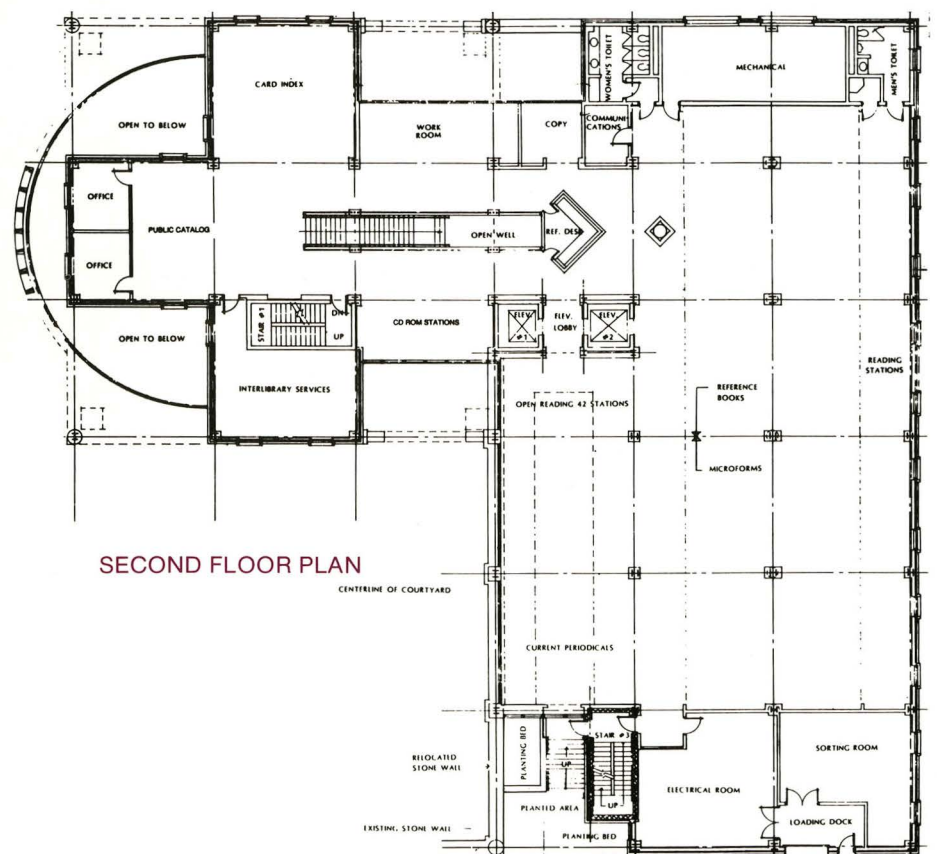
With the completion of desperately needed classroom space in Hyland Hall, recreation facilities in the Byron Complex and the addition of Redington and Gavigan residence halls, the new library has emerged as the University's last critical need to maintain its competitive position in the northeast.

It will be both an intellectual and aesthetic center for the campus. To get a sense of what the new University Library will be like, let's fast-forward to 1992 and take a tour of the finished building:

The attention of a person approaching the Library from the Commons or from Monroe Avenue is first attracted by the curving glass facade, especially after dusk when the 24-hour study room inside acts as a beacon.



FIRST FLOOR STREET LEVEL PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

The building itself is L-shaped, with public service and staff areas concentrated in the forward area fronting on the Commons. Stacks and study areas occupy the longer part of the building along the rear of the site, bordering the University tennis courts.

This shape creates space for a plaza and pedestrian area between the library and Gunster Memorial Student Center next door. One library entrance opens onto the plaza toward the Commons; another opens on Monroe Avenue.

In addition to the 24-hour room, which can be secured from the rest of the building after regular library hours, the first floor houses circulation services, including a 24-hour drop, copying facilities, an 18-station computer laboratory and the first stack level with study seating and four small group study rooms.

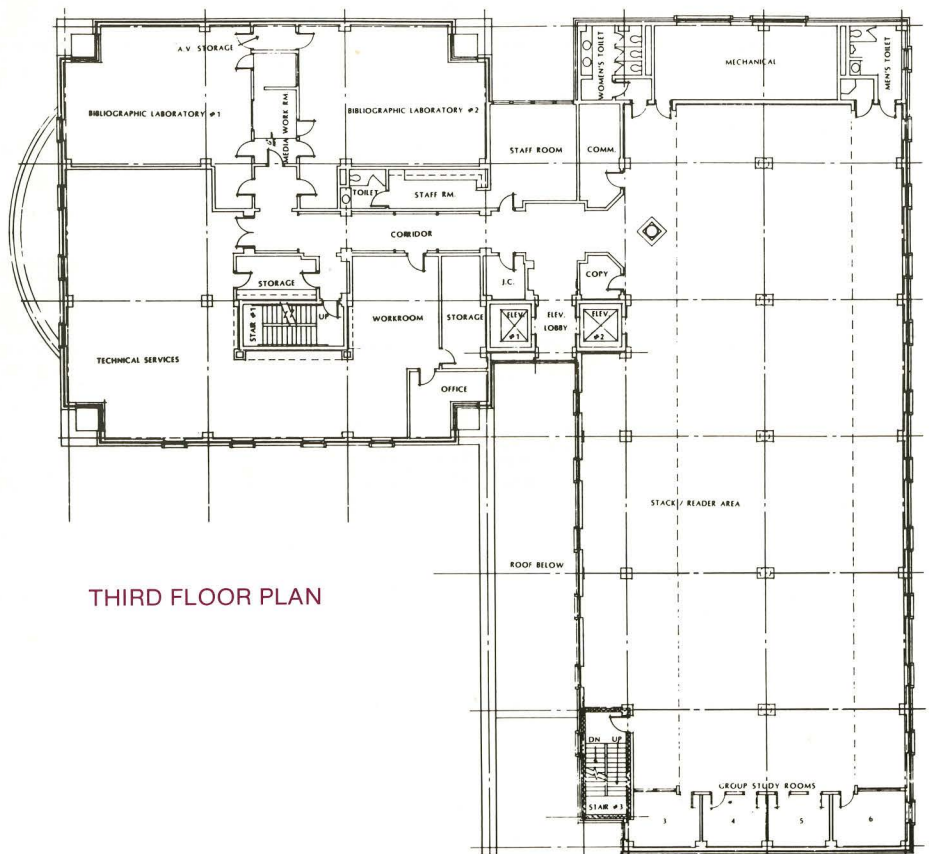
The entire library seats more than 700 users at closed and open study carrels and tables, compared to 400 open carrels in the old library. With its classrooms and other student spaces, the library can accommodate more than 1,000 users at once, yet there is a sense of openness and accessibility because of the design and furnishing of the building.

A staircase to the second floor leads directly to the reference collections and other public services. Interlibrary loan, current periodicals and microforms are also on this level.

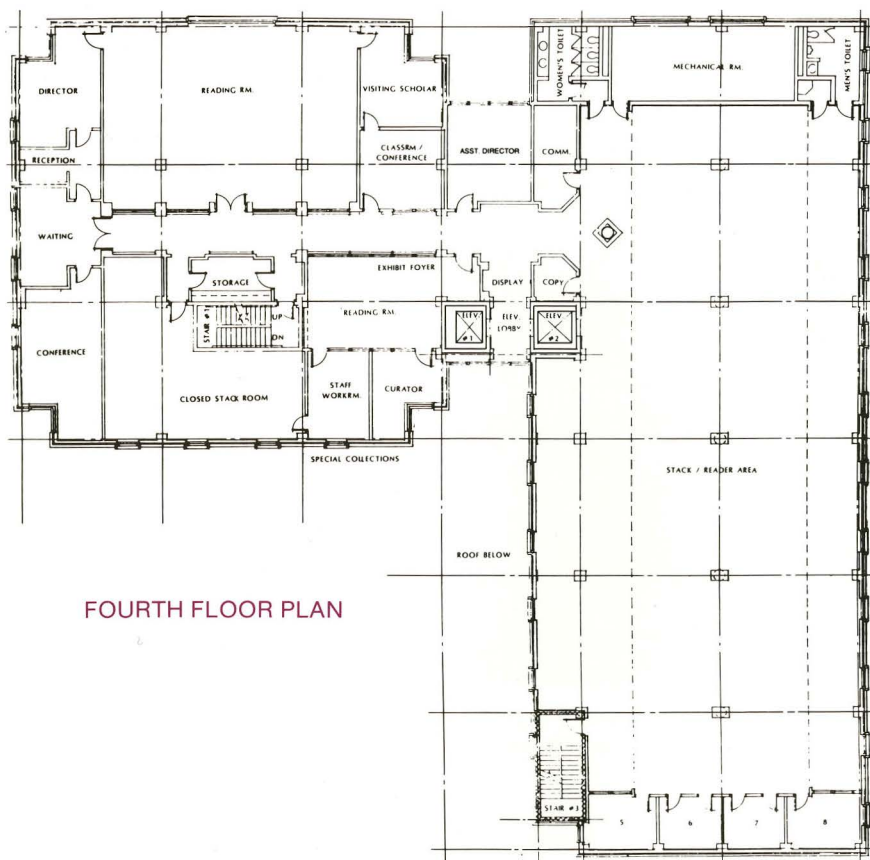
In the forward portion of the third floor are two bibliographic instruction laboratories with a central control room and the technical services staff work area. The stack area has study space and two large group study rooms.

There are four more group study rooms on the fourth-floor stacks, and the forward area houses administrative offices and a small conference room. The special collections, archives and special services office are also on this floor, along with a specially designed quiet study area and a staff work room.

A large reading room on the fifth floor overlooks both the campus and the community and has as a motif the heritage of Scranton.



THIRD FLOOR PLAN

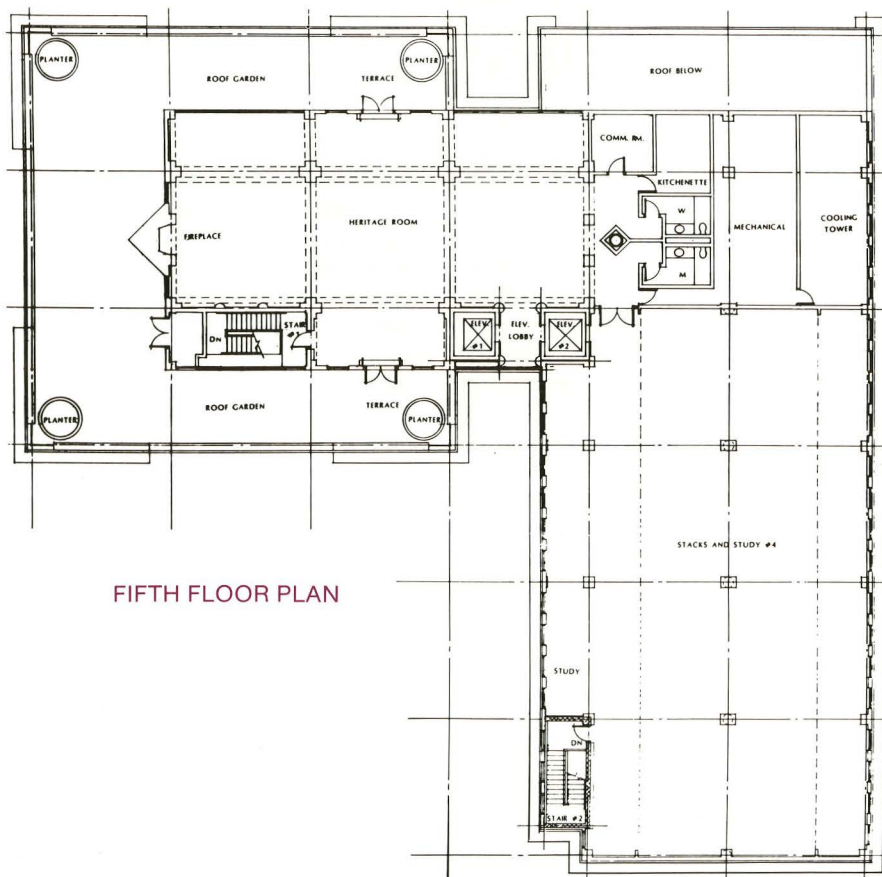


FOURTH FLOOR PLAN



But this tour of the new building does not reveal the technological changes that have been planned for. In the years since Alumni Memorial Library was built, libraries and information processing have made giant leaps forward. Collections of books and documents have been augmented by audio and video media, microforms, computerized data bases. Information stored in other, remote libraries is available through computer networks. Students and researchers using electronic methods can "look it up" without turning a page or cracking a book.

In 1987 a gift from the Pew Charitable Trusts allowed the University to computerize its library catalog. Some students and faculty now search for books from their personal computer keyboard via modem, without visiting the library. Library planners look forward to the day when they will also be able to retrieve full texts and research materials. The new building is planned with that day in mind, just as it is planned to handle the collections' expansion needs for the next quarter century. [5]



FIFTH FLOOR PLAN



Harry Weinberg with Fr. Panuska during a visit to the University on December 4, 1989, a few days after announcing his intention to give \$6 million for the new library and for the Judaic Studies Institute at the University.

Harry Weinberg Gives \$6 Million For Library and Judaic Studies Institute

The University has received \$6 million, the largest private gift in its history, from Harry Weinberg, a former Scranton businessman and one of the founders of the Judaic Studies endowment.

The gift, to be made over a period of time through the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, includes \$5 million for the new University library and \$1 million for the Judaic Studies Institute.

Weinberg and his wife, Jeanette, who died in August of 1989, have been generous benefactors to the University for many years.

"I am absolutely thrilled to receive this initiating gift for the new library, which is being designed to serve not just University students but the whole region as well," said University President Rev. J.A. Panuska, S.J., when the gift was announced shortly before Christmas.

Weinberg, who now lives in Baltimore, is the former owner of Scranton Lace Co. and the Scranton Transit Co. His gift to the University was an expression of respect for the community and the University.

"Mr. Weinberg often told me of his high regard for the people of Scranton, people who got along well despite differing nationalities and backgrounds while at the same time retaining a sense of their heritage," Fr. Panuska said.

He noted that Weinberg's regard for the University is based on the same recognition. "Our role in the community is significant, and while we have enjoyed many accomplishments we have not forgotten our roots. We still strive to be accessible to those who need us most," he said. "We, too, have grown from humble beginnings, have been successful and have not forgotten our community."

Harry Weinberg was born in Austria in 1908 and came to this country at the age of four. After beginning a business in Baltimore, he successfully developed an interest in transportation in a number of cities in the United States. His activity in properties and investments has achieved phenomenal success.

Morey Myers, a University Trustee, noted that the Weinberg gift to the University, a Catholic institution, is "a living

symbol of the generosity and the commitment to education and to interfaith understanding which are the hope of the future of our nation."

The Judaic Studies Institute is a planned expansion of the University's Judaic Studies Program, which was established in 1979 principally by members of the Scranton Jewish community. It has brought a series of eminent Jewish scholars and spokespersons to campus.

Fr. Panuska said the Weinberg gift to the library and the Judaic Studies Institute fits the University's needs perfectly. "We are currently engaged in raising additional endowment funds to extend the Judaic Studies programs to promote Jewish-Christian dialog in the setting of this Jesuit university and to create an institute with a faculty coordinator," he said.

The \$5 million designated for the library was among the first of several significant lead gifts to the Gateway to the Future campaign, which has a goal of \$13.3 million, the cost of construction for the new library. [5]