

The background of the entire page is a detailed painting of a volcanic landscape. In the center, a large geyser erupts, sending a thick plume of white steam high into a dark, overcast sky. The surrounding terrain is rugged and rocky, with various shades of grey and brown. In the foreground, a group of about seven hikers is visible, standing on a sandy or rocky path. They are wearing colorful gear and some are using trekking poles. The ground is covered in intricate patterns of mineral deposits in shades of blue, green, and orange. The overall mood is one of natural grandeur and exploration.

# SMU LIBRARIES

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

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Thomas Moran (1837-1926), *Yellowstone National Park and Other Mountain Regions* (1876)

Learn more about the Rees-Jones Library of the American West on Page 6.

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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

## What is the *perception* of a modern academic library?

This has been on my mind a lot lately. Libraries carry a long and storied history. Everyone knows the concept in some form, whether it's a public library, private library or academic, like the seven – soon to be eight – libraries that make up SMU Libraries. Perception, like identity, is unique to each individual and is shaped by experience and knowledge. Our identity propels us to form connections with others who share our time, place and ideals. We display our connections through action, appearance and financial support. Are you a "library person"? If so, what social identity are you choosing?

Libraries are a brand made up of awareness and images that form your knowledge about what it is. Recall and recognition form awareness. Type, favorability, strength and uniqueness form the image of a library. Old perceptions abound. For some, the word "libraries" evokes images of books. For others, the word "libraries" reminds them of a quiet atmosphere. But what about you? What do libraries mean to you?

To further the thought exercise, brands exist in an identification



continuum. Do they generate fans like athletics, loyalty like the SMU college and schools, or affinity like financial support of students? And if not, why not? Our brand is strong, as you will see in these pages. You will see how we foster curiosity and community through art, experience and literature (see pages 11, 12); how we mark the loss of cherished friends (see pages 3, 12); our future aspirations (see pages 4, 5); our SMU and Dallas communities (see pages 3, 10); and how we will weave our history into new opportunities to discover, inspire

and enrich our understanding of our region and ourselves (see page 6).

I suggest that our brand is one of guiding unyielding curiosity, promoting engaged community, stewarding intentional preservation and disseminating a storied celebration of transforming information in all forms into knowledge. It is pioneering because you, dear reader, perceive us as so. ■

**Holly E. Jeffcoat**  
Dean of SMU Libraries



## INTRODUCING DR. JEFFCOAT

Dean Holly Jeffcoat and doctoral partner Brad Mindich successfully defended their work toward the doctorate in education (Ed.D.) at Vanderbilt University. Their study explored academic library fundraising in the context of social identity and campus brand equity and asked what strategies libraries can learn and apply from other content industries with deep fan engagement, such as the music, sports and entertainment markets. The final recommendations will become part of SMU Libraries' strategic rebranding effort.

Photo credit: Carol Edelstein



# Researchers find AI still needs the human touch

Law librarians Donna Wolff and Tim Gallina spent the summer seeking to understand generative artificial intelligence (AI). They found that current AI tools failed to produce reliable results, while future AI offerings designed for the legal profession could be game changers.

Wolff and Gallina are integrating opportunities for students to learn the nuances of the continuously evolving technology in the upper-level legal research courses they teach.

“New lawyers often spend the first seven to 10 years of their careers steeped in legal research,” Wolff says. “The library is a safe space for law students to become comfortable with generative AI while developing rigorous research and analysis skills.”

National surveys by Thomson Reuters, LexisNexis and other trusted sources indicate that lawyers have reservations about AI technology but believe it could have a huge impact on the field. Wolff and Gallina examined the use of generative AI tools – specifically, large language models – at the request of Dedman School of Law’s Jason P. Nance, Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law.

A large language model (LLM) is trained on massive datasets to recognize, summarize, predict and generate text based on patterns. The best-known LLMs are ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI; Bing Chat, released by Microsoft;



and Bard, Google’s entry in the market. These AI chatbots are computer programs designed to simulate human conversation. Users type in prompts or questions, and the chatbot generates text or other content.

The librarians tested LLMs – but the LLMs failed to include crucial information and/or cite relevant cases. In a report presented to law school faculty, the researchers noted that the chatbots “can provide inaccurate, biased, unoriginal and offensive responses” and create “a professional ethics

minefield for law firms” because they indiscriminately store and learn from chats.

Conversely, new AI offerings poised to launch by top legal databases LexisNexis and Westlaw could change the legal research landscape.

“Lexis and Westlaw ... contain the best-vetted case law, statutes and primary law data. They also have the best secondary sources to help explain the laws, and the most robust algorithms for finding relevant sources,” Wolff says.

The AI platforms Lexis+

AI and Ask Westlaw showed promising results in their demonstration phases. Both blend extractive AI (finding content) and generative AI (creating content) capabilities to locate and utilize information from their vast stores of legal information.

The librarians will continue to monitor developments “to provide a well-rounded understanding of generative AI’s potential and the continued need for human-verified answers.” ■



## MASTERING TEXT AND THE HUMBLE BRAG

We asked ChatGPT to write a simple definition of generative artificial intelligence. Here’s what it had to say:

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) refers to a subset of AI techniques and models that are designed to create or generate new data, content or information. Instead of relying solely on pre-existing data, generative AI systems have the capability to produce novel outputs, such as text, images, music or even entire simulations, often by learning patterns and structures from large datasets and then using that knowledge to generate new, coherent and contextually relevant content.

## ADDRESSING AI WITH RESEARCH EXPERTISE

The Underwood Law Library project is just one example of how SMU Libraries staff study and evaluate emerging research tools to determine best practices for applying them effectively and ethically in the academic space.

Research assignment design guidelines, citation guides and myriad other informational materials for students and faculty to address the use of AI are being posted on the SMU Libraries research guides website – [guides.smu.edu](https://guides.smu.edu) – as they are finalized, according to research librarian Megan Heuer, SMU Libraries’ director of educational initiatives.

“We are currently creating a guide on using AI as a research tool and will offer a couple of workshops on the topic in November,” Heuer says.

# Empowering young researchers with tangible skills

Remembering Black Dallas and kinkofa partnered with Voices of SMU to teach oral history to students.

Thanks to Library of Congress funding, Remembering Black Dallas – a nonprofit aimed at preserving African American history and culture in Dallas-Fort Worth – partnered with Voices of SMU and kinkofa, a digital genealogy platform that helps Black people reclaim their roots, for a workshop teaching students how to conduct oral history.

“The librarians and archivists worked with us to weave their collections into a story about Black life and history in Texas,” says Voices of SMU graduate student assistant Laura Narvaez ’26.

The workshop, titled *Emerging Historians: Preservation, Freedom, & Expanded Rights*, took place over two days on July 10–11. On the first day, a group of high school students and early college students from across Dallas-Fort Worth came to learn about archives, oral histories and digital storytelling.

“Whether these students pursue degrees in history or

not, they now have the tools to be the historians of their families and communities,” says anthropology Ph.D. candidate Kathryn Cross ’24.

On the second day, the students gathered at Remembering Black Dallas headquarters to get more hands-



on experience. The training was conducted by Voices of SMU, a cross-campus initiative that documents stories of underrepresented communities at SMU, and kinkofa.

“It was a joy to watch the students each have their own moments of clarity around how they may apply the things they were learning,” says kinkofa co-founder Tameshia Rudd-Ridge.

The first day included tours

of some of SMU’s libraries and archival resources, where the students watched a screening of a 16 mm film in a screening room in Hamon Library and got a close view of special materials related to desegregation in Dallas in the law library.

The second day involved a training session where students set up and tested Voices of SMU’s travel oral history kits and the kinkofa Rememory app.

“I’m so glad to see everyone collaborate to make this happen for our community and for students who are passionate about telling their family and community stories,” says SMU Center on Research and Evaluation Program Coordinator Pamela Bailey.

The training sessions covered research ethics, oral history methods, audio equipment use and transcription.

“We know our short time together will have ripple effects on their lives for many years to come,” says Jourdan Brunson, co-founder of kinkofa. ■



## A SAFE SPACE FOR LEARNING

Behind a large, open area in Fondren Library sits a popular study room – a small, quiet space painted in a vibrant blue. It’s Callan’s Room, a space dedicated to the late Callan Harrison Vanlandingham ’09. Named in August, the room was dedicated by Callan’s mother’s friends as a way to honor her memory. As a student and alumna, Callan was a passionate supporter of the Libraries. In fact, she was among the first Top 10 Haute Young Authors featured at the 2010 Tables of Content fundraiser. Today, the room’s decor is inspired by the colors in her book, *The Girl Who Learned Differently*. A graduate of the Shelton School, Callan wrote a book that instills a love of learning in children with learning differences.



## Advocating for student success

Congratulations to Muku Santhanakrishnan, clinical professor of finance and associate director of the Master of Science in finance program at Cox, as this year’s Business Library 2023 Super Teacher Advocating Research (STAR) Award winner. Santhanakrishnan advocated for students to start using library research resources in Business Library workshops – even before they officially began their classes in the master’s program.

Santhanakrishnan worked with business librarians to identify elements of financial research that were important to students’ needs. The result was a Business Library FactSet Fundamentals workshop that was successfully delivered to the incoming students and will be a staple of workshop offerings in the Business Library during the regular semester.



# Giving a warm welcome

## Get to know our newest staff members

**Audrah Bartel '21** joins Underwood Law Library as one of two night-shift circulation desk assistants. She serves faculty, students and staff as information provider, printer expert and writer of the Library Loo newsletter. As a recent SMU graduate, Bartel is delighted to start her career working at a University she has grown to love. She graduated with a double B.A. in history and English as well as a minor in political science. Her education and previous work experience in customer service make her a great fit for working at the circulation desk assisting students, professors and lawyers at the library. In her free time, Bartel can be found curled up in bed reading a good book or on the pickleball courts with her friends.



“My favorite part of the job is cheering on our hard-working students who spend so much time studying in the library while also learning about the greatest movies, comics and singers from my fellow Underwood Law Library Night Owl, Jen.”

**Jen Staggs '11** is one-half of the Underwood Law Library Night Owls – an all-female team of book lenders and “informationistas” who cater to the scholastic needs of law students as well as the occasional attorney or pro se. She earned a B.A. in professional writing from Baylor University and decided museums and libraries were her natural habitat instead of cubicles. While completing her M.A. in art history at SMU’s Meadows School of the Arts, she assisted in Hamon Arts Library’s media collection. Staggs now returns to her alma mater to serve as a library specialist in the Underwood Law Library. She is fond of world travel and medieval and Renaissance books and prints and is mom to a precocious white chihuahua named Pinky.



“I adore our SMU Libraries. ... I’ve enjoyed breathing in the book-scented air here since my mother received her M.Div. at Perkins in the ‘90s.”

**James Glenn** is the new access services manager at Hamon Arts Library, where he hires, schedules, trains and supervises student assistants. He also resolves customer account issues and assists with guest borrower registration and serves on the SMU Libraries Access Services Committee. He serves as the building manager of Hamon Arts Library, which requires serving as liaison for facilities maintenance staff and security personnel and co-coordinating large-scale facilities projects. Before Hamon, he worked at Bridwell as a Kelly Services contractor. He is pursuing his Master of Science in library science at the University of North Texas. Glenn earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Howard University. He is a fifth-generation Dallas native who enjoys attending visual and performing arts events in North Texas and beyond.



“My favorite part of the position thus far is developing more intuitive workflows for Hamon Access Services allowing us to achieve operational excellence and facilitate a superior user experience.”

**Kaitlin Siebert** first started working part time in SMU Libraries in 2022 after graduating from the University of North Texas with a B.A. in integrative studies. In January, she joined the team full time as patron resource coordinator. In this role, she assists library patrons in locating and utilizing library resources and manages Fondren Library Course Reserves. She also opens the Fondren Library Monday through Friday and supervises the Main Desk in the mornings. She serves on the student success team and works closely with undergraduate librarians to

“I love seeing and learning about all of the fun things in the collection.”



create supportive programming for students. In May, she began pursuing her master’s degree in library science at the University of North Texas. Outside of work, she enjoys film photography and painting.

**Molly Steed** joins SMU Libraries as archivist of the Bywaters Special Collections. There, she processes, catalogs and preserves special collection materials, including paper records, works of art on paper and audiovisual material for use by the SMU community and the public. She provides curriculum support for SMU students and faculty and provides research and reference services for patrons. She also works with donors to acquire new collections for the archive and increases awareness of the collections through blog posts and exhibits. A graduate of the University of Central Arkansas, Loyola University of Chicago and Dominican University, she previously worked as an archivist for the Everglades National Park collection. Outside of work, she loves going for bike rides and playing soccer or tennis with her husband.



“My favorite part of my job is being able to help patrons locate resources they were otherwise unable to find. The Main Desk is a de facto wayfinding point, so we receive a lot of unique questions. It’s always a fun challenge when a patron asks me a question I haven’t thought about, and always very validating when I can point that patron in the right direction.”



“I get to work a job that combines my interests in biblical studies and libraries. Additionally, the Bridwell Library is a beautiful library.”

**Christopher Clarke** comes to SMU Libraries as research and instruction librarian at Bridwell Library, where he provides research support for students and faculty in religious studies and theology. In addition, he offers information literacy instruction for classes at the Perkins School of Theology. Plus, he serves as a writing tutor for Perkins students in the Theological Writing Center. Clarke is a graduate of Marlboro College, the University of Connecticut and Southern Connecticut State University and holds a Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University. He previously worked as assistant professor and internship coordinator in the Department of Information and Library Science at Southern Connecticut State University. He enjoys painting miniatures and bird-watching.



“The student workers are hilarious and very inspiring. They are such hard-working individuals, and I like being able to mentor them in their college journeys. Being next to Starbucks is also a plus!”

**Jazmine Coats** joins the team as access services manager at Fondren Library, where she supervises 20 student assistants and works with the access services team to create and implement policies and procedures that best fit daily needs. A graduate of the University of North Texas, she spent six years at Dallas Public Library as a library associate and out of school time coordinator for the Youth Services Department. Coats enjoys writing poetry, going for walks and trying new restaurants. She recently became an aunt and considers it her best reward in 2023.

## A doctoral graduate makes her return to campus

**Carrie Johnston '14** joined the SMU community – this time as a staff member – in August. The graduate, who earned her Ph.D. in English from SMU in 2014, joins the Libraries team as director of research and scholarly initiatives. In this role, she leads the SMU Libraries’ research team in planning and implementing services to support original research projects (particularly those focused on big data), digital research and scholarship methods as well as interdisciplinary projects.

Johnston also works to identify research needs and develop services to support advanced researchers in collaboration with the Libraries’ director of educational initiatives and campus partners such as OIT’s research and data science services team, the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the Office of Faculty Success, and the Office of Engaged Learning.

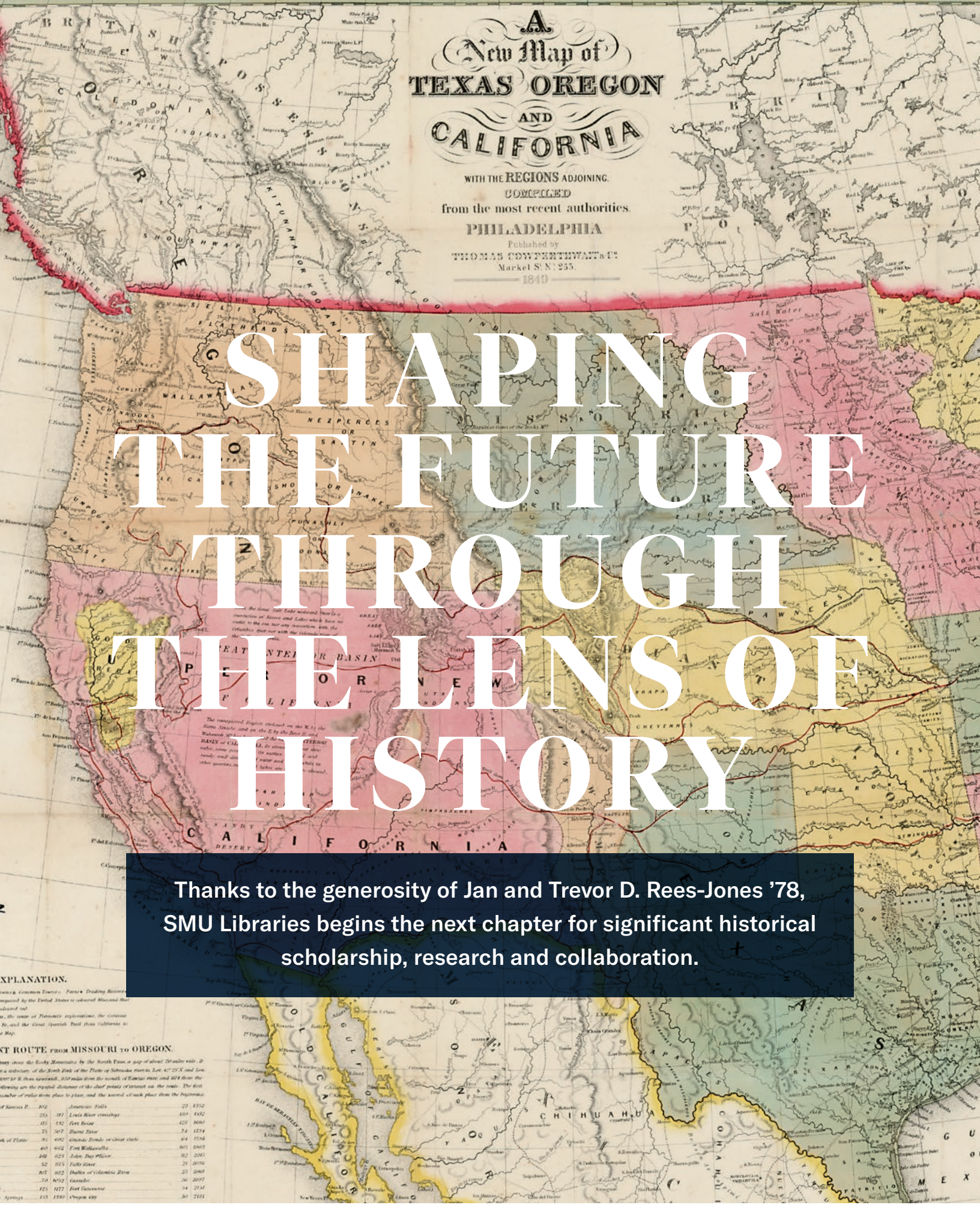
“I have been delighted to return to campus and see such a dynamic community of scholars and the robust research infrastructure that is being developed to support them,” she says. “I am excited about a number of projects and initiatives that are on the horizon for the SMU Libraries research and scholarly initiatives team.”

Among those projects was a drop-in Mapathon in the Fondren Starbucks on November 1 to aid in relief efforts in the aftermath of the earthquake in Morocco. Johnston and her colleagues are working with the Office of Research Innovation to support grant writing, particularly data management plans for federal grants. Other initiatives include Data Drop-Ins for those seeking help finding, cleaning, analyzing, visualizing and storing datasets; digital humanities workshops such as Introduction to Text Analysis and Python for Absolute Beginners; and humanities data incubators for wrangling humanities datasets.

As the research and scholarly initiatives team grows, Johnston looks forward to developing plans for a research studio that will serve as a hub for interdisciplinary research across campus.







# SHAPING THE FUTURE THROUGH THE LENS OF HISTORY

Thanks to the generosity of Jan and Trevor D. Rees-Jones '78, SMU Libraries begins the next chapter for significant historical scholarship, research and collaboration.

For the past two decades, Dallas entrepreneur Trevor D. Rees-Jones '78 has been unearthing the untold stories of our nation's history by assembling a unique collection of rare historical artifacts of the American West. Through a recent gift, he and his wife, Jan Rees-Jones, make this remarkable treasure trove available to scholars for generations to come.

At the heart of their gift lies a substantial portion of the Rees-Jones Collection, encompassing 30,000 items, including rare books, manuscripts, maps, photographs and ephemera. Their support – part of *SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow*, the University's multiyear \$1.5 billion campaign for impact – includes \$25 million to establish and build the Rees-Jones Library of the American West and a \$5 million endowment to support the library and its collections.

Their commitment is the largest and most impactful gift ever received by SMU Libraries, says SMU Libraries Dean Holly Jeffcoat. This historic gift will expand opportunities for researchers and historians and open new paths for academic exploration, learning and collaboration for students, faculty and the community beyond campus.

"We are incredibly grateful to Jan and Trevor Rees-Jones for their generous contribution to SMU Libraries and our community," says Jeffcoat. "Importantly, having both the Rees-Jones Collection and the existing DeGolyer Library on the same campus makes our resources on the American West among the very best in higher education and an essential research destination for scholars."

These SMU Libraries resources strengthen the University's standing among leading

institutions with special collections devoted to the history of the American West, such as the University of California at Berkeley and Yale University.

### Constructing the Rees-Jones Library

Construction of the Rees-Jones Library is expected to commence in late 2024, when the Science Information Center (SIC) that's now part of Fondren Library is torn down to make way for the new structure.

In preparation, staff members and materials will be relocated. In December, the dean's suite will move temporarily to the SIC while the current suite is renovated. In January 2024, the SMU Archives will be moved to Iron Mountain, a secure storage facility in Dallas. In early summer 2024, Technical Services, the Norwick Center for Digital Solutions and the Interlibrary Loan Department, as well as the temporarily relocated dean's suite, will move to refurbished quarters in Fondren Library.

Also starting in summer 2024, all collections now in the Science Information Center – government documents, maps, microforms, Dewey classification books, and science journals and books – will be moved to Iron Mountain.

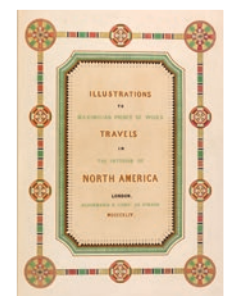
"DeGolyer Library will remain operational for researchers but will not be mounting exhibits in Hillcrest Hall for three years; instead, the exhibit space will be used as a reading room for students, to compensate for loss of study space in SIC," says Russell L. Martin, III, director of DeGolyer Library.

Since the announcement of the construction project in May, library staff members have been weeding collections, updating catalog records and preparing for the migration of collections to off-site storage. Most collections will be accessible

during the three years of construction, Martin says. "Moving over 1 million items requires both brains and brawn."

The new hub for historic preservation and future-focused discovery will bring together library staff with students, faculty, community members and visiting scholars for immersion in the Rees-Jones Collection and DeGolyer Library's expansive special collections focused on the American West. Library staff will have, for the first time, workspaces designed for special collections. Programming will unfold in spaces that showcase digital and physical materials and behind-the-scenes library work; enable independent and collaborative research; and provide impactful learning opportunities, curated exhibits and signature events.

A grand opening for the new library is expected in winter 2027, when the Rees-Jones Collection is installed, DeGolyer Library's companion collections are moved



Opposite page Samuel Augustus Mitchell (1790-1868), *Description of Oregon and California, Embracing the Gold Regions [with] A New Map of Texas, Oregon, and California ...*, Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwait, 1849. Above left Andrew J. Russell (1829-1902), *Trestle Work at Promontory, In Union Pacific Railroad Illustrations* (1869). Above Karl Bodmer (1809-1893) for Prince Maximilian zu Wied-Neuwied (1782-1867), *Travels in the Interior of North America ...*, London: Ackermann & Co., 1843. Below Jan and Trevor D. Rees-Jones '78.



*I feel honored to have our names connected directly to E.L. DeGolyer's legacy at SMU, and I look forward to seeing how the Rees-Jones Library will inspire and support future generations of scholars."*

Trevor Rees-Jones '78





*The relative breadth of the DeGolyer Library is counterbalanced by the great depth of the Rees-Jones Library. The combined holdings will be able to support teaching and research in very specialized areas and also in broader interdisciplinary approaches.”*

DeGolyer Library Director Russell L. Martin, III

to the new space and other collections stored off-site will return to stack space in Fondren.

Look for updates about this transformative resource in future newsletters.

**Rees-Jones Collection: Bringing history alive**

Trevor Rees-Jones’ interest in collecting began during a childhood visit to the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, the Fort Worth museum known for its works in various media depicting the American West. Over the past 20 years, Rees-Jones formed what has become one of the most significant private holdings of Western Americana in the country, says curator Rick Stewart.

“Focused on the exploration and settlement of the trans-Mississippi West, the collection includes thousands of rare and historically significant books, pamphlets, broadsides, maps, atlases, documents, manuscripts, photographs, prints, archival materials and printed ephemera,” Stewart says.

The primary collecting period comprises the late 17th century to the mid-20th century. Among the collection’s highlights are:

- Nearly all the major color plate folios published on the trans-Mississippi West during the 19th century.
- Albums of masterworks by pioneering photographers.
- Many unique and highly significant manuscript maps, as well as landmark sheet maps, atlases and foldout maps in books.
- Correspondence and documents from major historic figures.

**Connecting the past to our future**

Rees-Jones, founder and chairman of Chief Oil & Gas, represents the second of three generations of SMU alumni. He earned his Juris Doctor from the SMU Dedman School of Law after graduating with a Bachelor of

Arts from Dartmouth College. His father, SMU alumnus and prominent Dallas attorney Trevor William Rees-Jones ’43, served as the lawyer for the estate of the late E.L. DeGolyer, Sr., an oil industry pioneer, extraordinary book collector and philanthropist.

In 1973, trustees of the DeGolyer Foundation voted to transfer ownership of DeGolyer’s private library and its endowment to SMU.

Numbering roughly 21,000 volumes at the time of DeGolyer’s death in 1956, today the library holds about 180,000 volumes, over 1 million photographs, about 2,500 separate manuscript collections, over 3,000 maps, over 4,000 newspaper and periodical titles and an extensive collection of ephemera, says Martin.

“While the Rees-Jones Library is focused primarily on the pre-1901 period, the DeGolyer Library has, by design and by opportunity, collected 20th-century material,” Martin says.

DeGolyer Library’s special collections, particularly those centering on railroad history, southwestern photography, business history, women’s archives and Mexican history, will complement and supplement the new American West collection.

Both libraries contain invaluable rarities; however, their holdings of common, workaday imprints can be just as valuable to researchers piecing together full pictures of the past.

“SMU will now have not only superb



examples of extremely rare (and sometimes unique) materials, but also broad and deep collections of ‘ordinary’ Western imprints, the raw materials of what scholars call ‘print culture.’ Great libraries need both to attract researchers,” Martin says.

**Catalyzing collaboration on campus and beyond**

The Rees-Jones Collection and Rees-Jones Library of the American West will enable SMU Libraries to build on longstanding relationships with allied academic departments while opening doors to new ones.

A prime example is the travel grants program offered through the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies at SMU. Since 1996, the Clements Center has promoted research, publishing, teaching and public programming in a variety of fields of inquiry related to Texas, the American Southwest and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. The travel grants for scholars have brought a host of visiting researchers to the DeGolyer Library over the years. They, in turn, write and publish dissertations, articles and books based on their work in residence. With the coming of the Rees-Jones Library, this

activity should only increase, Martin says.

Beyond the Dallas campus, SMU-in-Taos offers immersive cultural experiences and unique research opportunities related to the American West. While in Taos, New Mexico, students and visitors perform in-depth research in a culturally rich and energetic environment replete with singular collaborative experiences for artists, historians and earth scientists seeking a greater understanding of one of the country’s most unique regions.

Other academic departments across the University also offer programs and curricula

related to the American West, all of which will benefit from SMU Libraries’ Western Americana resources.

“The Rees-Jones Collection and Rees-Jones Library of the American West will diversify our offerings to students and faculty and enrich crucial conversations about our collective past and future,” Jeffcoat says. ■

**Opposite page** Charles M. Russell (1864-1926), *Buffalo Family*, 1921. **Above** Thomas Moran (1837-1926), *Yellowstone National Park and Other Mountain Regions*, 1876.



# Finding deep meaning in research

Since I began my time as a student worker at DeGolyer Library in summer 2021, the library has become one of the most welcoming work environments I've ever been a part of. All the librarians deeply care about their work and helping their student workers appreciate that work, as well.

This has been my first time working with special collections materials. As a graduate student, being able to look at materials from the era I specialize in has led to my research being elevated, and the librarians have been encouraging mentors, guiding my research as much as professors.

SMU is fortunate to have so many resources on specialized topics, and DeGolyer works tirelessly to make these materials available to students and the public, as well. DeGolyer hosts several events throughout the year and cycles materials on public display through various exhibitions.

DeGolyer allows SMU to participate in public humanities and has helped me learn the importance of engaging with the community outside of the University. I feel lucky to be a part of the ways in which DeGolyer and its librarians are doing important work for the campus. ■

Joy Morrow '26

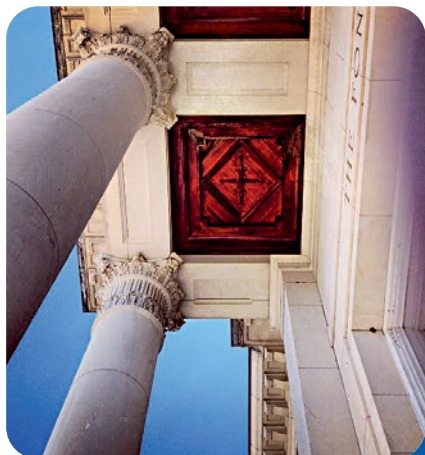
**Academic background:** Bachelor's degrees in English and sociology, Northeastern State University '15; master's degree in literature, Northeastern State University '17

**Current pursuits:** Ph.D. in English, SMU

**Fun fact:** She plays board games and works puzzles during study breaks.



“I feel lucky to be a part of the ways in which DeGolyer and its librarians are doing important work for the campus.”



# Objects of note

Jane Chu '81 tells inspiring stories of the immigrant experience

In early September, visual artist Jane Chu '81 paid a visit to her alma mater, taking part in a Lunch and Learn Talk in the Owen Arts Center and a Wine Reception and Artist's Talk in the Hawn Gallery of Hamon Arts Library. She also visited two graduate classes in the Arts Management and Arts Entrepreneurship program, giving students an opportunity to learn about her career in arts fundraising.

These intimate opportunities for members of the SMU community to meet with Chu came in celebration of the opening of her exhibit, *What We Keep: The Objects of Immigrants to America*, which debuted September 7.

In the exhibition, Chu

explores themes of perseverance, determination, sentimentality and identity. Fifteen drawings tell the story of her mother's perilous journey out of her native China as a teenager in 1949 during the Chinese Revolution. Each drawing depicts a black-and-white scene with a color sketch of the object overlaid, some of which are keepsakes and keys to the storytelling. The technique creates a 3D optical illusion emerging from the 2D format.

“I want my art to reflect how we can embrace multiple perspectives at the same time,” she told Beverly Mitchell, Hawn Gallery curator and assistant director of Hamon Arts Library. “Sometimes, society pressures us to fit into one framework at



“

*I want my art to reflect how we can embrace multiple perspectives at the same time.*”

Jane Chu '81

the expense of another. But in reality, it is totally possible to incorporate disparate mindsets simultaneously, and this is reflected in the style of my drawings.”

Chu, who received her master's degree in piano pedagogy from Meadows School of the Arts, resides in New York. She served as the 11th chair of the National Endowment for the Arts from 2014 to 2018. Many of her illustrations accompany the moving stories of immigrants coming to the United States in the Smithsonian's *Folklife Magazine*.

The exhibit runs through December 15. ■

Read more

[smu.edu/libraries/exhibits/campus](https://smu.edu/libraries/exhibits/campus)





# Papers of noted financial journalist, young adult author added to Archives of Women of the Southwest

**A**rchives of Women of the Southwest has a new acquisition in the papers of Karen Blumenthal '90, given last year by the late writer's husband, Scott McCartney. A financial journalist from Dallas, Blumenthal (1959–2020) wrote for *The Dallas Morning News* and *The Wall Street Journal's* Dallas bureau.

After years of working for news outlets, she pivoted to writing for young adults. Her books for teens took on hot topics including gun control, sex discrimination and abortion rights. Titles include *Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition* (2011); *Tommy: The Gun*



*that Changed America* (2015); and *Jane Against the World* (2020). She also wrote biographies of modern historical figures,

including Sam Walton, Steve Jobs and Hillary Clinton.

Much of Blumenthal's research was conducted in the DeGolyer Library. She served on the Friends of SMU Libraries Board and as a table host at the Tables of Content fundraiser. As a passionate fan of libraries, Blumenthal also supported the Dallas Public Library – in fact, the Forest Green Branch posthumously dedicated its auditorium and children's section to the author.

The collection includes research files, manuscript drafts, columns, newspaper clippings, interviews, reviews, correspondence and copies of her publications. It is available now for research use. ■

**Discover more**  
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## Celebrating a noted author and beloved professor

On August 24, friends and colleagues of author and SMU Professor Emeritus of English C.W. Smith gathered in the Texana Room of Fondren Library to hear snippets of his newest book, *The Museum of Marriage*. The short-story collection explores themes of solitary life, romance and marriage. The evening was also a chance to celebrate Smith's 50 years of authorship, with a retrospective exhibit of his publications on display, dating back to 1973.

Smith joined the faculty of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences in 1980. Later, in 2006, he was named a Dedman Family Distinguished Professor. He has received two Jesse H. Jones Awards from the Texas Institute of Letters and the Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story. He has also won the Southwestern



Library Association Award for Best Novel and two National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowships.

The event was co-sponsored by the DeGolyer Library, Friends of SMU Libraries and the SMU English Department.

## REMEMBERING A CHANCE ASSIGNMENT

On November 16, SMU Professor Emeritus of Communications Darwin Payne took part in a Q-and-A and book signing recalling his time as a reporter covering the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

In November 1963, Payne was working for the *Dallas Times Herald* when he rushed to Dealey Plaza following gunshots. There, he interviewed eyewitnesses and detectives outside the Texas School Book Depository. He was among several journalists taken to the sixth-floor window, where the shots had been fired. Later in the day, Payne followed the story to the Oak Cliff rooming house where Lee Harvey Oswald had been living.

Payne's book, *Behind the Scenes: Covering the JFK Assassination*, was published in October by the University of North Texas Press. Following a reception, Payne discussed his book and recollections in the Moody Hall Auditorium. The discussion was led by Paul Santa Cruz, archivist at the George W. Bush Presidential Library.



## Worth its weight in gold

**A**n image from the Lawrence T. Jones III Texas Photographs collection makes its way to a South Texas museum exhibit.

A photo request for a sepia-toned image of Colegio Altamirano from the Lawrence T. Jones III Texas Photographs digital collection – held by the DeGolyer Library – is helping to add context and depth to an exhibit in South Texas.

The image, taken in 1899, features a group of students and teachers outside the school in Hebbbronville, Texas, not far from the Mexican border. In the photo is a young Tomasita Martínez, a student whose father founded the school in 1897.

The photo, requested by Museum of South Texas History CEO Francisco Guajardo, made its way into the museum's exhibit *Dr. Garcia's Gold*.

The exhibit tells the story of 400 gold coins buried underneath the house of Martínez's husband, José García, in San Diego, Texas. The small-town doctor buried them during the Great Depression, just as President Franklin D. Roosevelt had signed an executive order to collect gold that was privately owned by Americans.

Upon his and Tomasita's daughter's marriage in 1950, García told the new couple about the gold – but they were never able to find it. Fast forward to 2002, when the home's new owner enlisted a plumber to help with a leaky pipe – and the gold was found.

But instead of reporting the find to the homeowner, the plumber took the pieces for himself and began selling them. A lawsuit ensued, until the original couple saw a news report about the story. In 2004, a county jury

determined that the couple were, in fact, the rightful owners.

"In developing the exhibit, we wanted to know more about Tomasita and found the direct connection to El Colegio Altamirano and your collection," explains Guajardo.

Guajardo notes that Gloria López, the daughter of Tomasita and José García, passed away in 2021 and left \$275 million to create the Hector and Gloria López Foundation, established exclusively to provide scholarships to first-generation Latino students from South Texas.

"The history of Colegio Altamirano is fascinating, but the story of Tomasita and the importance of education and schooling to that particular family and to the community were all significant points somehow imbued within one photograph," says Guajardo.

## How I use the library:

Check out how these students are using our resources – for academic and social purposes.



"I mostly come to the library to study. I think that the environment helps me focus and keeps me accountable."

Kitty Eid '27



"I use the library to get ahead on studying, prepare for class the next day and also meet with people in my graduate program to work on projects. It's a place where I can kind of get away and focus a bit easier."

Jackson Goodwin '24



"I use the library to study not only by myself but with friends, as well. If we have a common class or want to spend time together but don't have time to do so because we're busy, we can study together."

Zoe Mukendi '26



# MUSTANGS ON THE MOVE



**A–C** Families are all smiles during SMU Family Weekend, September 29–30. **D–E** Students snap some pics with Perna during Homecoming Week. **F** Author Jim Schutze discusses his book, *The Accommodation: The Politics of Race in an American City*, with Deep Vellum Books founder and owner Will Evans on October 11. **G** Stephen Markley shares excerpts of his bestseller *The Deluge: A Novel* with attendees on October 16. **H** Sharon Liberman Mintz, senior consultant with Sotheby's and an expert on the Codex Sassoon, shares a private viewing of the manuscript with medieval studies classmates Blake Wallace '24 and Raleigh Dewan '23. **I** An estimated 3,500 visitors came to view the Codex Sassoon during its three-day exhibit at Bridwell Library. **J** Staff members and friends pony up at Pastries with Perna.



# EXHIBITS



## *The World Methodist Museum Collections and the St. John's Bible*

**Semi-permanent exhibition**

The Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Galleries, Bridwell Library

In spring 2021, the World Methodist Council announced that Bridwell Library would be the recipient of the World Methodist Museum collections. Now, more than two years later, the exhibition opened October 2. This extensive exhibition, which is on long-term display and is free and open to the public daily, features just a portion of items on display at any given time. Many of the artifacts are set to be on rotation and have been carefully reviewed by Bridwell staff and scholars.



Jane Chu

## *What We Keep: The Objects of Immigrants to America* Through December 15

Hawn Gallery, Hamon Arts Library

*What We Keep: The Objects of Immigrants to America* is an installation of 15 drawings by artist Jane Chu '81. The exhibition centers upon her mother's journey out of China during the Chinese Revolution of 1949. A graduate of the Meadows School of the Arts, Chu believes that asking people to identify a personal object of meaning can serve as a gateway to learning their stories. (See Page 11.)



# SAVE *the* DATE

## Tables of Content

Saturday, March 23, 2024



Join us at 6 p.m. on March 23 for our annual Tables of Content dinner and Literati Award presentation. The 2024 Literati Award recipient is Norm Hitzges, a pioneer of sports radio and author of four books.





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