

# ANNUAL REPORT

---

FISCAL 2004-2005

---

## VCU LIBRARIES

### MISSION

VCU Libraries promotes the academic success of our students, invigorates research and scholarship, and advances the health care and outreach missions of the University with exemplary collections, services, spaces, and staff.

### VISION

VCU Libraries opens doors to learning and discovery. Our welcoming environment inspires scholarship, creativity, and the exchange of ideas. We anticipate the needs of our community and work to exceed its expectations. We dedicate our expertise to building the best libraries for the VCU of today, and we are committed to growing in partnership with the VCU of tomorrow.

### VALUES

*As members of the VCU Libraries Staff, we:*

Place the VCU community at the forefront of everything we do;

Believe that higher education transforms lives;

Affirm that a great university is built upon a great library;

Bring a commitment to excellence and a record of innovation to the teaching, research, and health care mission of VCU;

Serve as stewards of the University's information resources and contribute to the world's repository of knowledge;

Celebrate the diverse ideas and cultures that enrich our community;

Respect and protect the privacy of individuals;

Abide by principles of intellectual integrity and academic freedom.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

## VCU LIBRARIES

### Section I: Executive Summary

The VCU Libraries concluded the most productive and successful year in its history during fiscal 2004-05. The University restored all funding from previous cuts and,

#### ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

**ADDED** 39,397 titles and 47,314 volumes, bringing the total volumes in the collection to over 1.8 million.

**EXPENDED** nearly \$5 million to enhance collections.

**WELCOMED** 1,523,195 visitors to the Libraries.

**ANSWERED** 60,738 reference/information requests.

**CONDUCTED** 766 instructional sessions and orientations for more than 18,156 attendees.

**CIRCULATED** 188,649 items to the University community and provided over 74,629 electronic reserve accesses.

**BORROWED** 9,286 items through our interlibrary loan program and provided 21,036 items to other libraries.

**DELIVERED** over 3,125 documents/items to faculty and graduate students via the Libraries' document delivery services.

**EXPANDED** offerings of electronic materials by adding over 10,857 electronic books to the collections.

**SUPPORTED** the University's teaching and research with almost 16,000 print, electronic, and microform journal subscriptions and access to articles from over 7,300 other electronic journal titles.

**EXPANDED** outreach and development activities for the VCU and Richmond communities at 53 events attended by over 2000 individuals.

snapshot of the year. Visits to library facilities continued their year-over-year pattern of growth, up another 14% from FY03-04. Since FY00-01, visits have grown from 995,000 yearly to over 1,500,000 yearly, a growth of nearly 53% in just five years.

further, modestly improved the budget to its strongest in history. With improved funding, the VCU Libraries established programs to meet long-standing service requests from the VCU community; strengthened collections in areas experiencing the most urgent needs; deployed advanced automated services that significantly improved convenience and usability for students and faculty; enhanced physical spaces for students; and once again exceeded the previous year in the visibility and success of its cultural outreach programming. It must be noted that although improved funding has provided immediate, visible benefit to the VCU community, funding levels are still far from those appropriate for a research library system. The FY04-05 and FY05-06 budget allocations still place the VCU Libraries at the bottom of rankings for nearly every metric of research library strength, especially in journal subscriptions and total expenditures.

The activity highlights summary (left) gives a quantitative

Circulation of books declined by 3% over FY03-04, reflecting the growing availability of electronic books provided by the VCU Libraries and the preference for library materials in digital format. Interlibrary loan requests for materials from other libraries grew substantially, reflecting both improvements in automated systems providing ILL services as well as an increase in sponsored research. A decline in the number of titles and volumes added to the collection reflects the continued emphasis on acquiring electronic scholarly journals and databases that are in high demand, especially by faculty and graduate students. Instructional sessions and reference and information requests grew over FY03-04, a consequence of increased enrollment and the central role library facilities as the chief destination for conducting academic work at VCU. Cultural and community programs reached another high point during FY04-05.

Budget investments during the fiscal year were guided by quantitative and qualitative data from surveys and focus groups conducted in FY03-04. One of the most important sources for those data was the LibQUAL+ survey administered in spring 2004. LibQUAL+ is a suite of services that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. The LibQUAL+ final report was delivered in June 2004 and complete data analysis was made available in August 2004. The results from the LibQUAL+ survey and from other assessment efforts played a major role in directing investment of new funding in FY04-05. The VCU Libraries will conduct the LibQUAL+ survey again in spring 2006 to assess the impact of investments on areas identified by LibQUAL+ as areas of concern.

The LibQUAL+ and focus group data also informed a new strategic planning process that began in FY04-05. The VCU Libraries decided to use the Balanced Scorecard planning methodology, which is well established in business and health care environments but only just emerging into higher education. The methodology emphasizes measures and assessment, lends itself to quick implementation, focuses on balance between internal and external goals, and is readily adaptable to changes in environment and circumstance. The VCU Libraries expects to complete its new strategic plan early in the fiscal year.

## **Budget developments**

---

The University increased funding to the VCU Libraries and migrated one-time funding in the FY03-04 budget to the permanent budget in FY04-05. The new permanent allocations recovered budget cuts from previous years and advanced the budget modestly. Consequently the VCU Libraries in FY04-05 marked the strongest budget in its history.

Budget recovery for VCU's library system was of the highest importance for the library system and the University. The VCU Libraries' reported budget to the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) for FY03-04 was less than \$9 million, placing it very near to the bottom of funding levels in ASERL (ASERL fiscal reporting excludes personnel benefits.) The low standing threatened VCU's membership in that group, which would have significantly compromised its claim as a research library system. (ASERL represents 37 research libraries in the Southeast, and gathers data

using the same survey instruments and reporting policies as the Association of Research Libraries. All ARL members in the Southeast also are members of ASERL.) Fortunately, the new budget secures the place of VCU in ASERL and helps preserve the standing of the VCU Libraries as a research library system. About 56% of the new funding was directed to collections and 44% directed to personnel and operations. The VCU Libraries expects to report a budget of \$10.4 million to ASERL for FY04-05, representing an actual loaded budget of about \$11.5 million.

The strengthened budget had an immediate and visible impact on the VCU community in FY04-05. VCU students and faculty benefited from longer library building hours; stronger security arrangements; improved hours and more help for students; and improved collections in areas of strongest research focus at VCU.

### **Service recovery and improvements**

---

Building hours for both James Branch Cabell Library and Tompkins-McCaw Library were restored to FY02-03 levels during FY04-05. In addition, regular weekday hours at TML were extended and both libraries extended their hours on Saturday and Sunday. With these changes, VCU offered the longest library hours of any public academic library in Virginia except for the University of Virginia. (UVA has a dedicated 24-hour undergraduate library facility.)

Assistance to students during building hours previously began at noon and ended at 8pm in Cabell Library, a very small number of assistance hours compared to other academic libraries. These hours were extended to cover 9am to midnight, bringing Cabell Library to the forefront in hours of assistance offered to students. The new services were enthusiastically received by students, particularly the late night hours – many students arrive at Cabell Library after classes end at 10pm and help for them has been especially welcome. Weekend assistance hours also were extended, and TML provided assistance from its service desk during all hours of operation.

For the first time in VCU's history, the VCU Libraries opened Cabell Library round-the-clock during the final three weeks of the spring semester. The "Library Lite All Nite" initiative opened Cabell Library at 9am on Sunday morning and did not close Cabell again until 9pm on Friday night from April 24 through May 13, 2005. Saturday hours were unchanged, since Friday evening and Saturday use is traditionally the lowest-demand period during the academic week. The entire building and all resources were available to students, including individual student and group study rooms, all library digital and print resources, the Cabell computer lab, and checkout services. Enhanced security provided a safe environment for students completing projects and studying throughout the night.

Use of the building during the overnight period was surprisingly strong. Over 4,500 students took advantage of the service during the period, an average of over 300 students each night during the overnight period. Five evenings saw use by over 300 students; two evenings topped 400 students; and one evening exceeded 500 students in the building. At the close of the fiscal year the VCU Libraries was evaluating results

and considering whether to provide the service again in FY05-06. If the service is continued, experience at other institutions has shown that user counts during the overnight period grow larger as the service matures and student awareness of round-the-clock availability grows.

LibQUAL+ results from spring 2004 indicated that students and faculty at VCU had a generally satisfactory service experience with the VCU Libraries. However, the survey revealed important exceptions to that experience which pointed to inconsistent service responses and training among staff. Library staff developed and implemented several initiatives in FY04-05 designed to improve service scores and eliminate inconsistent service experiences among service points and staff.

To encourage more feedback on library services and collections, the VCU Libraries initiated a library suggestion blog in spring 2005. In the blog, openly available on the VCU Libraries' web site, users may submit questions, comments, and concerns to which library staff will respond, and students in return may respond to those answers. The freely open nature of the blog has resulted in much more feedback than the earlier individual email and physical suggestion boxes. The library suggestion blog appears to be the first and only such freely-available suggestion blog at VCU, and the candid honesty of its content clearly has a great appeal to the VCU community.

### **Facilities and physical plant enhancements**

---

The strain placed on library facilities by increased enrollment continued to be a major concern in FY04-05. VCU last added library space in 1975, 30 years ago as of August 2005. Since then, the growth of collections and the allocation of library space to university priorities has eroded space for students by nearly 30%, leaving significantly less space than in 1975 to handle an enrollment that has grown nearly 80% since then. In addition, much of the increased enrollment comprises full-time resident undergraduates who make the most use of library facilities. Seating and computers in Cabell Library typically are fully occupied from late morning to late evening, leading to overcrowded conditions during much of the day. Another factor is collection growth, which has exceeded the originally planned capacity of library space at VU by over 60%: originally built to house a maximum of 1.1 million volumes, the VCU Libraries' collections now exceed 1.8 million volumes.

The LibQUAL+ survey from spring 2004 identified library facilities as one of the areas of greatest dissatisfaction among students and faculty. Responders to the survey rated VCU's library facilities below their most basic expectations for libraries, and the survey's open-ended comments included many references to noise and disorder, ripped carpets, poor furnishings, inadequate housekeeping, and overcrowding.

University leadership worked closely with the VCU Libraries during the fiscal year to modestly improve library facilities and preserve student seating from encroachment by collections growth. In addition, the VCU Libraries launched major initiatives to reduce noise and disorder on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of Cabell Library.

- Compact shelving: In December 2004 the University allocated \$150,000 in one-time funds to acquire compact shelving, matched by the VCU Libraries with an additional \$220,000. In an intense effort that required the cooperation of several University operations housed in Cabell Library, storage space was cleared in the basement area and allocated to the shelving. Installation was completed in April 2005, providing storage for over 70,000 volumes that would otherwise have required 3,500 square feet of shelving in student seating areas.
- Carpeting: In spring 2005 the University approved funding and installation of new carpet on the three upper floors of Cabell Library. Much of the carpet there dated to the opening of the building in 1975, and was extensively patched and stained, presenting a safety hazard as well as an embarrassingly unsightly appearance. Installation was expected to be finished in August 2005.
- Environment in Cabell Library: Overcrowded conditions led to numerous complaints from faculty and students about noise and disorder in Cabell Library, especially in the primary individual study areas on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of the building. In response, the VCU Libraries developed new policy guidelines, enforcement standards, and publicity and signage. Staff also rearranged furniture and space to reduce noise and encourage quiet study behaviors. The new 4<sup>th</sup> floor Quiet Floor and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor “Sotto Voce” campaigns reduced noise and restored order to quiet study areas.
- Front sidewalks at Cabell Library: The University concluded planning for a complete renovation of the sidewalk area in front of Cabell Library in February 2005. The new sidewalks were designed to match existing brick designs on Shafer Court. The design widened the walkway to accommodate increased foot traffic; removed landscaping that concealed the north side access walkway for disabled persons, a potential safety hazard; and added an access ramp on the south side of Cabell Library. Construction was scheduled for summer 2005.
- Group viewing room in Cabell: In response to higher demand for DVD viewing and audio facilities, the existing group viewing room in Cabell Library was expanded and updated with contemporary video and audio technology. The new facility has proved very popular.
- Quiet Study and Instructional Media Workshop rooms at Tompkins-McCaw: These two spaces in Tompkins-McCaw Library were relocated and significantly renovated during the fiscal year. Both spaces were enlarged and modernized and immediately began to experience substantially expanded use by students. Staff time in maintenance and operation of the rooms was reduced by the changes.
- Security system: The VCU Libraries completed plans for security systems in both library facilities during the fiscal year. The new security system for Cabell Library was nearly installed by the end of the fiscal year and provides central card access control, security cameras, and additional panic/alert buttons for staff. The

installation is expected to come online early in the next fiscal year. The plans include an upgrade to the security system in Tompkins-McCaw during FY05-06.

## Information systems

---

The VCU Libraries continued its exemplary record in bringing new and enhanced digital collections and services to the web in FY04-05.

- **Get It @ VCU:** Researchers at VCU particularly benefited from the implementation of the Get It @ VCU service in spring 2005. Get It @ VCU links citations in journal databases and other digital reference sources to the item cited; for example, it immensely simplifies the process of locating a journal article from a citation to that article. Frequently Get It @ VCU supplies a direct link from the citation to the complete electronic text of the article, wherever that text resides and regardless of its publisher or provider, so that a researcher need only click on the link to see immediately the article cited. In other cases, the link will lead the researcher to the exact catalog record for a cited book or reference resource, where the researcher can determine if the work is available. Get It @ VCU even connects the researcher to VCU Libraries' ILLiad interlibrary loan system if VCU Libraries does not provide access to the cited item.
- **Email courtesy notices and email receipts:** The VCU Libraries began to use electronic mail to remind users when checked-out materials are due in FY03-04, and complemented that service during FY04-05 with electronic receipts for returned items. These features have been enthusiastically received by the VCU community. There has been a negative consequence: the reminder notices have significantly improved returns and slashed overdue fine receipts, requiring the VCU Libraries to fulfill the revenue requirement for overdue fines by tapping its salary savings line. As in the case of photocopy services, ILL, and other services, an improved service and success unfortunately has translated into a budget cut for the VCU Libraries.
- **Aleph migration:** The VCU Libraries uses the Aleph integrated library system software from Ex Libris Inc. to manage its circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, journal processing, and other collection management functions. Staff planned and initiated a transition to a major release of the software, with the changeover expected by the end of July 2005. The upgrade introduces many new features, including services such as automated checkout machines.
- **Library suggestion blog:** See "Service recovery and improvements" above.
- **Qatar:** The VCU Libraries, the School of the Arts, and the School of the Arts Qatar Campus collaborated in spring 2005 to create a new management solution for the electronic catalog, book checkout, cataloging, acquisitions, and other functions at the Qatar campus library. In April 2005, the VCU Libraries and SOTA-Qatar agreed to migrate data and records from the existing integrated library software system operated by the Qatar library to the Aleph system operated by the VCU Libraries. A test configuration confirmed that access by Qatar faculty, students,

and staff to the Richmond-based system was transparent to them and fully functional in all respects. The design retains full policy and operational control for the Qatar library while migrating all technical and support operations to servers and staff in Richmond. The transition to the new system by the Qatar library is expected to be complete by August 2005.

- Computers for student use: The VCU Libraries increased the number of computers available to students in library buildings during the fiscal year. Library buildings now provide 270 student-use computers, with 176 computers in Cabell Library and 94 in Tompkins-McCaw. In addition, a small number of desktop computers in Cabell Library were equipped with the Microsoft Office suite, and the remainder equipped with the open-source, Microsoft Office-compatible OpenOffice applications software. All computers in Tompkins-McCaw Library were equipped with the Microsoft Office suite. These software installations effectively transform library student-use computers into an extension of VCU's computer labs for many students. The VCU Libraries plans to expand Microsoft Office installations on Cabell Library computers using Student Technology Fees in FY05-06.

## **Collections**

---

The LibQUAL+ survey in spring 2004 confirmed that the VCU community is deeply unhappy with access to the scholarly record provided by library collections in the VCU Libraries. The lowest scores in the survey came from faculty and graduate students in their assessment of library resources provided by the VCU Libraries, especially their access to scholarly journals – indeed, the scores were such a significant departure from scores at other research universities that it raises library collections to a level of serious concern for VCU. The survey results were predictable: the very weak budget of the VCU Libraries compared to library funding at other major research universities undermines the scope and depth of collections, particularly in scholarly journal subscriptions. Consequently, the chief priority of budget requests from the VCU Libraries over the previous 4 years has been a stronger budget for library collections and especially for journal subscriptions.

Because of budget improvements in FY04-05, the VCU Libraries experienced a year of heartening recovery in its collections. The recovery began to address some of the concern expressed by faculty and students about library collections. Cancellations of journal subscription originally scheduled to take effect in September 2004 were suspended, preserving the existing subscription base. In addition, the VCU Libraries was able to restore some journal subscriptions and add a modest number of new subscriptions and other materials during the fiscal year, some of them crucially important to existing and planned VCU programs. Collections highlights include:

- Restored 273 journal subscriptions previously cancelled due to budget cuts: The VCU Libraries restored the subscriptions of 273 journals previously cancelled, representing the highest-demand and most important of the thousands of subscriptions cancelled since 1999.

- Added 81 new journal subscriptions: These titles established coverage in growth areas at VCU or addressed long-standing needs.
- Added 35 new collections of digital library materials: New and critically important web-based digital collections added in 2004-05 include:
  - IEEE/IEE Electronic Library: the complete text of IEEE and IEE journals, magazines, transactions, and conference proceedings, this essential reference library is a core resource for the School of Engineering and other programs at VCU and offers almost a third of the world's publishing output in electrical engineering and computer science. Acquisition of this resource is especially important to VCU: there is no reputable engineering school without access to this material, and VCU should have funded its acquisition when its School of Engineering was founded.
  - ArtSTOR: a large and growing collection of digital art images and associated data that will replace the use of slides and other physical images in many classroom settings throughout the University.
  - NetAdvantage: A comprehensive source of business and investment information that provides on-line access to all of Standard & Poor's independent research, data and commentary on stocks, bonds, funds, and industries.
  - Literature Online (LION): A fundamental resource for undergraduate education universally available at institutions with strong undergraduate programs, LION is a fully searchable library of more than 350,000 works of English and American poetry, drama and prose, 147 full-text literature journals, and other key criticism and reference resources.
  - ENVIROnetBASE: Provides 154 essential electronic reference texts in environmental science, engineering, law, and management as well as geology, ecology, and other topics in environmental science, supporting VCU's expanding programs in rivers ecology and life sciences.
  - FORENSICnetBASE: provides 103 essential electronic reference texts in criminal justice and law, forensics, and law enforcement, supporting VCU's large and growing forensic science programs.
  - RefWorks: RefWorks is a bibliographic management tool that allows students to create personal databases of citations for their papers by importing references from online databases. Students can automatically format the references to several different standards for a bibliography. This resource has had very high impact on students and faculty: the VCU Libraries has received many positive comments from across the VCU community.

The VCU Libraries continues to invest a substantially higher portion of its budget into collections than most research libraries. Collections expenditures in FY04-05 reached

\$5 million, exceeding the previous high-water benchmark set in 1993-94. Many of the purchases in FY04-05 are foundational library resources that are taken for granted at major research institutions in North America but previously unavailable at VCU, including key tools for undergraduate education. While progress is heartening, there is much more ground to cover before the VCU Libraries can meet the basic needs of research and education at VCU.

## **Grants and partnerships**

---

Active pursuit of grant funding and partnership opportunities continued as a key strategic emphasis for the VCU Libraries in FY04-05. The VCU Libraries reached a high-water mark in successful grant initiatives during the fiscal year, with most of the funding appearing in FY05-06 and subsequent years.

- Archives of the New Dominion Community Outreach initiative: Led by Curtis Lyons, Head of Special Collections and Archives for Cabell Library, the VCU Libraries submitted a proposal to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to expand the VCU Libraries' existing community outreach programs that form the basis for its Archives of the New Dominion community archives project. In July 2004 the NHPRC awarded the VCU Libraries \$160,700 for a 3-year initiative with Mr. Lyons as principal investigator. The initiative will record and preserve the work of non-profit organizations and key individuals working with the African-American, Hispanic-American, Gay and Lesbian, and Women's Activist communities in Richmond and Central Virginia. This NHPRC-funded effort will strengthen the depth and reach of historical documentation for these communities, and will extend VCU's already excellent record of commitment to its surrounding community. The Community Outreach Archivist funded by the grant was appointed in April 2005.
- COIN: Under the leadership of Jean Shipman, Director of Tompkins-McCaw Library, a planning grant to support a feasibility and design study for a proposed Community Outreach Information Network (COIN) was completed in spring 2004 and a proposal for an operational COIN was submitted to the National Library of Medicine in June 2004. NLM awarded a total of \$46,000 to the proposal in August 2004 with Jean Shipman as principal investigator. The COIN coordinator funded by the grant was appointed in November 2004.

COIN is a network of information providers through which community members and organizations can get free, current and accurate health information that is tailored to their clients' cultural needs and reading abilities. It brings together the outreach and promotional efforts of VCU's four consumer health libraries: 1) Community Health Education Center, 2) Massey Cancer Center Linen-Powell Resource Library, 3) Women's Health Resource Center at Stony Point, and 4) Massey Cancer Center Patient Resource Center also located at Stony Point. COIN provides training to intermediaries who provide health care information, those people who are naturally consulted by others for health information, such as public librarians, senior center volunteers, and pharmacists. COIN also creates a single

portal through which users can access information and resources provided by VCU's four consumer health centers. The COIN website focuses on the top health concerns of the target community: chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and heart health.

COIN forms the cornerstone of a key long-term objective of the VCU Libraries: to become the leading non-profit provider for consumer and patient health information in Virginia. It is the culmination of several years of smaller grants and projects that began with the Community Health Education Center, CHEC, and has since reached out to nearly every community in Central Virginia that is underserved with respect to health care information. Evidence points to more positive health outcomes for intervention when health care information is accessible and understood by patients and consumers, so the COIN initiative and its successors can have a major impact on health care in Virginia, especially for minority and disadvantaged communities.

- Information Rx Evaluation Project: In follow-up to the ACPF/NLM pilot Information Rx project in FY03-04, Tompkins-McCaw Library under the leadership of Jean Shipman developed a proposal to evaluate the Information Rx initiative by identifying barriers perceived by physicians to filling information prescriptions and exploring patient's actual ability and desire to fill such prescriptions. The National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) subsequently awarded \$35,000 for FY05-06 to carry out the proposal, with Jean Shipman as principal investigator. A Ph.D. student in VCU's Social Work program has been appointed to carry out the project in summer and fall 2005.
- Informationist fellowship: Tompkins-McCaw Library, under the leadership of Jean Shipman, worked with the National Institutes of Health and the National Library of Medicine throughout spring 2005 to develop a 2-year fellowship proposal that funds a VCU graduate student to explore the concept of Informationist. An informationist is an information provider who participates as part of the care provider team for patients, based on the assumption that access to easily understood healthcare information in a clinical setting will increase its use and positively affect outcome. Working under the direction of Ms. Shipman, the graduate student will develop a model for providing healthcare information that includes both extensive training and direct participation by the information provider in the care provider team. In June 2005 the NIH and NLM jointly awarded funding for the full 2-year fellowship as well as \$6,500 per year to the VCU Libraries for support costs. It is anticipated that the graduate student appointed to carry out the Information Rx Evaluation Project will complete that work in December 2005 and will then transition to the Informationist fellowship initiative in January 2006.
- NLM Associate Fellowship Program Institutional Host: Tompkins-McCaw Library, under the leadership of Jean Shipman, developed a strong proposal to the National Library of Medicine to host an NLM Associate in FY05-06. The NLM Associate Fellowship program is a postgraduate training program for outstanding health

sciences librarians early in their career. Because of the talent and distinguished contributions of Associate Fellows, competition among institutions to host Fellows is intense. In June 2005 VCU joined the elite ranks of institutions that have hosted more than one Associate when the NLM announced that Associate Rachel Gyore would intern with Tompkins-McCaw Library during FY05-06. In FY03-04 Tompkins-McCaw hosted NLM Associate Fellow Ms. Shannon Jones, a successful relationship that led to Ms. Jones' recruitment to the faculty of the VCU Libraries.

- Bioterrorism Preparedness Grant, Reynolds Geriatric Grant: These grants by VCU units include funding for support for Tomkins-McCaw Library.
- VIVA: As in previous years, the Virtual Library of Virginia (VIVA) continued to benefit from participation by VCU Libraries staff in FY04-05. In addition to the contributions of VCU Libraries' staff to web operations and other key VIVA projects, the University Librarian led a small group of librarians from Virginia institutions in requesting new funding for VIVA in the 2004-05 change budget request, as well as certain changes in legislative language defining VIVA. Although the effort was successful in getting new funds allocated to VIVA in both the Governor's budget and the House budget, the Senate deleted the funding in the closing hours of the session. However, requested changes in legislative language regarding VIVA's non-profit status were successful.
- Virginia Community College System collaboration: In a ground-breaking initiative for Virginia higher education, the VCU Libraries and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) worked together in FY04-05 to acquire and adapt for joint use the MetaLib library portal software. The implementation proved challenging but was nearing production status at the close of the fiscal year. The collaboration resulted in substantially lower costs for both institutions, significantly improved access to library resources for their users, and powerful new ways for students and faculty to locate and use library resources.

### **Private funding and promotion**

---

The VCU Libraries expanded its Development Office staff in the last half of FY04-05. A new full-time position was added and a portion of another position was assigned, bringing the total staffing resources for Development to nearly 2.5 FTE. The full-time staffing was complemented by the assignment of additional student hours. It is anticipated that a new publications officer planned for FY05-06 will relieve the Development Office of publicity responsibilities and free up that time for development priorities.

Stronger staffing allowed the Development Office to become more focused on prospect research and foundation giving. Working closely with the VCU University Advancement staff, the VCU Libraries developed and submitted a proposal for capital funding to a local foundation in spring 2005. The proposal was successful and the VCU Libraries was awarded its first successful capital campaign foundation request of

\$250,000 in May 2005. The grant requires the VCU Libraries to raise matching funds by June 2006.

Private funding overall continued to grow in FY04-05. The Friends membership roll (and consequently, annual giving) added an average of 14 new members each month, with the FOL membership at years' end standing at over 600.

Cultural programs that raise the profile of the VCU Libraries among the donor community continued a record of strong success in FY04-05.

- **Brown-Lyons Lecture:** The VCU Libraries and the Center for Judaic Studies at VCU celebrated a milestone event on March 23, 2005: the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Brown-Lyons Lecture. Dr. Jack Spiro's lecture "The Many Faces of Zionism" drew a very strong audience and was followed by spirited discussion, including contributions from Holocaust survivors in the audience. Dr. Spiro was presented with a specially framed and captioned poster of the lecture commemorating his enormous contributions to the intellectual richness and diversity of Virginia Commonwealth University and to the national dialog on religion and Judaism.
- **Cabell Lecture:** The 19th Annual Cabell Lecture achieved its highest turnout ever with an audience of over 300, including many students. Author and VCU professor Tom De Haven presented "Master Hands and the Background Man: A History of American Comics," examining the rich history of American comics and celebrating the medium's indisputable masters. Images from comic arts and graphic novels held in Cabell Library's Special Collections and Archives illustrated his fascinating talk.
- **Black History Month observance:** The VCU Libraries marked Black History Month in February 2005 with an innovative, multi-faceted approach. On February 15, VCU professor and author Christopher Brooks presented "And Still I Sing: African-American Women in Three Musical Traditions," a captivating multi-media lecture event on three ground-breaking African-American women musicians from the jazz, blues, and gospel traditions. The strong turnout exceeded that of previous Black History Month programs. In addition, the Research and Reference department in Cabell Library created a Black History Month Blog for the VCU community, featuring historical information, new research, interesting but little-known facts, intriguing mini-biographies on important figures in African-American history, and many contributions from VCU faculty, staff, and students. The blog was an innovative first for VCU and proved popular with students. To complement the blog, staff created a computerized video montage of significant black history events that ran in a continuous loop on a large plasma monitor in the Java901 café throughout the month. Finally, a web page of research and educational links related to Black History Month was featured prominently on the VCU Libraris' web site.

## Outcomes/objectives for 2005-06

---

Outcomes and objectives for 2005-06 will be guided by a new Strategic Plan for the VCU Libraries, which is under development using the Balanced Scorecard methodology. The Plan was in draft form at the end of the fiscal year, with completion expected by September 2005. Key objectives identified in the Plan include:

1. Improve the service experience of users: Address service inconsistency revealed by LibQUAL+ survey scores through new service standards, staff training, and developing an institutional culture that places service excellence at the forefront of interactions with constituents. This initiative continues a similar focus in FY04-05. Sustain longer hours of service, including 24-hour access during the exam periods, that began in FY04-05.
2. Provide the best possible access to the scholarly record: Since the VCU Libraries' FY05-06 budget is expected to be virtually unchanged from the FY04-05 budget, new acquisitions for the collections will be very modest. The VCU Libraries will seek out collaborations that leverage existing resources to make new acquisition possible; refine existing journal subscriptions to ensure their focus on University priorities; and pursue one-time funding that may become available during the fiscal year to purchase journal backfiles, reference materials, and the like.
3. Improve access to library collections: Implement corrections and upgrades to automated services such as Get It @ VCU, the ILLIAD interlibrary loan system, the MetaLib library portal, the Aleph web-based catalog, and the off-campus proxy system that simplify finding and using journal articles and other library materials. In addition, carry out planned initiatives to reduce disorder in library stacks, improve inventory control, and implement self-service checkout of circulating library materials.
4. Expand and enhance space for students: Seek one-time funding to lease space and support a large-scale relocation of less-used library materials from stacks in Cabell and Tompkins-McCaw Library to off-site stacks, freeing library floor space for students. Also use one-time funding to renovate and equip space released to student use by relocating library materials, and upgrade some of the 1970s-era furnishings in Cabell.
5. Educate the University community about space and fiscal needs for the VCU Libraries: Continue the efforts of previous years to educate the University community regarding its pressing need for a true research library system at VCU, and the demand from faculty and students for library services and collections commensurate with VCU's size, scope, and ambition. Vigorously educate the University community regarding the urgent need to expand library space at VCU to accommodate enrollment growth, particularly for the tremendously overcrowded Cabell Library.

6. Attain goals for private funding: The VCU Libraries must meet certain goals for private fund-raising in FY05-06. These include the established Capital Campaign goal as well as a required match for a foundation grant that will fund renovation of the 4th floor of Cabell Library to create space for graduate students.

### **School/College contributions to the University**

---

Academic quality, student retention, and research: The VCU Libraries focused its effort during the fiscal year on improving academic resources for study and research, much of which experienced serious degradation during previous budget cuts. Library collections saw heartening recovery in journal subscriptions and provided access to new, essential web-based resources that are universally available at strong research universities, such as the IEE/IEE Library, LION, and RefWorks. The library system also addressed serious problems with study space and student study environment through longer building hours, longer hours of assistance to students in the evening, powerful new information systems, and improved physical environment in Cabell and Tompkins-McCaw.

By focusing investment in these areas, the VCU Libraries advanced the University's goals for Tier 3 – Tier 2 migration; growth in sponsored research; nationally-prominent strength in core academic programs, particularly Life Sciences and Engineering; developing institutional pride; and especially recruitment and retention of students and outstanding faculty. Planned new programs such as the School of Public Health and the INOVA relationship benefited from stronger collections, where acquisition of library materials placed a priority on supporting emerging areas of importance to VCU.

Community relations and diversity: A number of initiatives advanced University goals in community relations and diversity: the multi-faceted Black History Month celebration; innovative and successful cultural programming such as the Cabell Lecture and the Brown-Lyons Lecture; and grant-funded programs such as the Archives of the New Dominion, the Community Outreach Information Network (COIN), and the Information Rx and Informationist projects.

Strategic Plan: The VCU Libraries appeared in the draft VCU2020 Strategic Plan as a major focus for the University as it moves forward. The prominence of the library system in the draft Plan emerged from concerns expressed across the University by faculty, staff, and students about its very low standing among research libraries and the consequent challenges in adequate access to the scholarly record provided by library collections, appropriate services to students, and support for graduate students. The concerns of the University community reflect a broad awareness that there is no great university without a great library. As VCU charted its probable course over the next 15 years in the planning process, it became clear that VCU's success requires a library system commensurate with its stature, accomplishments, and ambitions.

## Scholarly and research activities

---

As in previous years, the faculty and staff of the VCU Libraries were very active in publication and presentations.

### *Activity in professional associations*

- Jean Shipman, Director of Tompkins-McCaw Library, was elected president of the Medical Library Association.
- Pat Hammond, CHEC librarian, was elected president of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Medical Library Association.
- John Ulmschneider, University Librarian, completed service on the Board of Directors for SOLINET Inc. as vice-chair of the Board, and was elected to a 3-year term on the OCLC Members' Council for OCLC Inc.
- Shirley Thomas, Head of Resource Delivery Services, was appointed to Library of Congress "Voices of Civil Rights Project" for Richmond area.

### *Papers and presentations*

- Ghaphery, James. "Too Quick?: Log Analysis of Quick Links from an Academic Library Website". *OCLC Systems & Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 21 (3) In press.
- Ghaphery, James. "Google: An Information Literacy Case Study". *College and Research Libraries News* 65(10), November 2004, p. 582.
- Ghaphery, James. "Aleph OPAC Functional Group Discussion". Moderator. North American Aleph Users Group Annual Meeting. June 6, 2005. College Park, Maryland.
- Ghaphery, James. "Insert Content Here: Effective Beginnings and Ends". Presented at Virginia Library Association Annual Conference. Oct 29, 2004. Williamsburg, Virginia.
- Liu, An. "Delivering ALEPH XML Reports via the Web". Moderator. North American Aleph Users Group Annual Meeting. June 7, 2005. College Park, Maryland.
- Yu, Xiaochang. "Media and AV," in *Magazines for Libraries* (W. Katz, Editor. Bowker), 14th Edition. In press.
- Yu, Xiaochang, "Utilizing an SFX parser to populate e-journal problem reports with serial data automatically" presented at SFX/MetaLib Users Group meeting, June 2005.

- Lawal, Ibrionke, et. al., “Collecting grey literature: an annotated bibliography, with examples from the sciences and technology,” *Science and Technology Libraries* 25(3/4) 2005.
- Farley, Kevin, “Street violence: the transgressions of Donne’s Satyres,” presented at Renaissance Imprisonment Conference, London, UK, September 2004.
- Farley, Kevin, “Perchance some good: Shakespeare’s failures,” presented at International Medieval Studies Congress (Shakespeare at Kalamazoo), Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2005.
- A monographic pictorial history of VCU, written by Ray Bonis, Jodi Koste and Curtis Lyons, was placed under with Arcadia Publishing for spring 2006 publication.
- Mary Ellen Spencer participated as a panelist in a program, “Do You Trust Your IT Staff? Do They Trust You?” sponsored by ALA/MARS User Access to Services Committee at the American Library Association Annual Conference. Chicago, Illinois. June, 2005.
- Mary Ellen Spencer participated as a panelist in a Quest Seminar program, “How Do the Helping Professions Know Which Questions to Ask?” The University of Richmond. February, 2005.
- Canevari, Catharine S., Yuki Dixon, Mark A. Elliott, Heather Enderle, Shannon D. Jones, Joel B. Lammers, Susan J. Phipps, Jean P. Shipman, Alan T. Williams and Barbara Wright. “Growing Our Own: Mentoring Staff to Become Future Librarians.” Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association meeting, San Antonio, TX, May 16, 2005.
- Jones, Shannon D., Barbara Wright, Jodi Koste, and Catharine Canevari. “Library in a Box: Reengaging with Users via a Scholarly Circuit Librarian Program.” Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting. May 17, 2005.
- Jones, Shannon D., Becky Hebert, Tammy Mays, and Cindy Gruwell. “Learning, Mentoring, Leading: Preparing New Librarians for Professional Success.” Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting. May 16, 2005.
- Jones, Shannon D., Lynne Turman, Melanie Norton, and Cynthia Burke. “Recruiting and Mentoring the Next Generation of Health Sciences Librarians.” Poster for the Medical Library Association Annual Meeting. May 16, 2005.
- Jones, Shannon D., Jean P. Shipman, Kelly Near, Judith G. Robinson, Ruth M. Smith and Linda Watson. “Health Information Prescriptions – Librarians and Physicians Collaborate to Empower Patients via Quality Health Information.” Poster for the MLA Mid-Atlantic Chapter Annual Meeting. October 14, 2004.

- Jones, Shannon D., Patricia A. Hammond, and Jean P. Shipman. "Health Adventure: A City Urban League Office and the University Libraries Collaborate to Eliminate Health Disparities." Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association meeting, San Antonio, TX, May 17, 2005.
- Seago, Brenda L., Lois Culler and Jean Shipman. "Collaboration between Library Professionals: Starting a New Medical School Campus at a Community Hospital in a Distant Location." Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association meeting, San Antonio, TX, May 17, 2005.
- Shipman, Jean P., Susan J. Phipps, Cynthia J. Simonson, and Deborah Frett. "Reaching Out to Local Communities through COIN: Virginia Commonwealth University's Community Outreach Information Network." Poster for the 2005 Medical Library Association meeting, San Antonio, TX, May 16, 2005.

### **Public and community service**

---

- John Ulmschneider, University Librarian, served on the Board of Directors for the Richmond Public Library and chaired the Finance Committee.
- John Ulmschneider served on the Library Technology Services Act (LSTA) Advisory Committee for the State of Virginia.
- John Ulmschneider served on the Advisory Committee for a state-wide study of public libraries funded by the Library of Virginia.
- Curtis Lyons, Head of Special Collections and Archives for Cabell Library, served as a member of the State Historical Records Advisory Board.
- Curtis Lyons, Head of Special Collections and Archives for Cabell Library, served as Treasurer and archival advisor for the Virginia Civil Rights Movement Video Initiative. VCU Libraries made the videos created by this non-profit organization available on-line and participated in the creation of a brochure advertising the resources.
- Monique Prince, JBC Undergraduate Services Librarian, served as a member of the Richmond GO READ Steering Committee.
- Jodi Koste served as newsletter editor for the national archivists' organization.
- X. Yu provided significant technical help to other libraries throughout the Commonwealth, the country, and internationally in solving EZproxy, ColdFusion, SFX, and other computer-related technical problems.
- Yuki Dixon, Archival Assistant in the JBC Special Collections and Archives Dept., worked with Mitzi Humphrey of Art6 Gallery on an art show called "Fluxus Redux."

- Ken Hopson, Manager, Media and Reserve Services, contributes his web designing, digital photography and animation skills to his service as webmaster for the Friends of James River Park. He recently redesigned their web site: <http://www.jamesriverpark.org>, which was cited in “City Edition” and “Style Magazine.”
- Dan Ream, Head of Education & Outreach for Cabell Library, made a presentation to two Virginia Educational Media Association conference attendees on the impact of Google on student searching and how librarians can become better searchers of Google.
- In support of the Libraries' service arrangements with area high schools, Dan Ream provided training for the Appomattox Governors School librarian on accessing and using VCU Libraries services and resources and offered tours of Cabell Library for Maggie Walker Governor’s School faculty. In addition, the library instruction classroom in Cabell was made available for Open High and Hanover school librarians to provide on-site instruction for their students on the use of VCU Libraries services and resources.

### **International Activities**

---

- X. Yu helped form a Chinese-American librarian group to develop SFX/MetaLib in Chinese libraries.
- Dan Ream, Head of Education & Outreach for Cabell Library, was included in VCU School of Business planning and orientation activities for a joint MBA Program with Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt to begin in January, 2006. In addition to several meetings with VCU Business faculty and VCUL administration, Ream offered an initial orientation session to three Egyptian faculty when they visited VCU in November, 2004.

### **Important Challenges**

---

The central challenge for the VCU Libraries remains the same as for previous years: achieving a funding profile commensurate with VCU’s stature and ambitions. It is essential that the University continue the momentum of improvements from FY04-05 into FY05-06 and the next biennium. Even with recent budget improvements, the VCU Libraries still lies at the bottom of rankings for nearly every metric of research library strength, especially in journal subscriptions and total expenditures. To ensure the success of its strategic plan and programs, VCU needs to raise its library system at least to rank 99 among academic research libraries in the U.S. A top-100 ranking will create a library system characteristic of leading research universities and provide access to the scholarly record needed for research and education. It also will ensure building hours, services, and security that fully support VCU’s current, planned, and envisioned academic and research programs.

A second challenge is growing increasingly urgent: adequate library space for VCU's enrollment. VCU last added library space in 1975, 30 years ago as of August 2005. Since then, the growth of collections and the allocation of library space to university priorities has eroded space for students by nearly 30%, leaving significantly less space to handle an enrollment that has grown nearly 80% since the 1975 high-water mark. In addition, much of the increased enrollment comprises full-time resident undergraduates who make the most use of library facilities. Seating and computers in Cabell Library typically are fully occupied from late morning to late evening, leading to overcrowded conditions during much of the day. Furthermore, VCU is most unusual among research universities in providing no dedicated library space for graduate students. Another factor is collection growth, which has exceeded the originally planned capacity of library space at VCU by over 60%: originally built to house a maximum of 1.1 million volumes, the VCU Libraries' collections now exceed 1.8 million volumes.

To meet these challenges, VCU must build an addition to Cabell Library in the relative near term. Only a substantial addition will provide sufficient space to meet even minimum seating and study needs for the existing and projected enrollment. Without an addition to Cabell within the next 3-4 years, the overcrowding in Cabell Library will reach unsafe dimensions. VCU simply cannot meet its enrollment goals and its commitment to increase educational quality while providing less library space than it offered fully 30 years ago. Further, an addition to Cabell Library will very significantly improve the utility and appearance of Shafer Court as a center of student academic life, and eliminate an unsightly hole in the center of the University's busiest student corridor.

## **Assessment Summary**

---

This section responds to two questions posed by the assessment section of VCU's WEAVE assessment and reporting tool (<https://www.weaveonline.net/welcome/>).

1. What specifically did your assessments show regarding progress you made on your outcomes/objectives?

The assessments show that the VCU Libraries set and achieved ambitious goals during FY04-05 and satisfied some long-standing demands for collections and services from the University community. The accomplishments reflect the impact of the strongest budget in the history of the VCU Libraries. But they also reflect the efficiencies and talent of staff in VCU's library system. With a smaller budget than UVa, Virginia Tech, or George Mason, the VCU Libraries was able to provide longer library hours than any public academic library except UVa. It was able to devote a larger portion of its budget to library collections than any academic library in Virginia. And the VCU Libraries brought advanced automated systems and outstanding web-based services to its users that are generally provided only at the most well-funded university library systems.

The assessment clearly shows an exceptional return on every dollar invested in the VCU Libraries. The University can look to FY04-05 as an example of the impact on University life than results from improved funding of its library system. As the University contemplates a new 6-year budget plan that will bring its investment in

libraries to a level commensurate with the size, scope, and ambitions of VCU, FY04-05 is assurance that great value will result from the modest funding improvements that have been requested.

The VCU Libraries identified seven objectives for FY04-05:

- expanding education and community outreach
- designing and delivering responsive user services
- enhancing physical environment
- applying technology to ensure success for users
- transforming services through assessment
- expanding the Libraries' resource base
- strengthening collections

Specific accomplishments to meet these objectives included

- longer hours at Cabell Library and TML as well as more hours of assistance to students, including 24-hour access during the spring exam period
- stronger library collections, especially for journal subscriptions, essential web-accessible standard references for engineering and life sciences, and new full-text, numeric, and image databases
- expanded services to off-campus programs
- reduced noise and disorder in Cabell Library, as well as enhanced quiet study space in both Cabell and Tompkins-McCaw
- new and improved search, display, and integration features in many web-based systems provided by the VCU Libraries
- improved services and enhanced assistive technologies for users with disabilities
- stronger grant funding, especially for initiatives that strengthen community relations such as the Archives of the New Dominion and Community Outreach Information Network

These accomplishments, and many others, delivered stronger collections and enhanced services to the VCU community.

2. What specifically did your assessment show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?

No specific outcomes/objectives will require continued work in FY05-06. However, three areas of ongoing concern emerged from assessments that will figure prominently in the FY05-06 outcomes/objectives.

1. Space: Two outcomes/objectives in FY04-05 specifically target overcrowding and security concerns in Cabell Library; the pressures on library space also impacted other outcomes/objectives. Although successfully completed, these outcomes/objectives are band-aids that barely address an increasingly unsustainable situation. It is important to vigorously educate the University community regarding the urgent need to expand library space at VCU to accommodate enrollment growth, particularly for the tremendously overcrowded Cabell Library. Without an addition to Cabell within the next 3-4 years, the overcrowding there will reach unsafe dimensions. VCU simply cannot meet its enrollment goals and its commitment to increase educational quality while providing less library space than it offered 30 years ago.
2. Collections: Library collections provide essential access to the scholarly record for research and education. The LibQUAL+ survey in spring 2004, along with FY04-05 outcomes/objectives involving collections, confirmed that the VCU community is deeply unhappy with access to the scholarly record provided by library collections at VCU. The lowest scores in the survey came from faculty and graduate students in their assessment of library collections, especially their access to scholarly journals. Stronger funding for VCU's library system, commensurate with that of a major research university, is needed to boost investment in collections and ensure adequate access to the scholarly literature.
3. Service experience of users: Although the FY04-05 outcomes/objectives related to service were concluded successfully, it is clear that an improved and consistently excellent service experience for users will need constant attention. It will require that the VCU Libraries create and then sustain an institutional culture that places service excellence at the forefront of all interactions with constituents. It also will require that the VCU Libraries maintain and, if possible, extend building hours and the 24-hour service during the exam periods that began in FY04-05.