

# University Libraries 2024 Impact Report



University  
of Colorado  
Boulder

# A message from the dean of University Libraries

One of my favorite things to do as dean of the University Libraries is to stroll through our spaces and encounter students engaged in all that the research library has to offer.

I might pass by a student silently memorizing notes from flashcards; a group of individuals chatting as they collaborate around a whiteboard; a classroom instruction where scholars and students are working with rare manuscripts; or a consultation session where a research librarian is helping a student with their term paper.

Serving Buffs from all backgrounds and helping them thrive academically and socially is our top priority as a library. We welcome students into our five library locations, helping them synthesize knowledge and connect with resources and information, and we provide support for academic success and belonging wherever they are on their journey.



In this University Libraries 2024 Impact Report, we highlight the many ways in which the Libraries are making a difference to the students, faculty and staff of CU Boulder at all levels of their academic and personal journeys.

I hope you enjoy our stories of engagement.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert H. McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "McDonald" being the most prominent parts.

**Robert H. McDonald**

Dean of University Libraries,  
Senior Vice Provost of Online and Extended Education



A Norlin Library study area affectionately known as “the Fishbowl.”

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Welcome to campus

# Meet the Libraries student employees

## We're one of the largest employers of students on campus

If you visit any area of the Libraries, you will encounter students working in a variety of roles and spaces. Students assist patrons at service desks with checkout and locating items, provide security and mail services, perform archival and preservation work and assist in the organization and management of collections. We employ about 175 students each year and they are a foundational part of our workforce.

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**“We consider them to be ‘our students’ and we aim to support them not just as employees, but also in their academic journeys.”**

—Dean Robert H. McDonald

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### Louie Grimaldo

Undergraduate | Finance major | Started 2021 | Class of 2025 | Libraries Security

“Working at the Libraries with so many good people has inspired me to work within my career in ways to meaningfully support the value of community.”



### McKenna Yates

Undergraduate | Sociology and Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts | Started 2023 | Class of 2025 Digital Media Services (DMS)

“The Library’s DMS department has given me the rare opportunity to work with different types of legacy media, such as VHS tapes and analog film reels for digital conversion.”



## Keegan Gore

Undergraduate | Computer Science major | Started 2023 | Class of 2026 | Norlin Circulation

“I appreciate that working in Norlin circulation is essential for library users—and the time in the stacks allows me time to slow down and reflect.”

## Azzaya Avaadorj

Undergraduate | Architecture major | Started 2024 | Class of 2027 | Preservation

“I like working in preservation, preparing books for circulation and compartments for our Rare and Distinctive Collections. My supervisors are the nicest and kindest people you’ll ever meet.”



## Sahra S. Ghiasy

Undergraduate | Marketing major, minor in Communications | Started 2021 | Class of 2025 | Business Library Front Desk Circulation

“Working at the Business Library, I get to help a variety of people get the resources they need.”

# Investing in student success

## The Laughing Goat Endowed Scholarship



Daryl Smith (left) and John Jenkins (right) at the Laughing Goat Coffehouse in Norlin Library



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**“This scholarship has helped me gain more confidence in myself. As a student who thought that all hope was lost for me in my first few years here, I never thought that this could happen to me and I’m truly blessed to be accepting this award.”**

—Buby Admasse, 2023–24 scholarship recipient

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Established in 2020, the [Laughing Goat Endowed Scholarship](#) recognizes the unique contributions student employees make to fulfill and advance the University Libraries’ mission and values. Since its initiation by the Laughing Goat Coffeeshouse and the Libraries, 18 Laughing Goat and Libraries student employees have been awarded an average of \$1,400 dollars each.

“Students’ education is the backbone of our success. We hope that these scholarships continue to inspire creativity and discovery and that students feel at home in our space,” said John Jenkins, owner of the Laughing Goat.

# A space for scholarship and study

We strive to be an inclusive place that welcomes everyone, wherever they are on their educational journey

## Serving the community

On peak days, up to a third of the population of campus visits a library location. In 2023, we had:

- 5,000 average daily visitors
- 20,041 answered questions
- 80,342 materials checked out
- 803 library presentations to groups with 15,518 participants

## Striving for equitable access

We provide access to educational resources and offer the support for utilizing them. This includes:

- 11+ million online and physical resources.
- Course reserves that offer textbooks free of charge.
- Library resource guides. Our top guide had 100,716 hits last year.
- Adopting open educational resource initiatives to reduce the cost of higher education.

## Norlin Library West Entrance



Before



After

## Creating welcoming spaces

We're updating our spaces to create a student-centered environment.

### Music Library renovation | 2017

- Vibrant design with new study rooms, seating and listening stations.

### Business Library renovation | 2021

- A sleek, modern library transformed for today's business students.

### Norlin West Entrance renovation | 2022

- A welcoming entrance and relaxing reading room space.

### Gemmill Library renovation now underway | coming soon in 2025

- Updating collections stacks and student study space.

# Acknowledging exceptional service

## The Libraries Outstanding Student Graduate



Ella Schigur and Dean Robert H. McDonald at 2024 Commencement



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**“I like to think of myself as a source of stability after so many years here. The Libraries have certainly been that for me.”**

—Ella Schigur

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Ella Schigur is the [University Libraries Outstanding Student Graduate](#) for 2024. Schigur was acknowledged at Commencement with Dean Robert H. McDonald for her four years of steadfast service to the Libraries.

Schigur began in the Howard B. Waltz Music Library in 2020 as a first-year student. She moved to Norlin Library Security during the COVID-19 pandemic and assisted students navigating hybrid learning environments. When the Music Library reopened in 2021, she was integral to their success, taking on responsibilities for the front desk, circulation and training a new generation of incoming library student employees.

Schigur graduated in 2024 with a BA in women and gender studies.



# Finding her path

How a job in the archives helped a student find her passion



Casey Ringer archives a box of materials

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**“Working in the archives helped me to understand how to work with primary sources. My undergraduate thesis was inspired by, and based on, this work.”**

—Casey Ringer

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Casey Ringer began working for the University Libraries’ Rare and Distinctive Collections team in 2022 and her experiences changed her life. Her work in the archives inspired her to add history to her philosophy major.

Ringer’s job as a student employee was to process, label and organize new acquisitions to make them more discoverable to researchers. At the time of our interview, Ringer was wrapping up a year’s work on an acquisition of

materials from a CU Boulder Japanese Language School alum, Forest Pitts, archiving her 100<sup>th</sup> box of materials.

Ringer completed her undergraduate degree in 2024, graduating summa cum laude and was accepted into a master’s degree program in the History Department at CU Boulder. She intends to continue her work in the Libraries archives while completing her graduate degree.

# A new DEI residency program

## Librarians of the Future

A three-year residency program, [Librarians of the Future](#) prioritizes diversity, equity and inclusion. Participants have the opportunity to experience multiple career paths within academic librarianship, gain project management experience, build a professional network, and prepare for the research and service aspects of a tenure-track library position.

### Brandi Hart



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**“When I entered the field of librarianship, I was surprised at the amount of stratification and division in the profession. That CU Boulder had a program like this really struck me. I felt like this is a place where open-minded people want to change the profession and support and sustain that change. I connected with the people here and they really want my input.”**

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Brandi Hart supports student success by teaching information literacy and creating instructional videos at the Business Library.

### Katie Randall



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**“I have been working with my colleagues at CU on what it looks like for us to implement policies of inclusion and equitable access. As a woman of color, I really want to create institutional support within the Libraries for the Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies.”**

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Katie Randall supports students, faculty and researchers in the subject area of Native American and Indigenous Studies.



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**“Libraries have not done well at recruiting and retaining BIPOC folks into the career. We want to change that by bringing in excellent librarians through this program. Brandi and Katie have so much talent, skill and experience to offer. They are already assets to the profession, no matter if they end up at CU or another institution.”**

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Vanessa Seals, assistant dean of Organizational Development & Inclusive Practice

# The Glenn Miller collection

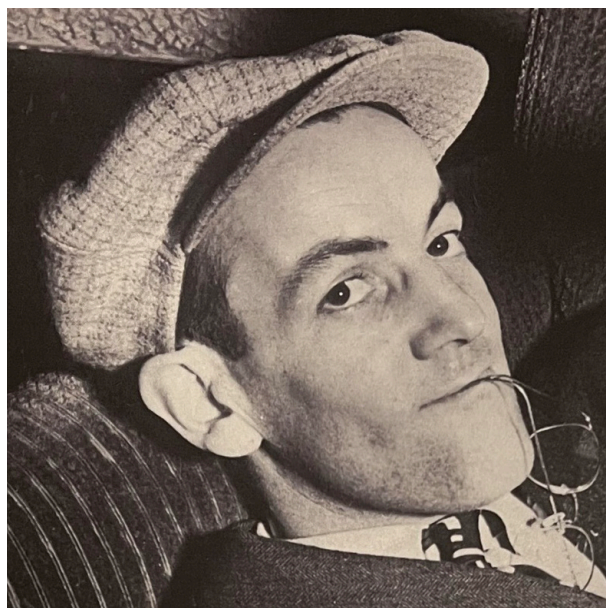
## Donor funds an archivist to preserve and digitize music history

In 1923, Alton Glen “Glenn” Miller attended CU Boulder for three semesters before becoming one of the most successful big band musicians of the 20th century. A gift from a group of committed jazz supporters is allowing us to hire an archivist to review the campus’ collection of materials associated with Miller’s work—a mostly untapped trove of information about the iconic artist.

The support for this massive archival effort stems from the generosity of Deanna and Brewster Waddell. Brewster graduated from CU Boulder in 1984.

“Glenn Miller was one of, if not the greatest, big band leaders of his time,” said Brewster.

“He wrote music for and played with the top band leaders of the day, like the Dorsey Brothers, Benny Goodman, Harry James and many more. Louis Armstrong carried his recording with him on the road! The realization that his music, notes, artifacts and instruments were in the basement of Norlin Library, hidden from the world, was elating to us. With our backing, we could bring to light many unknown works and personal aspects of Glenn Miller and add to his lore. We had to do it!”



A photo of Glenn Miller from the collection



News clipping from the Fort Morgan Times



The Glenn Miller collection is currently stored in the University Libraries archives

This unique donation will support a project archivist who will assemble, catalog, preserve and manage what is known as a major collection of big band and swing music memorabilia and research materials, an estimated 1,400 boxes. It's a rare opportunity to participate in preserving and digitizing an important period of American history that hasn't been fully accessible for research use due to the sheer volume of items.

“As CU Boulder has a very well respected College of Music, we thought we'd like to sponsor a jazz program that would bring visibility to CU,” said Brewster.

# Donor Support

EBSCO Foundation is making a difference at the Libraries in three significant ways



Los Seis de Boulder memorial

## 1 Preserving forgotten histories

In May 2024, CU Boulder marked the 50-year anniversary of six student activists killed in two separate car explosions two days apart. All were involved in El Movimiento, the Chicano social justice movement seeking parity of racial representation within the student body. The activists became known as Los Seis de Boulder and for decades their social movement and deaths remained an “archival silence” in the university’s historical record.

Today, a permanent [Los Seis de Boulder memorial](#) stands on the campus and is used as a teaching resource for students studying the history of the Chicano/a movement and its fight against structural racism. Support from the EBSCO Foundation allowed the University Libraries’ Rare and Distinctive Collections to accept the Los Seis de Boulder memorial into the permanent collection, assuring this commemorative art would remain available for future generations of students to learn about this turbulent period in university and Colorado history.



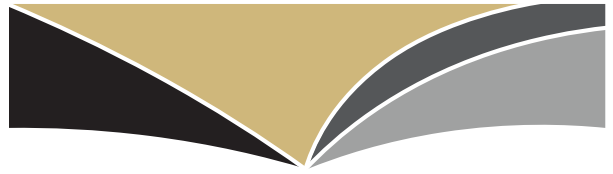
Conservator, Hillary Morgan inspects Los Seis memorial

## 2 Helping new students find belonging

Soon after they arrive on campus, we offer first-year students a complimentary copy of the Buffs One Read title and we provide opportunities for them to meet new people through book clubs and programs designed to help create community through the shared reading of one book.

Now in its fourth year, Buffs One Read has impacted thousands of students, faculty, staff and members of the greater Boulder community who've attended author events or participated in book discussions or used the text in their classroom teaching.

In 2024-25, the selected text is *Solito*, by Javier Zamora, which tells the story of the author's 3,000 mile journey from El Salvador across the U.S. border.



# Buffs One Read



Prof. Reiland Rabaka, director of CAAAS

## 3 Supporting diversity in scholarship

The Center for African and African American Studies (acronym: the CAAAS, and commonly called the Cause) is the research, creative work and programming division of the broader Black Studies community at CU Boulder.

In mid 2024, the EBSCO Foundation funded a partnership with the University Libraries and the CAAAS to support graduate students engaged in research and creative work in African studies, African American studies and/or African diaspora studies. Support included opportunities to attend conferences and develop research skills with a dedicated librarian.

The CAAAS is led by Prof. Reiland Rabaka, a longtime supporter of libraries, author of 17 books, more than 100 published articles and recipient of numerous awards and honors, including funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Science Foundation, the National Museum of African American History & Culture, the National Museum of American History, the Smithsonian Institution, the Eugene M. Kayden Book Award, the Cheikh Anta Diop Book Award and the National Council for Black Studies' Distinguished Career Award.



Students participate in the Culture Crawl

## You're invited to participate in our two signature programs, the Buffs One Read and Culture Crawl.

### **Buffs One Read**

This year's one read selection is *Solito: A Memoir* by author Javier Zamora, which tells the story of his 3,000 mile journey from El Salvador across the U.S. border.

This fall, join the conversation through book discussions, programming and more.

### **Culture Crawl**

The [Culture Crawl](#) is a program run collaboratively by the University Libraries and CU Boulder arts and culture groups. Its mission is to help students—particularly first-year students—discover all that CU Boulder arts and culture has to offer. Its signature event is the one-day Culture Crawl held this year on September 25, 2024.

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## Plus, check out a new photo exhibition showcasing Libraries Student Employees.

### **Student employee showcase**

A new photo exhibition of student employee portraits is now installed in Norlin Library on the west side second floor hallway. The exhibition features portraits of student employees in their different roles and their observations on their work in the Libraries.

**Support the  
University Libraries**

Your generous gift allows us to continue our work to seamlessly connect our campus community with high quality information, create welcoming spaces that inspire scholarship and study, and preserve our cultural heritage.

**[libraries.colorado.edu/give](https://libraries.colorado.edu/give)**



University Libraries

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