

A Letter from the Smith College Staff Council Leadership

As we slowly return to a more 'normal' way of life and look toward the future, as we anticipate returning to campus this coming fall, we are mindful to reflect on the events of this past year.

We recognize how contentious and raw things are on our campus and how polarized things are nationally. We have been witness to toxicity and harm on our campus as well as in our country as a whole. Together, we continually ask ourselves — what can we learn from this and what action can we take to create positive change?

One constructive way to create change on campus and advocate for staff is to get actively involved. Involvement can take many forms — whether running for and serving on Staff Council, coming to Staff Council meetings as a non-member, attending all-staff forums, filling out surveys, or participating in feedback sessions. These are just a few examples of ways to be a part of the process. Staff Council continues to work on finding meaningful opportunities to engage all staff, because we represent you all.

We would like to specifically remind union members that this includes you! While your collective bargaining unit represents you in many matters, there are many college-wide policies and standards that apply to all employees that are not handled on a union basis. Getting involved in the Staff Council is an effective way you can have your voice heard on these issues. While we always have some union representation on the Council, it is relatively small compared to the percentage of union employees on campus, and we'd like to see that change.

Ultimately, we want all employees to be heard and we know that there are many different perspectives to be shared. We may not always agree, but if we want Smith to be a fair and inclusive employer,



Staff Council, October 2019.

Staff Council 2019–21

Brian Bocchino, Staff Accountant, Controller's Office
 Jennifer Burwell, Scheduling Coordinator, Registrar's Office
 Jon Cartledge, Digital Asset Specialist, Imaging Center, Art Dept.
 Jessica Drawe, Administrative Assistant, Admissions
 Ashavan Doyon, Communications Coordinator, College Relations
 Jessica Flynn, Payroll Manager, Controller's Office
 Dawn Hines, Asst. Director, Development
 Brenda Jameson, Recruiting Coordinator, Development
 Colleen Keenan, Associate Director for Client Systems, ITS
 Thomas Lark, Financial Systems Coordinator, Dining Services
 Amanda Lopez, Dining Room Coordinator, Dining Services
 Ann Mayo, Manager Security and Guest Services, Museum of Art
 Heather McQueen, Resource Manager, Clark Science Center
 Kristina Mereigh, Associate Director, Health Services
 Elly Mons, Health Professors Advising Director, Clark Science Ctr.
 Maddy Neely, Administrative Coordinator, School for Social Work
 Davis Rivera, Electrician, Facilities Management
 Alison Schoen, Student Programs Coordinator, Student Engagement
 Barbara Solow, Assistant Director for News, College Relations
 Erin Smith, Stockroom Service Specialist, Clark Science Center
 Rashad Uqdah, Catering Cook, Dining Services
 Lucinda Williams, Acquisitions Supervisor, Libraries
 Vanessa Williams, Administrative Assistant, Dining Services
 Debra Wright, Gift Planning Coordinator, Development

A Letter from the Staff Council Chair

continued from page 1

we need representation from employees across campus departments and types of work. We need to have honest conversations about where we are and where we can improve.

The administration is taking steps to make Smith a more equitable and inclusive work environment. This is important work. If you want your voice to be heard — get involved. We want to work with you!

Thank you.

Your Staff Council Leadership,
Thomas Lark, Chairperson
Maddy Neely, Vice Chair
Colleen Keenan, Secretary
Jessica Drawe, Treasurer



Staff Council is a great way to be involved on campus, meet colleagues in areas of the college you might not otherwise explore, and increase your engagement in the community. Elections are held every spring, and we are always looking for people excited to get involved.

Nominate Yourself Or Other Staff

Staff Council is accepting nominations for this April's election. ***The deadline for nominations is April 28, 2021.*** Nominations are anonymous, but you must be logged into the portal to access the [form](#).

Contributors: Thomas Lark, Maddy Neely, Colleen Keenan, Jessica Drawe, Nanci Young, Jon Cartledge, Kathy San Antonio, Jean Ferguson, Allison Page, Chris Carr Hill

Editing and Layout: Jon Cartledge

Proofreaders: Ashavan Doyon

Photo credits: J. Baker, M. Biddle, M. Callahan, C. Carr Hill, J. Cartledge, J. Dand, J. Ferguson, A. Figus, S. Fliss, J. Frankestein, K. Gutting, C. Keenan, N. Lehoux, S. Menchen

6 Benefits of Being on Staff Council

Share your voice

We have a real seat at the table, and a history of affecting real change. Become an active member of staff council to make your voice heard regarding real issues that affect staff.

Advocate for staff equity

Smith staff are vital to fulfilling Smith's mission of educating women of promise. Become an active member of staff council and help make the campus community aware of the important role we play at the college.

Recommend new policies

Staff council leadership meets with the college President and the VP of Human Resources multiple times a year. Personnel Policy Committee members meet with HR on a regular basis. As a member of staff council, you will be part of the team that is creating and shaping our platform.

Make connections across campus

Staff council is an excellent way to meet people outside of your normal orbit. Connect faces to email addresses! Network! Make new friends!

Build and Foster community

Help foster a sense of belonging, while you satisfy your own desire to make a difference. We all have an important part to play at the college and we are stronger together!

Expand your resume

Staff council will look great on your resume! Take advantage of leadership opportunities your participation on the council can provide.

Staff Council Website: smith.edu/staffcouncil

Facebook: facebook.com/SmithStaffCouncil

Staff Council email: staffcouncil@smith.edu

Chronicle email: chronicle@smith.edu

Sign up for the Staff Listserv:

- go to <http://tinyurl.com/q7w6qdr>
- click on the blue "Join Group" button,
- choose your email preferences and click "Join Group."

Community Building and De-stressing: A Group for Staff

By Kathy San Antonio

Over the years, and recently in particular, I've had discussions with other staff members that have indicated to me that

- *staff want and need opportunities to engage with their peers across the college;*
- *there is enormous benefit to staff to networking and hearing each other's perspectives, challenges, and stress coping methods;*
- *the overwhelming majority of staff take great pride in the work they do for the college, and some are reluctant to talk about their challenges because of not wanting to appear "disgruntled."*

With the sponsorship of the Office of Equity and Inclusion's [Virtual Community Engagement Team](#), I now offer a monthly session for staff **Community Building and De-Stressing**. This group offers stress coping mechanisms and ways to function at work that avoid unhealthy patterns and help achieve balance both in the moment and for the long-term; as well as provide regular times for staff to come together and talk, troubleshoot, and support one another. The goal is for staff to feel an increased sense of community with other staff and the college in general and have a more positive attitude about their work.

Thus far, we've discussed how COVID has impacted our work and personal lives, the power of positively affirming one another, the negative impact stress has on our overall health, the benefits of humor in the workplace, and other topics.

My strong belief is that if staff feel heard and supported, they will engage in more positive ways to support the college's goals of being a more inclusive, equitable place for all.

This group meets over Zoom on the last Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. Staff who would like to attend should contact me at ksananto@smith.edu to be put on the distribution list.

Smith College Employee Health Benefits

By Jon Cartledge, Editor

EyeMed Vision

Should you need glasses or contacts, you can use your benefits from home at [participating providers](#). Glasses can be delivered to your home. Vision benefits are applied automatically.

Flex Spending Accounts

Over-the-counter drugs are considered eligible expenses in FSA plans. Participants will no longer need have a prescription to prove eligibility. Menstrual care products (i.e. tampons, pads, etc.) are also eligible.

Elections for Dependent Care FSAs can be changed when your daycare needs change. Submit your changes through Workday.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The [EAP](#) is a free benefit provided by Smith College to help employees work through life's challenges. The program, offered through the New Directions EAP, is a confidential and voluntary counseling referral service provided free of charge to employees and members of their family household. You have access to twelve free sessions with E4 Health, legal consultations and referrals, family and caregiving resources and referrals, pet care, and much more.

Well Connection Telehealth Services

Sometimes you'd like to meet with a doctor while sitting on your couch. In PJs. With the BCBSMA Well Connection platform, you can! Our doctors can do a lot over your tablet, laptop, or smartphone. If it isn't an emergency, take advantage of doctors on call on your personal device. Download the Well Connection App from the App Store® or Google Play™, or go to wellconnection.com for details!

Explore your other health benefits [here](#).

New Possibilities in Neilson Library

By Jean Ferguson and Allison Page



Digital Media Hub on the ground floor of the Mary Maples Dunn (north) wing



*Center opening in the Mary Maples Dunn (north) wing
Photo by Jeff Baker*

With over two dozen people waiting at the doors, Neilson Library opened on March 29. After over 8 years of planning and almost 3 years of construction, the Maya Lin-designed building is now available for limited services including study space and checking out books. Following the Culture of Care guidelines, only Smith students, faculty and staff who are in the Covid screening program may visit Neilson. There is a limit of 300 people, at any time, which is tracked by a new digital counting system installed on all perimeter doors.

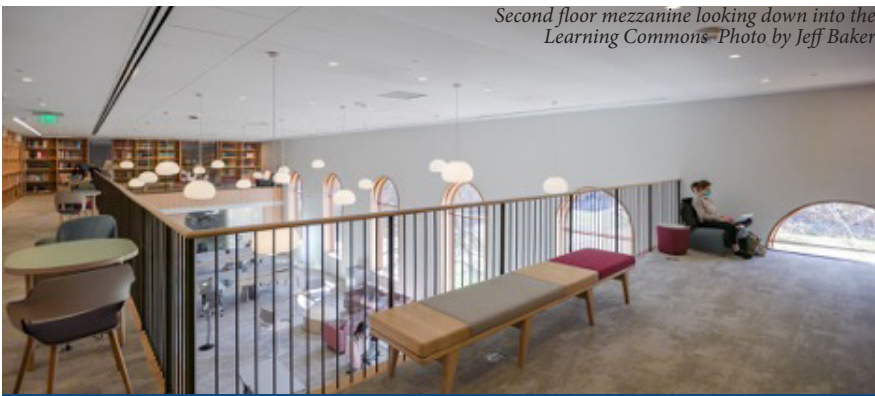
In fall 2021, dependent on campus guidelines, there will be new service points and programs available. Working collaboratively, Smith College Libraries and Information Technology Services will staff and support the Central Service Point on the ground floor, allowing checkout of books and other materials, as well as equipment loans and technology assistance. The ground floor also includes the Digital Media Hub, with two media production studios, computers and experts available for consultation on media production and digital mapping. On the first floor, the Learning Commons will provide a shared space for collaborative programming with the libraries, ITS, the Jacobson Center, the Spinelli Center and the Office of Disability Services.



*First floor Cafe in the Mary Maples Dunn (north) wing
Photo by Jeff Baker*



*Students studying on the second floor Central Hall mezzanine
Photo by Jeff Baker*



Second floor mezzanine looking down into the Learning Commons Photo by Jeff Baker



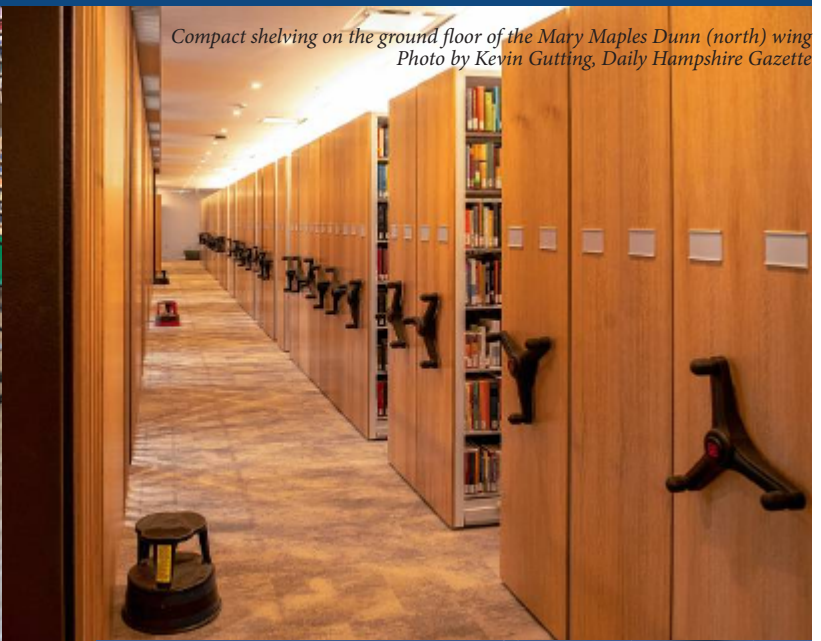
Bookshelves lining the second floor mezzanine in the Central Hall Photo by Jeff Baker

General collections are located throughout the building on shelves lining the walls, with approximately 75% of the books in compact shelving on the ground floor. After a move this summer, the college's Special Collections will reside in their own wing on the north side of the building, where the Sophia Smith Collection of Women's History, the Mortimer Rare Book Collection, and the College Archives will all be housed together. On the third floor, the Special Collections reading room, with beautiful views to campus, will be the Special Collections service point for all Smith and visiting researchers.

There's so much more to Neilson, including spaces and services in Alumnae Gym, the fourth floor Skyline Reading Room and terrace, the new home to the Conway Center as well as the return of the first floor Browsing Room. We can't wait to welcome the entire Smith community!



Temporary Central Service Point in the first floor Central Hall Photo by Susan Fliss



Compact shelving on the ground floor of the Mary Maples Dunn (north) wing Photo by Kevin Gutting, Daily Hampshire Gazette



Special Collections Reading Room on the third floor of the Ruth Simmons (south) wing Photo by Jeff Baker



Exterior view of the Mary Maples Dunn (north wing) looking into the sunken garden Photo by Jeff Baker

The Evolution of Neilson Library

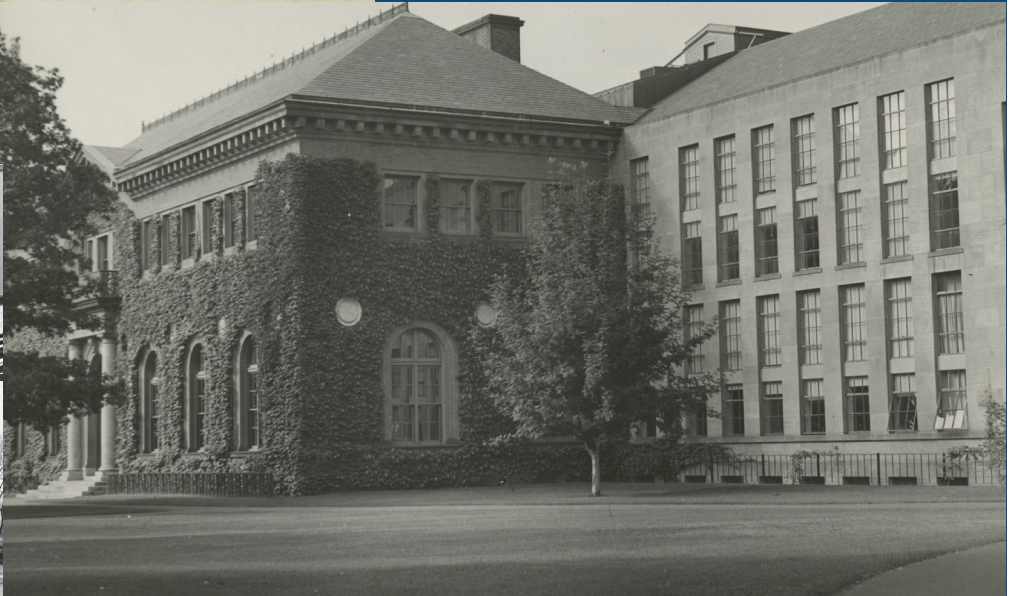
By
Nanci Young, College Archivist



Library North Wing construction and the completed North Wing, 1937.



Demolition of North Wing's Little Chapel location to make way for Northwest wing. Construction of the Northwest facade of Neilson 1961 and Completed Northwest wing facade, 1962.



Installation of steel beams for glass connector between South Wing of Neilson and Alumnae Gymnasium, ca. 1980.

Congratulations, Retirees!

Barbara Rejniak

By Chris Carr Hill



Barbara Rejniak retired after 26 years of working in the Office of Alumnae Relations and Development. When I think of Barb the saying that comes immediately to mind is If You Want Something Done, Ask a Busy Person To Do It. When Barb would recap to me some of her day's activities, I would be amazed at the many things she juggled. She was committed to her work at Smith, and remains committed to family, friends, and her faith. She was known for her thorough and diligent work ethic. Barb's job was to work with alumnae and she worked with countless classes and hundreds of volunteers. She was recognized for her incredible wealth of knowledge and infinite amount of patience. She rarely complains and always sees the good in everyone.

Retiring has allowed Barb to provide daily care to her elderly mother (also a Smith retiree) at a time when she needs her the most so Barb is thankful that the timing was right. When time allows she is anxious to get back to painting, long walks with her dogs, and spending more time at their house at the Cape. She is greatly missed in our office.

Jim Hume

By Jon Cartledge

After almost forty (total) years, beloved Woodshop Supervisor Jim Hume will be retiring from the Smith College Art Department. Jim started working at Smith in the early seventies as the Cabinet Foreman in Smith's cabinetry shop. When the shop was closed in the late eighties, Jim left the college, but returned in 1998 as the Art Department's Woodshop Supervisor, and has been helping students develop their wood-working skills for the last twenty-two years.

Jim traveled across the Mediterranean in the service, has since traveled to China and likes to say he's made it both sides of the world. Jim has made many drives to Alaska during his time at Smith, and would like to continue travelling, but the current condition of the world has that plan on hold. Hopefully, 2021 will give Jim a few more opportunities for travel.

When asked about his best memory at Smith, Jim mentioned the year Smith students nominated him for the Gavel Award, which he received at the 2010 Rally Day. If it wasn't for the students, Jim said, he would not have stayed as long as he has. He is still in contact with a Smithee from the class of '85 who calls him every Commencement Day. Another alumna always calls him on the birthday they both share. It's the students who keep him young, and who he'll miss most.



The Smith College Staff Creative Arts Showcase



Justin Thomas starts each painting by doing a detailed drawing directly on the surface. After this, he adds thin washes and glazes of color. Then, he draws and paints more, building up the image until it is complete.

Justin has been making artwork of since his early teens. He earned a BFA in painting and ceramic studies from UMass Amherst in 1996.

Justin is the retail manager at the Smith College Museum of Art. He lives in Windsor (MA) where he shares a home studio with his partner, Terrence Trapp, a garden and landscape designer. Justin and Terrence spend ample time hiking in the woods of Western Massachusetts.



Veeka Trofimova came across an image of beautiful slippers on Pinterest, created using wet felting. Wet felting is the process of turning wool fiber into a cloth by using soapy water and friction. It goes back to the nomadic people of Central Asia and is considered to be the oldest known textile.

Veeka studied ceramics and sculpture in college, where she did a lot of installation work using unconventional items: sugar, wax, paper pulp.

Veeka is the Administrative Assistant at the Center for the Environment. She lives in West Springfield with her partner Brian. Other than creative arts, Veeka enjoys mushroom foraging and dancing the Argentine Tango.



Lauren Anderson always has at least five or six projects buzzing around her head—the challenge is making sure to finish one before starting another! Her project ideas tend to jump from medium to medium as new questions or ideas take over. Lauren works in acrylic collage, watercolor, wood-burning, fabric, writing, and even a little furniture making.

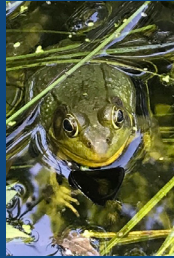
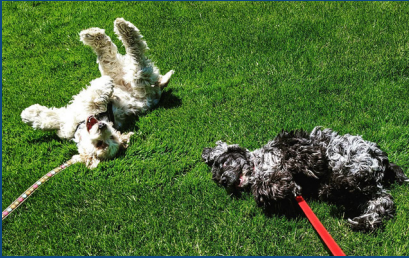
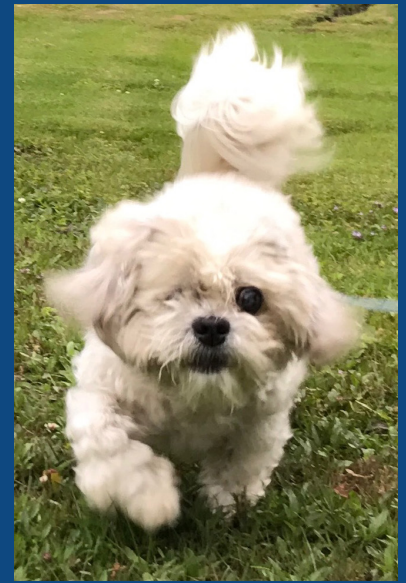
Lauren Anderson is the Content Production Coordinator in the Office of College Relations. She holds a Ph.D. in African American history and has a former career as a professor. Lauren and her wife, Heidi, moved to Northampton three years ago so her marriage and hoped-for family would be legally protected.

This beautiful work is being shared as part of the [Smith College Staff Creative Arts Showcase Virtual Preview](#). We encourage you to also submit your creative pieces! Please let us know if you are interested in participating and sharing your work in the Showcase on campus and/or the Virtual Preview.

How are you staying engaged creatively through art, music, or other mediums? How do your activities bring you comfort and help you create community while staying at home? We are looking for pieces that represent you, that share an experience, that tell a story. Perhaps you have been working on a creative piece for a while—a quilt, painting or bag that is just awaiting some finishing touches? Or maybe you have recently taken a photo of a breathtaking sunset while out on an evening walk? We encourage you to submit your creative pieces to the Virtual Preview so we can share your work with your fellow staff colleagues.

Supported by a 2020 Innovation Challenge Grant, the Showcase is designed to highlight the creativity and talents of staff. Our hope is to help the Smith College community become more aware of—and enjoy—the creativity of staff.

Got a pet photo you'd like to share? email us at chronicle@smith.edu



Top: (left to right) Sherbert by Jaz Dand, Chloe and Jaz Dand by Josh Frankenstein, Mia by Mary Biddle, Obie & Tilda by Jean Ferguson, Frog at Child's Park by Mary Biddle, Kashmir & Silverado by Christine Carr Hill. **Bottom:** (from left to right): Tamara by Jon Cartledge, Archimedes by Maureen Callahan, Genie by Christine Carr Hill, Sammy by Colleen Keenan, Dee Dee by Adriene Figus, Lola & Johnnie B by Sadie Menchen

Pet Corner

