

# Library System

## IMPACT REPORT 2020



# A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



## Dear Friend of the Library,

As I write this, 2020 is gratefully in our rearview mirror. When I reflect on this past year, I am awed by the creativity, flexibility, resilience, and commitment to service shown by our libraries.

During this time of great uncertainty, the Library remained committed to our core mission of catalyzing success for our faculty, students, and community. We completed two digital “renovation” projects, launching both a new library website and a new PittCat library catalog. We developed and implemented services to ensure our users received the materials they needed, quickly and safely. Our spaces remained open for those who needed in-person services, staffed by our resilient and dedicated team members who deserve accolades for their critically important efforts.

Despite the challenging environment, the Library continued to make substantial contributions locally, nationally, and internationally. Most significantly, we acquired the archives of the late playwright and Pittsburgh native son August Wilson, best known for his unprecedented American Century Cycle —ten plays that convey the Black experience in each decade of the 20th century. Joining with our library colleagues worldwide, we participated in a national research project aimed to help libraries engage their communities with archival materials more effectively. We also contributed to infrastructure supporting the fast and free dissemination of scholarly publications.

The year behind us was challenging for everyone. But it also reaffirmed the value of research libraries for the success of our students, faculty, and community, as well as the importance of the Library as a place of great creativity, responsiveness, and commitment to service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Tancheva".

**Kornelia Tancheva, PhD**  
*The Hillman University Librarian and  
Director, University of Pittsburgh Library System*

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### ULS LIBRARIES

Archives & Special Collections  
Center for American Music  
Chemistry Library  
Engineering Library  
Frick Fine Arts Library  
Hanley Library (Bradford)  
Haskell Library (Titusville)  
Hillman Library  
Langley Library  
Millstein Library (Greensburg)  
Finney Music Library  
Owen Library (Johnstown)

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### STAY CONNECTED

Bookmark our website!  
**library.pitt.edu**

Follow the University of Pittsburgh Libraries on social media to get updates on events, services, archival photos, and more.

-  [facebook.com/PittLibraries](https://facebook.com/PittLibraries)
-  [twitter.com/PittLibraries](https://twitter.com/PittLibraries)
-  [instagram.com/PittLibraries](https://instagram.com/PittLibraries)



# 2020 snapshot

**8,499,324**  
TOTAL COLLECTION  
ENGAGEMENTS



**4,327,878**  
electronic materials  
downloaded



**4,121,551**  
database  
searches



**49,895**  
print materials  
loaned

In 2020, the ULS responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with additional resources & services:

**3,008**  
class materials  
scanned & put online



**1,503** library items shipped TO **22** states

We also joined the Rapid Interlibrary Loan COVID-19 Initiative, along with 200+ libraries

**34,330** total filled requests TO/FROM **30** countries



## Research



**12,102,583**  
institutional repository  
items downloaded to-date



**39,579**  
questions  
answered

**1042**  
ULS research  
consultations

**37**  
Open Access journals  
hosted & published

## Teaching & Learning



**1,427,976**  
library visitors



**3,749**  
study room  
reservations

**29,854** participants attended

**1,450**  
workshops

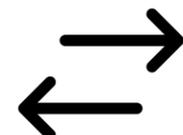
## Collections



**5,685,799**  
print books



**1,802,418**  
e-books



**45,679**  
Interlibrary Loan  
transactions



**High-Density  
Storage Facility**

new module **8%** full  
old module **100%** full

**108,890**  
print journals

**288,349**  
e-journals

## Media Creation



**4,634**  
multimedia kits  
borrowed

**464**  
podcast booth  
bookings

**288**  
video studio  
bookings

## Archives & Special Collections



**188**  
archives & special  
collections class  
visits



**62**  
Archival Scholar  
Research Award  
scholars since 2016



## OUR RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

*Create, Innovate, and Support*



**Amidst the changing on-the-ground reality of COVID-19,** the ULS has responded with resilience, agility, and a continuing commitment to facilitating faculty and student success. After the University shifted to remote teaching and learning, our staff continued to work both on-site and from home, seamlessly supporting thousands of students and instructors through the transition.

While every other unit on campus remained closed, we brought back a skeletal crew of essential personnel to work at Hillman and our remote storage facility to support the research and teaching needs of faculty by scanning physical material. Acting quickly, our Technical Services unit collaborated with internal colleagues to streamline the process for requesting and accessing materials. In addition, we worked with our digital content providers at HathiTrust to allow for expanded access to materials that would typically be inaccessible.

By July 2020, we had over 100 staff members working on-site. Our staff implemented new services, mailing requested physical materials to addresses around the country and providing reduced-contact options for faculty and students to check out materials. In-person team members also scanned and uploaded hundreds of materials that students would normally access in person.

Now, as the academic year comes to a close, we remain committed to serving the Pitt community through our innovative resources, expertise, and programs.



**3,473**

materials accessed via HathiTrust Emergency Temporary Access Service from March 2020 to August 2020

### Making a Documentary During a Pandemic

In the summer of 2020, we added a significant amount of audio and video production equipment to our Media Production Equipment & Services Equipment Lending Program. Unable to provide in-person tutorials due to safety precautions, the Media Production Equipment & Services team partnered with faculty experts to create video guides and tutorials for remote viewing. Despite the pandemic, students made great use of these resources. For example, Senior Lecturer in Film & Media Studies Carl Kurtlander's Making the Documentary class produced a film titled "George Romero & Pittsburgh: The Early Years." They recorded interviews with ULS equipment and incorporated primary source materials from the George A. Romero Archival Collection held by ULS Archives & Special Collections. The final result was a creative and successful film that premiered at a "sold out" virtual screening in February 2021.

# OUR DIGITAL UPGRADE

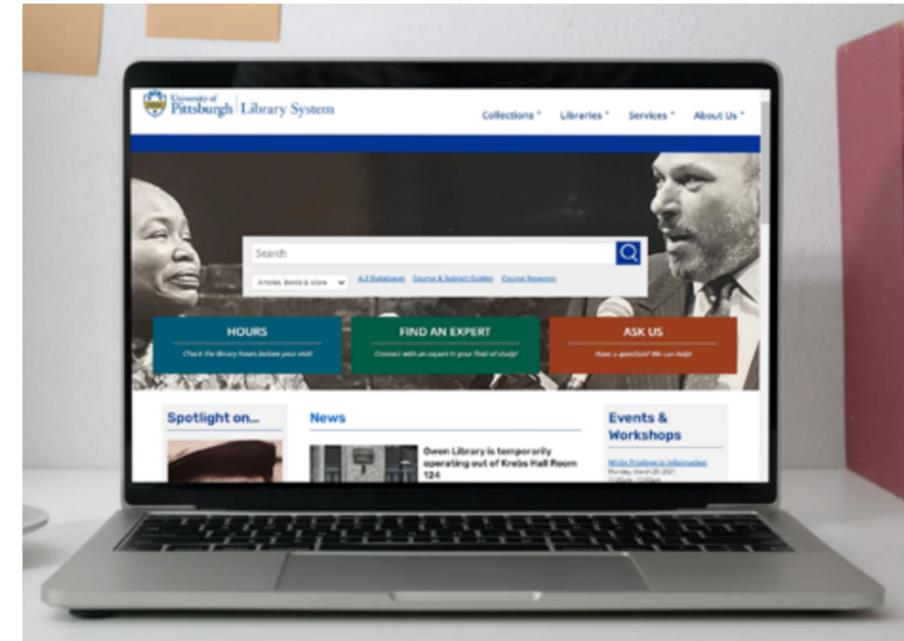
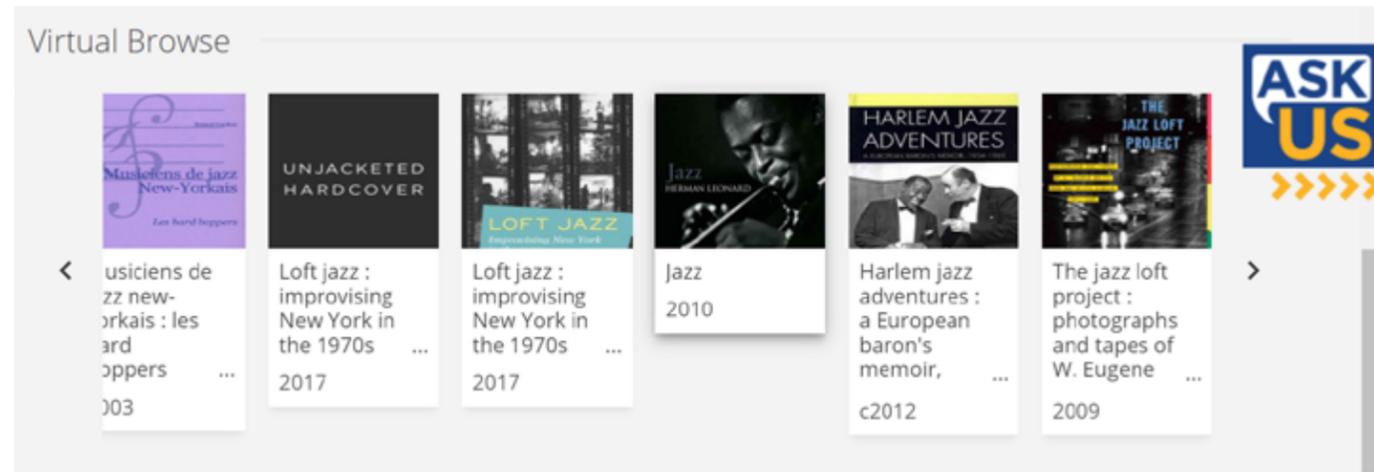
## The New Library Website and Catalog

Last summer, the Library completed a total redesign of the Library website and rolled out a new PittCat catalog system. Thanks to these efforts, virtual visitors now have a faster, friendlier, and more efficient Library experience, whether searching for an item in our collections or scheduling a research consultation.



**“The research and discovery needs and the speed and depth of the information that folks are looking for have changed so much in the last 20 years – we need to be able to serve them where they are with what they need as quickly and efficiently as possible.”**

-Rachel Rubin, PhD, Associate University Librarian for Research and Learning



The new Library homepage prominently features ways to contact our experts, see current exhibits, locate and register for upcoming events and workshops, and read recent ULS news. It also boasts a search bar where users can explore millions of articles, books, course readings, archival materials, and more. The search function directly integrates with the updated PittCat, which replaced the previous 20-year-old software. Plus, users can now peruse the stacks remotely using the new PittCat’s “virtual browse” feature.

In addition to improving the user experience, the upgrade also delivers more robust analytics, enabling our team to make data-informed decisions about services and materials we provide to ensure we are responsible stewards of University resources.

**These upgrades help faculty and students to stay current, save time, discover, explore, learn, and share more quickly and easily than ever before!**

### Getting to Know the New PittCat

To orient users to the new Library website and catalog, we hosted virtual training sessions and created tutorial videos for common activities, like conducting an advanced search in PittCat and viewing the “My Account” features. Users across the University have responded enthusiastically to this seamless search and discovery experience.





August Wilson

## The August Wilson Archive

In October 2020, the ULS announced the acquisition of the archive of the late playwright and Pittsburgh native son August Wilson, best known for his unprecedented American Century Cycle — ten plays that convey the Black experience in each decade of the 20th century.

Wilson honed his craft as a young man by walking the streets of his Hill District neighborhood, observing and immersing himself in Black street life, and listening to community elders talk about their daily lives. This experience inspired what would become his plays' vibrant characters and lyrical language. All ten of Wilson's American Century Cycle plays have had Broadway productions, and two earned Wilson the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The Broadway and film casts have included stars such as Denzel Washington, Chadwick Boseman, Viola Davis, Laurence Fishburne, and Phylicia Rashad.

The acquisition of the August Wilson Archive, as well as our other collections, is nicely complemented by the state-of-the-art Archives & Special Collections space in the reinvented Hillman Library. The new facilities contain significant physical and digital exhibition space, an expansive reading room, and a large classroom, allowing for hands-on interaction with these and other materials. Pitt's Archives & Special Collections also houses the Kuntu Repertory Theatre Collection and the papers of Vernell Lillie and Bob Johnson, other prominent figures in African American performing arts with Pittsburgh roots.



The United States Postal Service (USPS) recently released an August Wilson commemorative Forever Stamp as part of their Black Heritage series in February 2021. The First Day of Issue Stamp Ceremony video featured images from the August Wilson Archive.



**Processing of the more than 450 boxes of materials is already underway.**

In February, with generous support from the Hillman Foundation, we hired Dr. Leah Mickens as the August Wilson Archive processing archivist. Additionally, our Outreach and Engagement Librarian is beginning to collaborate with Pitt's Community Engagement Centers to plan future community-centered programming. As we process the collection, we will explore opportunities to bring the Collection to the Hill District, Wilson's home neighborhood, through events and exhibits. Future plans for the use of the August Wilson Archive include a Pitt student-created documentary, lesson plans co-developed with local teachers, and independent archival research experiences for local high school students, as well as community scholars.



**"I am thrilled to join the ULS and look forward to preserving the cultural heritage of such an important African American artist and Pittsburgh icon."**

-Leah Mickens, PhD, August Wilson Project Archivist

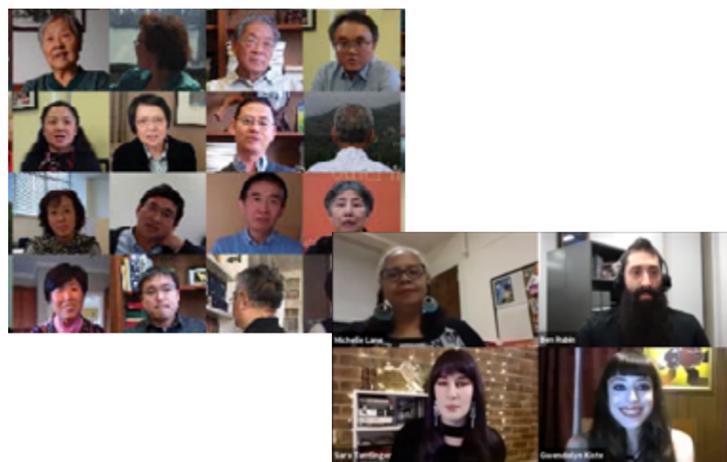
### Gems from the Collection include:

- Hundreds of writing tablets and notebooks which contain drafts, poetry, artwork, and other writing;
- Draft scripts of all the American Century Cycle plays and additional unpublished material;
- Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh diploma, given to Wilson in 1989 for using the Carnegie Libraries to educate himself after dropping out of high school;
- Awards and degrees, including his Pulitzer Prize certificates; and
- Correspondence with friends and collaborators including director Lloyd Richards and Claude Purdy, a close friend and colleague who was crucial to Wilson's later success.

# A GLOBAL LIBRARY

## Part of the International Scholarly Community

The ULS is an essential partner in the success of Pitt faculty and students. However, making significant contributions at the local and regional levels is only part of the picture. The library also actively contributes to the global scholarly community in many ways, advancing creation, discovery, and sharing on a global level.



### A Virtual World Premiere

The need to host events virtually rather than in-person allowed the ULS to connect with a wider audience, spanning many countries. One project, in particular, saw great success.

In November 2020, we premiered "The Revolution They Remember," a documentary created by our East Asian Library in collaboration with the Dartmouth Library. This feature-length film captures the memories of those who experienced China's Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

The virtual premiere represented the culmination of a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation and funding from Pitt's Year of Engagement. Attendance reached maximum capacity with over four hundred people from eight countries. The event demonstrated the extent to which the Library is part of the global scholarly community and the degree to which our work has global impact and importance.

Visit <https://culturalrevolution.pitt.edu/> to watch the documentary, available in both English and Chinese.



### Ithaka S+R 2019 - 2020 Primary Sources Project

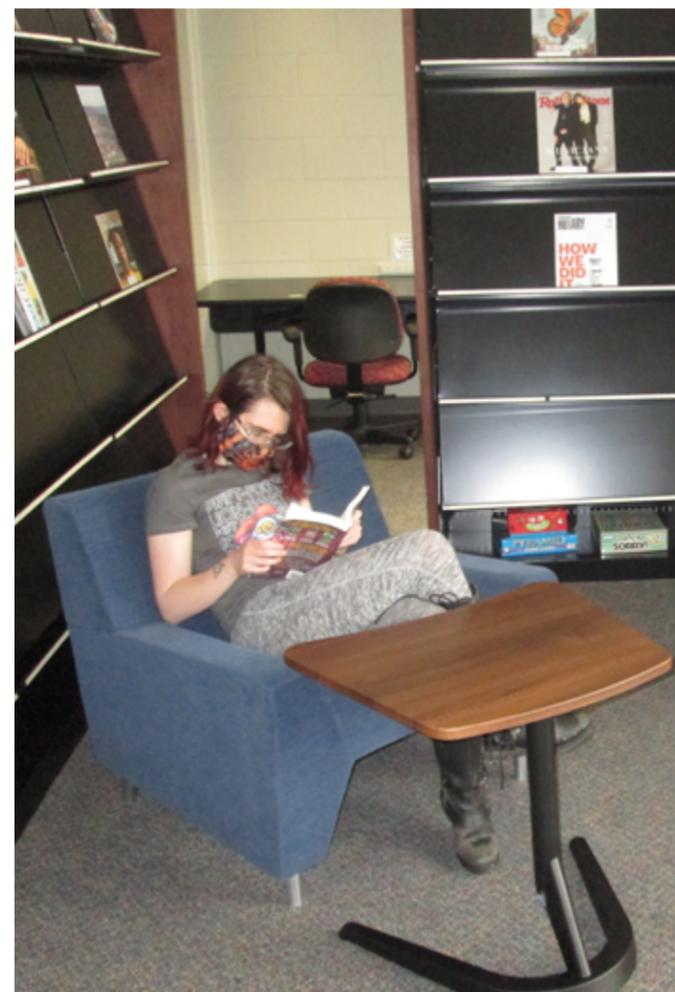
A team of ULS librarians recently supported the Ithaka S+R 2019 - 2020 Primary Sources Project. Ithaka S+R is a nonprofit that provides research and strategic guidance to help academic and cultural communities navigate economic, demographic, and technological change. This international study examined teaching with primary sources via instructor interviews.

Our team wrote an executive summary of their findings which will be incorporated in the larger Ithaka report, together with data from another 24 US and UK-based research libraries, to be released this fall. The ultimate goal is to develop a capstone report that analyzes data collected by participating institutions. This report will inform academic libraries' strategies and approaches to supporting and partnering with instructors teaching with primary source materials.

### Supporting Open Access Publishing

For many years, libraries have advanced the idea that published research, most of which is taxpayer-funded, should be in turn freely available to those same taxpayers and the global scholarly community, not locked behind publisher paywalls. To support this idea (called Open Access), the Library, along with the international community, has for many years supported Open Journal Systems (OJS). OJS is the most popular Open Access Journal publishing software platform in the world and is the platform we use to publish our 37 Open Access journals.

Our support for Open Access, and the OJS platform specifically, takes many forms. The ULS recently hosted the Public Knowledge Project (the body that oversees the direction and development of the platform) Sprint which brought together a diverse group of developers, editors, and scholars to improve this essential software. In the summer of 2020, the latest version of OJS was released, bringing a host of improvements to this valuable public resource.



# THANK YOU

## 2019–2020 Donor Honor Roll

**It is with tremendous gratitude** that we thank the following alumni and friends who are helping the University Library System engage students and faculty in the enterprise of knowledge creation, teaching, and learning. Your support helps us inspire intellectual discovery, critical thinking, creative expression, the free flow of ideas, and the worldwide progress of knowledge. Contributions include, but are not limited to, support for the Hillman Library Reinvention, acquisitions (including the August Wilson Archive), endowments, services, programs, the Textbook Project, and the Archival Student Research Awards.

*This honor roll of donors (organized by donor levels) recognizes individuals who have made contributions to the University Library System, including those who have given at the Chancellor's Circle level (\$1,000+) between July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020.*

*Please Note: Board of Visitors indicates the donor is a member of the University Library System Board of Visitors, "\*" denotes the donor's gift was matched by an employer's matching gift program, and "+" indicates that the donor is being honored posthumously.*

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#### Gifts of up to \$99

We extend our appreciation to the 101 individuals who each contributed gifts of up to \$99.

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Join us on this journey toward a bolder and brighter future! You can give online or download forms to give by mail at [library.pitt.edu/giving](http://library.pitt.edu/giving).

For more information, please contact Renée Pekor, Director of Development, University Library System at (412)648-7739 or at [pekor.renee@pitt.edu](mailto:pekor.renee@pitt.edu).



## LOOKING AHEAD

The Hillman Library renovation will resume in July, after pausing for a year due to the pandemic. We are excited to begin work on the first and second floors, where we will continue creating library spaces that advance academic studies, stimulate innovation, encourage intellectual exploration, and foster collaborative exchange.

Take a virtual tour of the newly reopened third-floor Archives & Special Collections space:

**[library.pitt.edu/  
archives-special-collections-virtual-tour](https://library.pitt.edu/archives-special-collections-virtual-tour)**