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Dean's Report to Library Advisory Council October 2020

Central Washington University

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October 2020

Dear Library Advisory Council:

This new academic year is like no other.

This fall, we continue the **virtual services** we grew and enhanced during spring quarter. We are able to serve our library users regardless of location through chat, appointments for more in-depth work, article and chapter scans, and mailing of print books to faculty and students outside Ellensburg when we cannot obtain an electronic copy.

I am proud to share with you that we were one of the first academic libraries to join the revival of our regional **interlibrary borrowing and lending** network, Summit. We have also expanded our interlibrary borrowing option by joining the RapidILL network, which gives us even more library partners.

All of these efforts are conducted with the latest advice and best practice in quarantine of materials; service might not be as speedy as before, but it's safe.

We are following Washington phased **reopening** and the guidance of our county public health department. In Ellensburg, we have carefully opened the doors of Brooks to welcome you with smiles behind our face coverings and through our eyes. There is plexiglass at the services desk. Some collections that are housed in tight spaces, such as Music and Curriculum, will be available by request. **Archives and Special Collections** is operating by appointment. We celebrated Archives Month with a virtual version of the annual Archives Crawl.

Although we are open, we recognize that many will prefer virtual interaction for their safety and comfort. Virtual appointments will be available even when the building is open. There will be reduced faculty and staff in the Brooks Library building because we also need to create safe conditions for us.

Should we have a change of phase or a University closure, we are prepared to mobilize quickly. If we need to close our physical doors, we'll continue to offer all services virtually and connect with you regarding additional support areas to expand.

Our **Center location** specialists are important members of our virtual services team. The Center locations in Lynnwood and Des Moines are closed this quarter in accordance with host location practice.

We have enhanced and deepened our **electronic resource collection**. We've added to our streaming video collections with subscriptions to Academic Video Online and Documentary Educational Video. Diversifying collections is a continuing priority with collections like African American poetry (see feature in Appendix).

Our **virtual programming** is growing. One of our signature programs, Cultural Conversions, held two sessions in Spring and one so far in Fall, all well attended.

Our successful Freedom to Read Grant supported our transformation of our annual Banned Books celebrations. Collaborating with the DEC, we featured “I Wish You All the Best” by Mason Deaver with a book giveaway, book discussion, and author visit.

See our playlist for our virtual poetry program:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3cU1OFSaRg7-svApjVB0-0rXOannv1f>

Watch our recently refreshed website for the very latest information:

<https://www.lib.cwu.edu/>

Our work in **Digital Humanities** continues to grow with our collaboration with the College of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for Humanities CARES grant. We offered an Introduction to Digital Humanities workshop on 19 October.

Appendix

Database Spotlight: African American Poetry

[African American Poetry](#) contains nearly 3,000 poems by African American poets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It provides a comprehensive survey of the early history of African American poetry, from the earliest published African American poems to the works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, the first African American poet to achieve national success and recognition.

The authors and works included in the collection show the huge variety of this relatively unexplored area of American literary history: coverage includes writers from both North and South, from rural and urban backgrounds, and ranges from University-educated professionals to those for whom the very acts of reading and writing constituted a defiance of Southern slave laws. Generically, poems range from ballads, broadsides and humorous verse to Romantic odes, sonnets and historical epics.

Important authors include:

- Lucy Terry Prince (1730–1821), an African-born slave whose one surviving ballad, "Bars Fight", is the first known poem by an African American. It describes an Indian raid on Massachusetts settlers in 1746, and was not published until 1855.
- Phillis Wheatley (1753?–1784), who was abducted from West Africa and sold as a slave in Boston, and went on to become one of the major American poets of the Colonial period. Wheatley showed prodigious intelligence as a young woman, and her volume *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773) made her only the second American woman to publish a volume of poetry.

- Jupiter Hammon (1711–1800?), whose poems, such as 'The Kind Master and Dutiful Servant', advocated Christian piety and loyal servitude.
- George Moses Horton (1797?–1883?), author of *The Hope of Liberty* (1829), the first book published in the South by an African American; his works show a new candour and defiance in their depiction of the indignities and outrages of slavery.
- Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1824–1911), a free woman from Baltimore who campaigned for the abolition of slavery and for women's rights. Her powerful descriptions of the experience of slavery include 'Bury Me in a Free Land', 'The Slave Auction', and 'The Slave Mother, a Tale of the Ohio', which is based on the same real-life events as Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*.
- James Monroe Whitfield (1822–1871), a regular contributor to abolitionist journals, whose ironic and accusatory poems such as 'The Misanthropist' and 'America' anticipate the Black nationalism of later generations.