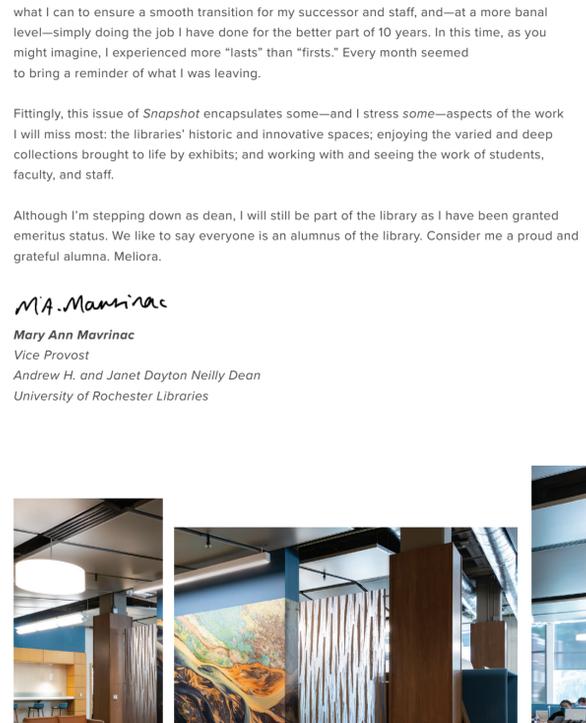


# Snapshot



UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER LIBRARIES 2021



## From Our Dean

A view from outside Studio X looking in on its salon, where Emily Sherwood, director of Digital Scholarship and Studio X, teaches a class

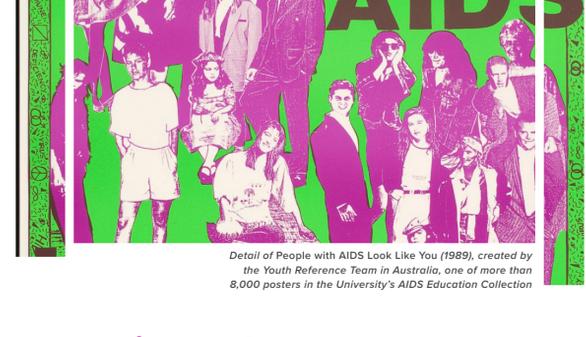
It would be difficult for me to introduce a publication on the libraries' highlights for 2021 without acknowledging the announcement, made in February, that this is my last year with the University of Rochester. (I sincerely hope this isn't news to you.)

I spent the past year wrapping up projects (some you will read about on the next page), doing what I can to ensure a smooth transition for my successor and staff, and—at a more banal level—simply doing the job I have done for the better part of 10 years. In this time, as you might imagine, I experienced more “lasts” than “firsts.” Every month seemed to bring a reminder of what I was leaving.

Fittingly, this issue of *Snapshot* encapsulates some—and I stress some—aspects of the work I will miss most: the libraries' historic and innovative spaces; enjoying the varied and deep collections brought to life by exhibits; and working with and seeing the work of students, faculty, and staff.

Although I'm stepping down as dean, I will still be part of the library as I have been granted emeritus status. We like to say everyone is an alumnus of the library. Consider me a proud and grateful alumna. Meliora.

*M.A. Mavrinac*  
**Mary Ann Mavrinac**  
Vice Provost  
Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neilly Dean  
University of Rochester Libraries



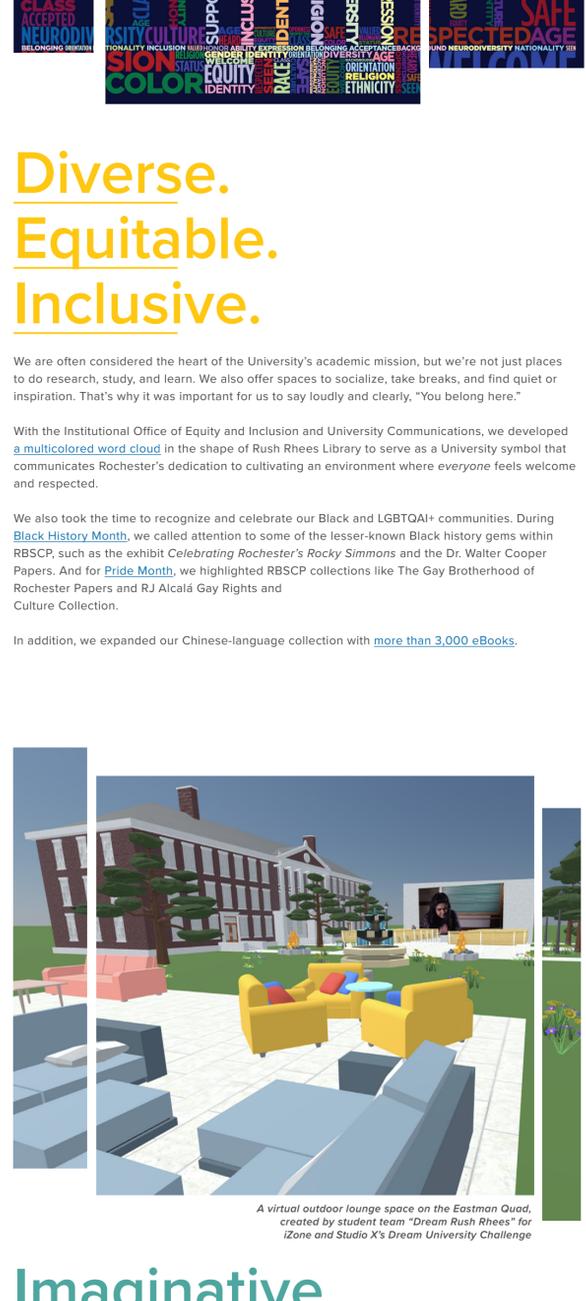
The refreshed Gleason Library's "meet-up" space, where students can wait for study-group mates, relax, or socialize

## Refreshed. Brand-new. Ever better.

The libraries' unofficial slogan for the summer of 2021 was ["Pardon our dust, but Meliora we must."](#) We spent close to five months working on three library spaces on the River Campus.

After 14 years of 24/7 use, Gleason Library received a [well-deserved refresh](#) that features a shift to a cooler color palette, a suite of new study furniture, and a reimagined layout that includes a meet-up space and powered study pods. At the Carlson Seim and Engineering Library, we breathed new life into the first floor with modern furniture and flexible spaces for easier transitions from group to solo study. On the same floor, we also built Studio X. The University's [new hub for extended reality](#) (XR) is equipped with virtual and mixed reality headsets, 360-degree cameras, and high-end workstations for experiencing, exploring, and experimenting in XR.

And at the Medical Center's Edward G. Miner Library, the historic Reading Room was [pulled out of the 1980s](#) by an array of modern amenities.



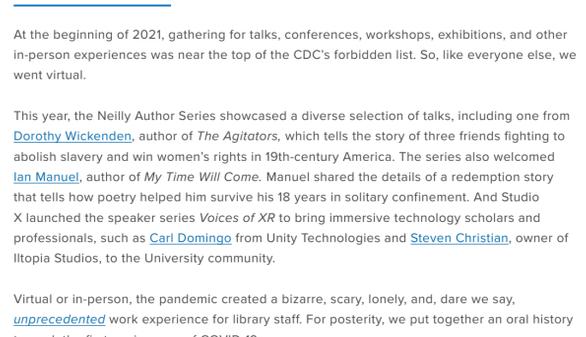
Detail of People with AIDS Look Like You (1989), created by the Youth Reference Team in Australia, one of more than 8,000 posters in the University's AIDS Education Collection

## Medieval. Archival. Educational.

Our collections are so varied and deep that you could give us an adjective, and we would give you a collection that it describes. The three words to the left correspond to three collections that received special attention in 2021.

Using pieces from the Rossell Hope Robbins Library and the Department of Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation (RBSCP), the digital exhibit [Reclaiming the Death of a Beautiful Woman](#) examines the illustrations and adaptations of Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott." Additionally, the RBSCP added a [manuscript letter](#) to the William Henry Seward Papers living collection. The letter sent to then Secretary of State Seward from Confederate spy Rose O'Neal Greenhow expresses Greenhow's resentment over being placed under house arrest on suspicion of being a spy (which she was).

We also highlighted the AIDS Education Posters Collection and its donor, [Edward C. Atwater '50 \(1926–2019\)](#), to promote the publication of [Up Against the Wall: Art, Activism, and the AIDS Poster](#) based on the eponymous 2022 Memorial Art Gallery exhibition.



Rochester's newest inclusive graphic was born out of a conversation between Randall Cook '93 '96S (MBA), assistant dean for the River Campus Libraries, and his husband, John

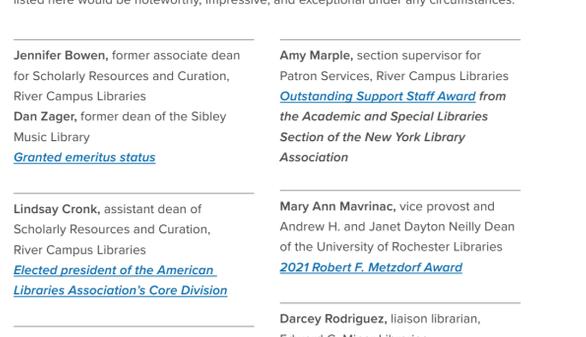
## Diverse. Equitable. Inclusive.

We are often considered the heart of the University's academic mission, but we're not just places to do research, study, and learn. We also offer spaces to socialize, take breaks, and find quiet or inspiration. That's why it was important for us to say loudly and clearly, "You belong here."

With the Institutional Office of Equity and Inclusion and University Communications, we developed a [multicolored word cloud](#) in the shape of Rush Rhees Library to serve as a University symbol that communicates Rochester's dedication to cultivating an environment where everyone feels welcome and respected.

We also took the time to recognize and celebrate our Black and LGBTQIA+ communities. During [Black History Month](#), we called attention to some of the lesser-known Black history gems within RBSCP, such as the exhibit [Celebrating Rochester's Rocky Simmons](#) and the Dr. Walter Cooper Papers. And for [Pride Month](#), we highlighted RBSCP collections like The Gay Brotherhood of Rochester Papers and RJ Alcalá Gay Rights and Culture Collection.

In addition, we expanded our Chinese-language collection with [more than 3,000 eBooks](#).



A virtual outdoor lounge space on the Eastman Quad, created by student team "Dream Rush Rhees" for iZone and Studio X's Dream University Challenge

## Imaginative. Ingenious. Integral.

We are a reservoir. We are a muse. We are a facilitator. We are the platform on which the stars of Rochester stand and present their creativity and intelligence. And we are fortunate to so often experience that brilliance up close through our students.

In collaboration with a broad collection of University partners, the Barbara J. Burger iZone hosted the second and third editions of the Innovation Challenge. In January, student teams competed to address various facets of [Rochester's health crisis](#). And in August, students teamed up again to create [sustainable solutions](#) for real-world problems facing local businesses and organizations. In the virtual world, Studio X and iZone held the [Dream University Challenge](#), in which students had to imagine, design, and build virtual spaces that would provide opportunities to connect.

Finally, the River Campus Libraries employs more than 120 students. Each year, a select few of them are recognized with the [Dean's Student Library Service Award](#) (585) 276-5731 and My Time Will Come (Dorothy Wickenden), Eleanore Lenoe '21 (RBSCP), and Ada Wightman '21 (Robbins Library).



A virtual bust of George Floyd "installed" by Steven Christian in Portland, Oregon

## For-real. Unreal. Surreal.

At the beginning of 2021, gathering for talks, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, and other in-person experiences was near the top of the CDC's forbidden list. So, like everyone else, we went virtual.

This year, the Neilly Author Series showcased a diverse selection of talks, including one from [Dorothy Wickenden](#), author of *The Agitators*, which tells the story of three friends fighting to abolish slavery and win women's rights in 19th-century America. The series also welcomed [Ian Manuel](#), author of *My Time Will Come*. Manuel shared the details of a redemption story that tells how poetry helped him survive his 18 years in solitary confinement. And Studio X launched the speaker series *Voices of XR* to bring immersive technology scholars and professionals, such as [Carl Domingo](#) from Unity Technologies and [Steven Christian](#), owner of Itopia Studios, to the University community.

Virtual or in-person, the pandemic created a bizarre, scary, lonely, and, dare we say, [unprecedented](#) work experience for library staff. For posterity, we put together an oral history to mark the first anniversary of COVID-19.



Cover art for books featured in the first half of the 2021–22 Neilly Author Series season: *The Agitators* (Dorothy Wickenden) and *My Time Will Come* (Ian Manuel)



The statue of philanthropist and Eastman Kodak founder George Eastman on the Eastman Quad

## Indispensable. Remarkable. Unforgettable.

We're now living in a time where it's common to measure performance against COVID-19—even the low end of our scale for success has hints of the supernatural. But the pandemic isn't responsible for our successes; it only heightens them. The work and achievements of the people listed here would be noteworthy, impressive, and exceptional under any circumstances.

**Jennifer Bowen**, former associate dean for Scholarly Resources and Curation, River Campus Libraries

**Dan Zager**, former dean of the Sibley Music Library  
[Granted emeritus status](#)

**Lindsay Cronk**, assistant dean of Scholarly Resources and Curation, River Campus Libraries  
[Elected president of the American Libraries Association's Core Division](#)

**Ashlee Huff**, office manager and human resources representative, River Campus Libraries  
[2021 RCL Staff Service Award](#)

**Gail Lowther**, special collection assistant, Sibley Music Library  
[Staff Service Award](#)

**Amy Marple**, section supervisor for Patron Services, River Campus Libraries  
[Outstanding Support Staff Award from the Academic and Special Libraries Section of the New York Library Association](#)

**Mary Ann Mavrinac**, vice provost and Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neilly Dean of the University of Rochester Libraries  
[2021 Robert F. Metzdorf Award](#)

**Darcey Rodriguez**, liaison librarian, Edward G. Miner Libraries  
[Staff Service Award](#)

**Kristen Totleben**, humanities librarian, River Campus Libraries  
[Appointed editor of College & Research Libraries](#), a monthly scholarly journal of the Association of College and Research Libraries

**Pamela Jackson**, Senior Director of Advancement (585) 276-5731  
pamela.jackson@rochester.edu

**RIVER CAMPUS LIBRARIES**

For information on how to support library spaces, collections, or the people and programs associated with them, contact

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**University of Rochester**

