Message from the Law Library Director

Our Library’s mission is to support research and instruction at the University of Virginia School of Law. Toward this goal, we strive to provide quality services, collections, and physical spaces. New challenges arise each year as the amount of data expands, new technologies emerge, and scholars increase their call for reliable information. But with the steadfast support of the Dean and Faculty of the Law School, the student body, our alumni, and many generous benefactors, the Arthur J. Morris Law Library continues to thrive.

Our top priority is to provide the best possible service to our patrons. With changing technology, users have come to expect that information will be delivered quickly, accurately, and comprehensively, to any location in the world. To meet these expectations we have added new staff, developed additional services, and improved delivery of existing services. Although many predicted that easy access to information through the Internet would make libraries obsolete, we find that our reference and research assistance is in greater demand than ever before.

The Library’s information services are supported by one of the most comprehensive legal collections in the country. Our impressive 870,000 volume collection is supplemented by five million volumes in the combined libraries of the University. Within hours of a request, a faculty member can possess almost any relevant scholarship, whether in the humanities, social sciences, business, economics, or medicine. The interdisciplinary research of today’s legal scholar demands this access, and we are fortunate to have a strong alliance with our library colleagues on campus.

I extend thanks to the talented and dedicated members of the library staff who meet the challenges of information delivery every day. Their work has placed the University of Virginia Law Library among the top legal research institutions in the world. We are proud of our achievements and excited by our potential.

The past year brought many changes to the Law Library. This report will update you on some of these changes and acquaint you with our plans for the future. I hope that you will find it helpful, and I welcome your comments and suggestions.

C. Taylor Fitchett
August 2005
Emphasis on Research and Teaching

The Reference Department assists faculty, students and the public with a wide array of research needs. Librarians undertake intricate detective work to track down information ranging from easily accessible web pages to obscure 15th century documents. Questions may come from anywhere—in person, by telephone, or through the generally available “Ask A Librarian” link on the law school website.

Most faculty requests, however, arrive through the e-mail service *Refdesk*. Librarians field more than 2000 faculty queries each year, ranging from simple case requests to complex, substantive research projects. Each *Refdesk* question is handled by one of eight reference librarians who answer *Refdesk* e-mails on a two-hour rotating schedule, during which they have primary responsibility for any questions received.

But *Refdesk* is a team endeavor. All eight reference librarians receive each request for information, as well as every answer. This serves several functions: first, it allows the librarians to rely on others’ expertise and backgrounds: a more knowledgeable colleague will regularly weigh in with advice in answering a difficult query. Second, it acts as an educational resource, providing all of the reference librarians with information about the methods others have used to answer questions. Finally, the patterns of *Refdesk* inquiries give the librarians a window into the faculty’s interests and research needs. This increased understanding of research goals allows the librarians to provide better, more focused service.

The research team is headed by Kent Olson.

Other members:
Ben Doherty
Taylor Fitchett
Marnita Hamler
Mandana Hyder
Micheal Klepper
Michelle Morris
Cathy Palombi
Alison White
Joe Wynne
Some of the librarians who provide research assistance also have other major responsibilities. For example, Cathy Palombi directs the library’s circulation and document delivery services but enjoys adding the challenges of reference work to her routine. She says “I appreciate both the interaction with the faculty and the variety of the questions. You never know what you’ll get when you start a Refdesk shift.” Others, like Xinh Luu, devote considerable time and effort to maintaining expertise in a particular area. Xinh’s proficiency in foreign, comparative, and international law adds immeasurably to the library’s array of research services, as does Alison White’s knowledge of archival and historical sources.

Some recent topics of Refdesk research include:

- The last year the Cleveland Indians won the World Series
- Why there are AAA, AA, C and D batteries, but no A or B batteries
- Whether Chief Justice Rehnquist was on the bench when the Supreme Court sat this morning
- Bathymetric charts of the area around the Taiwan Straits
- The status of lawsuits against Wal-Mart for antitrust violations
- The current status of the exclusion of women from combat in the U.S. military
- Identifying states that allow judges to participate in plea bargain discussions
- Support for the proposition that an agent’s authority can be no greater than that of its principal
- Whether selection criteria for grand jury service in Maryland in 1803 was more restrictive than for political participation
“Only on Jeopardy would one see contestants tossed questions as unlikely and as demanding as those I have put to the Law School’s talented and willing staff. The more elusive the question, the greater their professional pride in coming up with just what is needed – often with bonus information.”

Professor A.E. Dick Howard

Our librarians provide reference services for law school students, although the work differs substantially from faculty research. Librarians often work with students writing research papers or embarking on journal cite-checks. They show them how to use the library’s extensive array of databases and other collections to find the needed resources. They also help cite checkers track down obscure and sometimes incorrectly cited sources for the articles they are editing. Students are extremely appreciative when they find that last, elusive source or learn how to perform comprehensive research themselves.

In addition to the research support they provide, librarians assist faculty in their teaching responsibilities and students with their class preparation. It is not unusual to get an emergency Refdesk request for information from a faculty member who is on the way to teach a class. Librarians frequently offer moment-of-need training to law students who are new to the strange world of legal bibliography. Kent Olson teaches a course in advanced legal research each spring. Xinh Luu teaches a fall course in legal research and writing to law graduate students and a spring course in international and foreign legal research. Law librarians are available to teach research sessions in many areas of law as well as on the use of specific research tools within the collection.

To enhance our research and teaching capabilities, the Library recently made two substantial additions to the reference department. Ben Doherty joined the team in March 2004. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1999 and then spent a year as a law clerk in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. He moved to Charlottesville in 2000 when his wife, Lisa Woolfork, became a professor in the University’s English Department. Before coming to the Law Library, Ben was the Office Administrator for the Virginia Capital Representation Resource Center, a non-profit legal group in Charlottesville representing inmates on Virginia’s death row.
In July 2005, Michelle Morris joined the research staff. Michelle graduated from UVA Law School in 2001, after serving as an Executive Editor of the Virginia Law Review and being elected to the Order of the Coif. While in law school, she worked as a research assistant for Michael Klarman and Kent Sinclair. After graduation Michelle clerked for Judge Robert Bruce King of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and for the past three years she has been an associate in the D.C. office of Hogan & Hartson.

In addition to regular reference duties, both Ben and Michelle assist faculty with in-depth research projects. They are working with Kent Olson, head reference librarian, to encourage the faculty’s use of the library for research questions. Ben and Michelle facilitate faculty scholarship by working with professors directly, by providing aid to student research assistants, and simply by knowing faculty research interests well enough to supply timely, pertinent information as it becomes available. Both are able to dive into complex research questions that might take days or weeks to complete.

“The library’s research support is not only the best I have experienced, it is the best I can imagine. They do such a good job, I think, because they are invested in my research, they know what I am working on, they send me sources, articles, and books, unbidden. And what they send is always right on target, what I should be reading but don’t think to ask for. What more could any law professor want?”

Professor Risa Goluboff

Librarians are prepared to become full partners with professors in their research pursuits.

Although we currently provide high-quality reference service, we have set even higher goals for the research team. Librarians are prepared to become full partners with professors in their research pursuits. We believe that truly optimal research support requires the library to be an integral part of the intellectual life of the Law School.
SERVICE IS OUR MISSION

The quality of our service is best measured by those who use the library. In January 2005, we e-mailed a satisfaction survey to all law students. The survey was completed by 364 (33%) students. It used a rating scale of 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) to measure student satisfaction in a number of areas, such as collection resources, physical facilities, and user service. The tables below show the mean response to these rating questions. We are pleased to report that our ratings in all categories improved from those reported in the 2001 survey.

General Satisfaction Ratings

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<th>2001</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<tr>
<td>Competence/knowledge of staff</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy of staff</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of service</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Rating of the Law Library</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Rating of UVA Library System</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.87</td>
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Priorities

Students were asked to pick their top 3 priorities for library spending and to rate the importance of various improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Priorities for Library Spending</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Comfort (climate control, seating, lighting, etc.)</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extending Library Hours</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Improvement Ratings by Level of Importance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Power Access for Laptops</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Study Carrels</td>
<td>3.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>More Study Tables</td>
<td>3.87</td>
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Clearly the students value the library as a place to study, communicate, and relax. In response to the survey, improvements have been made to the library’s physical facility.

- Courtesy of the Dean, 96 adjustable leather chairs were added to the second floor of the library.
- The Caplin Reading Room is now reserved for law student use.
- A new group study room has been created.
- Additional electrical outlets were added.
- The library was open 24/7 during the last examination period.

*In response to the survey, improvements have been made to the library’s physical facility.*

*The extended hours were appreciated by many, many students. During finals, most of us do not stop studying when the library closes at midnight. As someone whose most productive hours are from 10pm-4am, I personally found the new hours to be great, and I know other students would agree with me.*

*Thanks again,*

*Khang Tran, ’06*

*New library chairs are very popular with students.*
Expanding Service

The Public Service Department, under the direction of Cathy Palombi, handles interlibrary loan requests, office delivery, circulation, reserve, and bindery operations. To enhance service, Cathy recently moved her office to the first floor of the library near the circulation desk. It is our hope that her presence near the first access point for most users will improve their library experience.

Cathy and her team are always exploring new ways to expedite service to faculty. Last year they evaluated and improved the four major methods of materials delivery:

1) Same day delivery for items in the law library;
2) 24-hour rush service for materials at other University libraries;
3) One day to one week service through the University LEO system for non-rush requests;
4) One week to 10-day turnaround for items requested from other libraries

Focus groups with students revealed that they, too, would like access to the LEO on-grounds delivery system to avoid, among other things, parking difficulties. We are working with University Libraries to evaluate the cost of extending LEO delivery to law students.
Dave Denton is the latest addition to the Public Service team. Previously, he worked in circulation and the computer lab at the Health Sciences Library. Here, Dave serves as stacks supervisor and works on digital and web projects. Keeping the books in order is especially challenging because of the library’s re-classification project. Half of our entire collection was relocated last year. Dave and his crew managed this shift so that patrons could always find what they were looking for. He is currently assisting with a visual history database for Special Collections.

The regional reporters were integrated into the Library of Congress classification.

Marnita Hamler, Government Documents Department, works on re-classification.
Come back to the library and browse!

Library patrons enjoy the popular magazines, novels, and movie DVDs available in our Klaus Collection. But until recent years it has been difficult to browse other parts of the collection because it was organized by author’s last name. The re-classification of the collection is a long-term initiative of our technical services librarians. It is designed to improve accessibility by adopting standard Library of Congress (LC) call numbers. LC, the system used by most academic libraries, divides knowledge into twenty-one classes, each identified by a letter of the alphabet. Most of these alphabetical classes are further divided into more specific classes, identified by two-letter or three-letter combinations. Many parts of our collection have already been reorganized. Below is a part of the LC classification scheme:

K- General Law  
KD-Law of the United Kingdom and Ireland  
KE- Law of Canada  
KF-Law of United States  
KG- Latin America, Central America, Mexico  
KH-South America  
KJ-KK-Europe

While re-classifying, we are also replacing and repairing books and withdrawing missing items. It will take us several years to complete the re-classification of the foreign and international collection, but United States law is almost finished. Please stop by the library and browse subjects that interest you—you never know what you’ll find!
Special Collections

Alison White became the Archivist and Director of Special Collections in 2004. While working at a Charlottesville law firm she earned her M.S. in Information Science at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. She also worked in the Historical Collections Department of the University of Virginia's Health Sciences Library. There she contributed to the Walter Reed Yellow Fever digitization project.

Alison is recreating the University of Virginia’s Law Library circa 1828—a project known as the Jefferson Collection. The most recent addition to this collection is Johannes Calvinus’ two volume Magnum Lexicon Juridicum (1759).

Last year we purchased the first American edition of Blackstone’s Commentaries, which includes a list of American subscribers, the colonists who underwrote the American publication of this legal classic on the eve of the Revolutionary War. We also acquired three new form books: The Self-Taught Conveyancer by ‘Gentlemen of the Bar’ from Pennsylvania in 1819; Isaac Goodwin’s New England Sheriff; or, Digest of the Duties of Civil Officers, dated 1830, and a United States Form Book by Charles Wells, published in 1845. These form books are wonderful examples of early law practice in our country.
Conservation and Preservation

Another Special Collections project is assessing the condition of the rare materials within our collection to determine whether we need to restrict access to certain books that are in poor physical condition.

As we re-classify the main collection we are also identifying materials that are in need of physical preservation. For example, this summer we boxed older, more fragile state reporters.

Special Collections Assistant Cecilia Brown is spearheading efforts to restore many of our rare books, including the recent acquisition listed in the law department’s 1828 catalogue: Barnabe Brisson’s 1743 Roman Law Dictionary.

Digitization

The Rare Materials Digital Services Department is compiling a visual history database of thousands of photographs, and we are delighted to contribute photographs from our collection to its development. We are also digitizing hundreds of Virginia Supreme Court briefs that once filled our Ivy storage facility. The digital images of these documents will be available through Hein Online in 2006.
Exhibits

Throughout the year the staff of Special Collections designs exhibits to highlight parts of the collection. For Alumni Weekend, we featured a history of student life at the Law School. The Class Action exhibit displayed student and faculty pictures, student notebooks, and other memorabilia. A display of law student notebooks and student and faculty writing currently resides in the Caplin Reading Room. In addition, there is an exhibit on Mortimer Caplin’s life on the third floor of the Law Library.

Two companion exhibits have been on display in our lobby as part of the Commonwealth of Virginia’s commemoration of the landmark Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision. In the exhibit you will find, from the papers of E. Barrett Prettyman, Jr., Law ’53, the signatures of the Supreme Court Justices who ruled on the 1954 Brown decision.

Signatures from Brown v Board of Education

Caplin Exhibit
All in the Family
2004-2005 Library Art Exhibit

Each August the Library opens a new art exhibit. Last year’s theme was “The Family of Law,” featuring fifteen artists, all of whom have a connection to the UVA Law School. On September 2, 2004, the Law Library hosted a lively wine and hors d’oeuvres reception celebrating the Seventh Annual Law Library Art Show.

Participating Artists:
- Alice Cannon
- Kate Coughlin
- Mary Page Evans
- Thomas Gordon
- Margaret Heritage
- Charles Hopson
- Mackie Kudravetz
- Thomas Lawson
- Tansa Leon
- Lawrence Phillips
- Hartwell Priest
- Anne Slaughter
- Ashlin Smith
- Laura Snyder
- Tracy Verkerke

Prof. Jody Kraus and his son Atticus enjoy the Charlottesville String Quartet.

Tracy Verkerke with her work tj@law.virginia.edu, a gift from the Faculty

Faculty, staff, and students socialize.
Looking Ahead

We are not content to rest on our laurels. Our agenda for the coming year is ambitious! Research librarians will be scheduling appointments with as many faculty members as possible to better understand their scholarship initiatives. We also intend to increase the strength of our research team by adding one more lawyer-librarian who will assist in collection analysis, including the evaluation of electronic resources.

Another major initiative is called “Project Access.” Once completed, it will allow users to simultaneously search the library catalog (Virgo), as well as the full text of journals, newspapers, and other sources, such as Google and Findlaw. This will make the research process more efficient for library users, eliminating the redundancy of repeating a search in various databases—each with its own hard-to-remember password. This "portal" style interface will be released to the public in 2006.

We are also planning to renovate the office space adjacent to the reference desk and examine better uses of our space generally. Along with maximizing the function of working spaces within the circulation area, we will continue to enhance student spaces to provide better areas for study and communication.

You Are Invited!

We will kick off the new semester with our 8th annual art exhibit. This year’s theme is NYC’ville, featuring work from young artists in New York City and Charlottesville. It promises to be urban, edgy, and hip. You are invited to a reception for the artists on Thursday, September 1st from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. As always, there will be wine, cheese, and music!
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<th><strong>The Law Library by the Numbers</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td>Titles Held</td>
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<td>Number of Professional Librarians</td>
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<td>Number of Support Staff</td>
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<td>Library Net Area</td>
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<td>Sheets of Microfiche</td>
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<td>Manuscripts &amp; Archives</td>
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<td>Library Seating</td>
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<th><strong>2003-2004</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Titles Added</td>
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<tr>
<td>Items Checked Out</td>
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<td>Total Hours of Lexis &amp; Westlaw Use</td>
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<td>Hours Worked by Students/Temps</td>
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