

UB Libraries *Today*

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A Portal to the Past

Unveiling the Robert L. Brown
History of Medicine Collection



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UB Libraries Today is published by the University at Buffalo Libraries for alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

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Colorized photo of Dr. Tamejiro Kawakami, special representative from Japan to study oral hygiene in the United States, in his office in Tokyo, Japan, in 1924.



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DO YOU KNOW?



The University Archives' Imperial Hotel collection contains Ōya stone, a soft lava rock? Frank Lloyd Wright was captivated by

this easily carved stone and used it for geometric details throughout his design for the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo (1923). Contact lib-archives@buffalo.edu to learn more.

from **EVVIVA**

Greetings!

As the academic year winds down, we're afforded an opportunity to reflect on a semester filled with illustrations of the rich diversity within the University at Buffalo Libraries. In this edition of *UB Libraries Today*, you'll discover a wide variety of stories encompassing history, poetry, scholarly achievement and innovation.

UB Libraries' rare and distinctive collections are meant to be used and seen by the largest number of people possible, and we relish opportunities to share these treasures with students, researchers and the public through exhibitions, events and our digital collections. Our newest exhibition, *A Portal to the Past: The Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection*, transports artifacts, diagnostic tools, historic photographs and rare texts that have shaped the practice of healing over the years, from their home on UB's South Campus to North Campus, introducing this unique collection to an entirely new audience.

In a celebration of scholarly excellence, we shine a spotlight on one of our librarians who has been named an esteemed fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Join us in applauding this incredible achievement and acknowledgement of his dedication to advancing knowledge and fostering innovation. We also announce the appointment of the Charles B. Sears Law Library's first law practice technologist—an initiative that signifies a new approach to navigating the digital frontier by equipping future lawyers with the technical skills necessary to successfully navigate the complex information landscape.

You'll read about a remarkable piece of history housed within the University Archives: a University at Buffalo flag that journeyed aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986. Carried by a proud alumnus on that fateful mission, it reminds us of the courage and sacrifice of those who venture into space.

We uncover the story behind the life and work of British poet Charlotte Mew. The Poetry Collection boasts a treasure trove of this underappreciated, but contemporaneously well admired poet's manuscripts. The collection's recent digitization allows a wider audience to access the legacy of this enigmatic poet. We'll also discover how an astute cataloguer embarked on a journey to reveal a portion of Buffalo's vibrant literary history by conducting a series of interviews with individuals who were part of the city's African American artistic community during the 1970s and 80s.

And finally, we unveil the revitalization of our Lockwood Memorial Library, showcasing how deliberate design fosters creativity and collaboration among our patrons.

I invite you to join us as we celebrate the extraordinary contributions of our library community. Here's to a summer filled with discovery, inspiration and the boundless pursuit of knowledge.

Evviva Weinraub Lajoie, vice provost for University Libraries



Bridging Science and Information

UB Librarian Frederick Stoss
Elected AAAS Fellow

The Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, elects members each year whose efforts on the behalf of the advancement of science, or its applications, are scientifically or socially distinguished.

This year, UB librarian Frederick (Fred) Stoss has been elected as an AAAS Fellow. Stoss was recognized for his distinguished contributions in science librarianship and related realms, especially to providing scholars, students, and the general public with sound information relating to environmental issues. His service to the university, the library profession, and the community has been guided by a deep commitment to education, equity, access, social justice, environmental responsibility, and stewardship. His 40-year career in library and information sciences includes prior experience as a research scientist in the areas of toxicology and environmental health. Stoss's rich background provided him with extensive and invaluable insights that contributed to the academic success and professional and personal group of UB faculty, students and staff in the areas of research, teaching and learning.

"Fred's election is recognition of his achievements in advancing science librarianship over his many years of service," remarked Jake Carlson, associate university librarian for research, collections and outreach. "This is a rare honor as librarians are not usually recognized at this level by such a preeminent scholarly society. Being elected as an AAAS fellow speaks to Fred's high level of impact."

Stoss emphasizes that a statement of service should reflect an individual's commitment and motivation. "My service to the university, the library profession, my community, and more broadly to society as a whole and the planet we live on has been guided by a deep commitment to education, equity, access, social justice, environmental responsibility, sustainability and stewardship."



LIBRARY NEWS

In Our Poetry Era

In celebration of National Poetry Month and the release of Taylor Swift's newest album, *The Tortured Poets Department*, the UB Libraries hosted "In Our Poetry Era," an afternoon of poetry and Swift-themed activities. UB students arrived in their Taylor Swift merch to make friendship bracelets, write poems on typewriters, take Polaroid photos, and meet other Swifties. Also on display were a silent film by the original "It" girl Clara Bow (namesake of the final song on the album) and a pop-up exhibit of materials from the Poetry Collection, Rare & Special Books Collection, and Music Library, including some of Swift's literary references from Shakespeare's first folio to Sylvia Plath's *Ariel*, poetry books by pop musicians, and music scores by Swift and others. As one of the largest poetry libraries of its kind in the world, the Poetry Collection was thrilled to welcome UB students to their new poetry era.



JULIE PAVLOCK

A Journey to Research Success

Patrick Mohr is the winner of the University Libraries' 2024 Journey of Discovery Undergraduate Research Contest, recognizing students who produce significant academic inquiry using the Libraries' information resources and collections. A biomedical sciences major, Mohr's winning essay highlighted how UB Libraries' services and resources guided him through various steps of the research process.

As he began his paper titled, "Selenoprotein P in a Rodent Model of Exercise; Theorizing Its Interaction with Brain Reward Dysregulation, Addictive Behavior, and Aging," Mohr used library databases to customize his search for peer-reviewed articles, utilized EndNote, a program assisting with citation formatting to draft a manuscript, and took advantage of the Libraries' Delivery+ service.

"UB Libraries helped me navigate an overwhelming amount of information surrounding my research topic. By utilizing library resources, I developed a systematic approach to filter through a sea of articles, allowing me to explore other facets of my research more efficiently," said Mohr.

All of Us Journey

The National Institutes of Health's *All of Us* research program visited UB this spring to collect health data to address health inequities in underrepresented communities and to enhance genetic diversity in databases crucial for understanding diseases. Participants shared their health information anonymously and

received feedback on ancestry, traits and certain health-related DNA results that could be shared with their healthcare providers. Organized through the efforts of Ophelia Morey, the Libraries' community outreach coordinator, the *All of Us Journey* mobile tour's stop aims to advance equity and inclusion in research.



What We're Reading

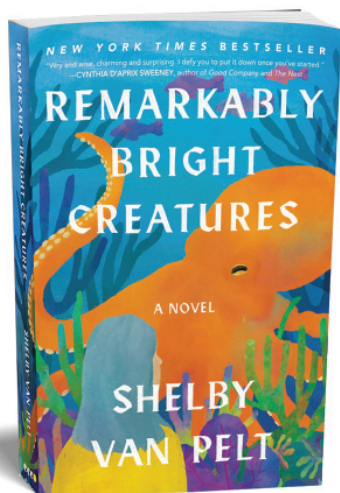
Remarkably Bright Creatures
by Shelby Van Pelt

In this beautiful novel, three stories intertwine to solve a decades-old mystery. The story centers around Tova, a lonely, elderly widow who takes a job mopping floors at the Sowell Bay Aquarium to both fill time and the hole in her life left by the death of her son Erick 30 years ago. Tova develops unexpected bonds of friendship with Marcellus, a witty, rescued giant pacific octopus who lives in one of the tanks, and the new maintenance worker hired to help her during her recuperation from an injury.

In this tale of unlikely friendships, what do a directionless drifter, a heartbroken septuagenarian, and a swiftly expiring, diabolical giant pacific octopus with Houdini-like tendencies have in common? Their stories combine in a tale of how two human hearts and three cephalopod hearts can unite to bring peace and hope to one another.

Deborah Chiarella

associate librarian, liaison to
Department of Music and Department
of Theatre and Dance



Breaking New Ground

Law Library Welcomes Its First Law Practice Technologist

Advances in technology are expanding the toolkit available to practicing lawyers, prompting the Charles B. Sears Law Library to launch a significant new initiative to equip students with the latest skills.

Leading this effort is Latasha R. Towles, the law library's inaugural dedicated law practice technologist. With a master's degree in library science from the University of Washington, specializing in law librarianship, Towles is spearheading the development of a Legal Technology Center on the library's second floor, taking charge of enhancing this aspect of the law library's service.

"Latasha's role is to integrate legal practice technology skills into the law school experience," explains Elizabeth Adelman, director of the law library and vice dean for legal information services. "This initiative is crucial to legal education as modern practice requires technology skills for practical and ethical reasons." Adelman highlights the New York Rules of Professional

Conduct mandating attorneys to understand the technology they use to serve clients.

Towles envisions the Legal Technology Center as a hub offering access to a spectrum of technologies developed for legal practice, from mastering Microsoft Word and Excel to exploring the frontiers of artificial intelligence.

"I want it to be a place of innovation," Towles says, "where students can explore their ideas and learn." The facility will also host courses on legal technology.

"Generative AI is thriving in the legal industry," Towles notes. "While it won't replace attorneys, we must harness it as a tool." Established databases like LexisNexis and Westlaw have integrated AI, and some law firms are developing internal AI tools.

As the Legal Technology Center takes shape, Towles aims to engage UB School of Law alumni, particularly those hiring UB graduates, to understand the legal technology landscape and the skills needed by new lawyers.



JULIE PAVLOCK

Illuminating Change

Lockwood's 2nd Floor Transformation into a Bright, Dynamic Learning Space

The second floor of Lockwood Memorial Library has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent months, converting an underutilized area into a revitalized student-focused space that reflects the Libraries' commitment to accessibility, collaboration and innovation.

One of the most noticeable changes is the disappearance of the old stacks, making way for sleek, lower-height shelving that enhances a sense of openness and allows an abundance of natural light to flood the area, creating a brighter, more inviting setting. This lighter, airier atmosphere sets the stage for a dynamic learning environment where students can feel inspired to explore and learn.

A highlight of this thoughtfully designed space is the relocation of Lockwood's distinct collections, which include graphic novels, juvenile fiction, international leisure reading

and Indigenous studies. As Laura Taddeo, head of the arts, humanities and social sciences team explains, "Our distinct materials reflect the experiences and perspectives of diverse groups. These collections not only enrich our academic offerings but also serve as catalysts for social justice advocacy and cultural understanding."

Increasing the visibility of the Libraries' distinct collections by relocating them to this area generates excitement, attracts new users to the library, and serves as a valuable resource for students and faculty conducting research in a variety of disciplines. By recognizing the need for access to materials that represent global and varied viewpoints, the library is catering to a wider range of learners and scholars, enriching the academic experience for all.





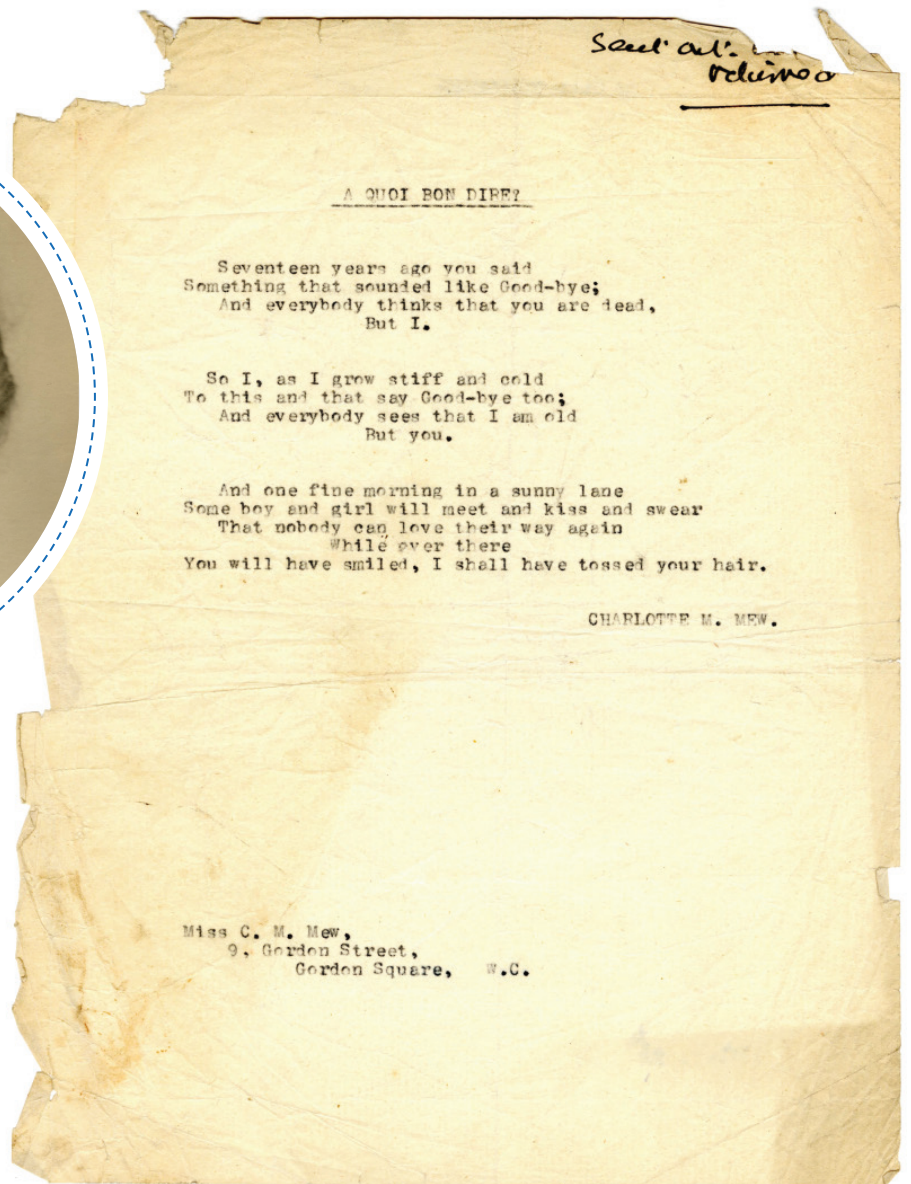
Charlotte Mew

Rediscovering a Literary Luminary

by Nicholas Michalski

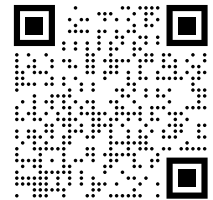
The British poet Charlotte Mary Mew (1869-1928) was a transitional figure bridging Victorian and Modernist poetry. Although she's lesser known today, luminaries including Thomas Hardy, H.D., Ezra Pound, and Virginia Woolf admired her during her lifetime. UB's Poetry Collection has an important group of manuscripts, correspondence, photographs and documents related to this underappreciated poet. The Poetry Collection also holds several rare volumes of Mew's poetry—including copies that belonged to Scottish poet Helen Adam and British novelist Hugh Walpole—making it a major center for studying Charlotte Mew's life and work.

After hearing Charlotte Mew read her poetry, the mystic poet Evelyn Underhill wrote, "An hour with Miss Mew is like having whiskey with one's tea." Unable to live openly as a lesbian, Mew was known to wear short hair, masculine attire, and carry a black umbrella. Unusual for a woman at the time, she rolled her own cigarettes and smoked profusely. Her pet parrot was said to hate men. Mew's life was plagued by the deaths of family members and a family history of mental illness to which she also succumbed.



After her death, Mew's work was rescued from obscurity, thanks in part to her friend Alida Klementaski Monro, who worked at London's Poetry Bookshop which published Mew's work in her lifetime. The Poetry Collection purchased Monro's Mew collection in 1956.

Mew's short, eerie poem "A Quoi Bon Dire?," French for, "What's the good of saying?," shows the morbidity and longing that pervades her work. It begins: "Seventeen years ago you said / Something that sounded like Good-bye; / And everybody thinks that you are dead, / But I." On the tattered typed manuscript of this poem, Mew's note in ink survives, recording the poem's rejection from publication: "Sent out: returned."



Two new resources are making this extraordinary collection more attainable than before, an online finding aid and a digital collection featuring high-resolution scans of archival materials.

library.buffalo.edu/mew





A Portal to the Past

Unveiling the History of Medicine Collection

Step onto the third floor of Silverman Library, and you'll encounter an array of captivating sights. A replica of an early 19th-century plague mask, a mid-19th-century mechanical vaccinator used for smallpox vaccinations, and an 18th-century trepan, a surgical instrument used for skull surgery—these are just a few of the rare and intriguing medical items featured in the University Libraries' newest exhibition, *A Portal to the Past: The Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection*.

The University Libraries' latest exhibition reveals a small selection of the vast materials housed in the History of Medicine Collection located in historic Abbott Hall on UB's South Campus. This curated assortment of rare and intriguing medical artifacts spans centuries and offers a glimpse into the fascinating history of healthcare. From third-century A.D. Roman surgical instruments to 19th- and 20th-century materials documenting the history of UB's medical and health sciences schools, this distinctive collection encompasses an abundance of rich historical resources intended to educate and inspire students, researchers, scholars, and a wide, global community. Established in 1972, and named in 1985 for Robert L. Brown, MD, former associate dean of the School of Medicine, the collection's primary focus is on the healthcare professions in Western New York. The collection contains over 20,000 rare medical and scientific books and journals, anatomical models, diagnostic tools, and other artifacts documenting healthcare advancements.

"This marks our first large-scale exhibition on the North Campus," says Keith Mages, curator of the History of Medicine Collection. "It's an incredible opportunity, one that enables engagement with broader audiences likely unfamiliar with the fascinating history of healthcare."

A Portal to the Past is thoughtfully organized in thematic sections of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and nursing, each area providing a glimpse into the larger collection, showcasing the remarkable diversity of materials available for exploration. Highlights of *A Portal to the Past* include a look at graduates of the Chautauqua Correspondence School of Nursing, a regional training school established in Jamestown, N.Y. From 1900 until 1927, the Chautauqua School of Nursing was noted to have enrolled 20,000 students, all educated through lectures and examinations mailed directly to their homes. This style of education was notable, as it allowed for working mothers, older women, and men to enroll in the training program – groups not traditionally included among early nurse training school graduates. Also on



Japanese dental motor ambulance, 1924
Throughout the 1920's, this motorized dental ambulance served the oral health needs of citizens in many different Japanese cities. Here, dentists and staff work with pediatric patients in an unspecified location.



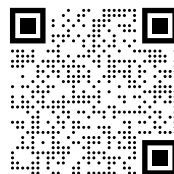
Plague Mask, 19th c.

Plague masks, originating in the 17th century, sought to counteract the "bad air" responsible for the bubonic plague with aromatic herbs, flowers and resins stuffed into the mask's beak. This 19th-century reproduction, crafted by hand for a French medical museum, is modeled after an original 17th-century mask from the Museum of Medical History in Ingolstadt, Germany.

exhibit are images and ephemera documenting the Eighth District Dental Society's international collaborations with early 20th-century Japanese dentists and oral health professionals. Established in 1892, the Eighth District Dental Society works to support the education and practice of local dental professionals. Among their many early initiatives was a cross-cultural exchange between Japan and the United States which saw professionals from each country touring the other, to learn more about their respective dental practices. Collected by Dr. Samuel A. Freeman during the 1920s, the images on display include interior shots of the Lion Dental Infirmary in Tokyo, Japan, as well as a photo featuring Japanese dentist Dr. Tamejiro Kawakami at work in his office.

"Although our collection of rare books, artifacts and manuscripts revolve around health and healthcare, we work to remind visitors that our historic materials are direct reflections of the larger societies from which they emerged," continues Mages. "Who was treated when ill? Who is left out of the narrative? What was done when effective treatment was not available? What was classified as an illness? Questions like these allow our objects to become potent tools, able to provide incredible insights into human innovation, knowledge development, and the fears, paradoxes, and progress of diverse cultures."

This exhibition exposes visitors to the remarkable resources available in the larger collection on South Campus, marking a return to a bygone era of medicine. By acquiring, collecting, preserving and exhibiting these treasured resources, the collection seeks to chart the future by exploring the past. *A Portal to the Past: The Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection* will remain on display until the end of 2024.



For more information about this exhibition or to schedule a tour of the Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection, please contact Keith Mages, curator of the Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection.





Cynthia Mathews
Poet and educator
Photo: Brother Simba

Begin, Buffalo!

Cataloging Chapbooks, Buffalo's Literary Scene, and the Buffalo Black Arts Movement

This is a tale that involves a mystery in the archive, a discovery in the backlog, and the rich literary history in Buffalo.

When the pandemic hit in 2020, and no visitors were coming to the Poetry Collection, it presented the perfect opportunity to continue catching up on the behind-the-scenes tasks of cataloging items selected for inclusion in the Poetry Collection. At this time UB Poetry Cataloger Edric Mesmer found the chapbook *Begin, Buffalo!* by a poet calling herself Cyn Mat, the *nom de plume* of Cynthia Mathews—with a preface by a fellow poet named Selena Ball.

The discovery of this chapbook sparked a memory from 2012 for Mesmer. When former curator and poet Michael Basinski was selecting items to loan to the Albright-Knox for the show *Wish You Were Here: The Buffalo Avant-garde in the 1970s*, one of those items was the chapbook *Womaning: Poems* by Cynthia Selena Ball-Williams. Mesmer made the connection that Selena Ball from the chapbook *Begin, Buffalo!* and Cynthia Selena Ball-Williams the author of *Womaning* were the same person. As Mesmer says, "The connections were constellating..."

This realization led Mesmer to contact Cynthia Mathews, and through their conversation, he learned of the story of these poets and their legacy, the connection between the two Cynthias, Mathews and Ball-Williams, and that they were in a writing group facilitated by poet and professor Celes Tisdale. This important conversation showed the connections and interactions among poets, actors, and painters in the African American community who were interested in social issues and political change during the Buffalo Black Arts Movement during of the 1970s and 1980s. This was a special moment in the history of Buffalo that combined music, poetry, dance and theater. One offshoot of this innovative and creative era was the Nia Writers Workshop. The Nia Writers Workshop was an important Black writing group in the area, dedicated to observing what was happening culturally and politically in the African American experience.

The discoveries made while cataloging the backlog and his conversation with Mathews prompted Mesmer to interview more

people who were involved with the Nia Writing Workshop, and more extensively, the Buffalo Black Arts Movement in Buffalo. Along with Cynthia Mathews, he had the opportunity to speak with poet and writer Cynthia Ball-Williams. Ball-Williams told him about the rich era during which she came of age in Buffalo when her many friends included the novelist Ishmael Reed; dancer and choreographer Pernet Robinson; jazz bassist Sabu Adeyola; and experimental saxophonist Charles Gayle—all from

Buffalo. Ball-Williams also told him about her time with the Nia Writers, studying at UB, teaching at Erie Community College, and working for Operation PUSH in Buffalo after meeting Reverend Jesse Jackson. She emphasized the rich diversity available in Buffalo when she was growing up.

Professors Ed Smith and Celes Tisdale were also among the people that Mesmer had an opportunity to interview. Tisdale and Smith were two of the first teachers to go into Attica Prison after the riots to answer the prisoners' demand for education. Tisdale's work with the writers there was collected and edited by him as *Betcha Ain't: Poems from Attica*, published

in 1974 by Dudley Randall's now-legendary Broadside Press out of Detroit. An expanded edition was published in 2022 by Duke University Press as *When the Smoke Cleared: Attica Prison Poems and Journal*, with an introduction by Buffalo-born poet and cultural critic Mark Nowak and additional writings by the men in the workshop with Tisdale.

One conversation led to another for Mesmer. He recorded the circuitous path of his many conversations in the *Little Book of Buffalo* series, a collection of pamphlets now held by the Poetry Collection. As Mesmer notes, sometimes it's that uncatalogued item in the backlog of your archive that reveals the fuller picture of a historic moment. For Mesmer, it was Cynthia Mathews' book of poems *Begin, Buffalo!* that began to reveal these connections. What a lucky find for this cataloger.



Cynthia Ball-Williams, author of *Womaning: Poems*. Photo: F. Haller

Preserving Pride

UB Flag's Journey Aboard the Challenger



Gregory B. Jarvis was an American engineer and astronaut who served as a payload specialist for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Born on August 24, 1944, in Detroit, Mich., Jarvis earned his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1967. He later pursued a Master of Science degree in the same field from Northeastern University in 1969.



Certain moments etch themselves into our collective memory, leaving an indelible mark. The tragic flight of the Space Shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986, stands out as one such moment—a lasting reminder of human courage and sacrifice.

On that ill-fated mission was Gregory B. Jarvis, a 1967 alumnus of the University at Buffalo's engineering program. Jarvis was proud of the education he received at the university and requested a UB flag to take aboard the Challenger with him on his upcoming journey. His intention was to return it to his alma mater upon his homecoming in a gesture of gratitude for the education he received at the university. It was to be Jarvis' first space voyage, but tragically, the Challenger broke apart just 73 seconds into its flight, claiming the lives of all seven crew members, including Gregory Jarvis.

Among the items retrieved from the wreckage was the gold-fringed UB flag Jarvis had requested to take aboard the Challenger. It had been vacuum-

packed and stored in a watertight safe allotted to Jarvis to keep personal items aboard the Challenger. The UB flag was found among the wreckage in pristine condition and then given to his wife, Marcia Jarvis.

In honor of Jarvis's legacy, the University at Buffalo held a ceremony on October 12, 1987, formally renaming the Engineering East building as Gregory B. Jarvis Hall. At this event, Jarvis's widow presented the university with a commemorative plaque from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the still-intact UB flag her husband took with him on the Challenger. When asked about taking the UB flag into space, Jarvis once remarked, "I thought [UB] was a great school. It was academically challenging and rewarding. This is a small token I can perform for the way they unlocked my future." Today, that flag, which marks a poignant moment in our nation's history, has a permanent home in the University Archives.



I'm Thankful!

The first time I stepped foot in UB Libraries in 2021 was also my first day on the job as a student assistant. I didn't know what to expect or where that role would take me. I had always loved libraries, but as a 2020 high school graduate, I did not often stray far from my dorm. When I started working for UB Libraries as a student assistant, I was greeted with such kindness by the library staff, I fell in love with both the job and the awesome resources offered by UB Libraries, like *Delivery+*. Since then, I have taken on several additional roles within the Libraries. Working both behind the scenes and upfront with the

public feels like I get the best of both worlds! I am always trying to make connections and provide great service, and I try to carry this mindset into my work on the Libraries' website by ensuring ease of use and mitigating accessibility issues. Now that I have earned a bachelor's degree in English, I'll be continuing my education through the University at Buffalo to pursue a master's degree in information and library science. I have realized how rare it is to try on so many hats while still having the flexibility to focus on my studies, and for that, I am truly grateful!

Sophia Finger, graduated in May 2024 with a BA in English and is continuing her studies at UB to pursue a master's degree in information and library science.



Delivery+ is the University Libraries' free document delivery service. UB faculty, staff and students can request physical or electronic materials from any UB library or any library in the world.



BOLD MEANS ROOM TO THINK.

Each floor in the recently renovated Lockwood Memorial Library has a distinct feel and function, so students can find the space that suits them best.

At UB, we've proven we can do anything when we come together. Our students have boundless ambition. Our faculty have unstoppable drive. And we're fueling the future with discovery and innovation through *Boldly Buffalo*, the largest campaign in SUNY history. Learn more at buffalo.edu/campaign

**BOLDLY
BUFFALO**
THE CAMPAIGN FOR UB