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NCSU LIBRARIES
VOLUME 23 NO. 3

2003

PART I-B LIBRARY NEWS

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Peer Research Advisors Make the Difference

By MEGAN OAKLEAF AND
AMY VANSCOY, RESEARCH AND
INFORMATION SERVICES, AND
KAREN LETARTE, CATALOGING

Patrons of the NCSU Libraries will notice some fresh new faces at the reference desk this semester. Douglas Brooks, Carlos Villate, and Patrice Williams are three NC State undergraduate students who are participating in the new Peer Research Advisors program, which was developed by the Libraries' Diversity Committee and modeled on successful programs at other institutions. Peer research advisors are students from diverse backgrounds who are interested in helping fellow students while improving their own research skills. They help answer questions at the reference desk and assist librarians with instruction sessions and outreach efforts. The Peer Research Advisors program aims to:

- present a welcoming and diverse face of library public services to students;



[Left to right] Foreground: Peer Research Advisors Patrice Williams, Douglas Brooks, and Carlos Villate. Background: NCSU librarians Amy VanScoy and Megan Oakleaf who coordinate the program.

- develop the peer research advisors' information literacy skills and contribute to their academic success;
- enhance the ability of all undergraduates to use the library effectively; and
- recruit young, diverse people into librarianship.

Many interested students applied for the program, and the three students chosen are ideal candidates. All three are enthusiastic, service oriented, and interested in the library. Douglas Brooks, from Pittsboro, North Carolina, is a junior majoring in electrical engineering. Brooks applied to the program to “assist those people who find it difficult to

do research in such a large facility.” He has enjoyed “every minute” of the program and is “impressed with the enthusiasm and effort that goes into library research.”

Carlos Villate, a senior majoring in biological sciences, has lived in Puerto Rico; Ludwigsburg, Germany; and Fayetteville, North Carolina. Villate plans to be a military intelligence officer in the United States Army after graduation. He likes the library’s work atmosphere and the learning opportunities the Peer Research Advisors program provides, and the amount and complexity of library resources impress him. Villate says, “In my short time here I have learned so much.”

Patrice Williams of Goldsboro, North Carolina, is a junior majoring in business management who plans to attend graduate school. Williams was attracted to the Peer Research Advisors program because it involves technology and research. She felt that it fit her personality because she loves to put puzzles together, and she finds the work educational and fun. Williams adds, “I thought I knew it all, but I learn every time I step into work.”

The students joined the Peer Research Advisors program this spring semester and have received library training in a variety of subject areas including chemistry, engineering, and

specialized techniques for government documents. The students have also learned about some of the Libraries’ exciting services and initiatives by attending presentations on the Digital Media Lab, the Assistive Technologies Center, LOBO (the Libraries’ online research tutorial), and electronic reserves. These advisors are beginning to use their new skills and knowledge to answer user questions on their own. As they discuss the interactions they have had at the reference desk and in the classroom, it is clear they are beginning to understand the challenges and thrills of assisting users in a research library. As one peer research advisor said, “Many students I know have said they have never been to the library before, and I just think they are missing a lot.”

The Peer Research Advisors program is one of a number of library initiatives to make students aware of the excellent career possibilities in library and information science. There is a critical need for librarians worldwide, and there are excellent graduate programs in this field in the Triangle area. The Libraries hopes the program will develop into an important part of its services, provide intellectually challenging jobs for students, and encourage some of NC State’s exceptional undergraduates to join the profession. ♦



[Right to left] Peer Research Advisors Carlos Villate and Patrice Williams assist an NC State student with a reference question.

A Virtual Tour of the NCSU Libraries

BY MEGAN OAKLEAF, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SERVICES,
AND MAY CHANG, DIGITAL LIBRARY INITIATIVES

Some patrons come to the NCSU Libraries to use its valuable information resources. Some come to search online for materials. Some come just for the coffee. Library patrons visit the library for many reasons, but when they arrive for the first time, they often have the same experience—they are overwhelmed by the size, variety, and complexity of the library facilities.

Librarians have always posted signage and offered on-site tours to help new users become acclimated to the library environment. Increasingly, however, patrons expect to have access to such help twenty-four hours a day and from remote locations. In summer 2002 work began on a virtual tour project at the Libraries to provide visual, descriptive, and directional information to users via the Libraries' Web site. The NCSU Libraries Virtual Tour was completed in early January 2003, just in time for the new semester. It may be found at <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/vtour/>.

The virtual tour provides many benefits. Because access



Express check-out service.



Unity computer lab.



Reference desk.

to the Libraries' Web site is available twenty-four hours each day of the week, the virtual tour is independent of time and location. This allows users to access the virtual tour from home before coming to the Libraries. They can familiarize themselves with the Libraries at their convenience. Reference librarians using virtual reference services can recommend the tour to patrons who cannot attend an on-site tour. In the Libraries, staff at all service points can refer to it when giving directions or answering basic questions about library services.

The virtual tour can also be used to supplement on-site tours and class instruction. Instructors may ask students to familiarize themselves with the Libraries before attending library instruction to generate questions ahead of time or just to find their meeting location within the D. H. Hill Library building.

Finally, the virtual tour may help prospective students and their parents to learn more about the services and facilities provided by the NCSU Libraries. Librarians may point prospective and newly admitted students to the virtual tour to help them become familiar with the building and facilities and to publicize events and resources focused on undergraduate students.

On the virtual tour Web site, users may take the tour, browse specific locations in the D. H. Hill Library, or learn about the branch and affiliated libraries. The tour focuses on a selection of locations in the library most frequently visited by patrons. Every page has an image of the location as well as a floor plan, description and direction information, and a navigation menu. Where

available, content is linked to relevant pages on the Libraries' Web site. The library has also included a self-guided tour that users can print out to take along on a walking tour of the D. H. Hill Library.

Behind the scenes, eXtensible Markup Language (XML) is used in the architecture of the virtual tour Web site. XML, a WWW Consortium standard, is a markup language for documents containing structured information. Most people use HTML (HyperText Markup Language) to create pages for the Web. Unlike HTML, XML provides a facility to define tags and the structural relationships between them. XML was designed to describe data and to focus on what data is; HTML was designed to display data and to focus on how data looks. This separation of content and presentation enables better Web management.

The descriptions and directions for each site were provided by staff of the Libraries and coordinated by Megan Oakleaf, librarian for instruction and undergraduate research. Photographs of the various locations were taken by Kelly Seiber, a student assistant, who also created the images with softer borders. Shirley Rodgers of the Libraries' Systems Department provided the images of the floor plans. Web site architecture, design, and graphics were done by Web Development Librarian May Chang with programming support from Tom Zack, both from the Digital Library Initiatives Department.

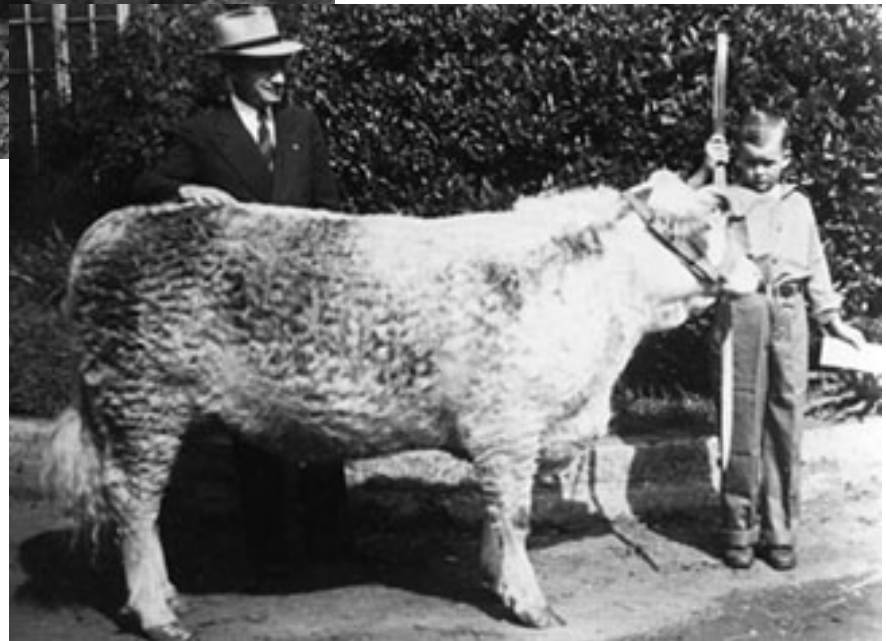
Please take the tour to become more familiar with the Libraries' facilities and to feel more at home while using its many resources. ❖





William Leon Holland, a 4-H club member from Wake County, displayed his 4-H project in 1952—a field of tobacco. Special Collections.

North Carolina State 4-H Club Leader Lera R. Harrill and grand champion Tommy Vannoy with his steer at the stock show held in Asheville, North Carolina, ca. 1950. Special Collections.



Development of the National 4-H Program

By MICHAEL WATTS,
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

In 2002 the National 4-H Club celebrated “100 Years of 4-H.” North Carolina has been at the forefront of the National 4-H Program from its early years, although it is difficult to pinpoint an actual starting date or a specific place where the North Carolina movement began. The NCSU Libraries’ Special Collections Department holds a significant collection of materials related to the 4-H Program, which is available for use by the public. The collection provides a comprehensive

historical overview of the national 4-H movement as well as North Carolina’s involvement in the program.

During the late-nineteenth century, as the American economy shifted toward an industrial base, supporters of a strong agrarian economy saw a need for a national program organized specifically for the benefit of America’s rural youth. Higher wages, access to modern conveniences, and the lure of leisurely pursuits tempted many young people to leave farms for city

jobs. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) cooperated with state governments to encourage young people who lived on farms and in rural communities to remain in place. A strategy was developed that promoted education and the implementation of new scientific farming methods to improve the lives of farm families.

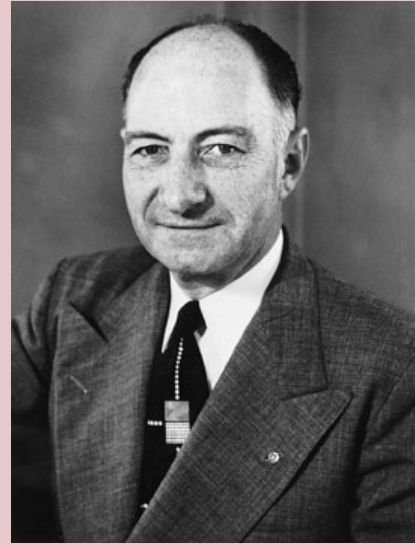
Early in the twentieth century, the USDA formed an organization headed by Seaman A. Knapp known as the Farmers’ Cooperative Demonstration

Work. The organization promoted new agricultural methods among farmers and farm youth. In rural locations across the country, boys' corn clubs and livestock clubs sprang up. Competitions offering cash prizes publicly recognized successes in raising quality farm animals and producing outstanding crops. Accurate record keeping and the use of modern farming techniques were encouraged, and participants learned to make good public presentations about their projects. Out of these regional youth clubs and farm competitions, a national movement slowly evolved.

The fledgling national network of rural youth clubs encouraged boys to develop and improve skills that related to agricultural production, and it sanctioned girls' participation in club work to improve their abilities in the domestic arts. In 1909 the North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (now NC State University) entered into an agreement with the USDA to work cooperatively with the federal government to provide demonstration programs in agriculture. This was the first such agreement in the country. The result was the formation of the Extension Department at the college. North Carolina preceded the rest of the nation in formalizing the ties among the state's higher educational system, agricultural extension work, and rural youth.

That same year, Ira O. Schaub became the Extension Department's boys' corn club agent. Schaub later directed the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service between 1924 and 1950. He also held positions as dean of the School of Agriculture at the college from 1926 to 1945 and as director of the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station from 1937 to 1940. In 1911 the Extension Department hired Jane S. McKimmon to organize girls' club work. McKimmon later became assistant director of the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service from 1924 to 1946. In 1945 she wrote a book recounting her 4-H and cooperative extension experiences entitled *When We Are Green, We Grow*. McKimmon's outstanding service in extension education was honored in 1976, with the opening of NC State University's Jane S. McKimmon Extension Education Center.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 brought state agricultural extension work into the administrative realm of federal land-grant colleges, and the



Lera Rhinehart Harrill, North Carolina's "Mr. 4-H," ca. 1960. Special Collections.



North Carolina school-based 4-H Club horticultural project, ca. 1970. Special Collections.

Cooperative Extension Service was established. Many programs provided by the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration organization became part of the Cooperative Extension Service. The new extension service assimilated the rural youth clubs as part of its outreach efforts to create the National 4-H Club.

North Carolina's rural population led the nation in answering the call for participation in the 4-H program. This distinction can be cred-

ited to North Carolina because of the state's early development of an official agricultural demonstration system that involved rural youth. Additionally, there was the dynamic leadership of one amazing individual.

In 1922 Lera Rhinehart Harrill became the 4-H Club agent for Buncombe County, North Carolina. In 1926 Harrill was appointed as North Carolina's state 4-H club leader. Known as "Mr. 4-H," Harrill's forty-year tenure with North Carolina 4-H saw the organization's annual member-

ship increase from 20,000 to 160,000, the largest 4-H enrollment of any state in the nation. Harrill provided leadership to more than three million club members during his service with the state 4-H program. Throughout his career, he stressed the citizenship and character-building aspects of 4-H, as well as the development of agricultural skills. He would often say to his staff, "It's a great thing to produce a grand champion 4-H steer, but unless you do something at the same time to produce a grand cham-

panion boy or girl, you have failed in your greatest responsibility."

That spirit served as the force behind the success of the 4-H program in North Carolina, and it drives the organization to this day. Materials documenting the history of the national 4-H movement, North Carolina's 4-H program, and the personal papers of Harrill (MC 17) and Schaub (MC 21) are available for research in the Libraries' Special Collections Department. ❖



1956 national 4-H tractor program winners. Chris F. Holtzman of North Carolina, seated on the tractor, was one of the winners. Special Collections.



Focus, a newsletter published three times a year, seeks to promote the services, activities, needs, and interests of the NCSU Libraries to the university, the Friends of the Library, and beyond.

Editor: Terrell Armistead Crow.

NCSU Libraries Homepage: <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/>