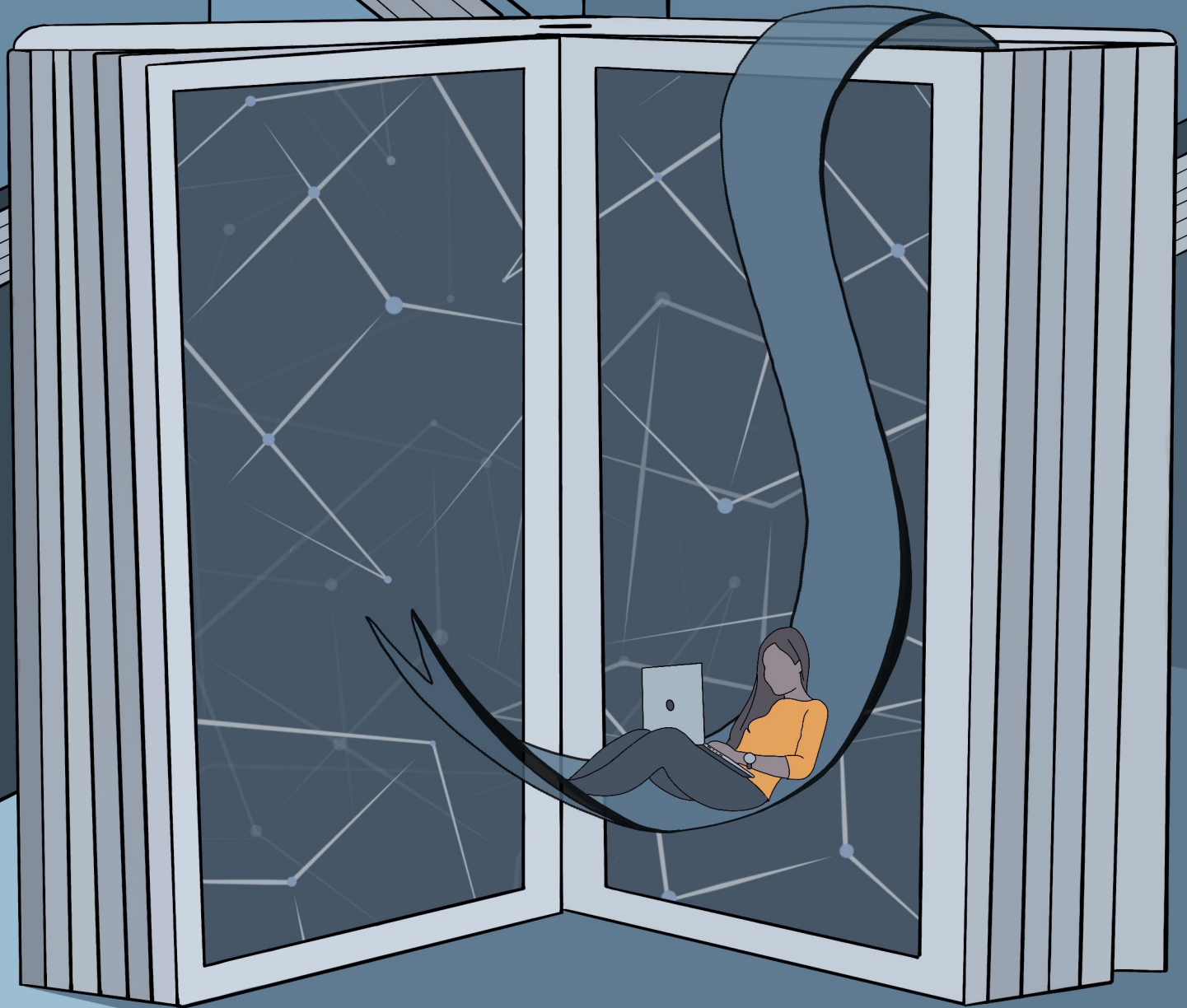


Spark

Annual Publication of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville School of Information Sciences | 2021



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Chancellor's Professor Emerita Carol Tenopir: It has been my honor to serve as Interim Director of the School of Information Sciences this past academic year. Things, of course, were not "normal," as we all weathered the global pandemic together, moved almost everything online, curtailed conference travel, and worked to keep momentum under these unusual circumstances.

I am pleased to say that the great momentum SIS built under Director Diane Kelly was maintained thanks to dedicated staff, faculty, and students. Our first two BSIS majors graduated in May and the number of our undergraduate majors has increased twice as quickly as expected. In addition, we will have a record number of master's students in the fall and we welcomed three new faculty members in 2020/21. SIS was able to award more scholarships than ever before, thanks in part to the many named endowments our alumni have helped fund, and our students and faculty kept active in professional organizations through virtual attendance.

What comes next? I leave that to my successor—Dr. Abebe Rorissa. Dr. Rorissa became Director of SIS and a Tennessee Volunteer on July 1 this year and I am heading into retirement. I will let Dr. Rorissa introduce himself and some of his plans for the coming year. Of course, my last words must be...Go Vols!

Director Abebe Rorissa: I feel lucky and privileged to start my tenure as the Director of such a great and vibrant School. I have been in awe of the School of Information Sciences at UT because of its world-class faculty, excellent students, highly qualified and dedicated staff, and alumni who are leaders in the field. Having seen the School up close, albeit for a short time, the great work my predecessors—Dr. Diane Kelly and Dr. Carol Tenopir—have done, and the strong foundation they and the School's broader community laid, is evident.

In collaboration with our stakeholders, including all of you, I plan to build on our School's global reputation as a leading iSchool with highly ranked academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. I will work hard to ensure we meet our student success goals while making the School a more inclusive teaching and learning environment that meets the needs of a diverse group of students, faculty, and staff. I will share with you my detailed plan in future communications after I settle into my new role.

When the COVID-19 pandemic abates, we hope to have in-person events where we can network and interact with each other. I look forward to meeting you all on-campus or virtually. Go Vols!



Carol Tenopir



Abebe Rorissa



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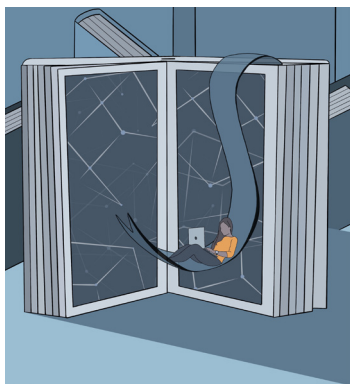
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Abebe Rorissa *Carol Tenopir*

SIS Professor & Director
Abebe Rorissa

Chancellor's Professor Emerita
Carol Tenopir

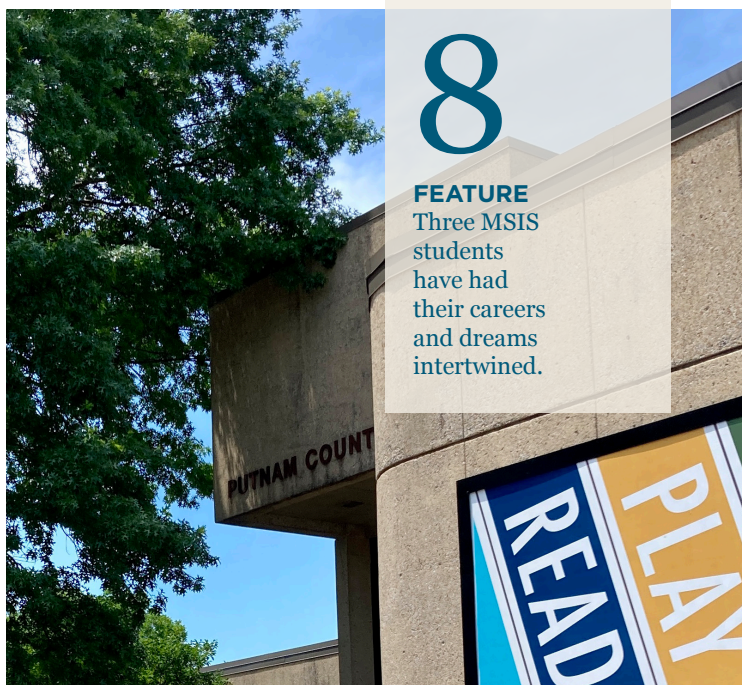


ON THE COVER

Courtney Wombles is an MSIS student entering her second year in the program. We asked students to submit artwork for this year’s magazine cover and this was her fantastic submission.

This is what Wombles had to say about the piece: “I mostly draw digitally, and I created this digital drawing to encompass how I view the field of information and library sciences, as well as how the field’s components fit together within the information environment.

- 04** Social Media Round-up
- 05** Making Space at SIS
- 06** 2020 Alumni Awards
- 12** Carol Tenopir Retires
- 19** SIS Scholarships
- 22** Faculty News
- 24** Honors at SIS
- 25** CCI’S New Dean
- 26** SIS @ a Glance



8

FEATURE

Three MSIS students have had their careers and dreams intertwined.

14

OUR NEW SIS DIRECTOR

Meet Abebe Rorissa, who recently stepped in to lead SIS.



16

ALUM KARLENE JENNINGS

Fundraising isn’t just about money, it’s about relationships.



IN THIS ISSUE

20

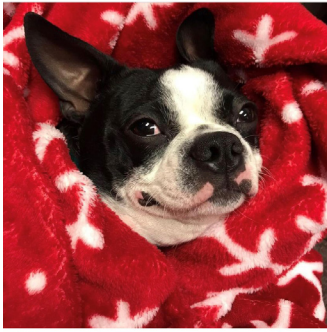
FIRST BSIS GRADS

Meet the first two students to graduate with a BSIS degree at UT.



ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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utk_sis We asked our students, staff, and faculty to share their holiday spirit through their favorite holiday photos! Check them all out by visiting the link in our profile. DM us your favorite photos of you would like to be included.


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University of Tennessee, Knoxville



Liked by sla_utk and 36 others

utk_sis How is scientific information misused to fuel disinformation campaigns? Meet MSIS student Claire Jordan, who will be studying this subject and how to prevent science misinformation in an upcoming summer research program at @uofmichigan. Read her story at the link in our profile (tiny.utk.edu/cjordan).

utk_sis



35 likes

utk_sis It may be chilly outside, so let's give an extra warm welcome to our nearly 40 new Master of Science in Information Sciences students joining us tonight for orientation! #newvols

UT School of Information Sciences
July 6 at 11:36 AM · 🌐

We are pleased to announce that SIS Director Abebe Rorissa was elected to be president of the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T), just days after stepping into his role at SIS! Learn about how he is particularly interested in making justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion a priority in the work that ASIS&T does: <https://sis.utk.edu/2021/07/02/new-sis-director-abebe-rorissa-elected-to-be-asis-president>



NEW DIRECTOR OF SIS:
DR. ABEBE RORISSA

14 Likes · 1 Comment

utk_sis



13 likes

utk_sis Join Seattle Public Library Chief Librarian Marcellus Turner and Head of Marketing and Online Services Helen Tapping for the 2/11, 3 p.m. ET webinar "Equity work at The Seattle Public Library – how to use a Racial Equity Toolkit in your everyday work." In this session, we will cover what the Seattle Citywide Race and Social Justice (RSJI) Initiative is, the role of the RSJI Change Teams at The Library and how we have set up the team to be successful in this important work. We will introduce the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) and show several case studies that demonstrate how we have applied the toolkit in both

utk_sis
Circle Park



Liked by pammyd13 and 50 others

utk_sis If someone creates an AI program and that program ends up creating a painting – who is the creator? Assistant Professor Brian Dobreski tackled topics like AI's relation to personhood during his impressive output of research in the last year, and he was recently awarded the 2021 Bonnie Carroll and Roy Cooper Faculty Enrichment Award. Learn more about Brian and his work at the link in our profile! 🎨🤖



Making Room

Over the past two years, SIS has added an undergraduate major and several new faculty members—it was time to expand our physical capacity, too! Construction this past year provided the School with three new offices and a new, larger conference room. We're excited to make the most of our new space in order to better serve our SIS community. Here's how it looked under construction and how it looks now—swing by and we'll show you around!



Hallway in progress



Finished hallway



Office in progress



Finished office



Conference room in progress



Finished conference room

INNOVATOR'S AWARD

Celise Reech-Harper ('12)
 Assistant State Librarian,
 Rapides Parish Library
 Louisiana



“We’ve gained a lot of partnerships, we’ve learned a lot about giving each other grace but also relying on each other.”

Celise Reech-Harper moved into her first library director job in January 2020—so one can imagine that flexibility and innovation quickly became a necessity as she navigated overseeing one main library and 10 branches of the Rapides Parish Library in Central Louisiana through a pandemic.

Reech-Harper defers much of the praise for how the Rapides Parish Library changed services and implemented new ideas during the COVID-19 pandemic, preferring to give credit to those around her.

“It was a very difficult year but also a time for us to innovate and make this organization even better...We’ve gained a lot of partnerships, we’ve learned a lot about giving each other grace and about relying on each other,” she said.

Reech-Harper said she was flabbergasted to have been nominated and chosen for this award because so many library directors and other information sciences professionals responded similarly to the pandemic by taking a tragedy and finding ways to positively impact their communities. Connecting with other library directors across the state was integral in her endeavors to serve her parish and patrons.

“If I had not had the positive relationships with the state library and other library directors, I’m certain we would not have been able to accomplish what we did. They gave me ideas I happily stole and they gave me support,” she said.

Here’s a few of the ways Rapides Parish Library changed, improved, or added to their services under Reech-Harper’s purview, many of which will remain in place.

- **Virtual card option:** This allows people to become patrons online, and allows patrons to use all of the library’s online services without having to go into a branch. They’re currently working on making digital scan cards that can be saved on patron’s phones, too, so patrons will no longer have to carry a physical card.
- **Eliminated fines.**
- **Live-streamed board meetings.**
- **No-contact service:** This includes curbside service where library employees either load books and other checked-out items into the backs of vehicles or place them on a table for patrons to pick up.
- **Virtual programs:** “We’re excited to start back with our regular in-person program but we’ll continue our virtual programming because we’ve heard from our community that they like having more options and more access points, and we listened to them,” she said.
- **Mobile hotspots:** Reech-Harper utilized the li-

brary’s vehicles and stocked them with hotspots and set them up in parking lots for patrons to have internet access outside.

- **Hotspot checkouts for patrons.**

Besides adding new programming and technology, Reech-Harper also made sure the library partnered with other community organizations to ensure that both library personnel and patrons had access to resources beyond the library. This included bringing in Louisiana Spirit Crisis Counseling Support to help personnel and patrons find resources such as mental health providers, support groups, or even housing.

“We can help with education or some items they may need, but if they’re in need of food or assistance, or completing forms for housing or long-term mental health help, we’re not the best people to do that; part of our mission is connecting people with resources and we want to get them the best resources we can,” she said.

Overall, the year has brought so much change, some of it bad but a lot of it good. The response to it all shows the resiliency of people, the flexibility of systems, and the innovation of many, including Reech-Harper.

“I like to focus on the opportunities it provided, because it did encourage people to let go of some of the old and embrace new services, and it also broke down some of the barriers to service,” she said. •

Would you like to nominate someone for an alumni award? Go here to nominate someone and see past recipients:
sis.utk.edu/alumni/distinguishedalumni

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Nancy Pack ('80)
Executive Director,
Alabama Public Library Service
Alabama



“Everything out there is just a new twist to what we’ve been doing, the basic elements are still there.”

For Nancy Pack ('80), the last four decades of being a librarian has really been about one thing: the people. Whether it was her cohort at the School of Information Sciences, many of whom she's stayed in touch with throughout the years, or the varied patrons she has served, it has been the people who have made it a career she loves.

Pack became interested in librarianship when she was a kindergarten teacher and visited her school's library frequently. She liked the idea of promoting early literacy and having an opportunity to aid so many children's education. After a couple of years teaching, she returned to school at the University of Arkansas to become a school library media specialist.

There, a professor encouraged her to get her master's from an ALA-accredited program and she chose SIS at the University of Tennessee. She learned all of the basic building blocks to carry with her wherever she desired—and Pack took full advantage of this. She's worked in libraries in six states, including: public libraries, a special library at an Airforce base; libraries for the blind and disadvantaged; and a state library.

She got a jumpstart on library administration by becoming library director of William F. Laymen Public Library in North Little Rock, Arkansas, right after she graduated. Though she initially planned to work at a school, all the school library positions had been filled, so she began looking into public libraries.

“I pretty much had a learning curve, not being a director or librarian before, but I had a lot of good mentors who helped me learn the ropes. I do think a lot of the coursework they had at UT prepared me a lot for being a director,” she said.

When Pack thinks about her time at SIS, she lists off various names that many alumni would know, including Gary Purcell, Ruth Wilson, Ann Prentiss, Bill Robinson, Glenn Estes, and many more. Besides faculty, her fellow students were a constant source of companionship and support.

“The class...was remarkable, and I say that my degree was earned by all of us working together and sharing our knowledge and being able to network with them,” she said.

It's too much to go through every single position Pack has ever held, she says—but she does like recalling the highlights of her experiences over the years. For example, working with blind library patrons in Florida and Maryland was particularly interesting and rewarding.

A completely different experience was her time as a contracted librarian working at Moody Airforce Base in Georgia. Her time at public libraries allowed her to create

programs for people of all ages, backgrounds and income levels. She particularly enjoyed programming for the aging population and loved opportunities to oversee renovations and new library construction.

“I've had all the areas of experience that a librarian goes through in a career, I've been very fortunate,” she said.

The latest challenge in her career, however, was not one Pack intentionally took on but one that everyone faced starting in 2020: the COVID-19 pandemic. She is currently the executive director of the Alabama Public Library Service, which oversees all of the public libraries in the state, as well as the Alabama Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Her approach to the sudden changes necessitated by the pandemic is simple and one she said she learned during her master's program: information is still the same, it just gets repackaged. Virtual story time on YouTube or Facebook isn't all that different from when librarians recorded stories that could be listened to over the telephone, Pack said.

“Everything out there is just a new twist to what we've been doing, the basic elements are still there,” she said. “It always goes back to the basic building blocks and applying them and just the formats have changed.”

Pack knows she'll see even more new technologies emerge during her career, and that libraries will always be at the forefront of finding ways to ensure those technologies benefit the most vulnerable, those people who are most in need of additional resources. It's the reason she went to library school in the first place: to touch people's lives and to make a difference; and like information itself, her passions and motivations may be packaged in different formats, but the purpose remains the same.

“The highlight of my career are the people I've worked with and provided services to,” she said. •

Among Friends



Three Students' Lives Stay Connected as Their School & Work Journeys Overlap

It's not unusual for students to take a meandering path that ends with them entering the MSIS program—some wander a little, and others even make hard turns into a drastic career change. But rarely do those paths intersect the way that those of three current MSIS students have: Carolyn Shafer, Jenny Huffman, and William Judd.

Not only are the trio all enrolled in the program at the same time, they're also all working at the same library branch, Putnam County Library in Cookeville, Tenn. But to top it off, they knew each other even before they worked together and they didn't all plan on going to school together at the same time. Here are their stories:

JENNY HUFFMAN

Huffman has a two-year accounting associates degree that she earned in 2006, but it was a degree she was never able to fully utilize. She didn't know what was next, and she had graduated just prior to giving birth to her now 13-year-old daughter.

Inspiration struck one evening while watching "Falling Skies" and observing a character in the show who is a history teacher. The way history was relayed in the show made Huffman want to learn more and she started delving into documentaries and nonfiction books. She decided to go to Tennessee Tech in August 2017 to earn her history degree.

“We found out that we were all going to school together by happenstance. I didn’t know that they were going into the same program until it happened, so that was crazy.”
- Jenny Huffman



Huffman actually met Shafer when she was a supervisor at Kroger and Shafer was a bagger, but they also ended up in one of Huffman’s favorite classes, the History of England. And yet one more layer of crossing paths was added when Shafer and Judd all became members of the school’s History Club, of which Huffman was president.

Around the same time that Huffman started getting her history degree she also landed a job as a library clerk at the Putnam County Library, making her the first of the bunch to start working there.

Despite their similar interests, it was still a surprise when she realized they’d all be in the School of Information Sciences master’s program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville at the same time.

“We found out that we were all going to school together by happenstance. I didn’t know that they were going into the same program until it happened, so that was crazy,” she said.

While Judd and Shafer have their own information sciences interests, Huffman quickly realized hers highlighted her love of historical artifacts: archiving. She’d had the opportunity to volunteer at the Cookeville History Museum helping to enter items into their system and researching the items’ historical significance for exhibits. She thought museums would be her focus, until she landed an internship at the Tennessee Tech Archives and Special Collections. Huffman found her true passion was being “neck deep in historical things that were so cool to me” and she decided to pursue archives as a career.

Huffman is currently the president of the Knoxville student chapter of the Society of American Archivists, an organization resurrected in spring 2020. In fact, Huffman

created a poster proposal called “Phoenix from the Ashes: Reviving Our Student Chapter,” and submitted it to the SAA and it was one of three chosen to be presented at SAA’s annual conference. She also was a first-year representative to the American Library Association in her 2020, along with Judd.

Between school, work, and student chapter activities, Huffman also homeschools her daughter; the distance education classes work well with her busy schedule, even though she loves taking classes in person. But, she does have the advantage of already knowing two of her classmates outside of online classes.

WILLIAM JUDD

Judd went through several possible career trajectories before having a lightbulb moment that led to entering the MSIS program. He started out certain he would go into ministry, but then wanted to be a professor of theology and entered grad school to pursue that. That’s when he had the opportunity to work at the Divinity School Library at Vanderbilt University as a shift supervisor doing reference work. It was there that (he says, jokingly, at the risk of dating himself) a coworker first showed to him a new search engine called Google.

While that job was one Judd said he “immediately fell in love with” it wasn’t the moment he decided to become a librarian. When he finished his master’s degree, he decided academia wasn’t his future and decided to become an or-

dained minister in a different denomination and went to a seminary in Chicago.

“When I told them my background at the library in Vanderbilt, they immediately put me in the library there,” he said, noting that visiting the library was one of the first things he did upon arriving there. “I went to the stacks, that’s the most holy place for me. It was one of those moments where I thought hmm, I am a little bit different.”

He stayed at that school for a year and tried his hand at ministry one more time before briefly pursuing a career as an insurance agent. Finally, he decided to see what it would take to become a librarian.

“Once I started the process of looking at library schools, I knew this was it,” he said.

He had initial trepidation about the online SIS program, but that quickly dissipated once he found a thriving community at the School.

“We all have that passion for information sciences and information literacy, and there’s that commonality and sense of community. I show up for my classes five or 10 minutes beforehand and there’s always a chat going on,” he said. “And the professors are intensely invested in your success.”

When COVID-19 hit his life hard in 2020, Judd experienced first-hand how the SIS faculty was willing to support students. Both his parents contracted it and his mother spent a month in the hospital and he was forced to withdraw from a class to help care for them. His professor alleviated his concerns about the withdraw and gave him flexibility the next semester to finish his work.

In the midst of the pandemic, he received an email from the director of the Putnam County Library asking if he’d be interested in a position there. While he wants to be an academic librarian, Judd said that working at a public library would give him additional experience.

“It’s been really rewarding to see all the things you can do in a public library that you cannot necessarily do at an

academic library, and vice-versa. Working with people and what they’re interested in is what I like,” he said.

As for working and going to school with two people he’d already befriended, Judd said it’s been a fun bonus. He says Huffman is a kindred spirit, and also noted that he and Shafer worked together at Barnes & Noble while they both were attending Tennessee Tech.

“It’s really fun working with people that not only are friends but are on the same career trajectory as well; it’s almost as if we’re all interns and someday we’ll all have our big jobs. There’s some camaraderie there,” he said.

CAROLYN SHAFER

Shafer’s journey to SIS was more direct, but she intentionally took her time to get there. She volunteered at a library as a teenager and asked how she could become a librarian someday and was told she’d need to earn a master’s degree—this put librarianship on her radar. She graduated high school in 2010 and earned her undergraduate degree in English in 2018, but decided to take a couple of years off before going to graduate school.

Shafer said it was actually Judd who encouraged her to check out the program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he was applying. She was initially on the fence but his push was exactly what she needed and she hasn’t looked back.

She said it’s been awesome taking the same classes with Judd and Huffman, neither of whom she typically gets to see at their library jobs, as they work different shifts. But all

**“We all have that passion for information sciences and information literacy and there’s that commonality and sense of community.”
- William Judd**



“Libraries really bring communities and families together.”

- Carolyn Shafer



of them took their three core classes together and that really helped her with entering a new school and program.

As the previous stories mentioned, Shafer has worked several jobs during and in-between her time at school. She still works at the bookstore and the library, and she added on another position at Publix, so finding balance while attending classes has been a challenge. But working as a clerk at the library is by far what she enjoys doing the most.

“I really love talking to the kids, they have all sorts of interesting questions. My path at UT is school librarian because I love working with kids and I love teaching and I love libraries, so I feel that’s a really good fit for me,” she said.

She’d actually been applying at the library for some time but nothing ever panned out. It was by happenstance that she walked into the library once during 2020 for a school assignment and ran into the children’s librarian there, who she knew.

“She walked up to me and asked me if I wanted an interview and I was just like, sure. It was kind of at a drop of the

hat, so that’s how that happened. So I got an interview and I got hired, that was really random and I was surprised,” Shafer said.

Working at the library has helped her to see the scope of what libraries and librarians do for their communities, and she said it’s been akin to social work in some ways. There have been opportunities where she was able to help people that have left her feeling really fulfilled and excited about her career choice. For example, a recent instance wherein she helped an older man who labeled himself as technologically illiterate to apply online for a pastor position.

“We hit apply and he was just like, oh my goodness, this is amazing, thank you so much. To me, that was the easiest thing ever, but for him, that really made his day. He was able to apply for a job and he was happy and that’s a really good piece of library work people don’t think about,” she said. “Libraries really bring communities and families together.”

And sometimes, they also bring friends together. •

LEAVING A LEGACY



Professor Carol Tenopir Retires After 27 Years at SIS

When SIS and Chancellor's Professor Carol Tenopir was asked, in the middle of a pandemic, to postpone her retirement for another year so she could serve as interim director of the school, she said yes. Then she went on to lead the School through a strange and challenging time, all with a steady calm, before retiring July 30, 2021.

Foundational Research

Tenopir leaves a legacy of 27 years at SIS and even more than that in the field of information sciences. As her colleague, SIS Associate Professor Rachel Fleming-May noted, "Carol is one of few LIS scholars I'm aware of who have managed to keep one foot in libraries and one in 'Information Science' (to the extent they're different, that is). Her prolific research productivity and high-quality teaching are admired by her colleagues in LIS programs, while librarians respect and appreciate the contributions she made over the years through her *Library Journal* column and annual Database Marketplace report."

Tenopir got her foot in on the ground floor of her research niche when online databases, online resources, and online scholarly information was just starting to emerge. She was interested not only in how those resources were delivered and designed, but also how they change the way people—particularly researchers—access information. Through the Association of Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) her path crossed with Donald W. King, founder of consulting companies Westat and King Research, who had long studied the motivation of scholars accessing information in

a more traditional paper world. King and Tenopir merged their research interests and established a long-standing research collaboration.

"He was looking at the role of information in scholarship and research and I'd been working with publishers, libraries, and developers of online resources. It was a time of incredible transition in the scholarly publishing world in the '80s and '90s. I came to the University of Tennessee from the University of Hawaii to work with Don," she said.

The evolution of her research followed the technology, from a time where librarians would conduct online searches and give patrons the results, to where we are today.

International Reach

Tenopir's current research, funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, focuses on how early career researchers around the world have been, and continue to be, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and is a collaboration between the College of Communication and Information's Center for Information and Communication Studies (CICS) and the School of Information Sciences with CIBER Research Ltd. in the United Kingdom. Yes, she does plan to conduct research during her retirement, but she also plans to travel and make plenty of time for family, friends, and hobbies.

One of those places she plans to return to is Finland, where Tenopir has had an intersection of personal and professional interests over the years. She has three times been a Fulbright Scholar in Finland; the last time, in 2016-2017, serving as the Fulbright Nokia Distinguished Chair in Information and Communication Technologies. Serving

as a Fulbright scholar means both learning from scholars there, and teaching Finnish students and faculty about her research and the United States. Why Finland? Finland is world renowned in information sciences and her husband, Jerry Lundeen, has family in Finland. Now, after so many times visiting and collaborating with people in the country, they also have plenty of friends there they enjoy visiting.

While Tenopir's research and travels have been far-reaching, perhaps one of the ways many information sciences researchers and professionals know her is through the Library Journal column she wrote for 28 years, starting Feb. 1, 1983, and ending Oct. 1, 2010. More than one SIS faculty member first saw her name on this column before getting to later meet her, as Clinical Associate Professor Cindy Welch recalls.

"I started paying attention to anything and everything this columnist wrote, and she became a sort of academic mentor to me – unbeknownst to her, of course. The fact that she also lived and worked in Hawaii just made her cooler than anyone I knew. Imagine my delight years later in 2008 when I came to interview for the job at UT and my hero (and her wonderful spouse) were the people who gave me my Knoxville tour," Welch said.

Arrivals & Departures

Lundeen was faculty at the University of Hawaii and Tenopir was a systems librarian there at the beginning of her career. She also taught online searching at the library school; teaching that class was so enjoyable it pushed her to pursue her doctorate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, all the time commuting from Honolulu. In 1984 she accepted a faculty position at the University of Hawaii School of Library and Information Science, alongside her husband. Ten years later, Lundeen decided to retire and start a rare book business and Tenopir took the position at the University of Tennessee. They packed up and moved to Knoxville in 1994, which would become their home for the next 27 years.

It didn't take long for Tenopir to embrace being a Vol, and she and Lundeen even became long-time Lady Vols season ticket holders and fans – though they'd generously share tickets every winter with Associate Professor Wade Bishop so he could take his daughters to a game, he said.

"I do believe Carol's contributions are immeasurable," Bishop said, of course referring to her research and teaching, but noting that besides that, she always went above and beyond for faculty and for the

staff of the Center for Communication and Information (CICS).

While she didn't actively pursue administrative positions, those roles often found her, the first of which was being the interim director of CICS. She was asked by the then-chancellor to lead the center after SIS merged with the College of Communication and Information.

"The chancellor said we need to take this rich research culture that SIS is bringing to the college but we need to expand it and we need a faculty member to expand the Center. I thought I would do it for a year but ended up doing it for 11 years. The dean eventually said we needed to take the 'interim' off of my title," she said.

Moving into that position was a hard sell, as Tenopir loved being a teacher and had been teaching courses on information access and retrieval and information entrepreneurship for many years by that time. But she eventually relented and helped turn CICS into what it is today. Now it is led by SIS and Chancellor's Professor Suzie Allard, which allowed Tenopir to return full-force to her research and teaching over the last few years.

As for what is next, Tenopir said she still loves Knoxville and will certainly be visiting in the future, but that her son and daughter-in-law live in Michigan (where Andrew Lundeen, her son, is a digital projects librarian at Michigan State University) and invited the couple to live with them during their retirement. As fate would have it, Tenopir and Lundeen were visiting their family in Michigan during Spring Break of 2020 and ended up staying on the eight-acre homestead during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's been a strange and memorable year as SIS interim director, with all of her meetings held remotely and even her retirement "party" taking place in a Zoom room as faculty, staff, and former students shared their memories of Tenopir throughout the years.

According to Tenopir, "The transition was easier for SIS faculty, since so many of our classes were already online. And, whether interacting remotely or face-to-face, our faculty, staff, and students have remained close and we are dedicated to high-quality research, teaching, and service. I've had a great academic career at the University of Hawaii and the University of Tennessee. I must admit, my blood now runs Tennessee Orange and will do so into my future as a Chancellor's Professor



FORWARD MOMENTUM

Meet New SIS Director Abebe Rorissa



“We want to make a difference in the lives of others. In our case, we want to have student success, but we have to back that up with the Volunteer spirit.” - Abebe Rorissa

When asked what drew him to information sciences, new SIS Director Abebe Rorissa enjoys stepping back and looking at the big picture. He makes observations that inevitably cause those who hear them to ponder that same big picture, such as, “Think of the web and where it started. The internet started as a network to transfer information, so technology is a tool, but without the content, which is information, technology just becomes useless. That’s what excites me about information.”

TEACHER, LEADER, AND VOLUNTEER

With statements like that, it’s easy to tell that Rorissa has been a teacher and thoroughly enjoyed that role. Another role he enjoys is that of service, as is evidenced by the recent honor he was given as the 2021 recipient of the Watson Davis Award for Service by the Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T). The award recognizes someone who “has shown continuous dedicated leadership in and service to ASIS&T and made substantial and lasting contributions to ASIS&T governance, chapters, SIGs, committees, and publications.” It was also announced in July 2021 that Rorissa is the president-elect of ASIS&T.

Rorissa says that his passion for service aligns perfectly with the UT Volunteer spirit, which is one of many positive aspects that drew him to apply for the SIS director position. He looks forward to learning more about how the Volunteer spirit is embodied by the SIS community.

“We want to make a difference in the lives of others. In our case, we want to have student success, but we have to back that up with the Volunteer spirit. And alumni are our advocates but we have to support them as well, and we have stakeholders as well, and our service to the broader society,” he said.

He was also a practitioner for many years, and before that, he was an undergraduate student at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, where he earned a degree in math and physics. It was there that he found his calling in information sciences and earned his master’s degree in the field.

Rorissa traces back the start of his career in information sciences to when he was an undergrad and had two job offers: one as a math education professor and one in information sciences.

“I told my department chair and asked him what I should choose. He said, ‘Information sciences sounds new and exciting.’ And that’s how I ended up in it, and I’m grateful to him every day,” he said.

AN EXCITING JOURNEY IN INFORMATION SCIENCES

The School of Information Studies at Addis Ababa University was just one of two such schools on the entire continent, with the other established in Nigeria. He was part of the first cohort to graduate, noting there were students from 13 other countries in that cohort. It was a blossoming field at the time and Rorissa was excited to be a part of it, and he still is.

Here’s an overview of what Rorissa calls, “an exciting journey in information sciences”:

- First librarian position: He started out as an automation librarian at the university library, which at

that time included writing a program to automate the bidding process from suppliers. He was also tenure track and required to teach classes as part of his job.

- First big achievement: Rorissa moved to a position at a university in a small country called Lesotho, that is literally located in the middle of South Africa. He conducted an intensive feasibility study and secured funds to increase the information technology system before fully automating the university library’s entire card catalog system.
- Creating a new kind of library: His next stop in 1998 was as the systems librarian at the University of Namibia, where he helped build what they called an information and learning center, rather than a library. “We were one of the innovative ones of using technology and creating space for users. Now they talk about things like maker spaces in libraries, and we were thinking about that then, we planned it really well,” he recalls.
- Becoming a teacher: Teaching became his next calling, and as he decided to move into that role full-time, Rorissa began looking for a doctoral program. He was offered an assistantship at the University of North Texas, where he earned his PhD.
- Becoming an administrator: Rorissa was offered a position as faculty at the University of Albany, in New York, where he taught at the Department of Information Studies and at the College of Emergency Preparedness/Homeland Security and Cybersecurity, the latter of which he eventually served as the associate dean for faculty development.

COMING TO SIS

Then Rorissa looked for his next career chapter, which he has found at the School of Information Sciences, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He describes the position of SIS director as a “dream job,” noting his colleagues at Albany said they’ve never seen him smile as much as he did upon accepting the job.

If there’s any sort of challenge to being SIS director, it’s finding new ways to elevate a program that is already flourishing.

“This is not a school being started from scratch and trying to figure out what it needs to do. SIS already has strong programs with sky-high enrollments, and we just became a top 10 school,” he said. “It is a school with an already elevated reputation and standing, and a strong foundation, and an amazing faculty, excellent students, and staff that know what their responsibilities are and they do it really well,” he said.

As he officially stepped into the role July 1, 2021, Rorissa said he would begin learning everything he could about the School and its programs, and begin looking for ways to add onto the margins.

“My goal is to build on this strong foundation with the help of the faculty, staff, and everybody else, and elevate and promote the school at every opportunity I have,” he said. •

THE FUNDAMENTALS

of Library Fundraising

Alumna Karlene Jennings Shares Her Tips & Skills for Persuading People to Invest in Libraries

Though libraries serve as a foundation to their communities, they are usually responsible for raising a significant portion of their own funding. While there is sometimes stigma associated with this financial side of libraries, School of Information Sciences alumna Karlene Noel Jennings said that fundraising for libraries should be seen in a much different light.

“We control the future of libraries by getting people to realize that they can invest in them, and it is the job of a librarian to do that. If someone keeps saying they could never do my job, then we’re not going to have libraries anymore,” she said.

Professionally, Jennings entered into the world of libraries as a fundraiser and had been doing the job for a decade prior to entering the MSIS program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She already had a doctoral degree in higher education administration when she decided to pursue her information sciences degree, but she felt it was important in relating her enthusiasm for library fundraising to others within the library world.

Jennings has specialized in academic library fundraising, which is unique in that it doesn’t have a natural audience in the way a public library or a specific college department does—she has had to look at the broad audience an academic library can serve (basically anyone who visited the library while they were a student, or anyone who cares about its unique collections), and find those who are passionate about its role at its institution.

“Fundraising is an art and a science, they like to say, but it’s true,” she said. Jennings is so passionate about fundraising for libraries she has written three books on the topic. Most recently, she contributed a chapter about essential advancement skills for librarians in “Emerging Human Resources Trends for Academic Libraries.”

“We as librarians often let other people tell our story, and that’s unfortunate from an advocacy standpoint,” she said.

Presently, Jennings serves as chair for the Philanthropic Advisory Group (PAG) of the American Library Association. She also teaches and always makes sure to include an aspect about why libraries are important investments for communities. She’s actually teaching Management of Information Organizations



for the first time at SIS this fall as a lecturer. And she’s a member of the SIS Advisory Board, which provides another opportunity for her to both advance the field and the importance of supporting libraries and information sciences.

Jennings said she loves connecting people with ideas, and people with people, so development and advancement roles were a natural fit. She believes that if more librarians approached fundraising this way rather than thinking of it as asking people for money, it would become a more natural fit for them.

“I strongly see the library advancement role as a bridge builder—what we’re building bridges between might be different but we still have that tenet of what we do,” she said.

Jennings wants to share her passion, knowledge and experience fundraising for libraries with others in the field, so we’re sharing some of what she’s picked up from her

• UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE - different audiences want different things! You have to talk to them and find out their story and that will reveal why or how they would invest in the library. "Some people want the traditional library, some people want the innovative library, and some people want a blend of both. We don't always know what they want, but you have to ask them and sometimes I think we forget that."

• INSTITUTIONAL TURNOVER - when deans, development officers, and administrators leave, donors feel like they have to keep starting over with a new trusted advisor. Creating a sense of community to create continuity for donors is important. "I wouldn't want to start over with my attorney, my hair stylist, and my doctor every two years, but that's the equivalent of what is going on."

• USING JARGON - many potential donors probably don't know what OERs/Open Education Resources are, but would understand exactly what "free educational materials" are. "We often put things in a vernacular that separates us as opposed to brings us together... People are inundated with messaging in so many different ways and one of the key things is to get out of library speak and into normal people speak."

• LACK OF OWNERSHIP FROM LIBRARIANS - while librarians who aren't development officers or administrators may not think that fundraising is their job, it benefits the library if they bend that thinking. They're part of the story the library has to tell, and part of that community that creates a sense of continuity for donors.

• SPEAKING IN MONETARY GOALS - instead of having a "money thermometer" to communicate to the broader public, make sure you're telling them what the money will fund. "Fundraising should never be about money, it should always be about the projects and the ideas. It is not about the dollars, it is about what they do!"

Key Issues in Library Fundraising Right Now

MORE FUNDRAISING FUNDAMENTALS

How to be a Successful Fundraiser

- **It's not just about calling on people for money, it's about creating relationships.** "Asking for money is the penultimate step, it's not where you start from."
- **Getting a degree in library and/or information sciences can be very helpful.** "Having my MSIS lent a credibility with donors that I wasn't strictly a fundraiser and I could serve as a translator. That was one of the things that mattered a lot; my UTK degree encouraged me to be more active in ALA and other avenues that has yielded more of my publishing and my position as the chair of ALA's philanthropic advisory group."
- **Learn how to find partners in unusual places.** "Why are we not looking to graduates from institutions to partner with us because they work at tech companies? Look at what we are doing in terms of tech! Library supporters come from a variety of different majors, backgrounds, and interests."
- **Know what the trends are in libraries and more broadly to be a knowledgeable liaison between your library and your donors.** "I love figuring out what the key is to turn a lock, so finding that idea that turns a lock with a donor makes me happy, it's like finding the perfect present for someone."
- **Learn how to tell your library's story.** "How do you communicate to a broader public who may not have set foot in your library? People care about these issues who may not want to ever come check out a book, and it's how are you telling that story to a larger audience."

Tips on Surviving Fundraising Burnout

- **Remember your own "aha moments."** "One of the most essential things that I try and remember is where I came from, how transformative libraries were for me and my experience. The goal is to sustain libraries for the future, because without libraries, how many 'aha moments' won't happen for others?"
- **Focus on the goal.** "For me, it's focusing on the relationships with the donors, what the donors wish to achieve, as well as what we're trying to achieve for the students or others; outcomes matter."
- **Change the narrative.** "We need to embrace a culture that wants to talk to people about supporting the library in whatever way. You don't want funding, in whatever revenue stream, to be an afterthought. It needs to be a core part of the mission, and for some people that's not a comfort zone."
- **Find resources that inspire you.** "There's a fundraising expert named Jim Langely—he talks about coming out of the other side of the pandemic and how we need to think of our fundraising differently, and I would encourage each and every library director to look at some of his principles and access where they are on his continuum. What I like about him is, it's the whole nature of we can't keep doing things the way we've always done them; the world has changed and donors have changed."
- **Manage leadership transitions.** "I am working with two colleagues on a chapter about how leadership transitions can exacerbate and accelerate burnout, in a larger work being published by the Association of College & Research Libraries in 2022. Continuing to position your library and its key stakeholders for success; make them feel inspired and included in the change process."

SIS SCHOLARSHIPS

SIS has several scholarships, including these endowed scholarships for master's students. If you'd like to contribute to any of these, just go to tiny.utk.edu.GivetoSIS.

Gary R. Purcell Scholarship Endowment

This award honors the memory of professor Gary R. Purcell, the School's founding director. This scholarship will go to a student who shows unusual promise as a leader in the field of information sciences, in research and innovation, intellectual activity, and creativity and management. It is an award for overall excellence, rather than excellence in any one particular area.

2021 recipients: Karen Beal, Katherine Shea

Beverly Dance Library and Information Sciences Scholarship

This scholarship was given by the grandsons of Beverly Dance in her memory. She graduated from UT in 1950 and returned decades later to complete her Master's degree in library and information science. She served as an elementary school librarian in the Knox County school system for two decades. She was known for riveting telling of children's stories and her love of reading. This scholarship honors her legacy to hundreds of young elementary school students whose lives were impacted by her life and influence. Students who apply must use 25 words or less to write why they should receive this scholarship, and their submission is judged on ingenuity and cleverness.

2021 recipient: Jessica Huffman



Carmen L. Moulton Memorial Endowment

Carmen L. Moulton was born in 1915. She attended Knoxville High School and was an honors student but Carmen was unable to attend college.

She married Andrew Rawls Moulton and had two daughters – Sylvia Anne Moulton Sproul and Jimmie Jane Moulton Ray – both of whom attended the University of Tennessee and earned undergraduate degrees, and later, masters degrees from the School of Information Sciences. Sylvia became a librarian in the Lenoir City Schools and Jane Ray served Knox County. This scholarship is awarded to a resident of Tennessee or a graduate of a Tennessee high school and is given based on financial need.

2021 Recipients: Jenny Huffman, Rachel Fenningsdorf



Glenn E. Estes Fellowship Endowment

Glenn Estes was a nationally recognized authority in children's literature and a masterful coordinator of conferences involving storytelling, literature, and continuing education for librarians. Professor and associate director of the School of Information Sciences, he served on the School's faculty from 1967 to 1996. This scholarship is awarded to students enrolled in the School Library Information Specialist Program, and who have demonstrated excellent academic performance, promise as a leader, and intend to pursue a career in children's and young adult literature.

2021 recipients: Meredith Watkins, Alissa Browning-Couch, Rebecca Remkiewicz, Jill Rudisill

John C. Tyson Minority Fellowship Endowment

John C. Tyson, associate professor at SIS, died unexpectedly young at age 44. His distinguished career included four years as State Librarian of Virginia and five years as University Librarian at the University of Richmond. He was a founding member of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, which gave him the 1992 Distinguished Service Award.

This fellowship is intended to promote the educational benefits of student diversity which includes the preparation for students to live and work in an increasingly diverse and global society and workforce.

2021 recipients: Elise Stawarz, Sahara Scott



Jane Moulton Ray Scholarship Endowment

Rich Ray established this scholarship to honor his wife Jane who graduated from the School of Information Sciences in 1988. She is a retired Knox County School librarian. This scholarship goes to Tennessee-based students and it is awarded in relation to financial need, with preference given to first-generation undergraduate or graduate students.

2021 recipients: Ashley Hurst, Claudia Gutierrez, Sara Corso

"Dr. Bill" Robinson Scholarship Endowment

William "Dr. Bill" Robinson was at SIS for 35 years, during which he served as acting director of the School twice and was assistant director from 2005 until his retirement in 2008. Robinson taught hundreds of students and some 10 courses, including required courses in Research Methods and the Development and Management of Collections. He authored some 45 articles with an emphasis on Tennessee librarianship, book publishing, and government publications.

2020 recipient: Karla Roland



A First for SIS

Two Students Make History as the Firsts to Earn an Undergraduate Degree from SIS

Jonathan Habashey was one of the first students to join the undergraduate information sciences major program when it started in fall 2019, and this spring became one of the first to graduate from it.

Habashey likes talking to people and understanding how they think, but he also likes technology. He started out interested in computer science, but wasn't very interested in the coding aspect of it—that's when he found out about the new information sciences major.

"I was told that information sciences is more on the people side, and I'm more of a people person so I looked into it. I saw that it had User Experience design, and that catered to my interest in technology," he said.

He wasn't quite sure what to expect going into the program, as prior to joining it he had never even heard of information sciences. But once he was immersed in the classes, he enjoyed every second of it.

"I realized that information sciences is a whole world of things that I had never even thought about: studying how people do research, studying how people should do Google searches—I thought that was really interesting," Habashey said.

He recounted learning about what goes into the creation of a software application or website, and how to make it more usable and user-centered. It was easy to start seeing UX design everywhere once he learned about it—in his social media apps and in every website or program he used. He describes UX designers as being a "connector" between those who speak in tech, such as software engineers, and the everyday user of technology. Being that connector allows him to translate what the users need and want out of technology, and to relay that to the engineers.



"This is my way to help a lot of people before they even have trouble with it, I'm stopping the problem before it even gets to them and making sure they can do what they need to do really simply and easily," he explained.

Information sciences has grabbed Habashey's attention enough to push him into applying, and getting accepted into, the master's program at the University of Tennessee's School of Information Sciences. There, he hopes to gain an even better understanding of theory and to get more hands-on experience in UX design.

"Having a master's degree will mean so much more once I'm out in the field," he said. "I feel really accomplished graduating, even though it was something expected of me, but it's still a big deal and I'm glad I get to continue my education here at UT. I love UT and I'm happy I get to spend another two years here." •



While Stephanie Walker was excited to graduate from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, with her bachelor of science in information sciences, the senior said it was also a bittersweet moment.

“I almost look back and wish I could have discovered information sciences earlier. I just feel like I spent a lot of time at the university doing things I didn’t enjoy, so I only had one and a half years to squeeze in information sciences and I wish my education wasn’t ending,” she said.

Walker was one of the first two students to earn the undergraduate degree in information sciences. Since its inception, the undergraduate information sciences program has quickly grown, drawing in students such as Walker, who were looking for something a little different.

“I changed my major twice...I like that information sciences is interdisciplinary and incorporates a human element. It is more about using my IT background to develop relationships,” she said.

Walker also said information sciences broadened her career opportunities, something she realized when she took her very first information sciences course, INSC 201 – Foundations of Information Sciences. She learned that information sciences could take her into social media, computer science, data analytics, and more. Data analytics is what drew Walker’s interest, and she pursued it as a concentration.

SIS Clinical Associate Professor & Director of Undergraduate Studies Carolyn Hank, describes Walker as a powerhouse and a trailblazer, noting that Walker chose to complete both an independent study course and a practicum, when only one of those capstone projects was required for

graduation.

“She takes initiative and is committed to excellence. And she evidenced that excellence in her academic work! Not only is she our first graduate; she embodies characteristics really vital to academic and, subsequently, early career success—the drive with the know-how,” Hank said. “I am really looking forward to staying in touch with Stephanie so I can continue to celebrate her accomplishments as she moved from information sciences student to an information professional and leader in our field.”

All the work has panned out; Walker has a job as a technology risk consultant at Ernst & Young waiting for her upon graduation. She completed a practicum at the company, which started in summer 2020 and recently ended. There, she was pleased to discover she had a great foundation and skillset to do the work the company required of her.

“I have a good education under my belt from SIS at UT, and I know I can be confident going into the field and working,” Walker said.

Walker is ready to spread the word about information sciences—a field about which she knew nothing until another friend in the program told her about it. She recommends that any student who is interested in connecting computer sciences with people, and who wants a broad array of careers to enter, should take an SIS class or two to see if they like it.

“I think no matter what major you have, just getting the information sciences minor—no matter what career path you end up on—what you learn in information sciences is going to apply because it is so interdisciplinary,” she said. •

FACULTY NEWS

New Faces & Roles

Assistant Professor of Practice Joy M. Doan Joins SIS in 2021

Joy M. Doan joined the School of Information Sciences in spring 2021 as an assistant professor of practice for the master's program, and brings with her a wealth of experience as an administrator, practitioner, special subject librarian, and as an instructor. Her most recent position was as head of the Marta and Austin Weeks Music Library at the University of Miami, which she said challenged her to tap into many areas of library and information sciences.

"Music librarianship touches so many areas, including special collections, archives, metadata, music information retrieval, academic librarianship, public services, cataloging, collection development. Because it is a specialized subject, you have to have pointed knowledge in all those areas, you must have the skillset to do it all," she said.

Despite her love of music— and a master's of arts in music history from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio—Doan said she's made it a point to work in areas outside of that niche, such as when she was an instruction, research and outreach librarian at California State University, Northridge, in Los Angeles.

Doan believes teaching in the MSIS program is an opportunity to both maintain the excellent working parts of librarianship and information sciences, but to also challenge students to shake things up and think outside of the box.

"I want students to think, 'I can be the change I would like to see.' Cliché? Yes, but true.," she said.

Doan plans to contribute to SIS diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, a focus she's had in past positions. At the University of Miami she started an endeavor to add more diversity to the collection by bringing in more materials created by black and indigenous people of color (BIPOC), and women, with a focus on works published after 1960.

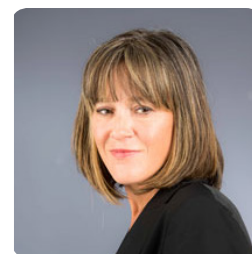
Another of Doan's goals is to join the ongoing collaboration between SIS and the librarians at Hodges Library; she was excited to see the school has an existing relationship with the library and hopes to create projects and research that will benefit both institutions and MSIS students.

Doan sums up her experience thus far at SIS: "This first semester in SIS has been wonderful. My colleagues have been warm and inviting; despite the oddity of coming on-board during the pandemic, they've ensured that I've been kept up-to-speed with needed information and really made me feel welcome. My students were a delight—eager learn and thoroughly engaged with our course material. I look forward to an even more engaging experience in fall when we all return to campus."•



BSIS PROGRAM GROWS; CAROLYN HANK FILLS DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES ROLE

Starting Aug. 1, 2021, Carolyn Hank transitioned from interim director of undergraduate studies to clinical associate professor and director of undergraduate studies. Here are some updates about the BSIS program, which has grown from eight enrolled students since its debut in fall 2019 to a current enrollment of 80 declared majors.



BSIS program overview:

- First capstone courses completed by majors: INSC 499 (practicum) in spring 2021; INSC 493 (independent project or research) in fall 2019, supervised by Dr. Jianguen He; INSC 495, a special topic course in digital & data curation.
- First SIS faculty mentors assigned to upper level majors (rank of junior or higher).
- @BSIS newsletter and listserv debuted.

2021-22 Priorities:

- Preparing for curriculum changes to fulfill new VolCore (general education requirements)
- Proposing SIS undergraduate courses for VolCore, which will benefit our majors as they can fulfill VolCore and degree requirements simultaneously, and also raise the profile of the SIS Undergraduate Studies, SIS as a whole, and the College.
- Continue to enhance our undergraduate studies' marketing and recruitment materials and engagement opportunities (you will be seeing more of us on TikTok and other platforms.)
- Cultivating industry relationships to enhance curricular and co-curricular activities, including internships, practicums, case studies and guest lecturers for our students, and to connect our excellent faculty to potential research collaborators or settings. •

A Selection of SIS Faculty Achievements & Updates

SUZIE ALLARD, CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSOR



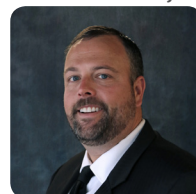
Allard is co-PI of two interdisciplinary studies on: disruptive disinformation campaigns in the Former Soviet Union States and disruptive effects of the pandemic on early career researchers. She is also co-PI on a project chosen for a One UT Collaboration and Innovation Grant.

DANIA BILAL, PROFESSOR



Bilal is PI for the IMLS-funded IDEA Institute on AI. She was the keynote speaker at the ACM SIG IR 2021 Workshop. She's published two posters and two papers with PhD students Jessica Barfield and Li-Min Huang. She is part of the campus-wide group Connecting & Coalescing HCI Research at UT.

WADE BISHOP, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Bishop, with MSIS graduates Hannah Collier, Ashley Orehek, and Joseph Winberry, published multiple articles in the Journal of Research Administration, the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, Journal of Documentation, and Library Hi Tech.

BRIAN DOBRESKI, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



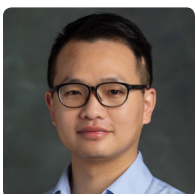
Dobreski continued research on metadata, personhood, and personal identity, publishing his findings in *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* and *Knowledge Organization*. He developed and offered a new course covering taxonomy, ontology, and knowledge organization systems.

RACHEL FLEMING-MAY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



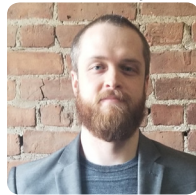
Fleming-May completed her appointment as Director of Graduate Studies in May. *Fundamentals of Planning and Assessment for Libraries*, co-authored with MSIS alumna and UTK Libraries Head of Assessment Programs and Collection Strategy Regina Mays, was published by American Library Association Editions.

JIANGEN HE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



He will present his work about how COVID-19 affected international collaboration at ISSI 2021. He served as co-chair of Panel & Alternative Event for ASIS&T 2021. He has been selected as one of 2021-2022 UTK Research Development Academy scholars to advance his scholarly agendas and build relationships with other faculty across campus.

BEN HORNE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Horne and co-authors published papers in *Communications of the ACM* and *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, on the effectiveness of news veracity interventions in different settings, and presented two workshop papers at the *MEDIATE* workshop at ICWSM in June. He is collaborating with UT scholars as co-PI on a disinformation project funded by the Office of Naval Research.

ERICKA PATILLO, CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Patillo enjoyed her first year at SIS learning the Director of Graduate Studies role from Rachel Fleming-May and Tanya Arnold. She has learned (but not mastered) over 20 new systems and apps. As MSIS Practicum Coordinator, she revised several processes and added new opportunities for our students.

DEVENDRA POTNIS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Potnis is researching Twitter hashtags for gatekeeping of COVID-19-related information; network gatekeeping on Facebook for benefitting new mothers in rural Appalachia; information services for disabled patrons; and information practices for alleviating information vulnerability. He will teach a BSIS class on information management this fall, and is chair of the ASIS&T SIG-III committee.

VANDANA SINGH, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Singh's research on diversity and inclusion in open source software continues to be recognized: she was a keynote speaker at the Thrive-Wise conference in June and presented her research at The Linux Foundation. She received the 2021 CCI Faculty Research Award for OSS research, social justice in rural libraries, and a meta-analysis of online education.

PEILING WANG, PROFESSOR



Co-authored with MSIS student Jing Su at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Wang published an article on post-publication expert-recommended biomedical articles in the *Journal of Informetrics*. She published an article on open peer reviews in *Research Evaluation* in collaboration with Dietmar Wolfram and Fuad Abuzahra at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

CINDY WELCH, CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



The School Library program is going strong, with more students than ever – more than 20% of our total master's program enrollment! Increased accountability and assessment have been added and our students continue to perform above the norm, including 98% passing the edTPA and a 100% passing the Praxis – both nationally-scored exams!

XIAOHUA (AWA) ZHU, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



After taking a sabbatical (luckily) during the pandemic, Dr. Awa Zhu came back to her normal teaching and research in Spring 2021. She is working on an edited book on the use and consequences of ICT in COVID-19, expected to be published by Routledge in late 2022.

2021 SIS Notable Honors

SIS AWARDS

Cassidy Thompson - Academic Excellence Award

Hannah Gunderman - Academic Excellence Award

Julia Proctor - Student Service Award

Kaypounyers 'Kay P' Maye - Gary Purcell Award

Ashley Orehek - CCI Outstanding Information Sciences Graduate Award

Jesse Morris - Best Paper Award

Kyle Johnson - Best Technical Project Award

Assistant Professor Brian Dobreski - Bonnie Carroll and Roy Cooper
Faculty Enrichment Award

BSIS Student Brooke Bixler - SIS Scholarship

BSIS Student Christopher Jackson - SIS Scholarship

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION AWARDS

Associate Professor Devendra Potnis & Joseph Winberry, PhD Student -
2021 Bohdan S. Wynar Research Paper Competition Award

Alissa Browning-Couch: Tennessee Library Association Gleaves
Scholarship

Kathleen Smith: Tennessee School Library Association Scholarship

Professor & Director Abebe Rorissa - ASIS&T 2021 Watson Davis Award
for Service

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AWARDS

Associate Professor Vandana Singh: 2021 CCI Faculty Research Award

Joseph Winberry, PhD Student: Dr. Marva Rudolph Scholarship



Joseph Mazer Joins CCI as New Dean in 2021

By the University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Office of Marketing and Communications

Joseph Mazer, professor and chair of Clemson University's Department of Communication, became the next dean of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's College of Communication and Information effective July 1.

Mazer has more than 17 years of experience in higher education. In 2012, he was named the director of the Social Media Listening Center at Clemson University. In 2018, he was selected to serve as the chair of Clemson's Department of Communication, and in 2019, he was selected as a Faculty Fellow by Clemson's Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

"Dr. Mazer brings a steadfast commitment to diversity and inclusion, extensive experience in academic strategic planning and program oversight, a successful record of innovative collaboration with external stakeholders, and an awareness of change in higher education," said Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor John Zomchick. "He will bring his experience and innovative perspectives to an award-winning college as he begins his tenure as its next dean. I look forward to his leadership and creative insight as our university embarks on its new strategic vision."

Mazer will succeed Dean Mike Wirth, who announced earlier this year that he will return to the faculty after serving as the college's dean for the past 15 years. Wirth will be remembered for increasing the college's research, making the college a campus leader in study abroad opportunities, and nearly doubling its endowment by raising more than

\$33 million to support research, scholarships, experiential learning, and facilities upgrades.

"I am honored to join UT's College of Communication and Information. This is an exciting time for the college to refine its vision while promoting innovation and excellence in line with the university's land-grant mission," said Mazer. "I look forward to collaborating with university leadership, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to design and implement a shared vision that highlights the college's position among flagship land-grant Research 1 universities."

Mazer's academic research focuses on new communication technologies and social media, communication in teaching and learning, communication in relationships, and quantitative research methods. He has been recognized among the top 1 percent of the most prolific scholars in communication between 2007 and 2016, and in the top 10 most influential scholars in instructional communication from 2000 to 2016.

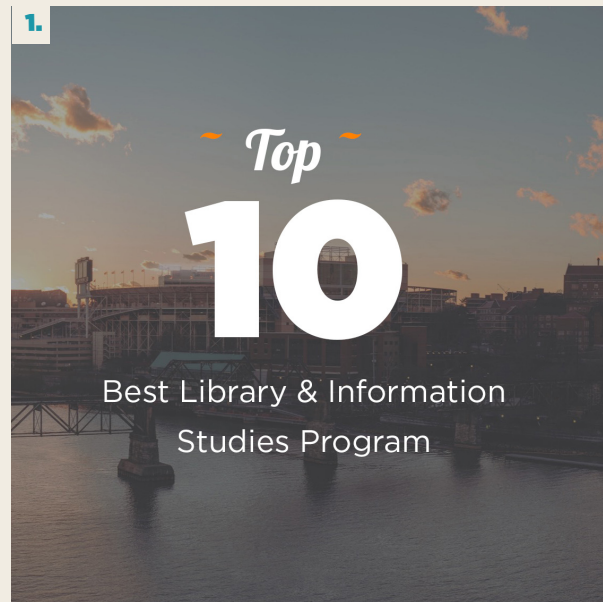
As dean, Mazer will lead a community of strategic creative thinkers who are passionate about leading, thinking, and preparing students to understand the role of information and communication in democratic societies. He will oversee the college's four schools—advertising and public relations, communication studies, information sciences, and journalism and electronic media. •

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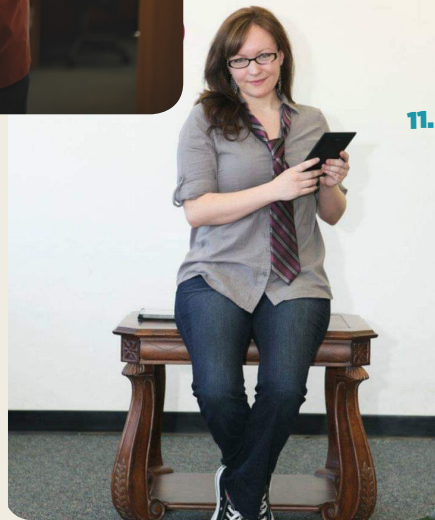
If you have a great alumni story to share, contact communications specialist Hillary Tune at htune1@utk.edu.

If you want to read more about the people and events featured here, visit our website at sis.utk.edu.



FEATURED ALUMNI





STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



1. The MSIS program was ranked 10th in library and information sciences programs in the 2022 Us News and World Report. **2.** Laura Creekmore ('17) is VP of content operations as Syndigo, overseeing online taxonomy and category attributes operations. **3.** Anna Galyon ('09) found her niche as director of the Oak Ridge National Lab library. **4.** Frank Allen ('91) is a recent past SIS Advisory Board president and also an administrator at University of Central Florida's Libraries. **5.** Rachel Gammons ('12) is head of the University of Maryland McKeldin Library's teaching and learning services and liaison to the University's iSchool. **6.** Dan Greene ('03) is a triple threat as an SIS alum, staff member, and lecturer. **7.** Jennifer Chilcoat ('89) became the Arkansas State Library director in 2020. **8.** Rebecca Davis is a CCI PhD alum and assistant professor at the Simmons University School of Library and Information Sciences in Boston. **9.** Kelly Passek was recognized as a 2021 Library Journal "Mover and Shaker" for using drones to deliver books to students. **10.** BSIS student Joshua Melendez served on the CCI Dean's Undergraduate Student Advisory Council. **11.** Karen Beal was awarded the Garcy R. Purcell Scholarship in 2021. **12.** Aspiring school librarian Kathleen Smith was awarded the Tennessee School Library Association Award in 2020. **13.** Claire Jordan researched misuse of scientific information at the University of Michigan Research Experience for Master's Students fellowship. **14.** Jesse Morris combined her environmental science background with information sciences to create a knowledge management map of water testing sites. **15.** BSIS student Holland Parkins was a CCI Land Ambassador. **16.** Charlie Mix helped create an interactive map as part of the "Perserving the Cradle of Southern Appalachia" conservation effort.

School of Information Sciences

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