

12-2014

Connections, December 2014

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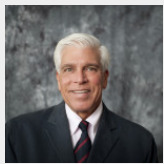
University Library, "Connections, December 2014" (2014). *Connections*. 46.
<https://docs.rwu.edu/libnews/46>

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December 2014



Introducing Connections

DECEMBER 2, 2014 2:30 PM

By Peter Deekle, Dean of University Library Services



Welcome to Connections, the RWU Learning Commons digital newsletter! Our new blog-like format will allow us to keep our campus and local communities informed in a more timely way with the activities of the University Library and the Learning Commons. Articles supporting our Learning Commons tagline: "Connect, Collaborate, Create," will include short announcements of Learning Commons events, feature articles on a variety of topics, a social media round-up, profiles of our Learning Commons staff, and helpful tips for using our resources and services.



Through this newsletter we hope to foster dynamic and ever-current communication about our services, resources, and public events. With contributions from our Learning Commons partners and associates, we hope to enhance the awareness and appreciation of our collective initiatives among the Library's many users – whether they are on campus or at a distance.

Visions for the Future

Learning Commons staff from the University Libraries, Instructional Design, Tutorial Services with valued contributions from University Advancement, have embarked on a reflective exercise to review and refine current mission and vision statements, aligned with the core values and related goals of Roger Williams University. The exercise supports an institution-wide consideration of strategic priorities, enabling the Learning Commons to reinforce its central and supportive purpose in advancing the academic success of students and faculty. We will use this exercise to align our future efforts in service provision and resource management with institutional goals.

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Meet the Learning Commons Staff – Chris Truskowski

DECEMBER 2, 2014 2:08 PM

Interview with Chris Truskowski



Introduction:

Christopher Truskowski was hired last summer as the Library's Web and Digital Services Specialist. He is responsible for keeping the Library's website current, supporting library technology applications, and providing digital services associated with the library's management of digital content. As a non-librarian professional, Chris brings a welcome and fresh perspective to our library world!

Q: Chris, as a native of New Jersey by way of Pennsylvania, what brought you to RWU? Have you noticed any glaring differences between the people here in Rhode Island?

A: I moved to RI with my wife who is working on a PhD at Brown. The job here at RWU is a perfect blending of my previous jobs—from working briefly as a library page to several different jobs in I.T. I'm really liking the job so far. Rhode Island people are not that different—in some ways, they are closer to people from New York or New Jersey than people from Boston.

Q: What kind of technology work have you done in the past that prepared you for this position?

A: For the past four years I worked building web-based systems for a college in Pennsylvania. It was a good background for everything I am asked to do here—updating and adding new features to the library website, investigating the potential for data mining in order to give a better picture of library user data, etc.

Q: This is your first time working in a library as a professional, though you have worked in academia for several years. Are there things you find particularly different about library work or working with librarians?

A: Working in the library is not that much different from working in a small I.T. department—all campus departments share the same clientele—students, faculty, and staff. Each person in the department has his/her own unique set of responsibilities. I appreciate that librarians as a group have a higher percentage than others of esoteric (random) knowledge.

Q: What areas of new technology excite you? Do you have any ideas on how to bring some of these technologies to RWU Library?

A: I am determined to find uses for touch screens and tablets in the library. There is a great potential with newer web technologies for displaying the library's content but there are technical as well as policy restrictions for the library website.

Q: We've heard rumors that you participate in the endurance obstacle races known as "Tough Mudder." Can you tell us what these races are like? What do they say about you?

A: The Tough Mudder creed considers the obstacle course not a race but a "challenge." The 10-12 mile obstacle course features 20-25 different obstacles, based on those used by the British Special Forces. These might include the "Arctic Enema," submerging in a mud pit filled with water and ice, or my latest challenge, the "Funky Monkey Bars," where the bars have been greased with mud, and slipping will dump you into a muddy pond, below. The goal is simply to get through the course and, regardless of whom you came with, everyone is on your team.

Q: Do you have any other interests you are passionate about?

A: I have played music since I was 8 or 9, starting with piano and trombone, but now playing a lot of tuba. I also sang in the choir in college, where I met my wife. We now both play in a Providence street band called "The Extraordinary Rendition Band," and we perform at a lot of activist events. I also am a home brewer and have enjoyed making beer for the past few years. My specialty is pumpkin ale, which turns out the most consistently every year.

Q: May we have a sampling of your pumpkin ale?

A: After work, of course.

Thank you, Chris.

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The Samsung Learning Experience

DECEMBER 2, 2014 1:50 PM



In partnership with Samsung the Learning Commons is inaugurating the Samsung Learning Experience – a designated site on the University Library’s first floor, where students and faculty can encounter and learn about the latest academic technologies and hardware platforms. More information about this new service will be forthcoming in future newsletter issues.



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“Death, Memory and the Civil War” – Associate Professor of Art, Anne Tait

DECEMBER 2, 2014 1:37 PM



RWU Associate Professor of Art, Anne Tait, delivered a faculty lecture during the Lincoln exhibit on October 15th, “Death, Memory and the Civil War.” Following her lecture, Professor Tait was interviewed by the Newport Mercury about her research on the cemeteries and the Civil War. You can find the full text of her interview online, here at <http://tinyurl.com/k6cywg3>.



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