Warm weather the week of November 1 greeted a sizable crowd of Tri-College students to Lutnick Library for the 2022 hacking event dubbed HaverHack. HaverHack was the latest in the series of Tri-Co Hackathons, annual events that host teams of students from Haverford, Bryn Mawr, and Swarthmore Colleges. The teams spend two days developing creative computational solutions to a variety of applications. It was also the first hackathon to be held in person since the pandemic.

The event was a collaboration organized by Wahub Ahmed ’25, of the student group Havercode, and Shayna Nickel, associate program director of the Haverford Innovations Program (HIP), with support from the Libraries’ Digital Scholarship team.

HaverHack began in the early evening on Friday, November 4. Students from the three colleges arrived in Lutnick’s Digital Scholarship Commons to register, form teams, and start working on their projects. Part of the orientation plan included a workshop designed and taught by Haverford student Ahmed Haj Ahmed ’26, who also works as a student developer on the Digital Scholarship team. Ahmed’s workshop focused on HTML and CSS, designed to refresh HaverHack participants on the essentials of web development.

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PULSARS, MOONBEAMS, AND A BRIDGE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND ART

Astronomy-Themed Paintings in the Strawbridge Observatory Library

After discussing the idea with Terry Snyder, librarian of the College, Carol reached out to Fine Arts professor Ying Li. Li asked her students if they wanted to make the idea into a class project, and they enthusiastically agreed. After a semester of hard work by the students, the paintings were completed and hung in the library in early 2023. To mark the occasion, the Libraries held a reception on February 6th to celebrate the art and the talented artists.

The reception featured the artists themselves, who spoke about the inspiration behind their pieces. Danika Rasmussen ’23, an Astrophysics and Fine Arts double-major, said, “This project meant a lot to me as a chance to combine my two main academic interests. I was able to take a really personal approach to my subjects because of the influence and knowledge of my scientific research work [on pulsars].” In contrast, Peter Deng ’23 created two pieces that “examine the moon’s romanticism as a literary and artistic motif for love and longing. Both works were inspired by Charles Baudelaire’s poem, Tristesse de la Lune and the Greek mythology of Psyche and Cupid’s love affair.” The vast differences among the six artists’ paintings speak to their unique perspectives and creativity around the project.

This project represents an important collaboration between the Astronomy and Fine Arts departments, and bridges a gap between the arts and sciences. It truly exemplifies the interdisciplinary nature that is characteristic of liberal arts colleges.

—Carol Howe is science librarian
Celebrating Douglass Day at Haverford

By Anna Lacy

On February 14, the Haverford College Libraries and Center for Race and Ethnicity Education hosted a Douglass Day event. Each year, the Center for Black Digital Research at Pennsylvania State University coordinates this large-scale transcription event in honor of Frederick Douglass’ chosen birthday. The goal of the program is to celebrate with collective action, transcribing archival materials from collections related to African American history. Every other year, the program focuses specifically on collections related to African American women’s history.

This year’s event focused on the records of Mary Ann Shadd Cary (1823–1893), an activist, journalist, teacher, and lawyer. Shadd Cary was one of the first Black women to establish and edit a journal in North America, The Provincial Freeman, and to attend law school in the United States. Born in Wilmington, Delaware, she also had connections to our region. She attended a Quaker school in West Chester, Pennsylvania, and established her own school for Black children there in 1840. Shadd Cary also taught in Norristown and New York City before moving to Ontario in 1853.

The project’s materials came from several archives and libraries across the United States and Canada, including the Archives of Ontario, the Moorland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Amistad Research Center. Over the past year, the Douglass Day team worked with archivists and librarians at these institutions to create a new collection of digitized materials on Zooniverse (hav.to/fvt). This collection facilitates large-scale community transcription, making Douglass Day a truly collaborative event. This is the first time that the papers and records of Shadd Cary’s life have been gathered in one place.

Douglass Day participants play an important role in making these materials accessible and available to researchers and the wider community. Transcribing these collections increases their accessibility so that they are more easily readable and searchable. This year, nearly 8,000 participants across the country transcribed more than 20,000 pages on February 14.

At Haverford, about 50 students, staff, and faculty worked together to transcribe records and identify the names of individual references in the documents. We were particularly excited to have Professor Lapsanksy-Werner’s History 340 class, a course focused on seven African American activists from the 18th–20th centuries, including Mary Ann Shadd Cary, participate. For many students, it was their first time transcribing primary sources. Working in small groups allowed people to discuss interesting findings and decipher difficult handwriting. And of course, like any good birthday celebration, we closed out the day with some cake!

—Anna Lacy is digital scholarship librarian
The Libraries are aware that the high cost of college textbooks and other required materials affects students at Haverford and throughout higher education. Recent survey data of Haverford students tells us that a substantial percentage of them can’t or don’t purchase or otherwise obtain access to the required materials for their courses. Open Educational Resources (OER) is an emerging strategy for making higher education more affordable. OER refers to openly-published course materials, such as digital textbooks, that are freely-available. The Libraries instituted an OER program in 2020 to encourage Haverford faculty to create, adopt, or adapt OER for their courses, with financial incentives commensurate with the effort needed to do this work. As a member of the Libraries’ OER team, I wanted to further my knowledge about these important resources. To this end, in 2022 I earned a Certificate in OER Librarianship by completing a semester-long course administered by the Open Education Network (OEN) based at the University of Minnesota.

The course provided an excellent foundation in the theory and practice of OER. I learned about OER’s licensing model, which permits adaptability. Instructors can create more inclusive teaching content with OER, by for instance, modifying examples in a book to better reflect the experiences of the students in the class. The open license also makes the resource free and unlimited to all students on the first day of class, with no burden to pay for or shop around for the materials. I was also introduced to the concept of a “zero-cost” course, which speaks to affordability through means that might not include OER, such as a course that uses an unlimited-access e-book purchased by the library. The course also focused on details and skills an OER librarian would use to enhance discovery, promotion, outreach, funding, and program evaluation.

For the course’s capstone project, each student created an action plan for their library’s OER program, with the goal of having a useful document that could be shared with colleagues to advance OER work on campus. Taking ideas from course discussions and readings, some of the recommendations I presented to our OER team included ways to involve other library staff with expertise that will enhance our program; identifying faculty, courses, or academic departments that might be good candidates to try OER or other low-cost alternatives; publicity of our grant program and of the concept of OER for faculty who aren’t familiar with it; honoring OER faculty publicly, for example with posters highlighting the work they’ve done and their low-cost courses; and ways to provide students with information about zero-cost courses at the time that they are choosing classes.

Desired outcomes that we might want to evaluate and report on could include measuring the overall cost savings OER create for our students, or comparing that amount to the outlay of faculty awards; positive course outcomes resulting from students’ not having to spend money on textbooks; perceptions of and satisfaction with OER and OER-based or other low-cost courses among faculty and students; and use of Haverford-created OER content beyond the initially intended courses at Haverford.

I look forward to continuing to work with faculty and library colleagues to create and promote Open Educational Resources at Haverford. Readers who are interested in the Libraries’ OER program can find details at hav.to/fvv.

—Mike Persick is head of acquisitions and serials
CURATING THE JAMES VAN DER ZEE EXHIBITION

The Student Perspective

BY UMIKA PATHAK ’25 AND ELLIE ESTEROWITZ ’25

The James Van Der Zee Exhibit

was curated by students in Professor Lindsay Reckson’s “Realism, Race, and Photography” course (ENGL/VIST 215). The exhibit was on display in Lutnick Library from January–March 2023. Below are accounts by two of Professor Reckson’s students who contributed to the curation of the exhibit.

Umika Pathak: The curation of the James Van Der Zee exhibit was undoubtedly a collective effort of creation. In Professor Reckson’s class, we learned how race has been, and continues to be, constructed through photography, with a focus on Black artists, creatives, and theorists who resist and remake the white construction of Blackness. This understanding served as the grounding force for our curation work. We each selected one of Van Der Zee’s works and, using extensive research and the elements of the photographs that moved us, formed interpretations that would live alongside his work, in the process learning about the responsibilities one has in curation—to the art, the artist, and the historical significance of the curated object.

What is beautiful about the exhibit is the way our individual voices ring out from beneath the works, asking viewers to enter the photographic space and spend time with Van Der Zee’s individuals and his creative techniques through our lens. What is even more beautiful, though, is the way our voices and the voices of the photographs ring out to each other, conducting lively conversation, asking questions of ourselves and our viewers. It reminds me of arranging the images on a whiteboard in our classroom on the last day of the semester. Our creative energies and visions for the exhibit gave way to a sparking, generative conversation about how to represent the work in a way that honored the revolution in Van Der Zee’s image-making. The exhibit is the product of these energies, and I am proud of the way we attempted to rewrite conventional museum space through arranging the images at different levels in an organic, home-like manner, rather than in strict, sterile placements. We even introduced two interpretive captions rather than one for “Kate and Rachel” (1909), which I worked on in particular. Emulating the remaking of the world that Van Der Zee performed in his studio as best we could felt like our highest priority in assembling his work, and I saw that energy within us throughout the entire experience.

Ellie Esterowitz: Professor Reckson canceled our final essay for “Race, Realism, and Photography” so that we could spend more time with the Van Der Zee exhibit. I think it’s very easy to feel like volume of work is privileged (continued on back cover)
Staff News & Notes

Compiled by Norm Medeiros

In October, Mary Crauderueff, curator of Quaker collections, was named co-chair of the biennial Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists. She also co-wrote a research note with Jordan Landes, curator of Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College, on the Quaker holdings at Haverford and Swarthmore Colleges, which was published in the December 2022 issue of Quaker Studies (27:2). Mary also contributed two chapters in the newly published The Quaker World (Taylor & Francis, 2022): “Quaker Archives in the United States” and “Dismantling White Supremacy in Quaker Archives: A Case Study.”

Norm Medeiros, associate librarian of the College, and Richard Ball, professor of economics, published “An Invitation to Teaching Reproducible Research” (Journal of Statistics and Data Science Education, 30:3). Additional authors included Aneta Piekut (Sheffield Methods Institute) and Nicholas Bussberg (Elon University). The article describes the educational benefits of teaching quantitative courses reproducibly, the subject of an online symposium held in spring 2021 and sponsored by Medeiros and Ball’s Project TIER initiative.

New Staff

Anna Lacy, digital scholarship librarian, joined the Libraries in November. Anna has experience working on community-engaged digital history projects and a background in history. She holds a B.A. in history from Stockton University, an M.A. in history with a certificate in Museum Studies from the University of Delaware, and is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Delaware.

In Memoriam

Emily Thaisrivongs, metadata librarian, passed away on December 19, 2022, due to complications from leukemia. Emily came to Haverford in 2015 after graduating from Simmons University with her master’s degree in library and information science. She made an immediate and profound impact on Haverford’s library program and the broader Tri-College Library Consortium. She was an expert and dedicated contributor to many initiatives, none more important than the Tri-College’s implementation of Alma, the system underlying Tripod, for which she held numerous responsibilities. Emily contributed to important national initiatives, serving on the ALA/ALCTS Committee on Cataloging: Description & Access, and HathiTrust Metadata Sharing Policy Task Force. More than these impressive professional accomplishments, Emily will be missed for her generosity and goodness. Her absence will be felt by her partner, family, friends, and colleagues whose lives she touched in countless ways.

—Norm Medeiros is associate librarian of the College and coordinator for collection management and metadata services
HaverHack
The Latest TriCo Hackathon
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Later that night, the teams migrated to the VCAM space for snacks and more work time. The teams reconvened the morning of Saturday, November 5, to finalize their work, which they then presented to a panel of judges and their peers. In all, 30 students in seven teams participated and presented. The judges’ panel, comprised of TriCo alumni, deliberated over an hour and declared first, second, and third-place prizes.

Nickel, reacting to the success of the event, said “The Tri-Co Hackathon has always been a popular event, even when it was remote. However, this year was particularly special because being back in-person brought a heightened energy, excitement, and collaborative spirit. We had more cross-college teams than in years past, which is always wonderful to see because it allows students a chance to expand their network. I enjoyed working with Wahub Ahmed, who put a great deal of time and thought into designing the experience, as well as Ahmed Haj Ahmed, who facilitated the primary workshop for the event. Students stayed and chatted long after we wrapped, which I think is a sign of a successful event.”

More details about the event, as well as project descriptions and photos, can be found on the Haverblog report at hav.to/d7b. The teams also shared their project data to a public Github repository called “TriCo HaverHack Fall 2022.”

—Patty Guardiola is associate librarian and coordinator of research, instruction, and digital scholarship services

Spring Exhibition
Showcases Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania Artistry

BY SARAH HOROWITZ

The Spring 2023 exhibition in the Rebecca and Rick White Gallery in Lutnick Library is “Enduring Presence 2023: Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania Art.” Curated by Adam Waterbear DePaul, Lily Sweeney ’23, and Digital Exhibit Curator Alex Rodriguez-Gomez ’24, the exhibit showcases contemporary art created by Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania (LNPA) members. The exhibit, open through July, highlights individual connections to tradition and community through creation. You can read more about Lily and Alex’s experiences working on this project at hav.to/asd, and view the digital exhibit, which includes photos of the artwork on display as well interviews with the artists, at hav.to/ask.

—Sarah Horowitz is curator of rare books and manuscripts and head of Quaker and special collections
Curating the James Van Der Zee Exhibition
The Student Perspective

(continued from p. 5)

over quality, so Lindsay’s gesture was really cool, both practically and in terms of what it meant for the course. In “Race, Realism, and Photo,” we spent a lot of time discussing the failure of artists like Jacob Riis and Edward Curtis to represent their subjects (almost entirely members of marginalized communities) without the belittling frame of settler-colonialism. We unpacked the photographic manifestations of the white gaze with careful attention to the way identity informs representation—an idea that to me felt agonizingly important when it came to organizing the James Van Der Zee exhibit. It would be silly, and probably irresponsible of us, to write our wall-text and curate our exhibit without intent to disrupt the politics of whiteness that have permeated museum spaces since their inception. We ended up using every bit of the extra class time Lindsay had given us to create something we felt represented Van Der Zee’s radically honorific depictions of Blackness. Entire hour-and-a-half blocks of class time were spent agonizing over exactly how to position Van Der Zee’s works so as to suggest welcoming domesticity and avoid the sanitized feel of museum displays. I am very thankful, not only that I did not have to spend my finals week on yet another 6–8 page final paper, but also for the opportunity to give Van Der Zee’s photography the care and attention it commands, and has rarely received.

—Umika Pathak and Ellie Esterowitz
are rising juniors