

Generous Gift to Transform the Digital Humanities Lab in SML



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Yale scholars are increasingly interested in working with the vast quantities of historical, literary, artistic, and musical material that have been digitized in recent years. Quantitative and algorithmic approaches to this “Humanistic Big Data” are promising, but humanists first want to understand the conceptual frameworks and computational tools of these new ways of conducting research. Yale University Library’s Digital Humanities Laboratory (DHLab), founded in 2015 through a grant from The Goizueta Foundation, fosters this important work.

The DHLab, currently operating in temporary quarters on the third floor of Sterling Memorial Library (SML), will soon have a permanent home thanks to the great generosity of University Library Council members Richard ’53 and Barbara Franke. Their gift will renovate a familiar space, the Franke Family Reading Room, named in their honor in 1998. Supporting teaching and research, the freshly furnished DHLab will be a state-of-the-art facility that uses computational approaches to create new entry points into Yale University Library’s remarkable physical and digital collections.

The creation of this new facility dovetails with other major renovations—and temporary relocations—across the library. During the past academic year, the Franke Room has served Beinecke readers while the landmark 1963 building has undergone renovations. In 2016–2017, the Franke Room will provide temporary quarters for Manuscripts and Archives researchers while that department’s space in SML is under construction. By 2018, the final refurbishing will take place, equipping the Franke Family Reading Room to house the DHLab and encourage hybrid scholarship at Yale permanently.

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