

Barbara Rockenbach will return to Yale as university librarian July 1



April 24, 2020

Barbara Rockenbach, associate university librarian for research and learning at Columbia University Libraries, will succeed Susan Gibbons as the Stephen F. Gates '68 University Librarian July 1. She began her library career at Yale as the second Kress Fellow in Art Librarianship in 1998 and progressed to successively broader leadership roles. As director of undergraduate and library research education, she worked with colleagues to introduce the Personal Librarian program for Yale College students and championed teaching with special collections. Shortly after [President Peter Salovey announced her appointment](#) [1], Rockenbach joined a library all-staff meeting via Zoom. Despite the pandemic restrictions that have closed library buildings, she told library staff, "We still share the strong sense of place that is the Yale University Library."

Following is the full text of her April 15 remarks:

"It is a pleasure to be with you today. I hope you are all safe and well at this moment. When I imagined my first meeting with all of you, the image was of a gathering in the Sterling Memorial Library lecture hall. I imagined shaking hands, some hugs, and definitely a lot of warm greetings shared in person. We are not in that moment

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now, but that doesn't change the sense of connectedness we can begin building even at this time of disconnection. We still share the strong sense of place that is the Yale University Library.

"I begin in this position on July 1. While the next few months are hard to predict, I have learned something in the last month of Zoom chats. On Zoom, only one person can speak at a time and I've been reminded of the importance of listening. My first goal is to listen and learn from all of you. I am interested in hearing all your ideas and aspirations for the Yale University Library.

"While I am familiar with the library from my previous time spent there, it is in many ways an unrecognizable place to me. Under Susan's leadership these past nine years, it is a library transformed. The strengths that I remember – the deep and broad collections, the innovative services, the beautiful spaces, and especially the extraordinary staff – are stronger than ever. I feel honored to be able to follow Susan as a leader and privileged to be in a position to advocate and support all of you as a staff.

"I have been incredibly impressed with how the library has transitioned to online collections and services during this time of COVID-19. My frequent visits to the Yale Library website have been inspiring. The Yale Library is present at this time for researchers, students, faculty, and staff. I look forward to hearing from all of you about the work you did to make this transition possible and the values you brought to that work.

"While it will be a few months before I start, I am looking forward to connecting with many of you before that time. In person meetings will be a challenge, but I will work with Sara Machowski to set up Zoom meetings. I'm eager to hear your ideas and hopes for our future work together and I can't wait to get started."

Source

URL: <https://web.library.yale.edu/news/2020/04/barbara-rockenbach-will-return-yale-university-librarian-july-1?page=2>

Links

[1] <https://president.yale.edu/announcement-university-librarian>