

Access, Inclusion, and Achievement: A Library for All

Impact Report 2026

AURARIA LIBRARY



AURARIA
LIBRARY

— SERVING THE SCHOLARLY COMMUNITIES OF —



ABOUT THE AURARIA LIBRARY

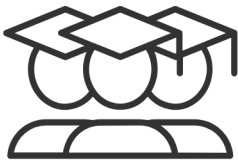
The Auraria Library is where the Auraria Campus community and opportunities come together. It's where learners and leaders connect and channel the power of three vibrant institutions of higher education—the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver), Community College of Denver (CCD) and Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver). It's where we research the past, study the present, connect with the world, and prepare for the jobs of the future.

The Auraria Library, designed by internationally recognized architect Helmut Jahn, opened to the community in 1976. As a Colorado state institution, the Auraria Library

is open to the public and provides access to federal documents as part of the Federal Depository Library Program. With collaborative workspaces on the first floor and quiet study space on the second floor, the library provides a space for all individuals to feel included and supported throughout their time on the Auraria Campus.

This report highlights the library's efforts to provide access to a wide range of resources and services and to support the achievement of students, faculty, and staff in their learning, teaching, research, and work.

Fast Facts



38,000+

students at
3 downtown Denver
colleges & universities



1,119,742

streaming media items

250

subscription databases



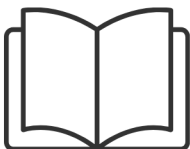
279,961

annual visitors at our
180,000 square-foot
facility at the heart of
the Auraria Campus



222,696

annual web visitors
and 550,000+
pageviews from
165 countries



465,698

physical books

1,628,383

ebooks



18,931

annual hours booked
in our 12 study rooms

FROM THE DIRECTOR



The Auraria Library proudly serves as a vital partner to three institutions, the University of Colorado Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and Community College of Denver. We recognize the unique character of each institution and the diverse identities of their students, acknowledging that each campus community contributes its own strengths, perspectives, and commitments to student success. Together, we support Auraria's faculty, staff, and more than 38,000 students, representing 15% of Colorado's higher education population.

Recognizing the diverse needs of today's learners, the Auraria Library provides in-person and online services to support students wherever they are, whether through one-on-one research assistance, classroom instruction, creative outlets, connections to technology, or access to journals and books. We are committed to meeting students' needs in any capacity, with flexible and robust online support designed to ensure access, continuity, and success beyond the physical library.

Our physical spaces give students the choice to study, relax, connect, collaborate, and get creative. Our collections offer access to scholarly and creative works that support the academic and research endeavors of students, faculty, and staff, and that highlight the enduring power of ideas.

In this report, we showcase the incredible impact the Auraria Library has on the learning and living community across and beyond the Auraria Campus. The title of this report, *Access, Inclusion, and Achievement*, reflects not only key values underlying our work, but also important characteristics for us to instill in all those we encounter.

The narrative and data you'll find in these pages reflect not only the library's value and diverse ways we serve, but also the dedication and professionalism of our team whose commitment and hard work are integral to our success.

I'm thrilled to share how the library enriches students' lives and strengthens our community. I invite you to explore, listen, and learn about the meaningful impact the Auraria Library has on our students, and to visit us and discover the library in your own way.

Jodi Shepherd
Director, Auraria Library

ACCESS

The Auraria Library makes available information, services, and resources across multiple technologies and formats, helping users access these resources independently and curating specialized collections to support their research and creative work. We're proud to have built a diverse, robust, and well-used collection, both in print and online, that reflects the constantly evolving needs and interests of the campus community.

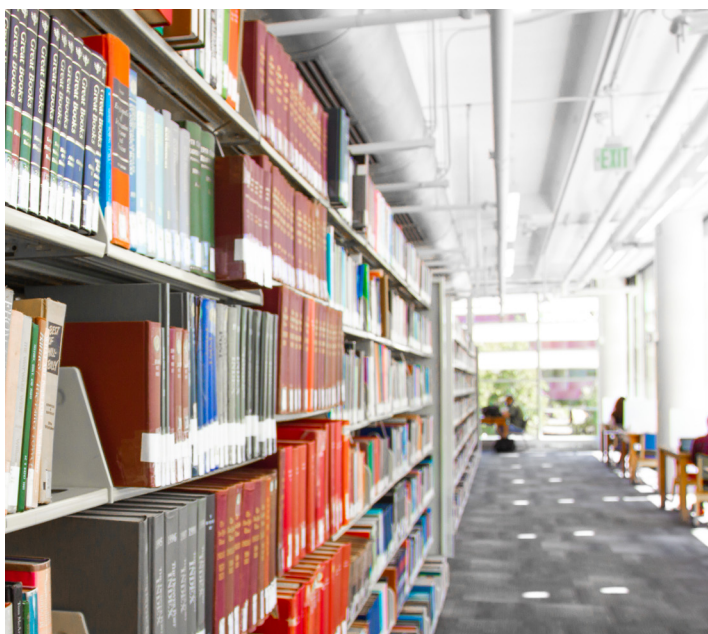
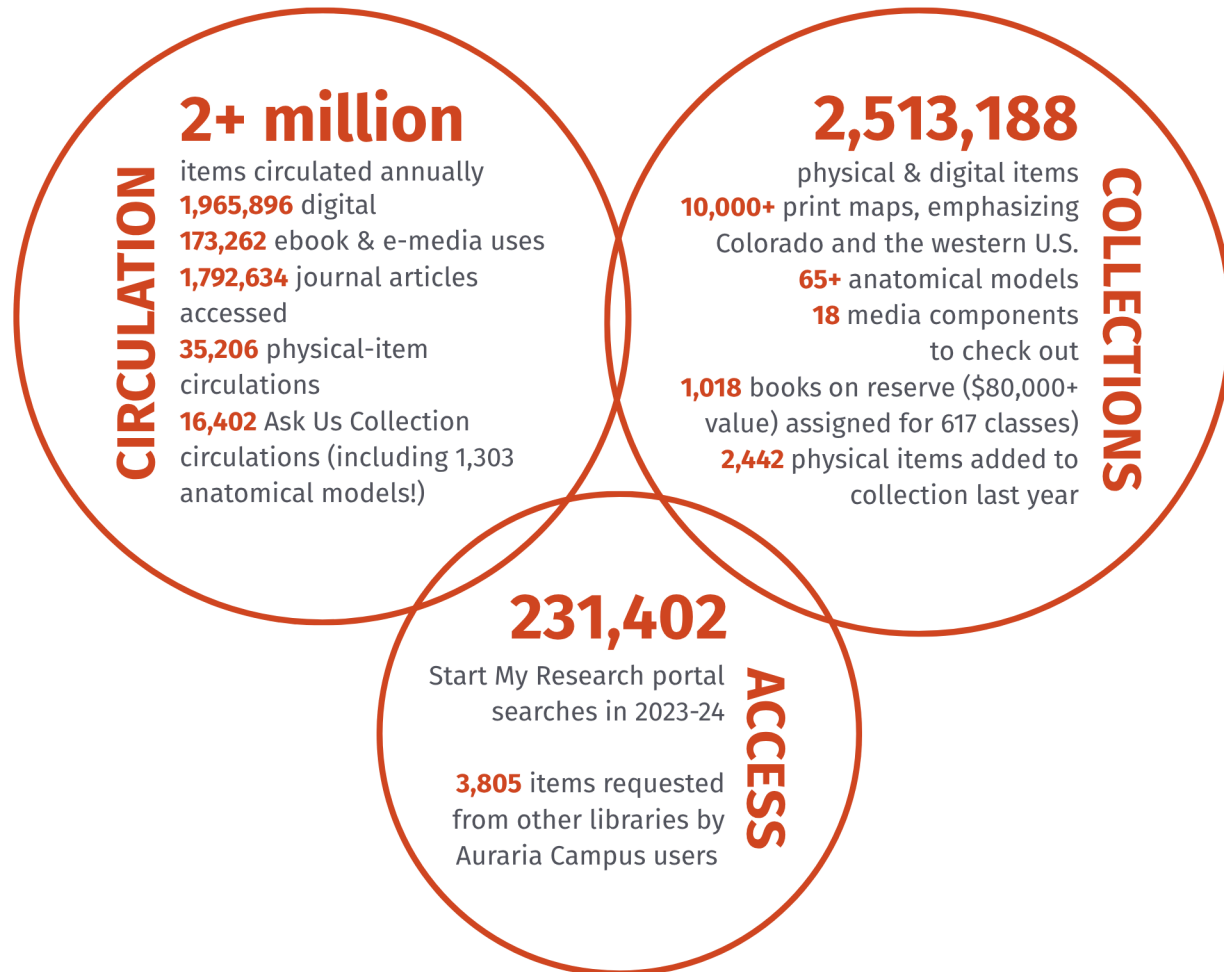
We provide access to a wide range of perspectives, histories, and ideas to ensure that users can engage with diverse

viewpoints. In addition to the thousands of books, journals, streaming media, and databases accessible through the library, we also provide access to unique items that support the student as a whole including calculators, media kits, molecular model sets, bike locks, Wi-Fi hotspots, charging cables, and state park passes.

At the heart of our mission is not solely the collection itself, but also our efforts teaching users how they can evaluate information. This not only furthers their academic growth, but also enhances their future careers and contributions to the community.



How We Provide Access



87% agree that the Auraria Library provides access to resources that are appropriate for my research needs.

84% agree that the Auraria Library provides access to resources that are current.

Fall 2023 library collections survey

SPECIAL & DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The Auraria Library's Special & Digital Collections house distinctive materials including manuscripts, audiovisual objects, photographs, rare books, maps and urban plans, and ephemera. To represent the varied backgrounds of our student body, we have collections in Hispanic American history; Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander (AANAPI) history; and Women's and Gender Studies. We also maintain dozens of collections relating to 20th century events of relevance to Denver and Auraria.

66
archival collections

16,861
books and periodicals

21,400+
digital collection
annual visits

9,873
digital collection items

Digital collection users
from

100
countries



“Our Special & Digital Collections offer students, faculty, and the community access to rare and unique items for research. Whether in our Reading Room, where you can page through Civil War letters or a 400-year-old volume of plays, or online anywhere with our Digital Auraria collections, history is at your fingertips!”

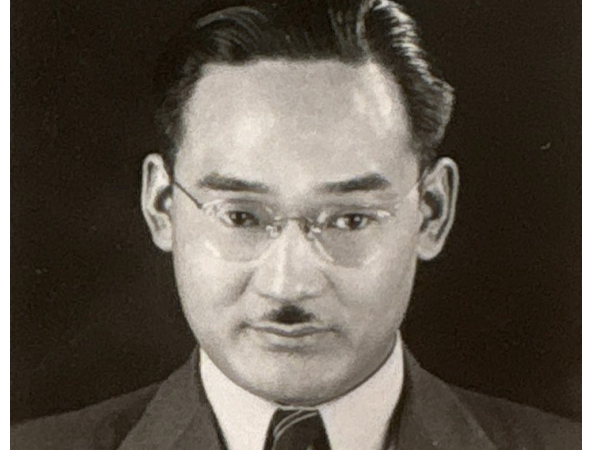
Leia Lynn
Department Head, Special & Digital Collections

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS



Minoru Yasui Papers

Minoru Yasui was a lawyer and civil rights activist supporting Japanese Americans and other minorities who faced persecution during the 1940s. These papers span six decades of correspondence, case records, organization documents, photographs, and newspaper clippings documenting Yasui's civic and community involvement. The collections highlight his activism and community work with organizations, such as the Commission on Community Relations and the Japanese American Citizens' League, addressing issues related to race, unemployment, mental health, public safety, senior citizens, and human services.



Ninth Street Historic Park Collection

The construction of the Auraria Campus resulted in the demolition of homes and businesses that displaced approximately 900 people – yet preservationist efforts helped keep one block of Ninth Street, with fourteen Victorian homes and a commercial building, from demolition. This collection contains architectural plans, administrative and financial records, historical research, and maps spanning 1972-76 and representing the planning, preservation, and restoration of residential homes on Ninth Street, now a designated historic district.



Women's Suffrage Collection

Donated by Elicia (Lee) I. Wolf, this collection celebrates the tireless activism of women such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton who fought for women's right to vote. Highlights from the collection include *The Revolution*, an early women's rights newspaper published by Anthony and Stanton, and a first American edition (published in 1792) of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. The collection also highlights various books, newspapers, political cartoons, and prints that reflect everyday experiences of 20th century women in the United States.



INCLUSION

Inclusion is a core tenet of the Auraria Library. We cultivate an environment in which everyone is welcome. Our collections and services reflect our users' diverse backgrounds and needs, and we leverage technology to ensure our resources and services are accessible to users of all abilities.

By offering dedicated spaces for collaboration and individual study, we provide students with a place to focus and create when they need it most. Users can access our learning spaces without fear of discrimination, unwarranted interference, or violations of privacy. Our collections are diverse, dynamic, and responsive to the academic, cultural, and personal interests of our community and evolving landscape.

We offer robust research support 24/7 through multiple channels, including in-person, by phone, and online via chat or email. Even if you're halfway around the world, students, faculty, and staff can get the support they need in the format that works best for their needs. And our instruction empowers users to understand the world around them, learn from diverse viewpoints, and assess information through multiple lenses.

“The Auraria Library empowers student success by delivering reliable, innovative technology that ensures seamless access to the information and digital tools students need to learn, create, and thrive regardless of institution affiliation.”

Tyler Howarth

Department Head, Auraria Library Information Technology



How We Support Inclusion

137

computers including

7

fully ADA-equipped computers with accessibility-enhancing software

2,500+

children's and young adult books

200+

languages represented in the collections, including

12,000+

items in Spanish

25

Wi-Fi hotspots to check out

Our dedication to inclusion is represented in our collections through our research of and funding for resources representing diverse perspectives.

8 databases acquired fiscal years 2023–25

\$30,000 allocated to purchase older books to fill in historical gaps in the collections

\$2,500 grant to purchase books and films by and about Asian American and Native American Pacific Islanders



“[The Auraria Library is] a safe place to go and escape problems for a bit.”

– MSU Denver user

“[My Auraria Library consultation] helped me realize I needed to stop looking at my thesis project as a whole... that to do it justice, I need to disassemble it and look at all the components of it separately. Which seemed really intimidating at first, but it's actually made the topic much more digestible, especially because it's given me the opportunity to start fleshing out my own solutions to the issue rather than being influenced by other people's ideas.”

– MSU Denver honors student

“[An Auraria librarian] taught me about a term that librarians use, 'vocational awe,' to describe good people who work extra hard because they see the populations who are dependent on that work being done. I think that this could be a great term to use in my thesis to explain why burnout happens specifically in helping professions like social work.”

– MSU Denver honors student

INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

Relaxation Station

Held just before finals, the library's twice-annual Relaxation Station event transforms areas of the library into welcoming, restorative spaces where students can take a mental break from their academic work. Activities include coloring, puzzles, mindfulness activities, refreshments, and

more. In spring 2025, the Relaxation Station featured trained service dogs to help reduce students' stress and improve their mood, underscoring the library's role as a central resource for holistic development and well-being.

Graphic Novels Collection

The Auraria Library's newly enhanced graphic novels collection includes more than 500 titles, curated to showcase diverse perspectives, and supported by a CU Denver Inclusive Excellence grant. Graphic novels have been shown to be more visually and emotionally impactful than more traditional literature. By providing a more inclusive collection, we can help our students feel valued, supported, and welcome in the Auraria Library and on our campus.



Displaced Aurarian Scholarship

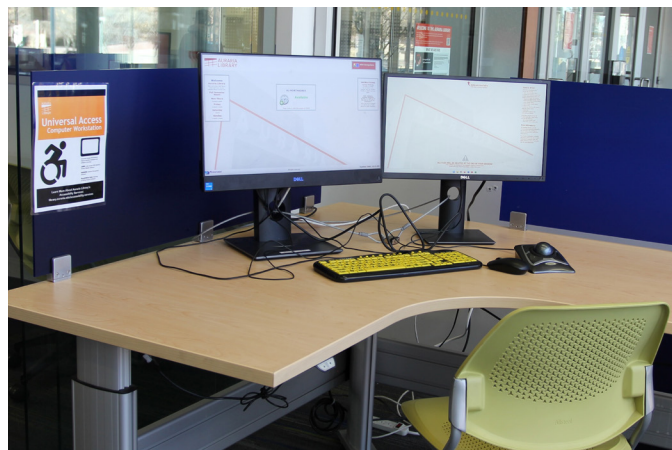
The "I Am Auraria" exhibit includes resources for students applying for the Displaced Aurarian Scholarship, which provides former Auraria residents and their descendants scholarships to Auraria Campus academic programs. Computers adjacent to the exhibit provide access to a database and map of the neighborhood's residents from 1955 to 1973, letting potential and current students determine if family members previously lived in the area.



Assistive Technology Workroom

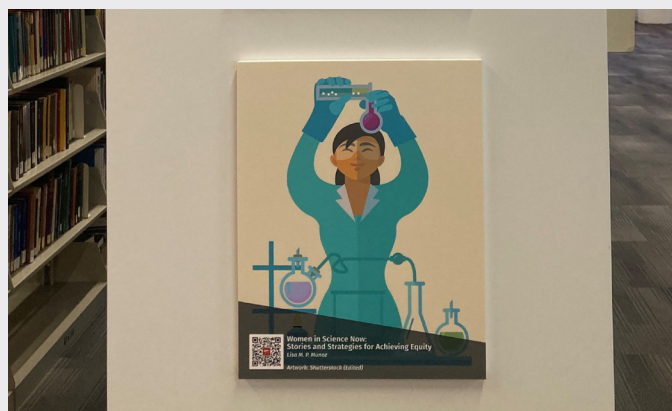
This assistive technology workroom available to all users, with priority given to users with disabilities, features adaptive technology such as:

- Video Phone Relay System | communication over video telephones via a sign language interpreter
- Topaz (desktop video magnifier)
- Two computers with assisted technology and Adobe Creative Cloud software



Art in the Stacks

To highlight the conscious effort the Auraria Library makes to purchase books by BIPOC and marginalized authors, our second-floor stacks feature cover art from books by many of these authors, thanks to CU Denver Inclusive Excellence Grant funding.



Deep Quiet Study

Our second-floor Deep Quiet Study space provides users with a noise-free area for studying, reading, writing, imagining, drawing, and thinking. With comfortable lounge seating, desks, study carrels, and an unparalleled “corner-office” view of downtown Denver, the space is welcoming to all who need a break from the rush and noise of classes and city life.



ACHIEVEMENT

The Auraria Library succeeds when everyone across our three partner institutions succeeds. We foster scholarly and creative works, provide enriching learning experiences tailored to students' needs, and build a culture of innovation. By ensuring access to scholarly resources, we enable researchers and students to learn from the expertise of others in their field.

Our research and instructional services help students and faculty develop more effective strategies for writing and producing original research, identify appropriate publishing

avenues, and advocate for support. Through our creative technology services, students, faculty, and staff can design, fabricate, present, and document their creative works. Auraria Library events and initiatives showcase and celebrate scholarly and creative work of faculty and students across campus, reflecting the library's status as hub and connective tissue for academic research, creativity, and community. Finally, our institutional repository ensures that campus-generated research and creative works are more accessible to a wider audience.

Helping Learners and Scholars Achieve Goals



7,829

Ask Us Desk inquiries and **2068** questions answered via 24/7 chat service



100+

librarian-developed online research guides with **91,896** pageviews



379

individualized research consultations by expert librarians



640+

appointments for creative technology support



178

instruction sessions taught to **3,245** students



200+

available books written or edited since 2019 by Auraria Campus faculty

Annual data from 2024–25

Library Access Adds Up to Financial Savings

As the Auraria Library promotes academic success, its resources reduce financial burdens for students as they explore their fields of study and pursue their academic and professional goals. In 2025, we assessed citations in student dissertations and theses to estimate the cost of accessing referenced materials without access to the Auraria Library. We found that resources in a typical thesis or dissertation could cost between \$1,000 and \$5,000 to obtain, though they could be found through the Auraria Library at no cost.

“From this [research] consultation, I feel like all the ideas and interests I had swirling around this topic were tied up with a bow, as I now feel like I know what I’m doing with literacy and civic engagement, instead of solely looking at these two in relation to each other.”

– MSU Denver honors student



How has the library helped you succeed in your studies?

“Being able to borrow anatomical models.”

– CCD user

“Being here [Auraria Library] helps me focus more than anywhere else.”

– MSU Denver user

“Gives me an environment away from home that helps ease distractions!”

– CU Denver user

“Seeing other people studying motivates me.”

– CCD user

LIBRARY INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The library instruction program teaches the campus community research skills to enable and inspire lifelong learning. We partner with first-year composition courses, disciplinary research courses, and original researchers to help learners and scholars develop information literacy skills; a set of interconnected skills and knowledge practices related to finding and using information.

In first-year composition courses at our partner institutions, librarians teach students to craft and refine strategies for finding information and evaluating it for relevancy and credibility within the context of its use.

In disciplinary research courses, librarians ask students to more deeply assess information within the context of a discipline and facilitate students' exploration with authority and expertise in their fields.

From undergraduates conducting original research for the first time, to faculty writing a book, librarians help original researchers develop their research scope, find gaps in the research, and ethically create and engage in the scholarly conversation.



“Not only do the students benefit, but so do the faculty members. We learn more about what scholarly sources are available at Auraria and get insight into the best ways to search for quality research. It is not a stretch to state that many students have told me that they might have dropped an ENG 1020 class if not for the aid of a well-timed instruction class.”

– MSU Denver faculty member

“The library session for my students in the core planning class for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree has been critical to developing my students’ research skills. They have learned about the different databases they have access to at CU Denver, how to stay on top of the literature in their subfields, and how to make the most of the resources at the library they have access to. This session is one of the highlights of my course.”

– CU Denver faculty member

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Innovation Garage

The Innovation Garage eases the process of imagining, designing, and creating. Auraria Campus affiliates can come together in a low-stakes, DIY environment in which we give students the time and tools to work on projects. The flexible layout, abundant natural light, and ample technology provide a physical and mental space to help users bring a fresh perspective to any project.

Features include:

- Large-Format Printing: For research posters, art presentations, and more
- 3D Printing: + software with lots of output possibilities
- Vinyl Plotting/Cutting: For one-color stickers
- Cricut: Cut paper, vinyl, fabric, and more
- Sewing Machine: For fashion, cosplay, or fun



Digital Media Studio

The Digital Media Studio is a space that can be reserved for portfolio-documenting photography (2D and 3D), portraiture, audio recording, and video. Studio equipment includes Nikon DSLR and Sony cameras, diffusion umbrellas, LED light kit, reflector panels, microphones, tripods, and teleprompters.

“I require students in my intermediate jewelry class to think critically about the various ways to document jewelry on and off the body. We visit the photo studio at the DMS to experiment, and then students are required to submit final editorial documentation for at least one project.”

– CU Denver faculty member

AURARIA CREATES

Auraria Creates is the library's annual celebration of the amazing scholarly and creative work done on the Auraria Campus. The weeklong program gives faculty and students, established scholars, and emerging voices a prominent showcase for presentations and exhibitions. The event reflects the library's central position as a hub and convener for big ideas, collaboration, and community.



2025 Featured Presenters

- Dennis Rudnick, MSU Denver faculty, on Resisting Divide-and-Conquer Strategies in Education: Pathways and Possibilities, a look at how “divide-and-conquer” strategies operate in the U.S. public education system
- Sandy Guinn, CCD faculty, on My Sketchpad, which helps students overcome barriers to extemporaneous drawing and creativity
- Elizabeth Pugliano, CU Denver faculty, on History, Practice, and Pedagogy: Empathetic Engagements in the Visual Arts, which probes historical, practical, and pedagogical empathy through works of art
- Jasmine Harris, MSU Denver faculty, on Black Women, Ivory Tower: Revealing the Lies of White Supremacy in American Education, a look at what it means to be a Black woman in higher education
- Flynn Condit, MSU Denver student, on The Periphery, his two-year photodocumentary exploring the spaces of the southern constituent republics of the former Soviet Union

“Auraria Creates supports student and faculty research by providing a tri-institutional platform to showcase creative and scholarly work, fostering collaboration, and connecting campus communities through interdisciplinary engagement.”

Gyasi Evans
Lead Librarian, Outreach and Engagement



Student Presenter Flynn Condit at 2025 Auraria Creates

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Open Educational Resources (OER), no-cost, open access teaching or other curricular materials, are an increasingly common way for faculty to save students money on expensive texts. OERs can be re-used, re-purposed, adapted, and redistributed by others. The Auraria Library helps faculty identify and adapt OERs they can use in their classes and connects OER advocates across campus to expand and promote OER awareness and access throughout the Auraria community.

“Open educational resources eliminate financial barriers for students to obtain course materials, allowing faculty to tailor materials to their specific learning outcomes and student populations, and enabling faculty to integrate diverse perspectives into learning materials to center voices often marginalized by traditional publishing structures.”

Sara Satkowiak
Lead Librarian, Scholarly Research Services

Institutional Repository

The Auraria Library’s institutional repository is a digital archive that preserves and provides open access to scholarly articles, undergraduate theses, doctoral dissertations, capstones, and semester projects created on the Auraria Campus. The repository makes campus-generated scholarship more discoverable and accessible to a wider audience.

5,500

page views of *Fundamentals of Business Law*, an OER written by CCD instructor Melissa Randall

2,900+

theses and dissertations in the institutional repository



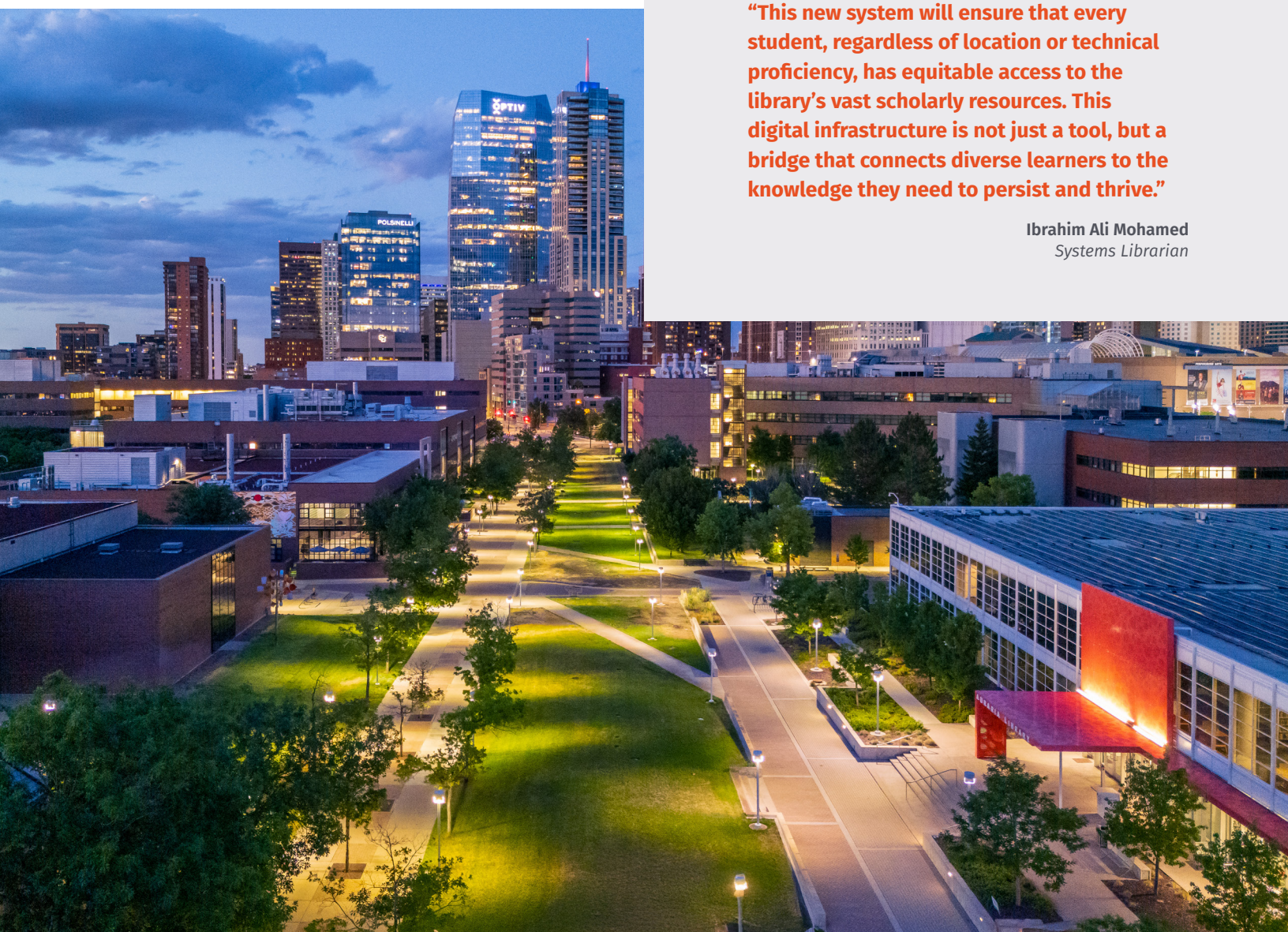
Updating Library Search to Meet Tomorrow's Needs

In 2026–27, the Auraria Library will implement a new search and discovery system to transform how users find and access library resources. The new search tool will provide relevant results across Auraria Library print and digital collections and seamlessly connect users to those resources. The new search tool will enable users to log in with their university credentials to request print materials, save relevant electronic resource records, save searches for future use, and have new research sent directly to their inboxes.

The updated search interface and supporting systems, which will debut in 2027, will also benefit library staff: helping us get information to users. Workflows involved from purchasing library materials to making them discoverable and accessible by users will be streamlined and more efficient, allowing us to bring information to our users faster and more accurately. With more sophisticated reporting on usage, the library can make better, data-informed decisions about the materials and resources we provide.

“This new system will ensure that every student, regardless of location or technical proficiency, has equitable access to the library’s vast scholarly resources. This digital infrastructure is not just a tool, but a bridge that connects diverse learners to the knowledge they need to persist and thrive.”

Ibrahim Ali Mohamed
Systems Librarian



YOU CAN BE PART OF OUR STORY

The Auraria Library's success these past 50 years is due to the support of the amazing scholars, institutions, and community members we serve. Here at the intersection of knowledge and discovery, we aim to grow our impact, and by engaging with the library in varied ways, you can be a catalyst for that.

We invite you to:

Check Out a Book: When did you last bring a book home from the library? With over 2 million physical and ebooks in our total collection, we know you'll find something new.

Explore Special and Digital Collections: Delve into the wonders of the Auraria Library's Special Collections through our digital collections or by arranging a visit.

Be Part of Library Outreach: Many campus faculty and students showcase and discover new scholarship and creative ideas at events like Auraria Creates and through our Faculty Authors shelves.

Tell Us About Your Needs: We're here to meet the teaching, learning, and research needs of students, faculty, and staff. Tell us about your collections and services requests so we can adapt to changes on campus and in industry.

Have Us at Your Event: We're eager to spread the word about our robust services, extensive collections, and inviting spaces and are available to present or host an information table at your event.

Make A Gift: The generosity of donors has fueled many of the spaces and services we provide today, and we have many opportunities for you to support the library's mission and priorities. From our Giving Day outreach efforts each April to philanthropy focused on updating our technology and other services that make college more affordable for students, every gift, no matter the size, matters.

Auraria Library

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