



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT  
THE DIGITAL LIBRARY  
December 8, 2006

In a research university, a library is much more than a repository of books and archival material. It is a major facility for the presentation, exploration and dissemination of all types of information. It is also a critical piece of infrastructure to support active learning, to foster the development of research and critical analysis skills and to underpin our scholarly work. This is why the top capital priority in the U of C's capital plan was the expansion of our current library facilities with a new building that we earlier called the Campus Calgary Digital Library.

As you know, we have government funding to build this new structure and also to renovate the MacKimmie Library Tower and Block. The new building will be built on the west side of the MacKimmie Library complex and will incorporate part of the existing Library Tower. The project is now being designed by two of Canada's most creative architectural firms – Saucier + Perrotte of Montreal and Kasian Architecture, Interior Design and Planning of Calgary. Actual construction begins in the new year.

This morning, we are announcing that longtime friends and supporters of the University of Calgary, Don and Ruth Taylor, have given the University \$25 million to help build the digital library. In recognition of this generous gift, the Board of Governors has named the digital library the Taylor Family Digital Library.

In addition, the gift from the Taylor Family will be used to create a green space in the centre of campus in concert with the construction of the Taylor Family Digital Library. This green space is a significant element of the environmental re-design of our campus. The history of the U of C was to build buildings where a footprint was available with less regard to the overall connectivity and cohesiveness of the campus. As a result, our campus is hard to navigate, is short on meeting and gathering spaces and, in many ways, is a patchwork of buildings, organized into discrete and largely unconnected disciplinary precincts, rather than an organized community. It is significant that the heart of our campus, now, is largely a series of roadways and loading docks. Our capital plan has always had as one of its key objectives the desire to repair this patchwork even as we build new buildings. The Taylor Family donation will permit the construction of what many great universities have and we lack - a central quadrangle that defines the heart of campus. Such quadrangles often serve as iconic meeting places for the entire university community, for both informal and formal gatherings. The Taylor Family donation will allow us to build such a green space in the heart of campus. This quadrangle was named the Taylor Quadrangle by the Board.

Architectural concept drawings and the full news release of today's announcement will be available after 10:00 at <http://www.ucalgary.ca>.

Don and Ruth Taylor share a passion for libraries and a strong belief that the resources in them should be available as widely as possible. We knew that the digital library would be a useful and wonderful addition to the U of C and a benefit to all Calgary and Alberta students. With the Taylors' extraordinary gift, we are now able to say with some

confidence that we can create an iconic, outstanding facility that we believe will meet world-class standards for a modern library at a research university.

A university library supports what people do in universities, which is learn. For many students, the library is the centre of learning support, and a key to their success. So our new library must be, in the words of Scott Bennett, Yale University's Librarian Emeritus, a library "designed for learning". When it opens in the fall of 2009, the Taylor Family Digital Library will be designed for learning, in keeping with which it will also house a variety of learning support activities that complement the library's role. To ensure the alignment of the Taylor Family Digital Library with our desired academic objectives, the programming and planning associated with this new facility and the renovated MacKimmie Library is being led by the Provost, Alan Harrison, and the Vice-Provost (Libraries and Cultural Resources), Tom Hickerson. On a larger scale, The Taylor family Digital Library will also become the Calgary cornerstone of the Province of Alberta's Lois Hole Digital Library.

The Taylor Family Digital Library will allow the University to bring together a vast amount of information, and more importantly, the professional staff to help students find their way. It will offer more study space, more computer workstations, specialized training and seminar rooms, wireless Internet access and more than 50 rooms that can be used to discuss and present information. The Taylor Family Digital Library will result in a 30% increase in available study space on campus, the kind of space we need to further the opportunities for collaborative, multidisciplinary teaching, learning and research.

The Taylors, like all our other donors, are committed to improving the lives and experiences of our students and the quality of work we do at the U of C. This is the fourth significant gift from Don and Ruth Taylor. They have also generously supported the Engineered Air Chair in Cancer Research in the Faculty of Medicine, and they have given two substantial donations to the Engineered Air Gait Laboratory in the Faculty of Kinesiology.

Let me end by publicly thanking Don and Ruth Taylor for their commitment to the University of Calgary, our students and the Calgary and Alberta communities.

Harvey Weingarten  
President