

# Pennsylvania Libraries: *Research & Practice*

News

## Noteworthy

*News Briefs from PA Libraries*

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### Penn State University Libraries Piloting Sensory Rooms As Supportive Spaces for Neurodiverse Students

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. – For students who need a break from the cacophony of campus life, a growing number of [sensory spaces](#) at locations across [Penn State University Libraries](#) can offer quiet comfort.

The University Libraries, as part of the [LibWell](#) initiative, are currently piloting three sensory rooms, located within Penn State [Berks' Thun Library](#), Penn State Brandywine's [Vairo Library](#), and in [Pattee Library](#) on the University Park campus, to assist students with sensory impairments and neurodiversity.

"The Libraries is committed to advancing the success and well-being of our students, and that means thinking about our spaces, services, resources and programs differently," said Rebecca Miller Waltz, University Libraries' associate dean for learning and engagement. "These sensory rooms are a great example of re-envisioning spaces and prioritizing resources in a way that directly supports our students' needs. We hope that this is just the first step of many that will ultimately lead us toward more inclusive, welcoming and supportive spaces for our community."

Sensory rooms use specialized equipment, furniture and lighting to generate a controlled sensory-focused environment that calms the nervous system, increases feelings of safety, and lowers stress and anxiety. Also called multi-sensory environments, these spaces offer a form of accommodation that can help meet the needs of a growing population of neurodiverse students, such as those living with autism, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia, and PTSD. While every room is different, the goal is to create a sense of calm and relaxation cues.igh gentle sensory

For the full news release or more information about sensory rooms at Penn State University Libraries visit the [Penn State University Libraries News article](#).

*Courtesy of Penn State University Libraries*

## Staff Promotion at Messiah University

Murray Library is delighted to announce the promotion of Rachael Jasitt to the position of Access Services Specialist. Jasitt's expanded, new role will encompass a broad range of responsibilities maintaining the library's digital resources and physical serial collections, in addition to continuing her role as the evening circulation supervisor.

*Submitted by Sarah Myers, Messiah University*

## Penn State University Libraries Political Song-a-Palooza Holding Open Auditions for Second Annual Event

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Political Song-a-Palooza, a musical event sponsored by [Penn State University Libraries](#) to showcase new, old and original political or protest music performed by Penn State students, faculty, staff and alumni is now accepting video and audio auditions.

Auditions are open through Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, via audio or video file submissions to [psap2024@gmail.com](mailto:psap2024@gmail.com). All types of performers are welcome to apply, from a cappella groups, soloists, singer/songwriters, bands, spoken word artists, and more.

To be hosted at the [State Theatre](#) in downtown State College on Saturday, April 20, the second annual live event will again focus on amplifying and sharing diverse voices of the Penn State community in creative new ways. Event coordinators are seeking performances that include songs from across geographies, movements and time periods that have contributed to political dialogue and shaped cultural and political landscapes.

For more information about this and other Political Song Series events, visit Facebook at [Political Song-a-Palooza](#) or the event's Instagram account at [@politicalsongapalooza](#). View last year's concert of more than 15 performers, [here](#).

Partners include [the Center for the Performing Arts](#) at Penn State, [The McCourtney Institute for Democracy](#), and the [Rock Ethics Institute](#), with support from the [Kerry and Janice \(Harms\) Kissinger Libraries Excellence Endowment](#).

For questions about Political Song-a-Palooza events including physical access and special accommodations, contact coordinators Rebekah Hill, music and performing arts librarian, at [rqh5509@psu.edu](mailto:rqh5509@psu.edu) or Andrew Dudash, political science/policy studies/government information librarian, at [amd846@psu.edu](mailto:amd846@psu.edu).

*Courtesy of Penn State University Libraries*



*Logo for Political Song-a-Palooza a live event celebrating political and protest music at the State Theatre sponsored by the Penn State University Libraries. Credit: photo provided / Penn State Creative Commons.*

## Share news about your PA Library!

Have news you would like to share in our next issue? Submit your news items via our online form: [bit.ly/1rkSdcR](https://bit.ly/1rkSdcR)

We look forward to making your Pennsylvania library accomplishments, experiences, events, and news part of the PaLRaP conversation.