

Nexus

A RYERSON UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY THE LIBRARY

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Official Opening

On November 15, 2004, Ryerson Library celebrated the official opening of the Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons. Ron's \$1 million gift allowed for the building of the Besse Commons on the main floor of the Library, a technology-enhanced space which has transformed the library for its users. The Library was pleased to host Ron, his family and friends, and members of the University administration to acknowledge Ron's significant contribution to the Library and to Ryerson. The evening consisted of a virtual-ribbon cutting ceremony to officially launch the Besse Commons, addresses by Ron Besse, Chief Librarian, Cathy Matthews, and President Claude Lajeunesse, tours of the new space and a reception in the University Archives.

Upper right: Chief Librarian Cathy Matthews thanking Ron Besse, with University Campaign Cabinet Member Loretta Rogers, Adam Kahan, Vice President, University Advancement, and Errol Aspevig, Provost and Vice President Academic.

Lower left: President Claude Lajeunesse, Ron Besse, seated on his Ryerson Chair, and Vice President of University Advancement, Adam Kahan, by the donor wall

Lower right: Co-Chair of the Invest in Futures Campaign, Ted Rogers, with guests in the Commons Learning Lab for the virtual ribbon cutting ceremony.





The Besse Commons

What is the Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons?

The Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons, located on the main floor of the Ryerson University Library, provides access to a wide range of information resources with advanced technology, and provides the expertise necessary to allow student, faculty and staff to successfully integrate information with technology in their academic pursuits. Available in the Besse Commons are 140 computer workstations providing access to the Library's electronic resources, Internet access and productivity software in support of student success. For more information, please visit the Commons website at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/library/ic>

Physically located within the Besse Commons are the Audio Visual Collection, the Geospatial, Map and Data Centre, the Reference and Technology Support Desk, the Commons Learning Lab and the Writing Centre. Each of these components of the Commons is a potential naming opportunity for interested friends of the Library. Your gift will help ensure that these valuable library service points continue to be available to our students.



The **Reference and Technology Support Desk** offers in person reference support to help students and faculty make use of the wide variety of information resources provided by the Library. This key service point represents a new model of collaboration; with librarians, technicians and student lab advisors working together for our users.



The Audio Visual Collection
(Fundraising Target \$100,000)

The Audio Visual Collection is housed in the Besse Commons beside the Geospatial, Map & Data Centre. AV materials support many academic programs, and the collection contains DVDs, videos, CDs and audiocassettes, all of which are listed in the Library Catalogue. The area also contains a variety of equipment which may be used for viewing/listening to the collection.



The Writing Centre
(Fundraising Target \$100,000)

The Writing Centre is a free, drop-in facility for all Ryerson University students, undergraduate or graduate, who want help with their writing. Appointments may be booked with peer-tutors for help with specific assignments and general writing skills.



The Geospatial, Map and Data Centre
(Fundraising Target \$100,000)

Access to maps, geospatial and social science digital data, together with related support services, is a prominent feature of this Centre. Library staff provide assistance with accessing and manipulating geospatial and social science data from a number of sources, including Statistics Canada.



The Commons Learning Lab
(Fundraising Target \$250,000)

The Commons Learning Lab has high visibility, adjacent to the Reference and Technology Support Desk. The lab, which has 36 computers, is used frequently for group instruction sessions to students by librarians. When it is not booked for group instruction, the Lab is open for individual student use.

Visitors to the Library

In its first four months, over half a million students and other patrons have visited and used the Besse Commons.

Since the official opening of the Besse Commons, the Commons has become a destination on the Ryerson campus. This includes visits from the Mississauga Public Library, the Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario and a tour of the Besse Commons in conjunction with the recent Ontario Library Association (OLA) Conference held in Toronto.

The Library also recently hosted visitors from the University of Technology in Jamaica, who were on a university-wide tour of the campus in anticipation of possible future partnerships with Ryerson.



Ron Besse and two of his grandchildren by the donor wall. The donor wall acknowledges the significance of Ron Besse's gift to the Library and creates a legacy for the future.



From left:

- Marilyn Booth, Dean of the Chang School of Continuing Education,
- Chief Librarian Cathy Matthews, Ryerson University Library,
- George Roper, Senior Vice-President, Academic Affairs, University of Technology, Jamaica,
- Jeanette Bartley, Associate Vice President, Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning, University of Technology, Jamaica,
- Cecile Farnum, Communications and Liaison Librarian, Ryerson University Library,
- Dr. Rae Davis, President, University of Technology, Jamaica,
- Lucina Fraser, Interlibrary Loan Librarian, Ryerson University Library



- Lucina Fraser, Interlibrary Loan Librarian, Ryerson University Library and
- Marilyn Booth, Dean of the Chang School of Continuing Education, touring the Commons with
- Dr. Rae Davis, President, University of Technology, Jamaica

What's Next for the Besse Commons?

The Ryerson Library launched its CASE for an Information and Learning Commons in 2001, with an original campaign objective of \$4 million. With the achievement of the Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons, the Library has been able to take the first step towards realizing its vision. Our next steps are to continue to encourage partnerships to help further develop our vision.

Our CASE:

CONTENT – The Ryerson Library spends over \$1.5 million annually on electronic resources which are available 24/7 from the Library website. Even though students may not be on campus, they still have access to a large repository of electronic information through the Ryerson Library to support their research needs. Help us to ensure the viability of our electronic resources by directing your gift towards the purchase of a digital collection. Personal or corporate donations to subject or program-specific digital content at prices ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per year, can be recognized on our website.

ACCCESS – Access to library resources requires technology. The 140 Besse Commons computers, for example, will need upgrading on a regular basis to ensure that students have access to up-to-date software and hardware. A gift of \$2,500 will allow the 'evergreening' of a single computer in the Commons. The goal of the Library is to secure \$1.5 million for the acquisition of computer hardware and software. Each funded computer will be identified with a donor plaque. Talk to us about honouring your graduate or other person with your gift.

SPACE – Ron Besse's gift has allowed us to transform the main floor of the Library into a welcoming space for the Ryerson community. To further develop the potential of the Commons as a collaborative space within the university, the Library is looking for partnerships to enable Phase II of the Commons – a \$1.5 million redevelopment of the 3rd floor to facilitate the relocation of university departments to work collaboratively with the Library in support of student success and faculty teaching and research.

EXPERTISE – How do we help students make sense of the vast amounts of information available? Librarians and library staff use their expertise to assist in many ways. We offer reference and instructional support in person, through real-time chat reference, by e-mail and telephone. We provided free instruction to over 7,000 students this year, in our labs, classrooms and service desks, helping our users to work not just faster, but smarter. A gift of \$25,000 helps support critical information literacy skills by underwriting costs of web research guides, lesson preparation and interactive skills assessment tools. Our target to support this initiative across all program areas is \$500,000.

For more information, please contact Chief Librarian, Cathy Matthews, at cmatthew@ryerson.ca or 416-979-5142 or Cecile Farnum, Communications and Liaison Librarian, at cfarnum@ryerson.ca or 416-979-5000 ext. 4835 or Paula Curtis, Executive Director of Development, University Advancement at pcurtis@ryerson.ca or 416-979-5000, ext. 5312.





Thank you, Ron Besse!

The renovations to build the Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons would not have been possible without the full support of the university and its administration. The Library held additional events to celebrate the opening of the Besse Commons and acknowledge the role played by other members of the university community in helping to realize this vision.



Top
Chief Librarian Cathy Matthews explaining the vision of the Besse Commons to members of the Board.

Phil and Colleen Lapp and President Claude Lajeunesse on a tour of the Commons



Left
Dr. Linda Grayson, Vice-President, Administration and Student Affairs, Suzette Giles, Data, Map and GIS Librarian, Bob Jackson, Manager, Ronald D. Besse Information and Learning Commons, Dr. Errol Aspevig, Provost and Vice President Academic

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