



The Case for Lilly Library

Each year, more than 1,700 first-year students make East Campus their home and rely on Lilly Library and its staff for their academic success. For first-year students and their parents, East Campus and its library serve as an introduction to Duke. Faculty and graduate students whose departments are on East depend on Lilly for library services and materials, as does anyone who uses the art and art history collections housed there.



Built in 1927, Lilly is one of the oldest and most architecturally significant buildings on campus. For more than four decades, it served as the Woman's College Library. When the Woman's College merged with Trinity College in 1972, it became the East Campus Library. In 1990 it was renamed Lilly Library in recognition of a gift from Ruth Lilly. Since 1994 it has served as the primary academic support space for first-year students.

But there simply isn't enough room in Lilly to accommodate the first-year student population any longer. And many of the library services and spaces today's Duke students need to succeed are available in Perkins and Bostock Libraries on West Campus, but not on East.



Since the opening of Bostock Library and the von der Heyden Pavilion and the extensive renovations to Perkins Library and Rubenstein Library that followed, the Libraries on West Campus have become the intellectual and social hub of Duke. New spaces such as The Link and The Edge: The Ruppert Commons for Research, Technology, and Collaboration have made the West Campus library complex a cutting-edge facility able to meet the needs of students, faculty, and academic programs.



But while Lilly Library and its staff are popular with first-year students and other library users, the lack of services and adequate study and research space prevents it from fully meeting their academic needs.

Renovating and expanding Lilly would retain the charm of its most beloved spaces,

such as the Thomas Reading Room, while at the same time modernizing the aging building structure and adding new spaces for study, collaborative research, and crucial services—such as tutoring space for the Thompson Program's Writing Studio, event space for the FOCUS Program, and more seating for students. An added café would become the crossroads for East that von der Heyden is for West, encouraging informal interactions between faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates.

A renovated and expanded Lilly would dramatically improve the student experience at Duke, a key priority of the Duke Forward campaign. The result would be a reinvigorated and better integrated East Campus, with Lilly serving as the focal point for a new academic neighborhood that incorporates recently constructed residence halls, all of which would impress and appeal to prospective Duke students and their parents.



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