iZone: Imagination-Ideas-Innovation
Specialized Learning Space for the 21st Century

Mary Ann Mavrinac, Vice Provost and Neilly Dean, River Campus Libraries, University of Rochester
ARL Membership Meeting
October 8, 2014
“You should go to the I-lab at Harvard.”
Why Libraries Should Be the Next Great Start-Up Incubators

Urban Wonk
• Emily Badger
• Feb 19, 2013
• 37 Comments
The Environment: Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

- Center for Entrepreneurship
- Kauffman Entrepreneurial Year (KEY)
- MS in Technical Entrepreneurship and Management (TEAMS)
- Undergraduate Business Degree – ENT
- Simon School of Business - MS
- Eastman’s Institute for Music Leadership
- High-Tech Rochester (Incubator)
- Office of Technology Transfer
The Need

- Centralized support for undergraduate student entrepreneurship
- Support student creative ideas and ambitions
- Pre-incubator space
- Neutral space
- All ideas – business, social, community
- Volatility of job market – create own future
Vision

The River Campus Libraries will become a collaborative hub of innovation in support of the teaching, learning and research mission of the Schools we support.
RUSH RHEES LIBRARY

STRATEGIC FACILITIES
MASTER PLAN
Why a library? Why our library?

- Interdisciplinary - Any student. Any program
- Neutral
- Research support
- Scholarly resources
- Build and manage databases
- Collaborative, technology-rich learning spaces
- Exhibit/showcase outcomes of research
- Familiar, accessible entry point
- Aligns with vision: collaborative hub of innovation
What people said they wanted

- Visible. Open concept. 24/7
- Part of library
- Food and drink
- Adjacent to parking
- Brainstorming space
- Message boards
- Entrepreneurship resources
- Research computers
- Database of experts
- Creative spaces
- Mentoring services
- Presentation practice
- Display technology
- Hall of fame
- Exhibition space
- Programmed…not too much
iZone: Program Goals

- Hub of innovation to support students' curricular and creative ideas
- Centralized and focused support
- Skills development, research, networking, mentoring, P2P and showcasing projects
- Strong technology infrastructure and state-of-the-art interactive technology for experiential learning, idea development, innovation, and collaboration
- Job ready
Purpose
Provide a central campus location for “101-Exposure” and “501-Excitement” around Entrepreneurship.

Scope
Theoretically: Anyone in the Rochester Community
Practically: 75% of occupants will be UR Undergraduate students; 20% UR Grad students. 5% Faculty
A week in the life......
The Challenge

- Terminology – language
- Vague until program fully developed
- Hub versus home
- Why a library?
- Staying open to possibilities
- Staffing and reporting
- New roles
- Governance
- Technology-rich spaces in old buildings
- Fundraising
The Opportunity

- Fill a gap
- Support curriculum
- Help students build a network, gain skills, & be job ready
- Cultivate loyalty to the UR and library
- Library as center of innovation
- Library as asset to university
- Create a meaningful buzz
iZone

The students at Rochester are some of the most creative people I've ever met, yet we currently lack a comparable infrastructure to support their innovative ideas and imaginations. Dean Mavrinac's vision for the iZone project is a student-friendly, well-researched, and bold solution to this problem. It has the power to unlock the full potential of our students and it has the full support of the Students' Association.

Antoinette Esce '15, SA President
The i-Zone: A 21st-Century Learning Space

University of Rochester students are increasingly voicing the desire to gain the skills needed to become successful entrepreneurs. Mary Ann Mavrinac, vice provost and the Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neily Dean of River Campus Libraries, is doing a lot more than listening.

Working closely with the Students’ Association Government, and in conjunction with Simon Business School’s Center for Entrepreneurship, Dean Mavrinac is leading a project that will create a hub for enterprising imagination, ideas, and innovation. The space will be known as the “i-Zone.”

With more than three and a half million volumes, extensive digital resources, and world-renowned collections of rare and unique materials, the River Campus Libraries (RCL) form the core of learning and research at the University. In addition to Rush Rhees Library, the RCL includes the Carlson Science and Engineering Library, the Physics-Optics-Astronomy Library, and others.

“Our spaces need to be equipped for various uses and learning styles,” said Dean Mavrinac. “And we need to complement that robust infrastructure by reimagining and reinventing the virtual experience through the digitization of rare and unique collections.”

James Mayer ’82, long-time friend of the RCL and member of its National Council, has invested in Dean Mavrinac’s vision by creating the River Campus Libraries Learning Spaces Fund. With this gift, James has established a foundation of support for future RCL projects that enable spaces and materials to continually evolve.

“The libraries represent one of the cornerstones of the University,” said James. “We need people who can think, and the libraries nurture curiosity and exploration and provide a source of inspiration for the entire University community.”

Twenty-first century learning spaces, like the i-Zone, are gateways, rather than destinations. They are starting points for building a body of knowledge, getting to the root of complex problems, and laying the groundwork for innovation. The Learning Spaces Fund, fueled by generous donors like James and utilized by leaders like Dean Mavrinac, will enable ambitious University students to rise to the challenge of Meliora.

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— James Mayer ’82

The i-Zone, part of the Rush Rhees Library Revitalization Project, is a 10-year facilities and master plan, will offer a program-specific environment for undergraduate students with entrepreneurial aspirations. Students will have a dynamic space to do research, participate in workshops and presentations, meet with mentors, and develop the skills—and concepts—that enable inspiration to be seen through to implementation. It will also be emblematic of Dean Mavrinac’s plan to bolster the River Campus Libraries’ (RCL) physical and virtual spaces.

Mary Ann Mavrinac, the Andrew H. and Janet Dayton Neily Dean of River Campus Libraries, looks at plans for the Rush Rhees Library Revitalization Project in the James S. Gleason Library with Students’ Association Government members Antoinette Eise ’15, president, and Ulrik Soderstrom ’16, senior at-large.
Questions?
Comments?

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