

My name is Elizabeth Bergman, I live in St Johnsbury. I do interlibrary loan for NVU Lyndon, I have done it for the last 11 years. I am also an alum of Lyndon, but I'm speaking to you today as a private citizen.

The impact of the college's decision about the libraries, runs deeper than getting rid of books. It will affect the quality of services for students and faculty, and the surrounding communities.

We're just coming back from the pandemic and both students and faculty are looking for more in person experience and need more hand-holding. We have first generation students who don't have family members to turn to for advice on college, and non-traditional students, returning to school after years perhaps of being out of school and finding things have changed, or are just very different now with a job and family. They will be looking for extra in person support.

I have heard that since staff manage the collection, reducing the collection will mean a need for fewer staff, and savings can be realized in this way. Staff do much more than manage the collection though. This decision will mean fewer staff to help students. Fewer people will be here to help with reference, answering phones, giving directions, unjamming the printer, putting in IT work orders, getting reserves for students, and any other things that might come up. Student workers don't always show up, and don't usually work over breaks, and not many work over the summer. All this work will fall on 1 & ½ people. And when one of those people calls out sick, or takes vacation time, it will be just one person doing this work. I have yet to hear a back up plan for this scenario.

The college promises this will bring a wider accessibility of materials with the digital library. They also promise this will save money. If the college is going to reduce its print collection by 70-80%, it will have to build up its digital content so students have adequate study material; ebooks, not just periodicals. Not all books have been digitized, especially in the academic fields. That will be expensive. They are at least as expensive, if not more so than print. Databases cost thousands of dollars. They usually have to be renewed perhaps yearly, and most likely increase 5% each year.

Right now, anything the library doesn't have, we get for students through interlibrary loan, usually for free (many libraries don't charge for lending), but it is very hard to get a whole ebook through interlibrary loan. Most libraries don't have, or are not licensed to loan them. WE are not licensed to loan them.

Interlibrary loan works on a reciprocal basis, meaning we loan to them, they loan to us. So I also fear that with our limited collection, and inability to lend ebooks (even if the public libraries wanted ebooks), that we will have nothing to offer other libraries and they will eventually stop lending to us; they will essentially stop doing business with us. Once we can't borrow from other libraries, the college will have to buy those materials for the students. More expenses. In 2018-2019 we borrowed 572 items for Lyndon.

This decision will also impact the community and other libraries. ILL wise, as said before, we won't be able to lend to other libraries. We lend a lot of material to libraries, VSC libraries, VT publics, and out of

state libraries. In 2018-2019, we lent 853 items. In the past 10 years, we've lent 7852 items. This is Lyndon alone. Some were lent to big, out of state libraries, Dartmouth, Boston Public, Ithaca, Salt Lake City Public, New York Public and Cornell, to name a few. These are libraries with a lot of money and materials, but we had something they didn't, and they opted to borrow, rather than buy.

The community uses our library also, for borrowing books, computers, printing, and gatherings. We've hosted local authors, and had homeschool groups use the building for meetings or projects throughout the years. The community won't be able to access digital books like they do our physical collection; I don't know if they will be able to use the building as they have with the new renovations planned for it. In rural VT, it's important to work with the communities, as the colleges have so far. I fear this plan will separate us from the community, and not allow us to help and integrate as much.