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Imagination at Work: Reaching New Users with Innovative Instruction and Outreach

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2014 Northwest Archivists Meeting
Your Mission, Should You Choose to Accept it: New Student Week

- New Student Week and the library’s role
- Criteria: engaging, fun, interactive
- Fall 2013: Place emphasis on archives and unique history
- Team effort since lone arranger
Make it interactive!

“Gaming is productive. It produces positive emotion, stronger social relationships, a sense of accomplishment, and for players who are part of a game community, a chance to build a sense of purpose.”

-- Jane McGonigal
Station Brainstorming

- Librarians each took ownership of a station
- Archivist supplied content and context for each station
- Archives unit scanned photos for historic photo booth
- Brainstormed outputs/activities together
Creative Stations:

Sing a Song of School Spirit

Activity: Write lyrics for a new school song; perform a song used in the past
Creative Stations: *The School Dance*

Activity: Learn to foxtrot or waltz; perform or create your own dance
Creative Stations: *Letters and Stories*

Activity: Write a letter to your graduating self; add to the Future of WOU wall; Add to an ongoing short story; write a poem
Fun Station: Make your own school pennant
Fun Station: Historic Photo Booth (on a budget)
Fun Station: Photos with Wolfie
Publicity and outreach

Wolfe can't believe how cool these things from the WOU archive are! Come by the library this afternoon until 3pm and see pieces of WCU’s 157-year history for yourself!
WOU Futures Past event schedule

- Students arrive
- Taken to classroom to watch short video
- Given station choices
- Get permission if necessary
- Get copy of their creative works
- Gather for IR
Unforeseen obstacles

- Scheduling (what we were up against at the same time)
- Students were very shy about creative projects, but loved the fun stations
- Bad weather pouring rain prevent students from trekking over to the library
Update to Second Event

• Collapsed areas onto first floor in the lobby
• Reduced archives tables from 3 to 1
• Did not staff creative activities
• Video playing on lobby tv
• Less staffing needed overall
• Update promotional materials to reflect changes
Reuse/repurpose event

• Students: target specific courses with faculty the library has good relationship with
• Faculty: fun activity for new faculty week
• Alumni: stations specific to event (fundraising for new buildings, Homecoming, etc.)
• Fun stations could be used during finals week to relieve stress
Thank you!

WOU librarians (and an archivist), 2013