

From: [John Wilkin](#)
To: libnews-l@lists.illinois.edu
Subject: COVID-19: end of week note for April 3rd
Date: Friday, April 3, 2020 1:45:09 PM

Friends,

As we end another week in the virtual spaces that we inhabit in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I wanted to send a note with a few pieces of business, along with a personal note.

As you all know, we lost our friend and colleague Joshua Lynch this week. The notes and remembrances several of you shared touched me. We initially hired Joshua in 2015 as a GA for the Mellon-funded Publishing Without Walls project. Joshua did outreach and training for the AFRO-PWW series and worked closely with Ron Bailey and Marilyn Thomas-Houston in African American Studies. Soon after he started, Joshua and I sat down for burritos down on Green Street. He was, as many of you noted, sweet, genuine, funny, and very generous. At this time, we are not aware of a memorial service. Joshua's parents, Robert and Wendy Lynch, arrived today after traveling from Oklahoma. They have many difficult decisions to make, which are made even more difficult due to the new pressures and challenges of social distancing. We remain in touch with Joshua's family. If individuals would like to share notes or remembrances, they can email those to libraryhr@library.illinois.edu and we'll prepare a package of thoughts and memories for the family. I would also like to thank our colleagues, particularly MJ Han and Skye Arseneau, for the sensitive and thoughtful work they did in communicating with Joshua's family and in preparing Joshua's office belongings for them. The caring environment we have here in the Library is exceptional. Let me also remind everyone about the note from Chancellor Jones on Sunday. As the Chancellor said, these are circumstances without precedent, and "we also ask that you all take the time you need to think about and address your emotional and mental wellness. We have support resources for [students](#) and for [our staff and faculty](#). We encourage you to call upon these resources without hesitation." Our Psychology Department has also assembled [this resource](#).

As mentioned, I also want to share updates and notes with you.

- We now have a COVID-19 webpage just for Library employees where we've placed various items you may need/want to reference quickly. Our goal was to provide important information, especially forms and messaging, in one central location. You can find the new page on the Staff Website here: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/staff/covid-19/>. Feel free to send suggestions for additions or clarifications to [Heather Murphy](#).
- As we know, the Governor extended his stay-at-home order through April 30th. The strategies and policies we've shared apply through that date or possibly later. Two examples come to mind. Our policies regarding "essential personnel" and building access continue to apply. My "extending library services" note earlier this week is a good reminder that we will continue to focus on deploying essential services and strategies *through this period* as well. We will keep you updated as to changes to policies and guidelines, but let's all do our part to keep the University a vital and

relevant institution.

- As I noted in this week's virtual hangout, the University and the state are facing significant financial pressures as a result of the pandemic. No actions have been taken in response to those pressures (e.g., we have not implemented a hiring freeze), but some steps will be necessary and we should be careful stewards of available resources.

Finally, we're organizing another virtual hangout for next week, so look for information from Lucretia. As before, this is not mandatory. In the hangout I'll share any updates I have, but, as always, it's an opportunity to get together, to share thoughts and strategies (and views into our local animal kingdoms), and to see your colleagues. You might try adopting one of the Zoom virtual backgrounds for the session--maybe even one of our Library backgrounds to simulate being in the Library! Instructions are [here](#), and links to Library backgrounds are now available on the [Library's staff COVID-19 web page](#). Remember, social distancing doesn't mean social isolation. Let's take care of each other.

Yours,
John

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