

Dean's Innovation Grants

Final Report

Date: 1/31/2022

Project Title: Increasing music accessibility for patrons with print disabilities

Project Team Members:

Blaine Brubaker; Kristin Wolski; Sabino Fernandez

Project Purpose

Summarize the project and the purpose of the requested funds.

The goal of this project was to assist in increasing accessibility for patrons with print disabilities, such as low vision or blindness. The purpose of the requested funds was to purchase a HIMS QBraille XL braille display and the GOODFEEL suite, a set of computer software. Together, this piece of technology and set of software allows both sighted and visually impaired patrons to create braille music.

Project Activities

The activities should describe the projects undertaken.

The braille display and the GOODFEEL suite were purchased, and software was installed onto the selected accessibility station at the University of North Texas Music Library. The braille display was cataloged and made available for patron usage. Documentation was created for Music Library faculty and staff training.

Budget

Describe how funds were spent.

\$1,595 was spent on the GOODFEEL software suite, \$3,195 was spent on the HIMS QBraille XL braille display, and \$45 was spent on shipping and handling.

Project Outputs/Outcomes

Summarize the outputs/outcomes for your project.

Those working on this project learned basic braille and how to assist patrons with print disabilities. Two patrons used the braille display and software with one patron providing formal feedback through Qualtrics and another patron providing informal feedback.



Other Results (if applicable)

Describe any accomplishments or impact besides those described in outcomes.

With the combination of the braille display and GOODFEEL software suite, one student in particular will be able to progress through the music education degree with an emphasis on choir more efficiently. We also have a growing partnership with the ODA and a continuing partnership with the two students using the station. One student envisions ways in which the library can support additional goals, such as starting a music braille transcription club on campus. Our work on this project is entering into the next phases and is ongoing.

Anecdotal Information

Include comments or stories received from program participants, staff, or others.

One Music Library student assistant assisted a patron with print disabilities and was moved by the excitement of the patron. The patron, who is a music student, was thrilled that they were able to turn their print sheet music into files they could read on their portable braille display. The Music Library student assistant stated that helping this patron made them see the difference these types of technologies and software can make.

A staff member from the University of North Texas Office of Disability Access brought two students with print disabilities to the Music Library to experience the new software. The two students came up with different keyboard functions to help future students in accessing the software, investing in the future of the accessibility station. They also recommended other technology that would help the accessibility station at the Music Library become even better. The student stated that with this equipment, it should make her life “ten times easier.”

Best Practices

Please provide information on best practices relating to your program. For instance, could your project be used as a model for other libraries?

This project could easily be a model for other libraries. It is critical for every library to be accessible to all, not only to one group of people. While our documentation is specific to our library, it could be tailored to another library. The training process for the braille display and software would be helpful for other libraries or library staff wanting to learn how to assist patrons with print disabilities. We presented on this project at a joint chapter meeting of the

Music Library Association in October 2021 and will present on this project at the Annual Conference of the Music Library Association in March 2022.

Program Continuity

Please describe sustainability of this project, if applicable.

Any patron is able to access the GOODFEEL suite and the braille display at the University of North Texas Music Library. This project has also led to other purchases to create an accessibility station, such as a braille embosser for printing out braille documents. With our new partnerships, we anticipate recommendations of additional software to add to the station. We learned that approximately 100+ students who are blind or have low vision attend UNT. As news spreads about our station, we hope to continue developing the stations for students with print disabilities. We will also continue efforts to create educational materials for those wishing to learn about the accessibility station or how to use the equipment by placing these materials on the [Circulating Music Equipment](#) guide.