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DATE: June 8, 2015

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Liddy Selects David Seaman as Dean of the University Libraries

Syracuse University Interim Vice Chancellor and Provost Liz Liddy today selected David Seaman as University librarian and dean of the Syracuse University Libraries. Seaman comes to Syracuse from Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H., where he is currently the associate librarian for information management.

“David is an exceptional librarian who has spent his career advancing and promoting the vital role libraries play in an academic community,” says Liddy. “His knowledge of digital library services and systems will be of great value to us as we move ahead with our Academic Strategic Plan, and I am confident his background will be of significant benefit to our faculty, students and staff. I have recommended David to the Board of Trustees, and I fully expect they will support this selection.”

Chancellor Kent Syverud says the selection of Seaman will move the University into a new era of collaboration on research, scholarship, teaching and learning. “David’s experience, background and expertise will be of great value in creating additional academic and scholarly connections between the University’s libraries and its schools and colleges. A strong and robust library is a critical part of what makes Syracuse a thriving, private international research university. I know David is the right person for this important deanship.”

“I am delighted to be joining Syracuse at this critical time in its history, as the institution reconceives its academic plan, seeks greater operational excellence and evaluates the physical campus environment,” Seaman says. “A great university needs a world-class library to support its broad research endeavors, enhance the student experience and provide innovative spaces and services that respond to a changing academic world. In collaboration with my new colleagues in the University Libraries and across campus, I welcome the opportunity to contribute my experience, enthusiasm and energy to moving Syracuse forward.”

Interim Dean of the School of Information Studies and Professor Jeffrey Stanton, who chaired the search committee, says Seaman garnered acclaim from both the search committee and the wider campus community for his experience, his broad knowledge of academic research libraries and his collaborative approach to work. “Our Syracuse University Libraries and the people who work there are tremendous resources for our campus,” Stanton says. “It was clear to the search committee that David has all of the capabilities needed to lead this wonderful and complex organization.”

Seaman joined Dartmouth College in 2006, where he has contributed to the library's strategic planning, technology leadership, budget management and some targeted fundraising. He oversees several critical areas for the library, including the Preservation Services, the Book Arts Workshop, the Digital Library Program, the Jones Media Center and the Records Management Division. Before joining Dartmouth, Seaman was the executive director of the Digital Library Federation in Washington, D.C., a consortium of 40 major academic libraries and organizations dedicated to using digital standards and technologies to extend their collections and services. While there, he grew membership in the organization by attracting many libraries from outside the United States for the first time, including the British Library, Oxford University and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

From 1992-2002, Seaman served as the founding director of the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia (UVA) in Charlottesville, Va., where he established a digital library enterprise with a strong user-service focus. He worked in close collaboration with many parts of the UVA Library, including Special Collections, Cataloging and the University Press.

Seaman has lectured and published extensively in the fields of humanities computing and digital libraries and has taught digitization courses at UVA's Rare Book School since 1993. He was an Association of Research Libraries Leadership Fellow from 2011-2012 and a member of the 2014 Senior Fellows Program at the UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information.

Seaman's academic background is as a medievalist. He earned a bachelor of arts degree from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, and a master of arts degree in medieval and Renaissance studies from the University of Connecticut. His recent research is centered on collaborative leadership in the information professions. He is currently working on a Ph.D. in managerial leadership at Simmons College in Boston.

Seaman will assume his new role on August 3.

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