Libraries are the hub of a liberal arts education. In the 21st century, what students need and want from a library has evolved to libraries as academic centers of campus. To meet our goal of supporting the success of every student, the former Gingrich Library will be transformed into a welcoming academic center to support emergent technologies and all the new ways of learning, teaching, studying, and researching.

With your help, this transformed space will become Albright College’s new Student Success Commons and Library, a center of learning, scholarship and community located in the heart of campus. Our vision is to create an academic center designed to foster a vibrant intellectual, cultural and social life for all members of our community—students, faculty, staff, alumni and residents of Berks County and surrounding communities.

A 21ST CENTURY ACADEMIC FACILITY

The design of Albright's new Student Success Commons and Library will foster student success by offering quality academic resources in a welcoming environment with state-of-the-art technology. Highlights include:

• A learning commons on the entry floor with library services, study and meeting spaces designed with multiple, flexible configurations, and built-in technology and tools for digital scholarship.

• The fusion of the people and the programs that help our students to succeed such as Albright’s Academic Learning Center and student success initiatives, including tutoring, academic coaching, accessibility services and Title III program offices—all under one roof.

• The relocation of Albright’s Experiential Learning and Career Development Center (ELCDC), which enables our students to explore majors, careers and hands-on learning opportunities that enhance Albright’s core liberal arts experience, leading our students to greater personal and professional success.

Having a welcoming, inclusive academic center that supports emergent technologies along with the many different ways in which our students learn, study, research, and engage with peers, faculty, and staff, is critical to our students’ academic success.”

— Karen Campbell, Ph.D., Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
• A new History and Cultural Center on the second floor that will house Albright’s History Department, including academic classrooms and faculty offices, as well as all of the college’s special collections, including Albright’s historical archives, the Nolan local history collection, the Lakin Holocaust Resource Center, and pieces from the Black Cultural Collection.

• A newly expanded Writing Center on the third floor, which will include writing program tutors, tutoring and study spaces and offices for our English composition faculty, creating a central location for teaching and learning important writing skills.

The Student Success Commons and Library will bring all of these resources together in an easily accessible, centralized space to support the academic success of all Albright students.

NEW STUDENT WELCOME CENTER

The campus visit is one of the most impactful experiences for prospective students and their families. A meaningful visit helps prospective students picture what life is like as an Albright Lion. The New Student Welcome Center, which will be located on the main entry floor of the new Student Success Commons and Library, will serve as the front door to the Albright campus for prospective students and families and will provide the opportunity to prominently feature the new learning commons as the hub of the academic experience. Admission offices will be housed on the third floor giving prospective students and families the opportunity to explore the entire building and see the vibrancy of Albright College.

A VISION FOR A NEW HISTORY AND CULTURAL CENTER FOR BERKS COUNTY

As part of its strategic vision, Albright College is committed to serving as an anchor institution in northeast Reading, developing and strengthening community partnerships. Our new Student Success Commons and Library will foster community partnership through expanded educational and cultural opportunities; thus, contributing to a vibrant future for Reading and Berks County.

Most notable is the creation of a History and Cultural Center, a dedicated space within the Student Success Commons and Library for Albright’s special collections. This new History and Cultural Center will feature the collections of the Lakin Holocaust Resource Center, the Black Cultural Collection, the Nolan local history collection, and the Albright archives.

These special collections distinguish Albright as the only school in the region with museum-quality historical archives and artifacts.

To catalyze the integration of these collections into Albright’s academic curriculum, Albright’s History Department will be located adjacent to the new History and Cultural Center. The space will include academic classrooms, research spaces, and faculty offices.

“As an anchor institution in northeast Reading, we are excited to have a space in which we can welcome members of the greater Berks County community to engage in the open exchange of ideas and cultural enrichment alongside our campus community.”

— Jacquelyn S. Fetrow, Ph.D. ’82, President, Albright College
FLEXIBLE SPACES TO ADAPT TO NEW LEARNING APPROACHES

Today's students excel at collaboration and navigating social networks. Students arrive at Albright with varied learning styles and fluencies, and often benefit from interactive learning environments such as small gathering areas, technologically enhanced spaces and video conference rooms.

By offering flexible spaces, the Student Success Commons and Library will allow students to shape the environment to suit their learning style. Flexible spaces will also provide improved meeting places for the many student groups at Albright, encouraging student participation and engagement. From studying independently in a quiet space to moving tables and rearranging seating for a group activity, this new facility will foster a spirit of collaboration and cooperation, structuring an environment where dynamic learning takes place.

A HUB OF ACTIVITY IN THE CENTER OF CAMPUS

Libraries today provide comfortable, functional and accessible space and technology for academic, cultural and social gatherings. We understand that in the years to come, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, fostering connections and building community will be more valued than ever. These extraordinary times remind us of the importance of community and of gathering together in shared physical spaces that promote reflection, rejuvenation, and relationship building.

Albright's new Student Success Commons and Library will be a hub of activity right in the center of campus. It will support a thriving, equitable and welcoming community, and will provide comfortable and inviting spaces for our students to gather to study, to learn from each other, and to collaborate and conduct research, both individually and with others. Such inclusive social and community spaces are central to the health and well-being of Albright students, and foundational to the college’s residential-based educational model.

Four key principles, guided by Albright's institutional priorities, have informed the design of the building:
1. Academic Success of our Students
2. Community Building
3. Inclusivity
4. Sustainability
KIMMEL BOGRETT TO DESIGN THIS EXCITING NEW FACILITY

Kimmel Bogrette has been providing extraordinary design solutions for academic clients like Albright College for almost 25 years. Endorsed by the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Pennsylvania (AICUP), they have worked with institutions such as King’s, LaSalle, Susquehanna, Franklin & Marshall, Widener, Washington & Jefferson, and Penn State, just to name a few. The firm possesses a deep understanding of Albright’s needs as an institution, how this project must align with our core values, mission and vision and the importance of sustainability.

THE INVITATION

This project is about much more than a building; it represents an opportunity to re-imagine how our campus community thrives academically, culturally and socially.

The Student Success Commons and Library will transform our students’ experiences at Albright, allowing the college to truly live its commitment to educating students of academic promise for success in lives and careers.

*Now is the time to become a partner in this vital project* and support Albright in meeting the needs of its vibrant community while we evolve into an even stronger residential liberal arts institution in northeast Reading, Pennsylvania.

Naming opportunities for individual spaces are available. For more information, contact Wendy Parsons, vice president for advancement, at 610-921-7504 or wparsons@albright.edu

In 2030, we envision that Albright will have a national reputation for closing the gap on education for all students of academic promise — for students who earn an affordable and high-quality degree with a strong liberal arts foundation, who are prepared to enter the workforce, who experience significant socioeconomic mobility, and who are prepared to hold fulfilling jobs, across all student demographics (gender, racial, ethnic, first-generation).