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Conjunction Junction, THAT'S Our Function

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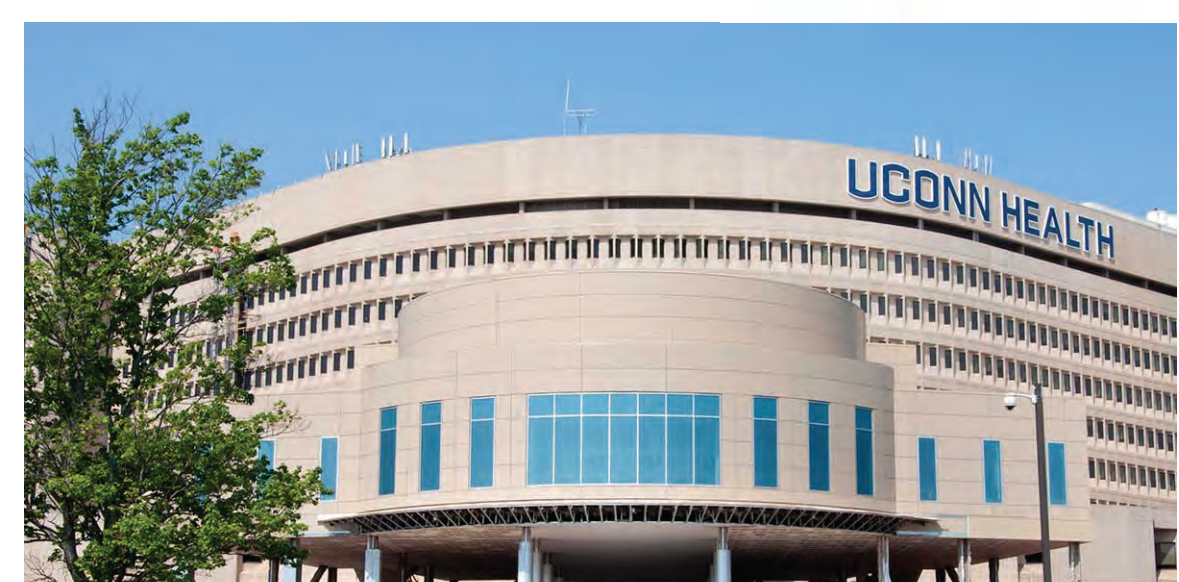
Conjunction Junction, THAT'S Our Function

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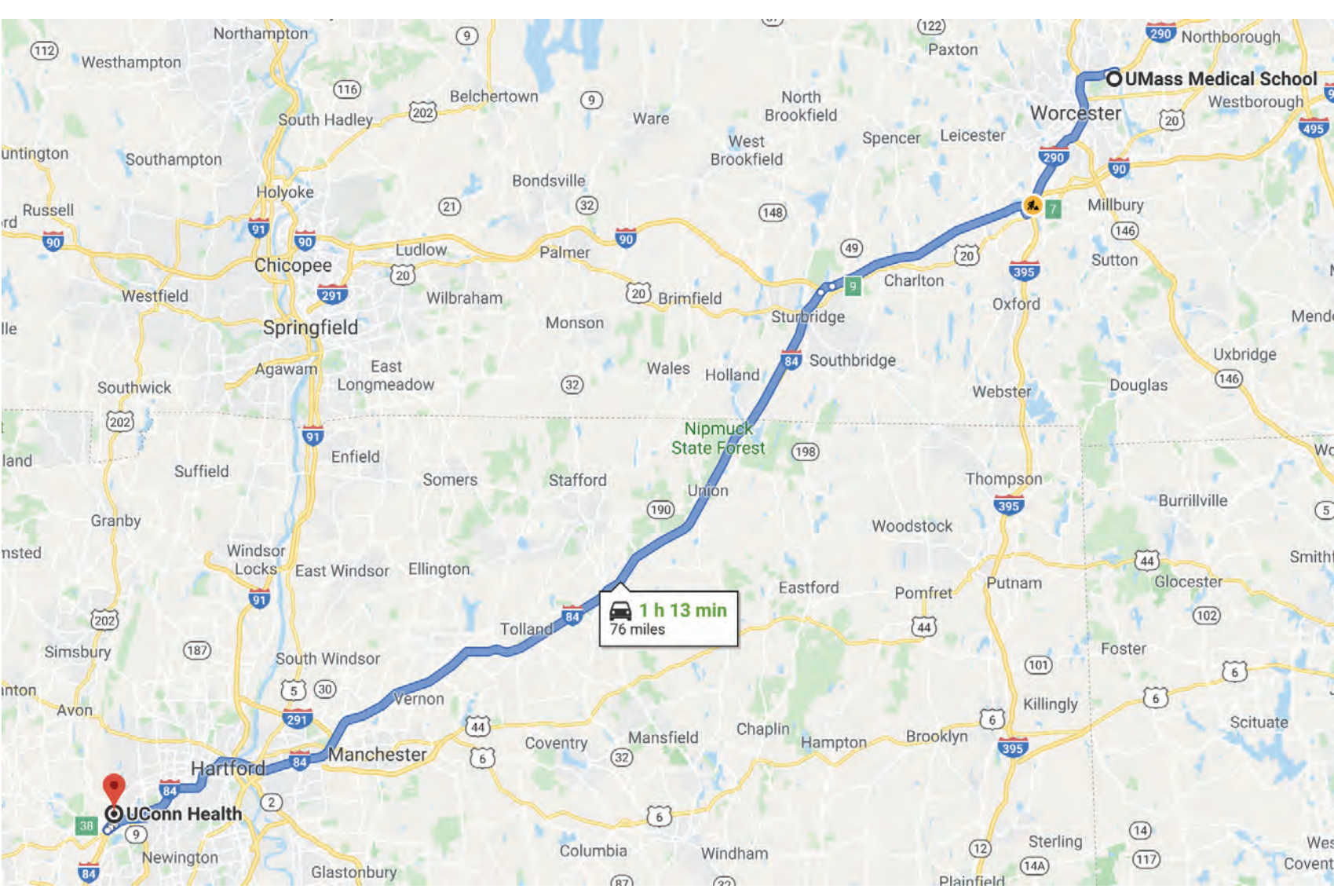


It started with an idea...








... could we collaborate with our colleagues at the UConn Health Sciences Library and the Hartford Medical Society Archives to put together an exhibit of historical ophthalmology items? We have a new residency program in ophthalmology at the UMass Memorial Health Care Eye Center. Could this be a way to welcome them *and* introduce them to the resources of the Library?


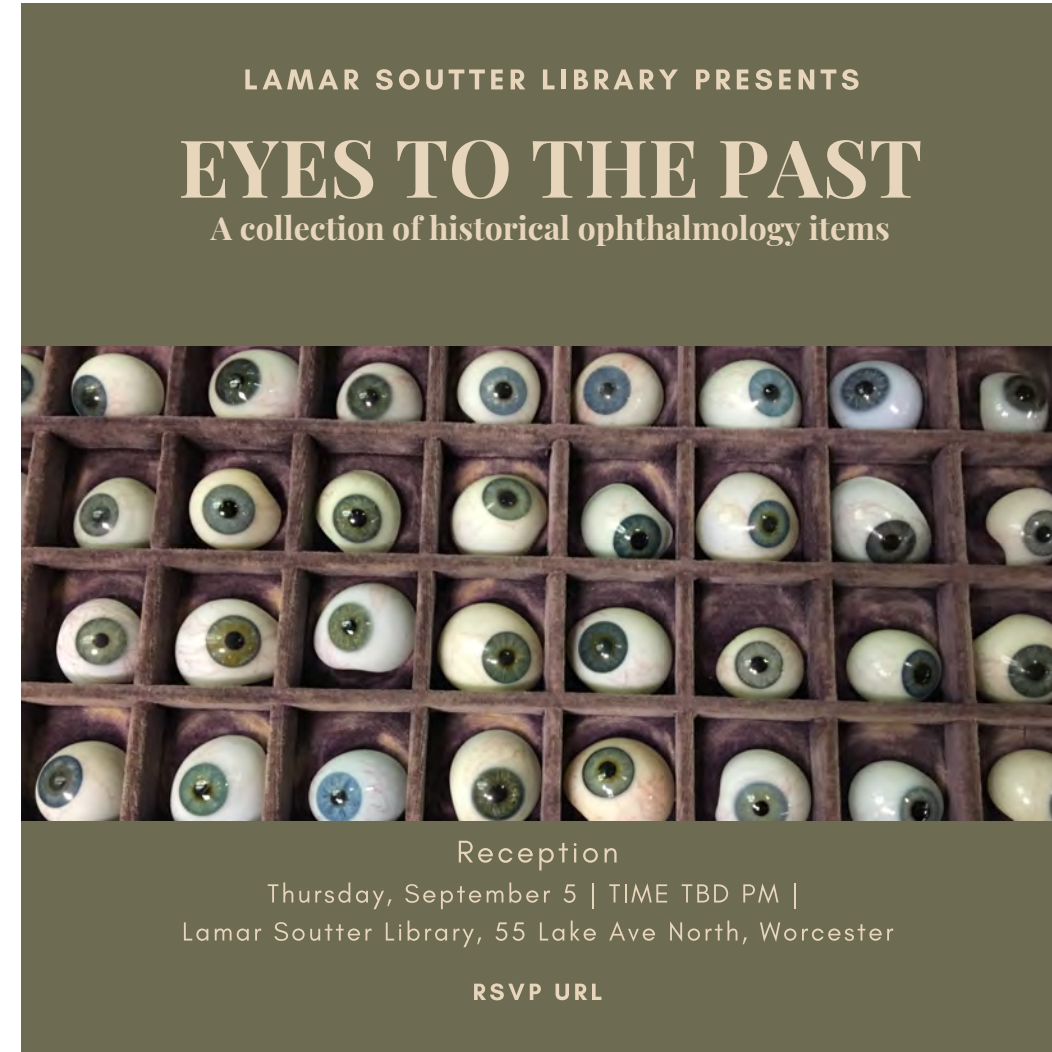

We reached out.
We made some inquiries.
We got some materials.
We made some lists.



Then, we took a road trip!



We looked through the items on display at the Hartford Medical Society Historical Library, UConn Health, and chose some we thought would fit with our ideas for the exhibit and program.

We worked with the ophthalmology department faculty and administrative staff to put together a program to highlight the items on display, the ties between the historical instruments and what's used in modern practice, new discoveries in ocular gene therapy taking place at UMass Medical School, and the current era of research and patient care in ophthalmology.

Then we sent out save-the-date notices and invitations for the program, and marketed the ongoing exhibit via our electronic sign in the library.



We assembled the new cases (breaking only one piece of glass), unpacked and arranged all of the items, made labels based on the medical student's research, and encouraged visitors to the library to stop and view the exhibit.

Early summer, we contacted the chair of the Ophthalmology Department to begin planning the event. We recruited a fourth year medical student with an interest in ophthalmology to do some research on the items for the exhibit. She wrote up documentation for exhibit cards. We ordered new display cases to house the items and got proper insurance for when the items would be in our care. We signed agreements.

Then, we went to pick everything up. Careful wrapping ensued!




And at last, we celebrated with a successful reception and program. The event was standing room only, and many visitors from the off-site eye clinic, including patients, came to the library for the first time.

LESSONS LEARNED ALONG THE TRACKS:

1. Resource sharing can mean more than articles and books. Archives, skills, and colleague networks can also be leveraged to build partnerships for successful projects.
2. Being creative with our library's collections can bring people into the space and in contact with our resources for the first time.
3. Reaching out to students to acknowledge their interests and providing them with opportunities to do learning projects outside of their normal studies is rewarding - for the students *and* librarians.
4. Changing mindsets can be challenging. It's difficult to break free from some beliefs that the library remains a place for events and librarians are simply hosts. *But* small steps lay the groundwork for change.