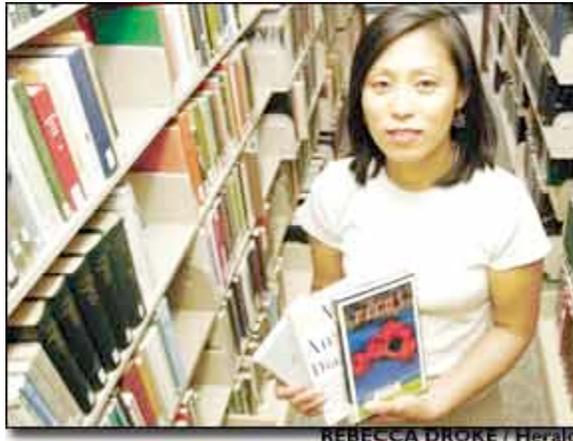

Healthy Living



REBECCA DROKE / Herald

Myoung Fry, a reference librarian at Reed Library at Fort Lewis College, was the primary organizer for the library's new consumer health book collection and Web site. She holds several of the books added recently.

Health by the book

Grants bolster Fort Lewis
College library collection

By Dale Rodebaugh
Herald Staff Writer

A world of consumer-level health information is at the fingertips of Southwest Colorado residents through Fort Lewis College.

Grants from the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the National Library of Medicine totaling \$13,500 have created a 120-book collection of medical literature at John F. Reed Library at Fort Lewis College and a comprehensive list of Web sites for people who want to read about medical problems in layman's language.

"We received a grant from the National Library of Medicine to provide reliable medical information

On the Net

In addition to its new collection of consumer health books, the Fort Lewis College library's Web site has information about other medical literature and provides links to consumer health

on the Internet," said Myoung Fry, a part-time reference librarian at FLC and the medical librarian at Mercy Medical Center. "Once we got into the process, we realized that we could use books but we didn't have enough money."

The Southern Ute Growth Fund came through, Fry said.

The collection of books covers such topics as physical and mental illnesses, illicit drugs and alcohol, dictionaries of medical terms and anatomical charts, caring for the elderly, homosexuality, children who don't fit in, birthing and parenting, alternative medicine, diets and nutrition, chronic pain and organ transplants.

Information in the books as well as on the Web sites comes from reliable, impartial sources, not from anyone with potential financial gain, Fry said. Straightforward language attempts to demystify what people don't understand or fear.

"All information is general, for the lay person," said Fry, whose master's degree in library and information science from the University of Oklahoma contained courses on medical terminology and how to operate a medical library. "I shared my list of suggested titles with other Fort Lewis College librarians, who rated them."

Fry said the Web sites and FLC library collection are geared for people who have been diagnosed with an illness and want to learn more about it or for people who want to ground themselves on an affliction of a friend or relative.

Chandler Jackson, director of Reed Library, said that the days when people went to the doctor with no questions asked and then straight to the pharmacy for the prescribed medicine are long gone.

"People want to know more about their problem," Jackson said. "They want to know what it is (medicine) they're taking."

The library collection can make people much more knowledgeable, Jackson said.

"The important aspect of this project is to make information available and easily accessible to the public," Jackson said. "People can use it whether they are affiliated with Fort Lewis College or not."

People interested in a specific health issue can visit a Web-based catalog to see if Reed Library has the volume, Fry said. Some books can be checked out, while others are for reference only.

On the library Web site, consumers can find information on general topics and links to national, state and local health organizations, including Ute and other American Indian tribes. The links also lead to certain full-text journals and books and support groups.

One of the Web site features is MedlinePlus, which has information in Spanish and 165 interactive tutorials covering a variety of topics.

The consumer-health project is a cooperative effort of the Fort Lewis College Library, the Durango Public Library and the

Southwest Regional Library Service System.

The consumer health information is proving popular with other than novice health-news consumers.

Brook Jenkins, an adjunct instructor of psychology at FLC for 15 years and a psychotherapist in private practice, is fascinated by what she has found on the Web site.

"I got stuck on one link," Jenkins said. "I just love it. I printed out nine articles on current health news."

Jenkins said she will use some of the articles for class. Among her discoveries were articles on predictors of suicide, jobs that appear linked to degenerative brain diseases and cocoa as a way to prevent heart disease and strokes. She's going to take a second look at an article on new drugs derived from crocodile blood.

Reach Staff Writer Dale Rodebaugh [here](#).

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