

Morgan (she/her): Alright, so Sara thanks so much for being here with us today really excited to have you on.

Sara Belmont: Thank you excited to be here.

Morgan (she/her): yeah Of course I was so excited to learn that you used to be a part of the WCWM Community when you were yourself at William and Mary So could you give us a little bit of background, who you are and.

Morgan (she/her): When you went to William and Mary how you're still involved with William and Mary etc.

Sara Belmont: Sure yeah so my name is Sara Belmont I'm actually the Web developer right now for William and Mary libraries I've been here for actually a little over five years now.

Sara Belmont: I am a William and Mary alum I got my undergrad degree from William and Mary in 1997.

Sara Belmont: So I'm old.

Sara Belmont: But.

Sara Belmont: But yeah I went to William and Mary from 93 to 97.

Sara Belmont: graduated with a degree in English and studio art and I worked at w cwm I think my sophomore and through senior years I can't remember if I actually started my freshman spring semester or not.

Sara Belmont: But yeah I was very involved in kind of like anything sort of media related so I did I was a DJ and I also was editor for one of the student campus publications back then.

Sara Belmont: yeah.

Morgan (she/her): Very cool very cool um yeah so I've been kind of getting to know how students end up getting involved with w cwm because it's, even though I mean I think they have something like 50 or 60 DJ which I think is pretty significant.

Morgan (she/her): But you'd be surprised how many people.

Morgan (she/her): don't actually know it's a thing so I'm curious, how did you learn about w CW and.

Sara Belmont: it's a good question I actually I don't really recall exactly.

Sara Belmont: I know so I'm originally from Richmond Virginia so just an hour away, and when I was in high school I used to listen to the University of Richmond college radio station.

Sara Belmont: which was 91 90.1 I think I think they still exist, so I was very much into like the indie alternative scene.

Sara Belmont: Okay, and still am, and they had some good programming with that kind of music back then, so I knew college radio already was a thing.

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Sara Belmont: And then I came to women marry, I think, from what I remember one of my one of my freshman dorm mates he was from New York City and was very much into the hip hop scene, back then, like Common and Nas and those folks and so.

Sara Belmont: I know he he.

Sara Belmont: He might have been one of the first people that turned me on to WCWM because he was interested in DJ for them.

Sara Belmont: I also had a couple other friends from high school that went to him and Mary with me that we're also we're all kinds of music.

Sara Belmont: Alternative music nerds and they had started working for WCWM to one of them was actually doing news which was interesting I had no idea we had like a college news radio show.

Sara Belmont: But I was mostly interested in just.

Sara Belmont: Playing I guess the music that I that I like to listen to.

Morgan (she/her): Okay, really, really cool so it seems like nowadays, at least from what I've gathered from some of the current.

Morgan (she/her): web domain Community they have you know, not everyone necessarily is a DJ sometimes they work with helping.

Morgan (she/her): catalog the collection and they're just involved just in the Community and would you say it was kind of like that, when you were involved, or how what was what was the scene sort of like.

Sara Belmont: It was back then, it was mostly DJ I think we did have some people when you got when you wanted to become a DJ you had to do X number of volunteer hours and you could either.

Sara Belmont: fulfill that by writing new stories if you're interested in the new segments or by yeah maintaining the stacks basically but from what I remember, I think, pretty much everyone was some sort of music DJ I don't remember as much Community outreach.

Sara Belmont: So that's cool that's actually really exciting.

Morgan (she/her): yeah yeah it seems like they're very interested in connecting with the Community so um I've heard a lot of interesting names for shows that the D.

Morgan (she/her): days have had the most memorable when.

Morgan (she/her): Someone I interviewed recently he doesn't radios radio show with a friend named Tori his name is Corey so there's sort their show is the Corey Tori Story.

Morgan (she/her): What was the name of your show and how did you kind of structure it.

Sara Belmont: um I don't think I actually had a name I am terrible with naming things I'm just not that creative, so I think it was probably just like a generic you know, like alternative whatever thing.

Sara Belmont: I can't again it was so long ago I can't I did have a name I used to do a special.

Sara Belmont: Show during finals like we would get I think like three to four hour blocks of time where we could just do whatever we wanted to, and I used to do a new wave like 80s electronic show, then, but sadly I can't remember the name the name of that.

Sara Belmont: But now I'm mostly played.

Sara Belmont: I don't know what.

Sara Belmont: What the radio station does right now but.

Sara Belmont: We would get a lot of singles in from the like local college radio labels.

Sara Belmont: Like seven inch vinyl.

Sara Belmont: So we would play a lot of current alternative music singles or at least that's what I would do is I would focus more on the alternative stuff and I was like specifically I was kind of attracted to.

Sara Belmont: Like the shoe-gazey I think what sort of became known as twee you like the you know kind of bubbly poppy alternative music, as well as a lot of a very kind of lo fi, moody sort of stuff.

Sara Belmont: Like anything I was anything that came off of the 4AD label which is it was a British label.

Sara Belmont: Okay, they had a lot of.

Sara Belmont: britpop Manchester scene bands, back then, so I played a lot of their catalog and Sub Pop and Teenbeat.

Sara Belmont: Which is a label actually out of DC so there were like some sort of local bands that came out of there.

Sara Belmont: So yeah and preparation for the show, I was kind of going back online and looking at all of the artists and was just like oh my gosh I remember them, I remember them.

Sara Belmont: It makes me want to go back into my music collection and digitize a lot of stuff so I can listen to it again.

Morgan (she/her): I love it what were some of the artists that you were really into i'm familiar with some of the genres but and examples would be great.

Sara Belmont: um oh gosh so.

Sara Belmont: um.

Sara Belmont: So I listened to, I listened to a lot of like British British artists so as a huge fan of Stone Roses.

Sara Belmont: Charlatan UK can't remember Primal Scream that might have actually been a New York City band.

Sara Belmont: But then I used to listen to a lot of all female bands so there's like Sleeper, Echobelly.

Sara Belmont: Elastica.

Sara Belmont: kind of those all female Brit kind of it-girl.

Sara Belmont: bands.

Sara Belmont: And then here locally, it was like.

Sara Belmont: Your Sonic Youth, Sebadoh, Unrest, Versus.

Sara Belmont: One of the bands I forgot about was a Wedding Present. They're actually from DC there they're great.

Sara Belmont: yeah I could I could probably go on and bore you to death, but yeah.

Morgan (she/her): No, not boring at all sounds like music library needs to recruit you to put together.

Sara Belmont: That would actually be really fun yeah.

Morgan (she/her): yeah we'll have to chat I love that idea.

Morgan (she/her): So um this might be maybe a little bit of a bridge too far, but I'm curious since you've always been interested in in all things media.

Morgan (she/her): What was it What was it like as technology was sort of shifting when you are a radio DJ.

Morgan (she/her): How students.

Morgan (she/her): I'm like they don't normally play vinyl for their shows anymore or CDs they're just hook their phones up and push play on a Spotify playlist.

yeah.

Sara Belmont: I think I was probably right on the cusp of the change because at WCWM at least up until 97 like we were still spinning vinyl so we had.

Sara Belmont: We had two turntables and then we did have a CD player, so you could have either two CDs queued up or two records queued up and then I don't know if they still if they still have the big mixing board.

Sara Belmont: But we had like this giant mixing board, so you could do all of your fades in and out between channels and.

Sara Belmont: actually do a little bit of live, you know audio balancing and mixing so, is it was very mechanical I would say, back then, which is part of the attraction for me I just.

Sara Belmont: I've always like kind of like tinkering with things so that was that was really appealing yeah I always wonder what students do now.

Sara Belmont: And how they how they broadcast their playlists if it's all pre selected or yeah I mean it was sort of nerve wracking in the 90s, because if you know if you messed up if you didn't have your start point on the on the record queued up correctly like you could totally screw up everything.

Sara Belmont: And do it on live radio but um but yeah That was all part of the fun of it, though.

Morgan (she/her): that's cool yeah I definitely think some students will still spend vital, but I think, by and large it's sort of a put together a playlist ahead of time have some talking play some music have some more talking, so I think it's just a push buttons.

Morgan (she/her): But the tinkering sounds definitely fun kind of like you know a little a little bit of a creativity and a little bit of a real time curating so that's me.

Sara Belmont: Turn yeah yeah.

Morgan (she/her): cool awesome so I know you said that you.

Morgan (she/her): were primarily a DJ but you also mentioned that you were editor in chief of another William & Mary publication.

Sara Belmont: I believe it was Jump! yeah.

Morgan (she/her): What a talk a little bit about Jump! and what you did with it.

Sara Belmont: um so I was that my junior year, so I guess going back a little bit I was, I was an English major and from a.

Sara Belmont: I kind of knew from the.

Sara Belmont: moment I started school that I wanted to go into some sort of publishing type career.

Sara Belmont: So I'd already had done some internships doing like some journalism local news reporting and that sort of thing.

Sara Belmont: And I also been like a Yearbook geek so I did Yearbook like since middle school So when I got to William and Mary some of my friends my English major friends were big into creative writing, and they were very involved with the gallery.

Sara Belmont: I can't remember what the other big literary magazine that woman Mary puts out is, but I was more interested in jump because I was kind of like the general interest.

Sara Belmont: You know, we were kind of report about anything and I got into it.

Sara Belmont: junior year as their production manager.

Sara Belmont: So this was like kind of where.

Sara Belmont: The design my design background came in, because I, I would do the layouts for the magazine.

Sara Belmont: Which is really fun, because it was such a mixed media, you know, we had poetry, we had photography we had all sorts of kind of like personal interest you know first person student perspectives that we could be really creative.

Sara Belmont: With how the magazine looked and then my senior year I took over as editor in chief.

Sara Belmont: New exciting yeah it was it was a lot of fun.

Sara Belmont: yeah.

Sara Belmont: yeah like a lot of stuff that William and Mary is you know we kind of had our core group of people that were really into it and we just sort of poured our souls, and our kind of interests into it.

Sara Belmont: Remember one of my friends and I were both really into graffiti at the time, so we had a we had run around with a local graffiti artists group in Richmond and I did a whole story on them and we took photos and.

Sara Belmont: yeah it was it was just a lot of fun and that's those are the kind of stories that I like to you know it's finding those little hidden things that people you know aren't maybe aware of, or.

Sara Belmont: You know.

Sara Belmont: You know, with graffiti it's the people have such a negative image of it and kind of exposing some of.

Sara Belmont: More of like what the.

Sara Belmont: You know what these artists actually are doing, you know what they feel like they're contributing back to their community, I think, has a lot of value.

Sara Belmont: And so you know jump magazine was great as a as a instrument to kind of elevate those stories.

Morgan (she/her): Absolutely I love that and I love that that you said that about graffiti as well, because I think that's.

Morgan (she/her): kind of like a subculture and that's a little misunderstood and it's also there's also music genres that run right alongside it, you know and.

Morgan (she/her): Those music genres also get a little bit understood so it's cool to know that you are a part of a not only one, but two communities, helping to sort of perpetual were accurate narratives about subcultures.

Morgan (she/her): yeah exactly.

Morgan (she/her): Very cool Okay, so now I kind of want to hop back in the time machine.

Morgan (she/her): and talk a little bit about your time as a graphic designer and eventual art director, I definitely did not know that about you would you care to share some more information about that.

Sara Belmont: I'm sure yeah So while I was at William and Mary my junior year they actually we had a visiting professor from VCU who started a digital arts Program.

Sara Belmont: which I got interested in, because you know I love computers and you know tinkering with stuff and I loved art and I loved layout design, so I actually I think I learned photoshop version two.

Sara Belmont: that's where I started, and I just I loved it like being able to create digital art and you know mashing up typography and imagery was just really awesome to me.

Sara Belmont: Because I'm not much of.

Sara Belmont: A painter or I guess like a traditional artist.

Sara Belmont: The digital media really kind of spoke to me and then so as part of my um I did a senior independent study with that professor and as part of that I worked for a local company.

Sara Belmont: called two rivers which is there a they're mainly a video production company, but back then, they also did a lot of what was popular at the time, which were CD Rom interactive.

Sara Belmont: So kind of like.

Sara Belmont: kind of like a website on a CD because in the mid 90s, there really wasn't the Internet.

Sara Belmont: And the websites that did exist, you know, say, like in 1996 we're still pretty primitive.

Sara Belmont: I don't even think you could do video so you know with the CD Rom you could have this very interactive graphic heavy video presentation so.

Sara Belmont: So I worked for them my senior spring semester, and they kept me around so.

Sara Belmont: So I just I just stuck around it's kind of like a easy sort of no brainer transition from College into real life, and that was where.

Sara Belmont: But it was it was a great experience, because they just kind of let me do whatever and you know sit in my corner and kind of learn stuff they had they had a graphic designer there, and he was um he was stronger with like actual.

Sara Belmont: More digital art, whereas my strength, has always been typography and layout.

Sara Belmont: And some information architecture kind of stuff so.

Sara Belmont: yeah I kind of just.

Sara Belmont: grew my photoshop skills through that and started learning some programming, because I started to learn how to create these interactive CDs.

Sara Belmont: which eventually.

Sara Belmont: We started like in the 2002 2010 or so we started doing more museum interactive so I started to learn how to make like various different games.

Sara Belmont: kind of interactive museum.

Sara Belmont: touchscreen displays where you could you know interact with video interviews I've done one where you could actually this was for.

Sara Belmont: The monitor the mariner mariners museum, they have the USS monitor Center down in Newport news, and I created a game called design an ironclad were basically.

Sara Belmont: I designed a bunch of different components like pieces of ships and you could put them together and then test to see whether it would sink or not.

Sara Belmont: cool, which was just a lot of fun.

Sara Belmont: But yeah so I did a lot of interactive stuff.

Sara Belmont: kind of mixed in there, I did a brief stint in advertising.

Sara Belmont: gosh when was that that was like 2000 2002 maybe 2004, or so I worked for an advertising firm down in Virginia beach.

Sara Belmont: That was that was when the Web was starting to take off, so I designed my first website with two rivers, I think, like in 1999 they needed a web presence so I learned html.

Sara Belmont: and created a website for them and I got better and better at that ended up moving to this advertising firm and.

Sara Belmont: became a bear like in house web designer.

Sara Belmont: And from there.

Sara Belmont: I kind of jumped around a lot in my 20s.

Sara Belmont: What I did.

Sara Belmont: yeah like you do.

Sara Belmont: So yeah I worked there for a couple years actually went back to two rivers.

Sara Belmont: And that's when.

Sara Belmont: it's changed more into an art director role.

Sara Belmont: Where I wasn't so much just the graphic designer but I was working with clients to come up with.

Sara Belmont: You know what their vision for at least when I was doing advertising for what their products were.

Sara Belmont: I had a great mentor back then Harry hHindmarsh he was the creative director at the Agency, I was working for.

Sara Belmont: And so I was kind of his art director, and we also I did some freelance work for him as an art director in my 20s as well.

Sara Belmont: But I learned sorry I could go on forever I don't want to ramble but um no I just I learned so much from him about.

Sara Belmont: Like good art direction you know not just making something look pretty but really making things stand out.

Sara Belmont: You know, like when you when you flip through a through a magazine, and you look at all the ads so much fun, they just look the same it's kind of the same with web design and I'm guilty of this, too, you know you look at a bunch of.

Sara Belmont: Education websites and they really all start to look the same at the end of the day.



Sara Belmont: But he was so he was just so creative and innovative and he he helped me think.

Sara Belmont: helped me try to look at things like how could you present this slightly different so that it would pop out.

Sara Belmont: Whether it's you know just simple like contrast to things like zooming and really close on things.

Sara Belmont: or using you know simple bold splashes of color.

Sara Belmont: You know just really simple things, but when you put you know this ad up against a more traditional one you could really kind of see the difference.

Sara Belmont: And you know it would be more appealing.

Sara Belmont: yeah you know to whoever your audiences.

Morgan (she/her): yeah wow that's really interesting really fascinating stuff also especially.

Morgan (she/her): I always love when people share mentorship experiences, because so much of I feel like your 20s and getting your career setup and figuring out who you want to be as a professional really matters, who you're here support communities and mentors makes such a big difference.

Sara Belmont: yeah absolutely um yeah I was so lucky to find him, and you know he's one of those one of those rare people that.

Sara Belmont: You know, when I went when I went to work for the advertising agency, this was on O'brien et al.

Sara Belmont: He was working at a different agency in Virginia beach, but because we had come across each other through.

Sara Belmont: Some different Interagency work when he knew I was at O'Brien he applied there and became the creative director, because he wanted to work with me, which is very like you know as a 26 year old person I was like what.

Sara Belmont: What makes me so special.

Sara Belmont: But yeah I mean that's what's so great about finding a mentor and somebody that you know really believes in you is that they can.

Sara Belmont: give you that confidence, I think, especially in if you're in any kind of creative career, we all have so much imposter syndrome.

Sara Belmont: And just so much anxiety about you know, are we good enough, you know how do we measure up against our peers reach that yeah but it's just overwhelming and having somebody that believes in you, is yeah.

Morgan (she/her): yeah can make all the difference, as also I'm really struck by how you mentioned.

Morgan (she/her): his ability to turn your attention to the simplistic things to really shifted designed to be more eye catching and grabbing and I think.

Morgan (she/her): that's one of the benefits of having mentorship and a support community is the perspective they're able to sort of provide without.

Morgan (she/her): You know you think about yourself and you're trying to make something new and exciting and it's like you, maybe throw everything in the kitchen seeing green oh it's a little hard to find yourself and it's.

Morgan (she/her): yeah people remind you that you know it's the answers probably right in front of you, you probably seen it.

Morgan (she/her): and probably a lot simpler and more human than you think it needs to be.

Sara Belmont: yeah yeah.

Morgan (she/her): Very cool very cool so along the same lines of.

Morgan (she/her): I want to kind of pivot back in a little bit about how you ended up a web developer at William and Mary libraries, but.

Morgan (she/her): Since we started talking about this whole idea of support and community and something that's really struck me with the students I've met that are involved with WCWM who have.

Morgan (she/her): Since new dawn graduated some are about to move on, is how the Community within w cwm inevitably influence their trajectory career wise.

Morgan (she/her): Like a met someone through their work with w cwm who then connected them to someone else.

Morgan (she/her): Or you know just this unexpected wealth of support moving in a professional direction so I'm curious did you have any experiences like that.

Sara Belmont: I'm not as far as like career wise goes, but I do have.

Sara Belmont: I'm very much an introvert so I don't stay in touch with a lot of my high school and college friends, just because.

Sara Belmont: I don't know I'm very terrible at those sorts of things, but because of my involvement with WCWM, I do have a couple handful of friends that you know will reach out to me, even just a couple years ago and they were like hey.

Sara Belmont: This band Belly was reuniting for a tour and they're going to be playing up at DC at the 9:30 Club, do you want to go.

Sara Belmont: And so I went to I went to that show with them actually bumped into another guy That was a DJ at WCWM at that show.

Sara Belmont: That I hadn't spoken to you like in 10 years or something.

Sara Belmont: And it was just yeah it was just it was very cool.

Sara Belmont: I think.

Sara Belmont: I don't know I think music just speaks to people on a different level, I think.

Sara Belmont: And yeah it's something I feel like I can always fall back on.

Sara Belmont: Those friends will always be friends will always have that connection, no matter you know what our political beliefs, are what our where what direction or lives have taken us, you know, will always have that that love for music in common.

Sara Belmont: yeah and it's just kind of fun to be.

Sara Belmont: I don't know to be 40 something years old and go into a show again.

Morgan (she/her): yeah, especially the 930 club.

Sara Belmont: Look yeah yeah.

Sara Belmont: I keep an eye out for what bands are showing up there, and like at the national in Richmond and the norm, I love the national because they have what I call the old people seating upstairs they actually have.

Sara Belmont: stadium seating so those of us that don't have the endurance to stand for.

Sara Belmont: Like four hours.

anymore.

Sara Belmont: Can you know can sit down and yeah.

Sara Belmont: yeah.

Morgan (she/her): Very cool so um yeah curiosity, like you, so you were doing the you know art directing and the graphic designing and the website building and now you're the Web developer doing awesome work for William and Mary libraries, how did you end up pivoting back to good old William and Mary.

Sara Belmont: Thank you, first of all um I was.

Sara Belmont: gosh.

Sara Belmont: I'm.

Sara Belmont: Trying to think I was.

Sara Belmont: I was looking for a change, I, I will say so, one of the one of the unfortunate downsides of working in small business, which was um I was with two rivers at the time still.

Sara Belmont: Is there's not a whole lot of stability.

Sara Belmont: And you know, I was at the time I was like 40 years old, I still didn't have a 401k.

Sara Belmont: My you're my parents are getting older, my mom at the time was having a lot of health issues, and so I was kind of in this panic of you know my God, you know how am I going to take care of my mom.

Sara Belmont: Am I going to be able to retire, you know, even though I'm married and you know we don't have kids so you know, thankfully, you know financially we're kind of okay.

Sara Belmont: was just like you know I really I'm not sure I can stay kind of in small business or even freelance for like another 10 or 20 years.

Sara Belmont: So I was looking for something with a little bit more stability and.

Sara Belmont: Since I was working here locally in Williamsburg and I've always been very much attached to William and Mary.

Sara Belmont: I you know I have, I have a lot of strong feelings about liberal arts education.

Sara Belmont: And the importance of that, so I would you know kind of peruse their job listings every couple months or something and I saw this position come up.

Sara Belmont: I had applied for another couple like one for at the alumni magazine, but this one came up, it was for a web developer I've always considered myself more of a web designer so it's like oh I'm probably not going to get this.

Sara Belmont: they're looking for a programmer.

Sara Belmont: But I got that first interview.

Sara Belmont: And then talking about the position I was like Oh, I could totally do this, this would be awesome.

Sara Belmont: And, thankfully, I guess the folks that were on my search committee thought the same way, so.

Sara Belmont: I'm here.

Sara Belmont: And it's been it's been great I feel like, if I had known more about what libraries were when I was in college or even when I was in my 20s I should have gone to library school because libraries and library, people are just kind of awesome.

Sara Belmont: I mean yeah it's like another Community like WCWM you know where you've got a group of people that all sort of have similar values as far as you know, information literacy, research, books, cats.

Sara Belmont: And it's just yeah it's just great it's been working at the library has been a really.

Sara Belmont: Encouraging and just you know supportive place to be and I've just I've learned so much you know before like I knew how to make a website, you know.

Sara Belmont: But you know now I know how to run a library catalog.

Sara Belmont: You know how to integrate chat systems and.

Sara Belmont: I've been doing all this work on excessive on accessibility that's really exciting, so I just gotten I've been exposed to so many more opportunities at the libraries, which has just been yeah I think it was it was a good career move.

Morgan (she/her): Oh that's so good to hear that's really exciting to hear, and I know I've particularly enjoyed working with you I've learned things about web design just from talking to you about you know the possibilities so.

Morgan (she/her): Thanks so much for that, and I know we're super super lucky to have you it's fantastic.

Morgan (she/her): um so I was kind of curious if you had any thoughts about how web development could maybe help to promote media as far as Radio Jason initiatives and communities.

Morgan (she/her): I know that's kind of like a lot very vague sort of abstract question, but do you have any thoughts on that.

Sara Belmont: And I'm really I really want to get more I'd love to find out more about what WCWM is doing, actually, I would just love to learn more about what the music library is doing and what you got what you're doing and those sorts of.

Sara Belmont: communities.

Sara Belmont: Because it's.

Sara Belmont: it's an interesting topic I don't really know where to begin, like the first thing that always comes to mind and has been something that I've been very.

Sara Belmont: interested in in the past couple of years is just how things are discovered on the Internet, I think it's.

Sara Belmont: You know how do we make things more discoverable that's one of the big issues, I was listening to some.

Sara Belmont: Something on NPR I think the other day, where they were talking about building a website where it would recommend certain people to whoever you know, was a Member of this website.

Sara Belmont: Based on you know kinda like their popularity and who they thought people would be interested in, and I was like you know that's so much of what the problem with the Internet is these sort of.

Sara Belmont: pseudo Ai recommendation systems that think they're exposing interesting content to their audience when really they're just kind of.

Sara Belmont: Recycling what's popular.

Morgan (she/her): Yes, good.

Sara Belmont: not really.

Sara Belmont: not really elevating.

Sara Belmont: or not really finding what might be interesting and new.

Sara Belmont: You know they're just kind of regurgitating the same old same old over and over again.

Sara Belmont: it's really hard when it comes to the web, because, like our search engines are so big you know they're so fallible you know they're just really blunt tools.

Sara Belmont: And when you're dealing with.

Sara Belmont: You know content that has been on the Internet for like 20.

Sara Belmont: Over 20 years now it's really hard to.

Sara Belmont: How do you get the new stuff online.

Sara Belmont: How do you.

Sara Belmont: How do you publicize it, how do you.

Sara Belmont: get it circulated to other websites, so that they can share it and publicize it so, then these search algorithms recognize Oh, this is something interesting.

Sara Belmont: Rather than just picking up the same old same old over and over again.

Sara Belmont: yeah.

Sara Belmont: there's so much.

Sara Belmont: I think one of the good things that libraries do is that we're really good at kind of digging through all that noise and curating things.

Sara Belmont: I think our research Librarians at William and Mary especially are good at finding resources, you know finding primary sources and as much as we could be promoting you know we've got really vibrant music scenes, especially in Norfolk and Virginia beach.

Sara Belmont: And if we could find ways to promote those.

Sara Belmont: You know whether it's.

Sara Belmont: You know, adding things to our collections or creating lip guides you know research guides that.

Sara Belmont: Either connect people with you know where you can find new music, where you can find new bands or.

Sara Belmont: I think there's you know even like some local publications that cover some of the local music scenes you know kind of finding those little bits of information and putting them on our website somewhere could be helpful.

Sara Belmont: yeah I don't I don't know tell.

Sara Belmont: What are ya tell me more about what the music library is doing, or what thoughts, you have.

Sara Belmont: Oh alright.

Morgan (she/her): I think that's something i'm always constantly thinking about i'm not i'm pretty new

Morgan (she/her): to the whole idea of I guess I'm learning how to flex my outreach and Community building muscles because it's not something I have a lot of practice doing.

Morgan (she/her): But with things related to music and kinda like what you said earlier it's a little bit easier to get involved because music just brings people together.

Morgan (she/her): And there aren't as many weird social obstacles to try to overcome when you're just super excited that everyone in this room right now is stoked about daft punk or something you know.

Morgan (she/her): yeah that's kind of cool um so I've been thinking about ways that the library can especially music library can help support um w cwm in their upcoming move.

Morgan (she/her): A couple of you'll hear in some of the previous interviews I've done um they're moving out of campus Center because campus Center is shutting down.

Morgan (she/her): And so they're going to be moving over into Sadler West and they're losing a ton of storage space for their vitals, so I think what they've said is they have like a basically like a 20 foot hallway to fit over 15,000 miles.

Morgan (she/her): wow that ain't happening right so I'm thinking of ways that the music library can support I'm kind of making sure that doesn't just you know kind of go by the wayside.

Morgan (she/her): Because I think that's really important material to hold on to especially some of the promotional copies that are you know definitely one of a time.

Morgan (she/her): DJ used to kind of write reviews on the vinyls and then either you know, in the album jacket or on top, or something and it's like that's priceless.

Morgan (she/her): I know, like maybe tons of people don't care, but I care and people who care about you know, music and music history and things like that would definitely care um and I'm also interested in trying to figure out how to boost the presence of WCWM.

Morgan (she/her): it's comforting to know, do they have a really wonderful alumni support system that kind of helps them with finances and logistics, as they need.

Morgan (she/her): But when like just how you mentioned Librarians are super cool and fun to work with, and we have a lot of unique skill sets that I think could be valuable to kind of helping promote WCWM without trampling any of the student autonomy, because it is a.

Sara Belmont: When a.

Morgan (she/her): Student run community, so I feel really fortunate that the student assistance that I've had that's how I learned about w cwm um.

Morgan (she/her): My first year here one of my student assistance, who, since we've done and is doing awesome things at tufts university she was.

Morgan (she/her): With WCWM and she asked if I wanted to do a show, and I was like okay sure, and then I got to see the studio and then I just learned more and more about the Community and it's just been.

Morgan (she/her): Something that's been on my mind and the students are also wonderful to work with, and I know they've worked with special collections they didn't.

Morgan (she/her): think it was a 60th anniversary of the radio station.

Morgan (she/her): I think it was in 2019 I know it was in the before times.

Morgan (she/her): But it was fantastic Jay and the team did a really great job they had food they pulled out, you know old vinyl tap copies old promotional like flyers my favorite.

Morgan (she/her): They had something about.

Morgan (she/her): The Wu Tang clan that they were able to like get at w cwm it's just I just think it's such an amazing community and it's amazing to me how they do so much with so little and they're still I guess it's the amount of.

Morgan (she/her): I don't wanna say promotion, but how many people know about them versus how many people don't it's startling to me.

Sara Belmont: yeah it's something that when you asked me to do this interview I started thinking about because, even when I was a DJ back in the 90s, I think the audience was so small I'm not really sure how far our transmitter even reaches.

Sara Belmont: And I had meant to look before today to see if they even have like a live stream or any sort of stream of their shows.

Sara Belmont: Because it would be, you know that would be something I think would be awesome so that no matter where you are especially for us alum you know we could listen in and find out like what's new in college radio.

Sara Belmont: But uh.

Sara Belmont: But yeah that that makes that makes me excited to hear that there's so much stuff like that, and maybe we can work with special collections to save some of that.

Morgan (she/her): And I certainly.

Sara Belmont: I was thinking of yeah you know, like collaborations with our own oral historian to capture some of the local music scene and.

Sara Belmont: I don't.

Morgan (she/her): there's endless possibilities and something you mentioned earlier to with I really was struck by that whole.

Morgan (she/her): What was the language that you used sort of regurgitating what's popular and limiting new discovery which I'll be honest, like my one of my favorite web tools would you call it a web tool to interact with a Spotify.

Morgan (she/her): I love them I hate that they don't pay their artists that's definitely awful boo to them, but the way it's set up, I think, is really fantastic, and they have this feature discover weekly.



Morgan (she/her): where you are getting new tunes every week.

Morgan (she/her): Based on you know listening preferences and I wonder, not necessarily the same thing, but when you were mentioning.

Morgan (she/her): You know, having something on the library website that might shine a light on lesser known bands in the Hampton roads area, I wonder if, maybe a similar sort of thing could be done in conjunction with w cwm.

Morgan (she/her): don't know what web wizardry with you.

Morgan (she/her): But they're there so they're already so good at finding you know obscure bands and, like some of these lesser known bands, but I think it'd be really cool to be able to with power it with the Web so to.

Sara Belmont: Speak yeah Apps absolutely yeah and with the you know, with the new art Center I don't know is Sadler going to be the future like the permanent home for the radio station.

Morgan (she/her): or no yeah sadly West is going to be.

Sara Belmont: As I was just thinking with the new art Center that will.

Sara Belmont: be coming along in the next couple of years I just think there's.

Sara Belmont: there's a potential for like a lot of excitement built up around the arts and music and the radio station that you know, maybe, maybe we'll have some great ideas between now and then, on how to showcase stuff better.

Morgan (she/her): I love it I love it um so, are there any exciting upcoming projects that you're working on with the libraries, that you wanted to share.

um.

Sara Belmont: I think probably the most exciting.

Sara Belmont: project that I'm looking forward to is our new digital archive.

Sara Belmont: Which is going to replace the existing one.

Sara Belmont: Because this will it'll be a better platform to showcase all of mostly the things we have in special collections that have been scanned or digitized so and I think specifically a lot of the unique collections, we have like our scenes some of the handmade books, we have from Cuba.

Sara Belmont: And he's specifically related to this it'll actually this platform where actually support video and audio so you can actually listen to.

Sara Belmont: tie their own oral histories, or you know any sort of music, that we do have in our collections on the website, rather than having to you know download an MP3 and then load it up and, whatever your player is and listen to it so.

Sara Belmont: that'll be probably launching sometime next year I think we're hoping to.

Sara Belmont: Do maybe a soft launch by the end of this year but, but that I think is going to be really exciting.

Sara Belmont: and, hopefully, maybe a big a big game changer.

Sara Belmont: For some of the.

Sara Belmont: The hidden things we have in our collections.

Morgan (she/her): huh yeah.

Morgan (she/her): That sounds exciting I'm looking forward to the review of that.

Morgan (she/her): it's very cool.

Well yeah.

Sara Belmont: I'm probably next year, like we're at the stage, right now, where we're testing out adding our content into.

Sara Belmont: into the platform so there's a lot of work to be done on a lot of the boring work which is makes it most of my day of.

Sara Belmont: And really our programmers day of exporting content from one database and transforming it so a new database can suck it up so.

Sara Belmont: that's just tedious and fraught with errors and time consuming but it'll be great once it's done.

Sara Belmont: Here oh.

Morgan (she/her): Well we're all waiting with bated breath.

Morgan (she/her): Alright, so I think we have successfully made it through our nuts and bolts let's pop on to some sprinkles to wrap things up and have a little bit of fun.

Morgan (she/her): So something I'm curious about if you wouldn't mind, is there a hobby that you picked up during the pandemic that you're still doing or one that you dropped, but wish you could still be doing.

Sara Belmont: um yeah so actually I picked up yoga over the break and.

Sara Belmont: Funnily it's not really word.

Sara Belmont: funny enough our previous associate dean of the department that I'm in is.

Sara Belmont: A very well established yogi instructor and she decided to start her own zoom.

Sara Belmont: yoga channel so I've been doing yoga with her for the past year.

Sara Belmont: So yeah which has been super fun and just.

Sara Belmont: A real relief with you know all of the anxiety that this past year has at least caused me.

Sara Belmont: As far as some of the things that I haven't been doing.

Sara Belmont: I'm kind of an amateur photographer.

Sara Belmont: On the side and.

Sara Belmont: I don't think I've taken pictures of anything like in a solid year.

Sara Belmont: Which is really sad I did I did start going through and like trying to edit because I also I also do like some photo manipulation and I in photo retouching and that sort of stuff.

Sara Belmont: I tried to get into that a little bit ago but yeah it's one of those things I don't know why it's just been hard to.

Sara Belmont: I don't know FLEX that creative muscle.

But.

Sara Belmont: Hopefully.

Sara Belmont: You know, maybe as things get back to normal well.

Sara Belmont: we'll see.

Morgan (she/her): we're very cool, what do you like to shoot with.

Sara Belmont: um I am a canon person so I've got.

Sara Belmont: I have a I have a 5D Mark II and a 6D.

Sara Belmont: right that I both really like I graduated to the full frame sensor five or six years ago and just love it and I got a couple years ago I got a my first macro lens which lets you shoot stuff up really close let's I really like I like taking pictures of flowers.

Sara Belmont: And like you know dirty grungy street stuff and.

Sara Belmont: That sort of.

Sara Belmont: stuff so the macros a lot of fun to play with but that's yeah.

Sara Belmont: I think the last time I played with that was like a year ago, so.

Sara Belmont: I need to get outside more.

Morgan (she/her): The times already changing the flowing.

You know yeah matter.

Morgan (she/her): All right, um another question for you name, something that you've been judged that you think is underrated show music.

Sara Belmont: underrated um.

Sara Belmont: I feel like a lot of the music, I feel like I listened to is underrated.

Sara Belmont: A lot of the shows I tend to watch are also underrated or get canceled after their first season.

Sara Belmont: Although one I don't know I don't really know if this is underrated or not, but I've been I've been really I love SCI fi and fantasy stuff and I've been really into the expanse which is on.

Sara Belmont: Amazon right.

Sara Belmont: yeah I don't know if that I feel like it's underrated even though it's going into its fifth season, but um, but I just I love it, even though it's SCI fi I think it has so many it speaks to so many of the problems and like social problems we have today.

Sara Belmont: But in you know kind of like in this alternate reality that maybe makes it a little bit more, you know approachable to think about.

Sara Belmont: But I just love it I just.

Sara Belmont: The I read all of the books and the characters are just so well developed and yeah I think that's great.

Morgan (she/her): I love it one of my best friends is super into the expanse.

Morgan (she/her): And I just started watching It is like where have you been all my life.

Morgan (she/her): Very good.

Morgan (she/her): Very cool.

Morgan (she/her): All right, um yeah let's to wrap things up and bring it on back around what is your favorite WCWM memory.

Sara Belmont: um I actually I love I love just thinking about the stacks I remember that I don't know what it looks like now, but when I was there, it was really just yet this long dark hallway and I just love going through there and finding things that it didn't either didn't know existed or.

Sara Belmont: You know we're just really old and that I couldn't find it the local record stores.

Sara Belmont: I just I loved feeling like I had you know personal access to this just treasure trove. of music.

Sara Belmont: So that's one of the things I.

Sara Belmont: That stands out the most and also.

Sara Belmont: Again I haven't seen what the studio looks like and 20 some years but we had like this awful like 70s color green SOFA that just looked I like I have no idea what it happened to that thing, but it was like the centerpiece of the kind of gathering meeting area.

Sara Belmont: And I just yeah I just remember hanging out there, sitting on the couch just yeah talking with people and chillin.

Morgan (she/her): love it fun times.

Morgan (she/her): Well, this has been an absolute blast thanks so much for giving up some time and chatting with us about all of your amazing interesting things WCWM.

Morgan (she/her): editor in Chief of job.

Are.

Morgan (she/her): I mean just fantastic all the way around.

Sara Belmont: As I just been very lucky.

Sara Belmont: But yeah Thank you so much for the opportunity and I'm just so I'm so excited that WCWM is still around and just wish all the best for all of those students and all the exciting opportunities that they're gonna they're going to have going forward so yeah.

Morgan (she/her): Absolutely well thanks and I'm sure I'll be seeing you around.

Sara Belmont: yeah Thank you Morgan.

Morgan (she/her): No problem.