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SAA Student Chapter at the University of Wisconsin- Madison

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Up-and-Comers: News for Student Archivists—Justin Seidler, Assistant Editor

Please submit “Up-and-Comers” items to Justin Seidler at justinseidler@gmail.com.

SAA Student Chapter at the University of Wisconsin–Madison

By Laura Farley, University of Wisconsin–Madison

The SAA Student Chapter at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW–Madison) was very active in the fall 2012 semester. In October, it held the first annual Fall Archives Symposium, hosting archivists from Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin, and maintained an active Archives Month blog. Chapter members are currently volunteering at Circus World in Baraboo, Wisconsin, processing collections for retired UW–Madison faculty and preparing their materials for transfer to the University Archives and the Radical Oral History Program. Look for the UW–Madison SAA Student Chapter booth at MAC 2013—the chapter will be selling t-shirts and homemade jewelry! Three members will also lead a session on podcasting in the archives, and several members will present posters.

Study-Abroad Opportunities at the University of Southern Mississippi

The University of Southern Mississippi’s School of Library and Information Science is pleased to announce that a new elective has been approved for the graduate certificate in archives and special collections. LIS 580: British Studies is part of a study-abroad course based in London and Edinburgh. Required courses for the certificate are on-line, except for the archival practicum, which can be done at an approved archives or special collection near the student. For more information, see <http://www.usm.edu/library-information-science/british-studies>, or contact Teresa.Welsh@usm.edu.

Past Forward: The Reclamation of the Michigan Women’s Historical Center and Hall of Fame Media Collection

By Elyssa Bisoski, Loyola University–Chicago; Kelly Kietur, Jennifer Patchett, Natasha Rogers,
Elizabeth Thornburg, Wayne State University

Introduction

The Michigan Women’s Studies Association (MWSA) formed on the campus of Michigan State University in 1973 as an academic professional organization aimed at addressing the lack of women’s history in the educational curriculum. In 1987, the organization expanded its mission and created the Michigan Women’s Historical Center and Hall of Fame (MWHOF), the first museum dedicated to preserving the history of the women of one state, commemorating women in Michigan and honoring those who have made extraordinary contributions in their respective fields.

In early 2012, Sandy Soifer, the MWHOF’s director, and Emily Fijol, the assistant director, identified an audiovisual collection containing content of enduring historical value as inaccessible to both staff and the public due to the dated format of the media. As a result, interviews with historically significant women from Michigan were frozen in time. However, through a series of chance meetings and a desire to digitize, preserve, and increase the accessibility of such a rich collection, a project and partnership were born.

In a collaborative effort, three distinct entities—the MWHOF; Allied Vaughn, a media solutions provider in Livonia; and a team of five interns—worked together to digitize, preserve, and increase the accessibility of the collection. The MWHOF had an extensive collection of over 400 titles, including 8-tracks; audio cassettes; reel-to-reel audio and film; Betacam, U-matic, and VHS tapes; 3½-inch floppies; and Zip disks spanning nearly 30 years of Michigan and national history.

Getting the Archival Gloves Dirty

The project began in the summer of 2012 with the initial review and inventory of the collection. Employees of Allied Vaughn, with the assistance of the first intern, Kelly Kietur, began transferring each item to DVD or CD. Due to the age of the materials, moisture had collected on many of the U-matic tapes, prohibiting their migration. To combat this issue, the team used an industry technique known as “baking” in which a tape is heated in a dehydrator to remove the moisture long enough to extract the content and transfer it to a surrogate.

(Continued on page 22)