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## 2018 Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship Recipient Thanks MAC; 2018 Emeritus Scholarship Winner Gives Thanks

Midwest Archives Conference

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## 2018 Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship Recipient Thanks MAC



**Matthew Prigge**

It is with delight that I thank the Midwest Archives Conference and the Louisa Bowen Scholarship Committee for honoring me with their 2018 Bowen Scholarship. Not long ago I decided to pursue a career in archives, but I have long known the value of a well-kept archives. In working toward my master's degree in history, I spent long hours researching in various repositories. I found archives to be peaceful and calming places and was taken with the vastness of what they had to offer. I was also impressed with the work of many archivists. One in particular, at the Milwaukee Public Library's central branch, was incredibly helpful to me in researching my master's thesis by locating an entire cartful of documents about my topic that had never even been processed. She had remembered seeing them in the sub-basement of the building while looking for something else. Her find extended my research at the library by over a month, but provided information that was invaluable to my final product.

It was this appreciation for the work of the many wonderful archivists who made my research possible that prompted me to enter into the MLIS program at UW–Milwaukee, and I am very thankful to MAC for helping me along in my academic journey. I worked behind the scenes at the Milwaukee Public Library as a volunteer this past summer, and this fall, for my fieldwork, I am helping to open up access to its vast holdings for another generation of researchers and writers. I am very much looking forward to continuing to engage in upcoming MAC events. Thank you again for this honor.

## 2018 Emeritus Scholarship Winner Gives Thanks



**Sarah Wade**

I would like to thank the MAC Emeritus Scholarship Committee for its generous award, which allowed me to attend MAC's 2018 Annual Meeting in Chicago, "Blurring Boundaries, Crossing Lines." The workshops on electronic records and sessions on diversity and inclusion were invaluable for my professional development, providing me the occasion to learn from colleagues working in a variety of repositories and to participate in conversations on topics integral to my work.

At the time of the conference, I was a processing archivist at the University of Kentucky and secretary for the Kentucky Council on Archives (KCA). As such, I was eager to attend MAC's sessions on arranging and describing born-digital materials, which are increasingly prevalent in contemporary archival collections and constitute the bulk of the KCA board's working files. In the workshop, "Going Rogue: Practical Hacks (and Pitfalls) for Electronic Records Processing," University of Minnesota archivists Lara Friedman-Shedlov and Lisa Calahan detailed the work of their Electronic Records Task Force, a collaborative group charged with developing accession and preservation workflows for born-digital records. Friedman-Shedlov and Calahan summarized the pros and cons of a variety of tools they had tested, which I found helpful as an archivist with limited experience of the many programs available to facilitate the management of born-digital materials. It was reassuring to hear about their success despite a lack of funding for digital processing and an extensive backlog of born-digital materials—circumstances with which many MAC members are likely familiar. It was also valuable to see how thoroughly the task force documented its project; this will allow archivists at the University of Minnesota and beyond to learn from their experience.

In addition to the sessions on born-digital records, I attended MAC's sessions on diversity and inclusion within the archives profession. As a processing archivist, my day-to-day work can be isolating at times. As such, it was wonderful to have the opportunity at MAC to hear firsthand from colleagues throughout the Midwest about issues impacting archival practices and repositories.

*(Continued on page 25)*

to teach a preservation course the following term. Having the opportunity to teach others about a topic about which I am so passionate was quite a wonderful surprise, and it allowed me to extend my knowledge of preservation beyond the confines of the library. Outreach to the community was an unexpected but much appreciated element of my internship.

Working my regular job from 8 am to 5 pm, transitioning into my intern role from 5 pm to 8 pm, then traveling home to put in an additional two to three hours of homework each night did prove exhausting, but was all very well worth it in the end. Pairing the hands-on experience that I gained through the internship with the excellent academic coursework provided through my degree program, I feel that I am ready to embrace my future career as a confident and well-prepared preservation librarian. Even though my approach may not suit everyone, I recommend that future MLIS students reach out to any or all internship opportunities and institutions available to share their experience and knowledge in preparing librarians for the professional realm. This internship experience allowed me to boost my professional skill set and to revitalize my motivation to accomplish any goals that I set for myself, and it inspired me to be the best preservation librarian that I can possibly be. In short, my summer spent as an intern in the Miami University Libraries Preservation and Conservation Department was truly a life-changing experience. For that, I will be forever grateful to my wonderful site supervisor and mentor, to all of the other librarians, and to the friends I have made on this fantastic journey.

## **2018 Emeritus Scholarship Winner Gives Thanks**

*(Continued from page 9)*

My participation in the “Diversity and Inclusion in the Archives Field” forum allowed me to learn about the individual and institutional struggles to overcome unbalanced hiring practices and to foster welcoming environments for all. It was heartening to hear discussions about the need for increased diversity among archives staff and inclusive representation within our collections. The “De-Centering Whiteness in the Archives” session was really informative. In particular, Kelly Bolding’s presentation on Princeton’s project to remediate racist descriptions in legacy finding aids was especially powerful. She emphasized that removing discriminatory language can be part of routine data cleanup, thus coupling reparative processing with iterative processing and taking meaningful action to counter the widespread imbalances in our historical records.

This past summer, I left Kentucky for Los Angeles, where I am now a special collections archivist at the Getty Research Institute. Though I am no longer a resident midwesterner, I look forward to staying connected to MAC and will continue to follow from afar the news of my midwestern colleagues. I am truly grateful to MAC and the Emeritus Scholarship Committee for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2018 Midwest Archives Conference—I hope to see many of you at future archives conferences!