Grant Cycles, Deadlines, and Labor Advocacy

A Roundtable about the Changing Work of Project Archivists
ALL ARE WELCOME TO ADD AND EDIT SESSION NOTES AS WE GO ALONG

http://tinyurl.com/projectarchivists

SESSION PARTICIPANTS

Rosemary K. J. Davis @widelight
Rachel Mattson @captain_maybe
Elliot McNally
Alison Reynolds @alison_reyn

PRESENTATION SLIDES/NOTES

http://tinyurl.com/projectarchivistspresentation

#marac16 #maracpgh #s7
BACKGROUND/EDUCATION
- MSLIS, 2011: Pratt Institute [Archives Certificate]
- BA in Liberal Studies, 2007: New School University

JOB DESCRIPTION/TIMELINE
- Samuel French Collection Processing Archivist
- 2 years of funding from CLIR Hidden Collections grant [2014-2016]

FUNDING/SALARY/BENEFITS.
- $50,000 with benefits with 2% cost-of-living salary bump for second year
- Funding from grant & directly from Archives/Library for professional development
- I am here at MARAC with funding from my institution
WHAT I WAS HIRED TO DO

- Process 450 linear feet of the Samuel French Collection
- Produce a finding aid
- Perform outreach for the collection
WHAT I ACTUALLY DO

- Training and supervising student workers
- Collaborating with faculty
- Researching accession history of collection
- Basic preservation
- Contribute to exhibition development
- Collaborate and communicate with donor
- Reference requests
STAFF SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION STRUCTURE

I SUPERVISED:
- 1-2 student workers per semester

I WAS SUPERVISED BY:
- Head of Archives & Special Collections
- Intensely self-directed with minimal supervision
RACHEL MATTSON

BACKGROUND/EDUCATION

➔ MLIS, 2014: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
➔ PhD, 2004: New York University
➔ BA, 1994: Oberlin College

JOB DESCRIPTION/TIMELINE

➔ Manager of Special Projects, The Archives of La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club
➔ Hired: April 2014. CLIR-funded Hidden Collections cataloging project
➔ When the grant ended, La MaMa offered me a permanent position

FUNDING/SALARY/BENEFITS

➔ $40,000/year plus benefits
➔ Minimal conference support: I am here at MARAC on my own dime
WHAT I WAS HIRED TO DO

Manage the Project of Cataloging La MaMa’s “Pushcart Collection” (show files, photographs, audiovisual materials, artifacts, 1962-1985)
WHAT I ACTUALLY DO

- Some cataloging
- Hiring + supervision
- Outreach + Reference
- Born-digital workflows, digitization
- Establishing collaborations w/area grad programs
- Tech stuff
- Strategic planning, policy development, fundraising
- etc etc etc
STAFF SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION STRUCTURE

I SUPERVISED:

◆ A rotating staff of part-time catalogers
◆ A total of 4 interns over the course of the project

I WAS SUPERVISED BY:

◆ I work closely with the La MaMa’s Managing Director, Artistic Director, Director of the Archives, and Director of Development

La MaMa’s founder Ellen Stewart w/ the cast of “The Contestants” (1966). Photo: H. Gloaguen.

Still from documentation of the Native American Theatre Ensemble's 1973 production of "Foghorn." (Transferred from ½ inch open reel.)

A poster for a Playhouse of the Ridiculous production (1967?)

Ozzie Rodriguez w/ a costume from La MaMa’s Trocadero Gloxinia Ballet Collection
ELLIOT MCNALLY

**BACKGROUND/EDUCATION**
- MLIS, 2012: University of Pittsburgh
- BFA, Fiber Art, 2009: Savannah College of Art and Design

**JOB DESCRIPTION/TIMELINE**
- Project Archivist, Poetry Collection, University at Buffalo
- 21 months funded by CLIR Processing Hidden Collections grant awarded 2013

**FUNDING/SALARY/BENEFITS.**
- $47,500 with benefits after 16 weeks of employment
- Funding directly from Poetry Collection for grant related conference presentations
- I am here at MARAC on my own dime
WHAT I WAS HIRED TO DO

- Process eleven little literary magazines’ business and editorial records [>273 LF]
- Produce finding aids
WHAT I ACTUALLY DO

- Processed 17 collections; surveyed 15 collections
- Mold/fire/water/pest mitigation
- Best practices development
- Created digital collection
- Created metadata application profiles
- Basic preservation
- Exhibitions + outreach
- Hiring + supervision
- Paging + scanning
STAFF SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION STRUCTURE

I SUPERVISED:
◆ Grant covered 2 student assistants at 10 hours a week

I WAS SUPERVISED BY:
◆ 2 curators and 1 processing archivist
BACKGROUND/EDUCATION

→ MLS, Archives & Records Management Specialization, 2012: Indiana University Bloomington
→ MA, English, 2009: University of Connecticut
→ BA, English & History, 2007: Denison University

JOB DESCRIPTION/TIMELINE

→ William Henry Seward Project Archivist, University of Rochester
→ Funded 3 years by Emerson Foundation grant

FUNDING/SALARY/BENEFITS.

→ $47,000 with full benefits, 1.6% raise after first year
→ Professional development fully funded
WHAT I WAS HIRED TO DO

- Revise and encode existing finding aids for Seward papers and Seward addition
- Act as liaison to Seward Family Digital Archive project
- Provide reference and instruction services using Seward papers
- Conservation and preservation review
WHAT I ACTUALLY DO

- Item level description
- Help design public interface for finding aid
- Outreach
- Curate exhibitions
- Develop and Revise workflows for in-house digitization
- Accession new materials and assist in collection development
STAFF SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION STRUCTURE

- I SUPERVISED:
  - One student employee

- I WAS SUPERVISED BY:
  - Special Collections Librarian for Historical Manuscripts
Springfield, Ill., Dec. 8, 1860

My dear Sir:

With your permission, I shall at this proper time nominate you to the Senate for confirmation, as Secretary of State for the United States. Please let me hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Your friend and

Alison Reynolds

Dear Sir,

What a very bright, cheerful, comfortable atmosphere you create! How I wish I could have lived closer to you.

Alison Reynolds

February 1860
Box 105:

Folder 1. Calling Lists, ca. 1839-42.
2. commonplace book with handwritten excerpts of texts addressing topics that include military history, philosophy, religion, and English literature. Frances Adeline (Miller) Seward's and William Henry Seward's.
3. Diary, Trip through Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland, 1835.
5. Fragments in Frances Adeline (Miller) Seward's handwriting, ca. 1840-60.
6. Fragments in Frances Adeline (Miller) Seward's handwriting, ca. 1818-65.
8. Arithmetic Practice Book Used by Mrs. Seward, November 1817; Arithmetic Practice Book Used by Mrs. Seward, no date.
9. School sites used by Frances Adeline (Miller) Seward, ca. 1816-16.
10. Calling cards.

Box 106: Correspondence.

Folder 1. 1840-1859.
2. 1860-1865.
3. 1866-1869.
4. 1870-1874.
5. 1875.
6. 1876.
7. no date.
→ TRIAL BY FIRE

→ INDEPENDENCE AND COLLABORATION

→ THE BEST STUFF
CONCERNS ➔ INSTABILITY ➔ ISOLATION AND FRUSTRATION ➔ AFTERMATH
How can Project Archivists be strong advocates for themselves on the job and in the archival profession at large?
HOW CAN SUPERVISORS BE BETTER ADVOCATES FOR THEIR PROJECT ARCHIVISTS, FOR THEIR PERMANENT EMPLOYEES, & FOR THEIR COLLECTIONS?
HOW CAN THE ARCHIVAL PROFESSION IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE WAYS TO FUND CULTURAL PRESERVATION WHILE ENACTING MORE EQUITABLE LABOR PRACTICES?
SESSION PARTICIPANTS

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THANK YOU!