2023 OHRAB Grant Interim Report

Ohio Humanities Council

"Digitizing Ohio Humanities' Archives"

Summary of Project and Progress

The original goal of our project was to organize, digitize, and catalog the public outputs that were produced as part of project grants that we awarded between 1990 and 2023. In June 2023, we hired a summer intern, who earned his MLIS degree, to assist in organizing and digitizing these grant files. Soon after the intern began working, we quickly realized that the job we had originally envisioned for him would extend well beyond his committed hours. So we shifted the focus of the project to best utilize his expertise in archival organization.

Over the course of the summer, he built the infrastructure necessary for a long-term project. His primary responsibility was to design workflows so that any staff member, regardless of experience working in archives, could digitize and catalog our records. Our intern designed four workflows: two for using the office scanners and two for processing our archive's materials.

We also realized that we should expand the project's scope. Although we originally intended to focus only on our grant-produced materials, we also wanted to include digitizing not only our grant records but also the programs that we ourselves have conducted over the past 40 years. To that end, our intern organized over 40 bankers boxes full of records and created a corresponding finding aid.

The other part of the project that we've worked on this summer is building the public website and the corresponding database. We outsourced this work to a contractor that we have worked closely with in the past to maintain our internal grants and programs records. Over the summer, we have developed a platform that will be fully searchable. We are currently in the testing phase of development.

Estimated amount of project completed (number of boxes)

We estimate that the full project is now 30% complete. Although very few items have been digitized, we have been able to sort through and organize more than 40 boxes of materials.

Summary of Expenses

We have paid out the following items:

- Intern's salary: $3,000
- Scanner: $579
- Cost-share: $1,000 (staff time)

We have also estimated that the contracted work of database/website building will be about $3,200.

Amount of Time Spent on Project

Our intern has spent 120 hours on the project, developing detailed workflows for using the scanning technology and the steps to digitize items. In addition, permanent staff has spent approximately 40 hours supporting the intern's work.

Progress Toward Goal

Because of a few delays in hiring an intern and in waiting on our contractor to produce the needed database, we are slightly behind where we had hoped to be by the end of August. The work that has been completed has focused mainly on creating an infrastructure and building our capacity to see this project through the long-term. With that being said, we are still on track to have a significant amount of our archives scanned and ready for public viewing by the end of the grant period.

Examples of publicity

We have not yet publicized this project. However, we will circulate announcements on our website and social media channels as we finalize the public-facing website and begin to digitize more of our collection.