

Of the People Grants Awarded

More than \$500,000 will be devoted to documenting cultural traditions.

The American Folklife Center (AFC) announced the inaugural recipients of Community Collections grants this week. Part of the Of the People: Widening the Path initiative, the grants will support individuals and organizations working to document cultures and traditions of Black, Indigenous and other communities of color historically underrepresented in the U.S. and in the Library's collections.

"The American Folklife Center is honored to support and preserve the important work of this first group of Community Collections grant recipients, who will be documenting and sharing the cultural traditions and stories of their communities with the Library and the American public," John Fenn, the AFC's head of research, said.

More than 180 applications from across the United States, including territories and protectorates, were submitted for review by the AFC selection panel. A diverse mix of 10 individuals and organizations will receive up to \$60,000 each to fund field research in Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or Latino and Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

The recipients will work over the next 12 months to complete engaging and meaningful research that will ultimately be included in the Library's various permanent collections.

OF THE PEOPLE, CONTINUED ON 5



Shawn Miller

Contract archivist Elissa Jerome holds a volume containing drawings used in the Jefferson Building's construction.

Library's Story Gets a Boost from Archives Project

A Manuscript Division effort is improving access to records of the Library's history.

BY CHERYL FOX

The Library of Congress Archives contains nearly 4 million items – documents from the Library's earliest days, records of acquisitions, personal files donated by staff. Together, these records help to tell the story of the nation's library and its oldest federal cultural institution. The collection rates among the top 10 most used in the Manuscript Division. Yet, it is not well known beyond a certain set of researchers.

All that is about to change soon thanks to a project the Manuscript Division has launched to elevate

the archives' visibility and accessibility. The project will update the collection's finding aids and process and rehouse the most popular parts of the collection.

"The project supports the Library's commitment to increasing discoverability of collections," Janice Ruth, chief of the Manuscript Division, said. "Not only do we want to meet the needs of those already interested in the Library's history, but we also want to deepen awareness of this uniquely American national library."

Until now, the ability of researchers to find information about the col-

ARCHIVES, CONTINUED ON 7

NOTICES

DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Amy McAllister at amcallister@loc.gov.

Kelly Abell
Lynette Brown

Avraham "Avi" Shapiro
Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard

HSD SEEKS STAFF VOLUNTEERS

The Health Services Division (HSD) is recruiting staff to join the Library's Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT). It is a trained team of staff volunteers that provides critical support to HSD health care professionals during medical emergencies, evacuation drills and other incidents that may cause illness or injury. HSD will provide MERT team members with hands-on training that includes CPR and automated external defibrillator use, basic first aid and bleeding-control techniques.

For staff who would like to volunteer but feel they are not cut out for the medical side of an emergency, HSD will also be offering training in other areas, including responder psychological first aid and critical incident stress management.

To join MERT or learn more about HSD's volunteer opportunities, contact Joe Nadzady at jnadzady@loc.gov or (202) 707-4046.

SIGN UP FOR JEMNS ALERTS

Staff are encouraged to download the Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS) mobile app on their personal devices and register to receive text alerts. For instructions and more information, go to the [JEMNS frequently asked questions document](#).

Questions? Call (202) 707-8708 or send an email message to epp@loc.gov.

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GAZETTE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at loc.gov/staff/gazette.

GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

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GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the April 15 Gazette is Wednesday, April 6.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to calendar@loc.gov by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

Fiscal 2022 Budget Enacted

BY TREY CARSON III

The Library of Congress received a 4.4 percent budgetary increase in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022, signed by the president on March 15. The monies will support the Library’s strategic objectives by expanding active visitor engagement, optimizing systems and financial infrastructure, strengthening data-analysis capabilities and sustaining technology innovation.

The Library’s total budget authority for the fiscal year – just under \$839 million – consists of four separate appropriations: Library of Congress salaries and expenses, which includes the Office of the Librarian and other service units; Congressional Research Service (CRS) salaries and expenses; Copyright Office salaries and expenses; and National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) salaries and expenses.

The 4.4 percent fiscal 2022 budgetary increase represents about \$36.9 million over the fiscal 2021 enacted budget.

New initiatives funded under Library of Congress salaries and expenses include \$4.4 million for 5G cellular technology upgrades; \$4.4 million for the Integrated Electronic Security System; \$6.5 million for the Library Collections Access Platform (L-CAP); and \$2.6 million for Microsoft 365 migration.

In addition, funding continued for the Library’s new visitor experience (\$10 million); the Veterans History Project (\$3.8 million); the Teaching with Primary Sources program (\$9.6 million); the surplus books program (\$250,000); and the Legislative Branch Financial Management System (\$1.4 million).

The Copyright Office salaries and expenses appropriation received \$3.2 million to implement the Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement Act. ■

Web Archives Add Wide Range of New Content

Over the past three months, the web archiving team in the Digital Collections Management and Services Division has added nearly 1,900 new items to the [Web Archive collection](#) on loc.gov. Content coming out of embargo spans 76 countries and 52 languages and includes additions to more than 60 collections. Here are a few highlights:

The [Coronavirus Web Archive](#) debuted publicly in February with over 450 records that document the pandemic, ensuring that scholars, scientists and average future Americans will be able to grasp the full impact of COVID-19 on individuals, families and communities. Examples of newly released content include [A Journal of the Plague Year: An Archive of COVID-19](#); [Survivor Corps](#); [Slay at Home Festival](#); [Designing on the Front Lines: Health Design Lab](#); and [Innovations in Socially Distant Performance](#).

The [LGBTQ+ Studies Web Archive](#) has added 45 records to its growing collection of over 350 records on loc.gov. The collection documents LGBTQ+ history, scholarship and culture in the U.S. and around the world. Examples of newly released content include [500 Queer Scientists Visibility Campaign](#); [Transrespect vs Transphobia Worldwide](#); [CURVE Magazine](#); [onePULSE Foundation](#); and [Making History: Kansas](#).

[City and the Rise of Gay Rights](#).

The [United States Congressional Web Archive](#) has been updated to include the 115th Congress (2017-18) and the 116th Congress (2019-20). Records were added for 252 members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, contributing to the total of over 1,400 records now available on loc.gov.

The [Brazilian Environmental Policy Web Archive](#) has been added to loc.gov. The archive presents municipal web content produced between 2010 and 2021 following Brazil’s inclusion as one of the five emerging BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) economies. Expanded economic growth is tied to demand for extraction of natural resources, making this archive an essential tool for researchers studying the progression of Brazilian environmental initiatives.

The [Bulgarian Political and Social Issues Web Archive](#) and the [Serbian Political and Social Issues Web Archive](#) have also been added to loc.gov. The collections include websites of politicians, political parties, nongovernmental organizations and other entities and address topics such as the development of civil society, liberal democracy, corruption and economic inequality. ■



ARE YOU IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FORMER INTERNS?

Questions or ideas? Contact alumni@loc.gov

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www.loc.gov/alumni

QUESTION & ANSWER



Nicole Lamberson

Nicole Lamberson

Nicole Lamberson is a writer–editor in the U.S. Copyright Office.

Tell us about your background.

I was born in Richmond, Indiana, and grew up there and in Pepperell, Massachusetts. I earned a bachelor’s degree with honors in political science, minoring in theater and Spanish, from Queens University of Charlotte in North Carolina. While there, I studied abroad in Hong Kong and interned for a summer in Washington, D.C., for the research department of the Democratic National Committee (DNC).

After graduation, I came back to D.C. and the DNC for the months leading up to the 2008 election. Then, I started working for the Obama administration at the White House, first as a research assistant and then as director of research for the office of Vice President Joe Biden.

I also did advance work for some of the vice president’s trips, which entailed spending a couple of weeks preparing for his arrival in

places I never really thought I’d visit – Morocco, Australia and Switzerland, to name a few.

While I spent most of my time working on these trips, the team and I always found a couple of days to explore and have some amazing experiences. I’ve bob-sledded with Olympians, taken a train through the snow-covered Alps to Italy for lunch and seen the penguins come home for the night on Australia’s Phillip Island – things I couldn’t even imagine doing otherwise.

But after spending so much time knee-deep in politics, I was ready for a change. The administration and my job were nearing the end, and I wanted to do something creative that would align more with my interests. So, I enrolled at George Washington University, taking classes at night, and earned a master’s degree in publishing with a focus on editorial management and business and marketing.

What brought you to the Library, and what do you do?

I enjoyed the copyright-related classes I took for my master’s degree, so I started looking for opportunities at the Copyright Office. I began in 2017 as a copyright specialist in the office’s Licensing Division, where I worked on the division’s public newsletter and other communications materials.

Then, in September 2019, I became a writer–editor in the Outreach and Education Section of the Office of Public Information and Education. I work on materials ranging from the technical to the informational to the creative, including website updates, video scripts, blog posts, news releases and more. I also lead the editorial process for the office’s in-house newsletter, Copyright Notices, and manage the office’s blog schedule and Spanish translations project.

What are some of your standout projects?

One thing I never thought I would do is write for an exhibit. But shortly after starting in my cur-

rent position, I became the writer for the new, permanent Copyright Office exhibit, “Find Yourself in Copyright” (located on the fourth floor of the Madison Building).

I was responsible for the text you see in the exhibit and the [online companion website](#). I’ve also written related articles for the Gazette and LCM, a script for a video (now in production) and a comprehensive docent guide, among other materials. It’s been challenging, but I’ve enjoyed the opportunity to flex and grow my writing and editing skills. It’s pretty cool to tell people that I wrote the copy for a public exhibit.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

I like to find ways to express my creativity. I co-founded a travel-related blog. Though we are on hiatus, I am looking forward to getting back to writing content for it soon. I’m also writing a novel, have recently taken up painting and enjoy photography.

I’ve also been involved in community theater since I was 5. I’ve acted in more than 25 productions, directed two plays and taken numerous acting and singing classes. Currently, I’m performing in my first full production in this region with the Arlington Players in “A Night of One Acts.” It’s been so wonderful getting back onstage and more involved in the local theater community. I can’t wait to do more.

And while theater is my first love, travel is a close second. I’ve been filled with wanderlust for most of my life. I try to travel as much as I can, which is never enough. I like to go abroad at least once a year (when there’s not a pandemic) and travel within the U.S. a couple of times a year. ■

HAVING TECHNICAL ISSUES?

The Office of the Chief Information Officer’s service desk is staffed around the clock with technicians ready to help. Contact ocloser_vicedesk@loc.gov or (202) 707-7727.

OF THE PEOPLE, CONTINUED FROM 1

Individual recipients are:

Karen Abdul-Malik Culture of R&B Urban Line Dancing

Through “Community on the Line: The Culture of R&B Urban Line Dancing in the Philadelphia, New Jersey and Delaware Tri-State Area,” members of the Soul Line dance community will examine R&B urban line dance culture in the greater Philadelphia region. The project will involve interviews with dancers, choreographers and participants and documentation of dance gathering places and events.

Jorge Félix Foodways of Northwest Chicago

Through “Sofrito Conversations: Bridging the North and West of Chicago,” Afro-Boricua artist and curator Jorge Félix will document cultural food practices that create bonds between Black and Latino neighbors in northwest Chicago. The project will unfold through public conversations, interviews and documentation capturing recipes and stories from home kitchens, community barbecues church potlucks and food offerings to Afro-Caribbean religious icons.

Tammy Greer Houma Culture

A United Houma Nation scholar and cultural leader will lead tribal documentarians, artists and elders in the project “And We Are Still Here: Indigenous Culture Bearers of Houma Communities.” Focusing on Louisiana’s southern coastal parishes, the project will document the work of 16 Houma culture bearers through interviews, photos, videos and audio recordings. The project will culminate with the launch of the United Houma Nation Traditional Tribal Artists Festival.

Mark Lupenui Music of Kohala

“Unearthing the Lost Songs of Kohala” will document unrecorded or “heirloom songs” of the Kohala region of the big island of Hawaii. Local musicians will

work with longtime community members to preserve a shared cultural legacy of original compositions held within families that chronicle ways of life emphasizing care for land and communities.

Russell Oliver Puerto Rican Coffee Farming

Coffee has long been one of Puerto Rico’s primary crops. “Documenting the Stories, Agricultural Traditions and Culture of Specialty Coffee Farmers in Puerto Rico” will document the community of emerging specialty coffee farmers, their combination of traditional and next-generation sustainable farming practices and preparation of coffee from seed to cup.

Isaac Rodriguez Chicano Music

Through “Sonidos de Houston: Documenting the City’s Chicano Music Scene,” a team of musicians and community scholars from Houston’s Chicano music community will interview musicians, dance hall owners, producers and fans. They aim to document

a music scene influenced by a mix of Gulf Coast African American and Cajun-inflected blues and R&B musical traditions as well as the country, orquesta and conjunto music often associated with more prominent Chicano music scenes in south and central Texas. The project will culminate in a street party/community documentation/archives event.

Phanat Xanamane Lao New Year

“Louisiana Lao New Year Archive” will document, archive and digitally exhibit multigenerational perspectives on the Lao immigrant community and its New Year festival at Wat Thammaratanaram, a Buddhist temple and monastery in Broussard, Louisiana. The temple serves as a religious and cultural center for Lao people in the area and hosts multiple cultural events throughout the year, with the largest one being the New Year celebration.

OF THE PEOPLE, CONTINUED ON 6

OIG WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Report suspected illegal activities, waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement in Library of Congress administration and operations to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). A link to all Library regulations is available on the staff intranet at <http://staff.loc.gov/sites/rules-and-regulations/>.

To make a report, contact OIG via the online form at www.loc.gov/about/office-of-the-inspector-general/contact-us/ or report by mail to 101 Independence Ave., S.E., LM 630, Washington, D.C., 20540-1060.

OF THE PEOPLE, CONTINUED FROM 5

Organizational recipients are:

Habele Outer Island Education Fund Weaving Traditions

“Warp and Weft of the Remathau” is a partnership between the educational and cultural development nonprofit Habele and Remathau women from the outer islands of Yap State in Micronesia. Most recently, the women collaborated in creating Weaving Connections, an online platform to help Remathau in the mainland U.S. develop educational materials to sustain their unique weaving traditions. Documentation will consist of interviews with master weavers living in the outer islands or the U.S. and photography of textile products and weaving processes.

Urban Artistry House Music

Originating in Black and brown gay clubs in the 1970s through the 1990s, house music has grown into a dynamic tradition within a network of communities across the U.S. and beyond. Through interviews and community-led documentation, the project “Follow the Music: Exploring Multi-Linear Legacies of House Culture” will explore contemporary manifestations of house music and dance culture in multiple U.S. cities.

Wichita State University Hispanic Celebrations

“Fiestas: Latinx Celebrations in Western Kansas” will document the Hispanic cultural heritage of western Kansas, focusing on the large yet underrecognized Hispanic (mainly Mexican American) communities in Dodge, Liberal and Garden City. A team led by a photojournalist and faculty from Wichita State University’s Spanish, History and Anthropology departments will document social and familial events (such as quinceañeras), foodways and religious celebrations (such as la Fiesta de la Candelaria) to honor the struggle of Hispanic immigrants in western Kansas and their contribution to local culture.

Launched in January 2021, Of the People: Widening the Path is a multiyear initiative funded through a gift from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. It provides new opportunities for more Americans to engage with the Library and add their perspectives to the Library’s collections. This work will expand the Library’s efforts to ensure that a diversity of experiences is reflected in the U.S. historical

record and inform how materials are used to understand our past.

For photos and more details about the grant recipients, click [here](#). For more information about the Community Collections grant project, visit the [Of the People website](#).

Additional grant opportunities will be available across the Library. The next grant application period will open in early summer 2022. ■

A SPRING TRADITION REVIVES



Shawn Miller

Now that many pandemic restrictions have been lifted, scores of tourists are once again strolling among the cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin this spring. On the much-quieter grounds of the Jefferson Building last week, a single bee alighted on blossoms.

REMINDER: REPORT COVID SYMPTOMS, EXPOSURE

All Library employees, including those working remotely, who have [experienced symptoms of COVID-19](#), received a positive COVID test result or had close contact with someone with COVID-19 are required to send a message to their supervisors and copy the Health Services Division (HSD) at HSDCOVID-check-in@loc.gov.

The email to HSD should include the employee’s name in the subject line and a reachable email address and telephone number in the body of the message. HSD will follow up to ensure that affected employees remain off-site for the appropriate amount of time and confirm that contact tracing is not necessary.

**Your Employee Personal Page (EPP) is at
www.nfc.usda.gov/epps/**

ARCHIVE, CONTINUED FROM 1

lection online has lagged because existing finding aids have not been updated to modern encoded archival description (EAD) standards. To address this issue, the Manuscript Division contracted with LAC Federal to bring on board two experienced archives specialists. The pair will also examine collection containers and replace outdated or damaged containers.

Lead archivist Elissa Jerome has worked as a contract archivist at the Smithsonian Institution's American Art Museum and Archives of American Art. Archival assistant Matt Caruso has been a Library contractor for a year and a half now.

Their work focuses on improving description of four series in the collection. Included are records of acquisitions in the collection's Order Division and Exchange and Gift Division series; administrative information about the Library in the Central File series; the records of the design and construction of the Jefferson Building in the Building and Grounds series; and the photo archive in the Photos, Images and Objects series.

As an example of how the records are used, the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) regularly consults the Jefferson Building series to find out what materials were originally used in the building; if a replacement is needed, AOC can match those materials. And Library specialists sometimes consult acquisitions records for context about the source of an item or collection.

The archives collection dates to 1897, when the newly constructed Library of Congress (now the Thomas Jefferson Building) opened its doors to the public and the Manuscript Department was established. By 1899, staff of the renamed Manuscript Division were working steadily in the building's attic to sort, arrange and describe collections that had been in storage in the U.S. Capitol, including papers of the Library from as early as 1800.

The division's reading room was located on the second floor in the southwest pavilion, while ample processing areas fitted with large tables and storage space were situated in the attic. The new building included special equipment to process archival materials.

In 1904, Librarian of Congress Herbert Putnam cited growth of collections focusing on the Library. "The sources for the history of the Library of Congress have been augmented," he wrote in his annual report.

That same year, the Watterston family donated the papers of former Librarian of Congress George Watterston, and Laura Meehan, daughter of another former Librarian, John S. Meehan, donated her father's 1829 appointment document signed by President Andrew Jackson and Vice President Martin Van Buren. Around the same time, the division purchased a register of books borrowed by members of Congress from 1801 to 1802.

The expanding collection of historical materials, Putnam wrote, included "whatever may throw light upon the growth of the collections, the personnel of the force and the relations of the Library to the Government and to sister institutions."

Although the Manuscript Division acquired material for the archives reflecting Putnam's broad collecting scope, it did so only as records were retired, not in a systematic, proactive way. As a result, records of acquisitions are incomplete – there are gaps and inconsistencies.

The newly launched project will improve description of the archives collection to help researchers understand how to use the records that are available. Jerome and Caruso are analyzing each series and will include their insights in improved EAD-formatted finding aids researchers can access through the Library's catalog and on other platforms.

Despite the roadblocks to access Jerome and Caruso are addressing, the situation now is far better

than it used to be. Until the 1970s, researchers did not have access to any finding aids at all for the archives collection. That's when the Library's recently retired historian, John Y. Cole, began his doctoral research on Librarian of Congress Ainsworth Spofford at George Washington University.

Around that time, the Manuscript Division recognized that researchers such as Cole were increasingly interested in the history of American culture and cultural institutions such as the Library. Staff also anticipated a jump in interest in studying the archives collection in advance of the Library's bicentennial celebration in 2000 and worked to improve access to as many materials as possible, an effort that continues with this latest project.

"Today, with planning underway for a new orientation gallery in the Jefferson Building, it is our hope that improved access to the institution's historical records can support that project and help the Library share even more broadly its amazing history," Ruth said.

To learn more about the Library's history, two books Cole researched using the archives collection are a good starting point: "America's Greatest Library: An Illustrated History of the Library of Congress" (2017) and "The Library of Congress: The Art and Architecture of the Thomas Jefferson Building," co-authored with Henry Hope Reed (1997).

In addition, the [archives catalog record](#) lists nearly 60 series in the collection. ■

HCD SERVICES PORTAL

During this period of remote work, the [Human Capital Directorate \(HCD\) services portal](#) is there to help.

Ask questions of HCD professionals; submit documents related to benefits, retirement and payroll matters; and track requests.