

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
May 11–13, 2016  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Report: SAA Oral History Transcription/Access Project**  
(Prepared by SAA Archivist Michael Doylen, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

The Archives of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) Libraries is pleased to provide the SAA Council with a report on our progress managing the oral history interviews created by the Oral History Section on the occasion of SAA's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. From 2010 to 2012, volunteers conducted interviews with 20 SAA leaders in order to document the development and future directions of SAA and the archives profession generally. Following completion of the interviews, volunteers organized the material, completed basic metadata, and prepared first-draft transcripts for some interviews. In May 2015 the Council approved the expenditure of \$3,500 to support an intern at the UWM Libraries, which is home to the SAA archives, in order to conclude work on the project.

Our goal is to develop an online collection of all oral histories using CONTENTdm, our digital collections platform. Additionally, we plan to present all interviews using OHMS, a tool developed by the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries that synchronizes transcripts and/or indexes with the interviews themselves and facilitates greater access to oral history content by users.

In September, we received the collection of oral history interviews (primarily uncompressed .avi files) from Lauren Kata, who had coordinated the project from the beginning and continues to be actively involved. UWM staff inventoried the collection, created working copies of all interviews, and then archived the original, digital files. Treshani Perera began work as the project intern shortly thereafter. Perera is a graduate student enrolled in UWM's Master of Library and Information Science/Master of Music coordinated degree program.

To date, Perera has focused her attention on the interview transcripts, which we received in various stages of completion and which are the most labor-intensive aspect of the project. She has finalized transcripts for 11 of the 20 interviews. They have been copy-edited, proofread, and formatted per our standards. By the end of April, she will complete indexes for these 11 interviews and then build records for them in CONTENTdm. As an example of this work, please see the interviews with Amy Cooper Cary and Frank Boles at <http://collections.lib.uwm.edu/cdm/search/collection/saa>.

In the next few months, Perera will complete work on the remaining nine interviews, creating full transcripts and indexes, synchronizing both documents with the interviews themselves, and

developing records in CONTENTdm. We are very confident that the project will be completed well ahead of the Annual Meeting, July 31-August 6. Following these tasks, we will update the finding aid and catalog record of the SAA archives at UWM.

Perera also plans to create a series of video clips to promote the collection at the Annual Meeting. She will work with SAA to identify opportunities to screen these clips at the meeting and perhaps also on the SAA website.

My sincere thanks to SAA for funding this project and creating a valuable internship opportunity for Treshani. For additional information, please feel free to contact me at (414) 229-6980 or [doylenm@uwm.edu](mailto:doylenm@uwm.edu).