

## **State Library of North Carolina**

Library Services & Technology Act

2012-2013 Grant Projects

Narrative Report

Grant Program: NC ECHO Digitization Grant

Project Title: Content, Context, & Capacity: A Collaborative Large-Scale Digitization Project on the Long Civil Rights Movement in North Carolina

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Number of Persons Served: 10,500

Primary Users:

- Adults
- Library staff & volunteers
- Statewide public

Primary Services:

- Digitization & digital library projects

## 1. Project Purpose

Succinctly describe what you *intended* to do (implement, create, accomplish), for whom (i.e., target audience), and for what *expected* outcome or benefit. [You will report *actual* activities and results in #2 - #6 below.]

The Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN) university libraries (Duke University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) conducted the second year of a large-scale manuscripts digitization project with a thematic focus on the historical era known as the Long Civil Rights Movement (LCRM). The goals of CCC are: 1) to promote and support educational and scholarly research uses of modern manuscripts and archival resources by extending the reach of entire collections/record groups beyond the walls of the four libraries; 2) to provide a proof of concept for a collaborative approach to large-scale digitization; 3) to develop shared standards and practices; and 4) to test interinstitutional workflows for use by the four libraries and other potential partners in future digitization projects. The project purpose is to digitize 38 manuscript collections (or approximately 400,000 digital objects) from the four partners. The resulting digital materials are made freely available on the open web, accessible through the collection finding aids. The digitized collections are presented online through user interfaces for digital collections at Duke, NCSU, and UNC Chapel Hill (with NCCU's content presented by UNC Chapel Hill); and are also searchable through Search TRLN, the online catalog shared by the university libraries. Project staff planned and executed methods to evaluate the success of the project with target audiences, as well as test the effectiveness of collaborative large-scale manuscript digitization and interinstitutional workflows. Target audiences include history faculty and scholars, students, library professionals and students, and the public at large.

## **2. Project Activities**

**Explain how the grant and any matching funds were spent. Describe the methods and activities used to carry out the project.**

In year two a new project librarian and a new digital production manager were hired. Most of year two was spent continuing digitization efforts. Audio digitization at Duke and UNC began in year two and is nearing conclusion. All digital production activities were time-tracked and documented. Other quantitative efforts included monitoring all online use of collections using Google Analytics. We conducted two qualitative evaluation studies with K-12 teachers in NC and with undergraduate students at UNC and NCSU. Future evaluation efforts were planned. The project website was continually maintained, as well as other online presences including a Facebook page and various subject-related blog contributions. A promotional poster was designed and a promotional video was created. Other outreach efforts included exhibits and brown bag lunches for Archives Week.

The majority of grant funds (\$136,185) was spent funding salary and benefits for a fulltime project librarian, a fulltime digital production manager, four part-time student research assistants, five part-time student assistants, and two temporary employees conducting digital conversion work. Additional grant funds (\$5,477) were spent on audio digitization equipment, meeting support, and transportation of materials. Matching funds contributed to a percentage of the salary and benefits of the principal investigator and the project librarian.

### 3. Project Outputs

**Provide measures of project or program (e.g., number of participants who completed a workshop, number of objects digitized). Report the extent to which you achieved project targets, and compare to pre-project numbers where applicable to show the degree of change.**

All digitization goals were met or exceeded in year two.

Digital Output:

Scanned 144,500 images for a total of 324,500 images (surpassing grant goal of 250,000 by 30%)

Presented 107,200 additional digital images online for a total of 257,200 (surpassing grant goal of 250,000 by 3%).

Transferred 44,500 or 100% of NCSU's digital files scanned at UNC, meeting project goals.

Due to increased visibility of online collections and an ever-growing number of items available online, web usage increased dramatically during year two.

Web usage statistics:

\*Project website ([www.trln.org/ccc](http://www.trln.org/ccc)): nearly 5,900 unique page views (a 64% increase over year 1) consisting of 3,800 visits (a 81% increase over year 1) by over 2,300 visitors (a 130% increase over year 1).

\*Finding aids: 10,200 unique page views (a 70% increase over year 1) and more than 9,500 visits (a 170% increase over year 1) by over 4,200 visitors (a 133% increase over year 1).

\*Digital objects:

10,100 views of digital folders\*\* (a 206% increase over year 1), 27,600 views of items within digital folders (a 360% increase over year 1) by 4000 visitors (a 300% increase over year 1).

\*\*NCSU does not track folder-level views, only item-level views.

Instances of project publicity and outreach activities:

Exhibits and brown bag lunches for NC Archives Week.

CCC promotional poster and bookmark design

27 blog posts on the Publishing the Long Civil Rights Movement blog (<https://lcrm.lib.unc.edu/blog/>)

9 blog posts on the Devil's Tale blog (<http://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>).

205 Facebook posts ([www.facebook.com/trlnccc](http://www.facebook.com/trlnccc)) resulting in 1,120 page views.

Promotional articles in NCCU Now and NCCU's the Campus Echo.

Promotional video ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwZ1fjAsb7U&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwZ1fjAsb7U&feature=player_embedded))

Project post on Society of North Carolina Archivists' blog

Article in Library Hi-Tech researched and written in year 2 (published in year 3)

#### **4. Project Outcomes**

**These are changes in the target audience's skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude, status or life condition brought about by experiencing this project. include a description of the ways the outcome information was gathered, such as through surveys, pre- and post-tests, or other systematic measures of intended outcomes. Outcomes should be reported here only if they were measured in a systematic way.**

**Note: not all projects will have outcomes to report.**

N/A: this project does not incorporate outcomes-based assessment

## 5. Other Results

**Describe any results not documented in Project Outputs or Project Outcomes, e.g., unexpected benefits, spin-off projects, etc. Also include any lessons learned, any especially successful aspects, and any recommendations for others interested in similar projects.**

In year two we developed a deeper understanding of large-scale digitization and how it relates to our project goals. For goal one (to promote and support educational and scholarly research uses of modern manuscripts and archival resources), we completed usability studies with two significant user groups: K-12 educators and undergraduates. Each study helped us gain a better understanding of how our project meets or does not meet the needs of each of these user groups. Our K-12 study showed us that this group of educators needs a more heavily curated body of materials and ready-made lesson plans. Neither of those efforts fits into our model of large-scale digitization, but it was useful to glean what would make these types of collections more useful to those educators for possible future endeavors. The undergraduate students gave mainly positive feedback about the online collections, with a strong majority stating they prefer these types of digital collections over physical archives, and would very likely visit the digital collections again in the future. Evaluation plans for a study with faculty and history scholars is underway and will be completed in year three. All quantitative time-tracking measures are in place and are nearing completion. Analysis of this data will take place in year three.

Our three other goals are aimed at library professionals, and we learned both new lessons and new benefits regarding each. Goal two (to provide a proof of concept for a collaborative approach to large-scale digitization) was further developed when we elected not to pursue the "sites of excellence" model in year 3. Our oversized materials are no longer being transported to NCSU because UNC already has the equipment to digitize those materials in-house. This decision will allow us to apply our resources elsewhere. We have come to the conclusion that transporting materials for the sake of that model is excessive. Collaboration is achieved in a multitude of other ways, rendering the "sites of excellence" model unnecessary.

Another significant development of goal two was learning that another LSTA grant project, Religion in North Carolina, is using the CCC website and project wiki as a model for developing their own workflows. This was very exciting for us to learn, and served as validation of our efforts to provide a working model for these types of collaborative projects thus far. In relation to goal three (to develop shared standards and practices), Duke has benefitted from exploring finding-aid based delivery for the first time. Duke and UNC's digital production centers have continued to refine workflows for large-scale digitization, which will be invaluable for future projects.

We continued to build up our website and add new reports as they were completed, as well as displaying our promotional video.

A significant lesson learned as a result of this project relates to the accuracy of each institution's collection size predictions. Duke completed the number of collections it set out to scan in their entirety, but came in significantly under the predicted 100,000 pages. NCCU's collections were also recently completed, and their page count came in low as well. While this will impact our total number of pages upon completing the project, we are still meeting the goal of digitizing 38 archival collections. As a result of these numbers, we began tracking page number statistics for each collection we are scanning, and will retroactively gather page number information for collections already complete. We hope to analyze that information and come up with a more accurate mechanism for predicting how many pages these 20th century archival collections actually contain.

## 6. Anecdotal Information

**Provide stories, comments, feedback, and observations about how people used the products or services of the project, especially how they benefited from them. The information reported in this section is informal in nature, whereas the information reported under Project Outputs and Project Outcomes comes from specific counts or measures.**

Participant comments from the undergraduate user study (responses were anonymous):

"It was rewarding having the documents at your fingertips and not having to request the documents and then make a special time to go see the document in the allotted library hours. It was also easier to have all the materials needed in one place."

"Digitized documents are great for students who have crazy schedules and need to do research at hours that don't always work with the library."

"I can have access to primary sources online without having to drive an hour or maybe more to view it. As a commuting student, it makes my life much easier to have plenty of documents at my fingertips."

We received numerous messages of positive feedback from the TRLN libraries in response to our promotional video, including this message from Andre Vann at NCCU: "A great job done by all and I will be spreading the "Gospel" of this great project."

A message from Duke librarian Shaneé Murrain regarding the Religion in North Carolina grant: "You all have created a great model and we'd like more information about how the [website and project wiki] were designed."

Facebook post from UNC University Archives: Take a moment to watch this excellent video "Digitizing the Long Civil Rights Movement in NC" created by our colleagues working on TRLN's *Content, Context & Capacity* project.