

## **Community Archiving Workshop- A Regional Training of Trainers**

**Statement of Broad Need/ Relevance to project category:** Local, regional, and academic libraries often serve as archives of and for the communities they serve. Many librarians and archivists find themselves struggling to manage unique and aging media collections such as film, video, and audio recordings, which come into their collection. These audiovisual (AV) collections contain content vital to the history and culture of our communities; however, the content is often unavailable due to the dramatic obsolescence of these recordings and the lack of knowledge and resources to preserve them. Important regional collections also exist within community, cultural, and faith based organizations which are under-resourced, many of them containing unique material which, if lost, cannot be recovered. In such cases, often the only opportunity for preservation comes when the collection is acquired by a larger institution. This process may save cultural records, but it often removes the collection from its community and from the local curators and historians who can best contextualize the content. Librarians and archivists often lack the training and capacity to create, manage, preserve and provide access to their AV collections. One of the greatest challenges to preserving AV collections nationally is that most expertise exists in concentrated regions (primarily in the Northeast) where major institutions have the lion's share of knowledge, staffing, and resources. This project proposes to expand the Community Archiving Workshop, an established model for community training in AV archiving, to fill this training gap in the libraries field while engaging non-librarian stakeholders and community members. Through this project librarians and archivists will improve their knowledge, skills and abilities in AV preservation and archiving and have the opportunity to share these skills in support of their wider community.

**Project Design/Proposed Work Plan:** The Community Archiving Workshop Training of Trainers (TOT) proposes to address the widespread threat to our AV heritage through a series of regionally-based workshops. Workshops address the problem using the following essential components: (1) Training of regional archivists and librarians, by established audiovisual archivists, in the essentials of care and preservation for AV collections. (2) Hands-on collection processing and identification workshops with trained AV archivists. (3) Creation of a basic long-term preservation plan with an assigned AV archivist. (4) Creation of a training curriculum and training toolkit which archivists and librarians can use to pass on their training within their community after the course of the workshop. (5) Digitization of select high priority content from each archive. Twelve workshops will take place in three regions (four per region). Regions are chosen because they are regions in which there are fewer trained audiovisual archivists and less opportunity for training. The proposed training sites are: Midwest (Madison, WI), Southeast (Nashville, TN), West Coast (Berkeley, CA). The Community Archiving Workshop (CAW) (<http://communityarchiving.org>) has developed our training workflow based on over six years of successful workshops conducted across the United States, in Mexico and the Philippines. Since 2011, CAW has mobilized audiovisual experts, regional community members, and library/archive managers to rescue endangered AV recordings and to train librarians, archivists, and individuals in the care and management of AV collections. As these collections age and the window in which preservation can be performed grows shorter, CAW seeks support to develop these individual workshops into a scalable curriculum. Such support will allow CAW to train more people, to provide more in-depth training, and to provide the post project technical support necessary for archives and libraries to reach their long-term preservation and access goals.

This two-year project is organized into four six-month work phases. *Phase I:* CAW leaders will establish formal partnerships for workshops, train librarians/ archivists and regional organizations on AV preservation issues. *Phase II:* The TOT curriculum will be finalized, online toolkit will be completed, and workshop schedule will be established. In the inaugural workshop in each region, CAW leaders will lead workshop delivery, train librarians/ archivists to run a CAW, and provide preservation recommendations to workshop site. *Phase III:* Four CAW trainings will be delivered by librarians/ archivists serving as community anchors. CAW leaders will closely mentor community anchors on

outreach and coordination, workshop development, and partner on workshop delivery. CAW leaders will mentor community anchors in the production of preservation plans. *Phase IV*: Four final CAW trainings will be delivered by community anchors for community partners. CAW leaders will provide mentorship and oversight of the development of preservation recommendations for all CAW training sites. Adjustments will be made to curriculum and online toolkit and project outcomes will be shared broadly through publications and presentations in the library/ archives field. Each of the 12 participating workshop sites will have the opportunity to select high priority AV recordings for preservation and necessary preservation/ digitization will be provided for, in order to create visibility of their collection. Through a total of 12 workshops we propose to train 18 library/ archive professionals, 45 community volunteers, process 12 audiovisual collections, and assess over 2,000 audiovisual recordings for preservation. Additionally, this project supports immediate preservation and access to 60- 100 unique legacy recordings.

**Diversity Plan:** AV preservation expertise and resources are concentrated to the Northeast region within major universities and institutions. Now going into its 8th year, the CAW organizing committee proposes to establish an expanded training model for regional coalitions on the West Coast, Midwest, and Southeast regions of the United States. One of the main goals in developing an expanded model for the CAW is to develop regional coalitions which will participate in training, are networked to resources and each other, and to provide a professional mentor for each community anchor to support their work for the duration of the project. These community anchors will foster partnerships with small community-based organizations and will serve as a hub for local AV preservation efforts. The CAW has a strong record for engaging grassroots organizations in workshops with regional libraries and historical societies. In doing so, relationships developed between small community-based organizations and larger libraries and archives foster skill and resource sharing and increase visibility and access to regional legacy collections, while ensuring that these collections remain as a resource to the community from which they originated.

**Broad Impact:** Recognizing the limited staffing and resources in most regional libraries and archives, the CAW meets collections and managers where they are, harnessing the energy of community volunteers and developing new skills for librarians and archivists. An audiovisual collection's life is extended and the potential for perpetual community access is greatly enhanced once an assessment and preservation plan is in place and a community knows about and is excited by the existence of that collection. Through these workshops, the CAW will gather data for preservation planning and provide critical education and documentation on audiovisual preservation. Collections and their communities will be empowered towards a sustainable plan for better care and greater access to their legacy recordings. In this process library/ archive managers, local community organizations and CAW leaders will gain intellectual and physical control over legacy audiovisual collection as a necessary first step towards preservation and access. The establishment of regional preservation coalitions helps libraries/archives provide an opportunity for community engagement, creating an innovative learning experience in the library that encourages civic participation, while centralizing critical knowledge on audiovisual preservation within the community.

**Budget:** The estimated two-year budget for this project is \$199,200. \$36,000 will be allocated for project coordination through AMIA, \$12,900 for the development of the online toolkit, \$9,600 for TOT curriculum design and materials, and \$46,900 each for the delivery of one TOT workshop and three CAWs in each region (\$140,700 total allocated for regional workshops). Included in each regional workshop budget is a dedicated workshop kit and supplies for each community anchor, participant stipends for participants of each workshop, a preservation incentive for each participating organization, and travel and training stipends for CAW leaders.