



Smithsonian

Robert Frederick Smith Summer 2023 Internships

Offsite at Amistad Research Center

DIGITAL COLLECTION STEWARDSHIP (1 POSITION)

Amistad Research Center – New Orleans, Louisiana

The Amistad Research Center (ARC) is committed to collecting, preserving, and providing open access to original materials that reference the social and cultural importance of America's ethnic and racial history, the African Diaspora, human relations, and civil rights.

Proper documentation of ARC's holdings is fundamental to this mission. As digital stewardship continues to change the nature of archives and libraries in the 21st century, work must be done to protect born-digital and digitized materials from format obsolescence. The Robert F. Smith intern will assist ARC staff in the process of reinforcing ARC's digital infrastructure to provide better access to the collections, both internally and for our global researchers. The project will update ARC's extensive collection metadata, and work to digitize, describe and present additional materials from the collections.

Position Description:

The intern will work with the Digital Archivist on a project that will focus on digitization, metadata creation, and increasing digital access with Amistad's collections management system, The Museum System (TMS), and creating content on the Louisiana Digital Library. The intern will gain knowledge of handling and digitizing an archival collection from Amistad's holdings, working with *The Black Panther* newspaper collection from the late 1960s-1970s, and the Rex Madsen and Jimmie Daniels collection of nightclub photographs from the 1930s-1960s. Research into these collections will aid in the creation of well-constructed descriptive metadata that will be used to populate TMS, and provide more efficient and access to ARC's digital assets.

Sample of Intern Duties:

- Digital scanning of newspaper and photographic materials from Amistad's holdings
- Research, analyze content, and create descriptive metadata from the digitized collection
- Learn and populate Amistad's collection management system (TMS)
- Create a virtual collection from digitized materials on the public facing Louisiana Digital Library
- Creation of blog and social media posts sharing information about the collections and about the intern's experience at ARC

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand best practices for digitization in cultural heritage collections
- Experience using an Epson flatbed scanner and Photoshop for digitization of archival materials.
- Introduction to the use of content management systems, specific to archival work and accessibility of collections, including TMS Collections and ArchivesSpaces
- Learn how to create digital content for a public digital library using Islandora.
- Learn policies and procedures for handling and long-term preservation of archival collections.
- Understand how digitization and curation impact multiple aspects of the operations of a small to midsized cultural heritage institution
- Understand how copyright and intellectual rights determine access to cultural heritage collections

Prerequisites:

- Demonstrated interest in African American history and culture
- Interest in community-facing archives, libraries, and museums
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Able work independently and as part of a team
- Interest in exploring and developing technological skills
- Detail-oriented with strong analytical skills

Work Environment: With a small staff, the work environment at the Amistad Research Center fosters collaboration among staff while also valuing independence and goal-oriented task assignment and completion. Important to this position is the ability to communicate well with staff and supervisors, ask questions as needed, the ability to work independently toward stated deadlines, respect of sensitive materials, and an empathy toward the people, places, and events depicted in Amistad's collections.

Tentative Schedule: Flexible

COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements: Per policies of Amistad Research Center and our host institution, Tulane University, all staff are required to provide proof of vaccination for COVID-19 or complete an exemption form. All staff, including interns, are required to take part in Tulane University's surveillance testing regardless of vaccine status. While Tulane University has become a mask-optional campus, at this time, Amistad still requires masks while in the Center.

Eligibility: Must be a United States citizen

Safety: June-November is hurricane season in New Orleans. In the event of a voluntary or mandatory evacuation, NMAAHC will coordinate a flight or other transportation to the intern's home base if necessary.