



Press Release

Friday, July 11, 2008

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

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Texas State Library and Archives Commission awarded \$536,000 Federal “Train to Share” Grant

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AUSTIN – The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) was awarded a \$536,000 federal “Train to Share: Interoperability Training for Cultural Heritage Institutions” grant that will train librarians around the state in proper tagging and displaying of online content of Texas museum and library collections.

TSLAC Texas Heritage Digitization Initiative coordinator, Dr. Danielle Plumer, wrote the grant, which aims to improve public access to rare and unique cultural heritage collections and materials across the state. The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarians Program from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) issued the grant.

“We have found that inconsistent methods of labeling and describing digital collections can frustrate end users unnecessarily,” said Peggy D. Rudd, TSLAC director and librarian. “By training participants to create better access to digital objects and collections, we will be able to offer researchers, historians and students consistent and easy access to the treasures of Texas history and culture.”

“Train to Share” through a series of workshops has three phases: an outreach and observation phase to identify the collections, resources and knowledge already available in Texas institutions; an education phase to train participant teams in a minimum of five two-day workshops; and a final production phase, in which teams will put what they have learned into practice through the development of 10 collaborative digital products.

“In 2005 we identified that training was our biggest need for the Texas Heritage Digitization Initiative,” said Plumer. “There are plenty of unique items that we want people to find and this will allow us to work with over 300 catalogers, museum professionals and librarians in helping people find them.”

The more than 700 public, academic, and special libraries and over 600 museums of history, art, science, and natural history in Texas will benefit greatly from training to put their collections online with rich descriptions. Producing sustainable partnerships will ultimately provide for improved online search and discovery experiences of rare and unique materials for the students, teachers and researchers of Texas.

TSLAC along with its grant partners, the University of North Texas Libraries and Amigos Library Services, will collaborate over a three-year period to develop statewide training workshops adapted from the Library of Congress series, “Cataloging for the 21st Century,” that provides instruction on the interoperability measures of digitization projects, and the principles of sharable metadata developed in a project previously funded by IMLS.

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"We continue to raise awareness, forge partnerships and provide interoperability training to ensure sustainability, which is vital to the ongoing development of digital projects across Texas," said Rudd.

The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarians grant program supports efforts to educate the next generation of librarians and provides grants for graduate and doctoral studies, continuing education and training. IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas.

TSLAC, Texas libraries and museums are home to the riches of the state's history and culture. Soon it will be easier than ever to locate these special materials and collections thanks to the grant.

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ABOUT THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

TSLAC helps Texans find the information they seek. The people of Texas utilize TSLAC services and programs to effectively use information and materials that improve their lives, the lives of their families, and their communities. Since 1909, TSLAC has carried out a commitment of making information work for all Texans by providing history and genealogical services, federal and state government documents, electronic research, and library services to Texans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical, or reading disabilities. For more information, go to <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us> or email pio@tsl.state.tx.us.