

# Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative

## Archives 101: Community History and Archives Presentation Notes

### Slides 1-2 Introduction (5 Minutes)

Welcome everyone and introduce yourself!

Start workshop by reading Arizona State University (ASU) Library's **Indigenous Land Acknowledgement** and recognize the communities who have inhabited this land for centuries.

The **Labriola National American Indian Data Center** is actively working with communities in Arizona to decolonize and indigenize archives by centering Indigenous knowledge and sovereignty.

### Slide 3 Who We Are (3 - 5 Minutes)

Established in 2017 with the support of Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the **Community-Driven Archives (CDA) Initiative** seeks to:

- Work with Arizona's Latino, Black, Asian & Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and LGBTQ communities to preserve history.
- Create intergenerational and intersectional safe spaces that reimagine archives and support lifelong learning.
- Acknowledge historical trauma by supporting community led healing projects that break cycles of erasure.
- Provide access to archival collections and free library resources.

### Slide 4 What's an Archive and Archivist? (3 - 5 Minutes)

Explain what an archive and archivist is. Share the following definitions:

An **archive** is a time capsule and active space where past and present merge. It contains primary resources that preserve the history of several generations.

An **archivist** appraises, arranges, describes, and preserves archives.

Encourage workshop attendees to share what an archives means to them. Who's the memory keeper in their community?

If you're a **professional archivist**, edit slides 1-6 with your information. What do you preserve? Why? If you don't have collections that represent these communities, explain why and be very honest.

Building relationships with historically marginalized communities will take time, trust, and a real commitment from your institution to empower Community Archivists who are ready to share and preserve their stories.

If you're a **community archivist**, please edit slides as needed. Why are you leading this workshop? How has your community been documented in local history? Why should people preserve? What legacy do you want to leave to future generations?

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## Slides 5-6 Community-Driven Collections (3 - 5 Minutes)

ASU Library is home to several community-driven archival collections that are accessible to the public in person at Hayden Library or online.

The **Chicano/a Research Collection** was established in 1970 by Dr. Christine Marin when she was a student during the Chicano – Civil Rights Movement. It's the largest archive in the state that focuses on Latino history. We have collections on mining history, farm workers, activism, politics, culture, and family history.

The **Bj Bud Memorial Archives** documents LGBTQ history from the late 1970's to early 2000's. The collection was named after a local lesbian activist named Harlene "Bj" Bud.

## Slides 7-8 Ready to be a Community Archivist! (3 - 5 Minutes)

Arizona's **Latino, Black, Asian & Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and LGBTQ communities** have been excluded from local archives and memory. In 2012, the Arizona Archives Matrix Project showed these communities currently make up over 42% of the population but are only represented in 0 to 2% of known archival collections.

Are you ready to become a Community Archivist!  
Here are some helpful tips to get you started.  
**Remember to appraise, arrange and describe, and preserve your archives.**

## Slide 9 Appraise (5 Minutes)

Ask attendees to share what they think about when they hear the word appraisal. Explain what it means within archives.

**Your role in Arizona history is extremely important** and your photographs, documents, and artifacts have historical value because it's rare and unique and can't be found anywhere else.

The first thing you want to do is **conduct an inventory** of what you have in order to create a preservation plan.

**What do you have?** *Example: letters, diaries, scrapbooks, photographs, artifacts, genealogy records, oral histories, and home videos.*

**Where is it?** Most individuals have material scattered in different locations. *Example: Mom's house, your office, or in a shed outside.*

The small discussions and activities throughout this workshop will help **create a safe space for everyone**. As professional archivists, we need to center the lived experiences and knowledge of communities. We need to advocate for equal ownership of archives and shared stewardship responsibilities.

**Community archivists are experts** who need to be engaged at all levels of the preservation process. This is a good opportunity to uplift personal stories and collective memory as well as promote self-reflection and solidarity. The average length of this workshop is 1 hour 30 minutes. If the activities take up more time, the workshop can be extended to 2 hours.

## Slide 10 Show and Share Activity (10 - 15 Minutes)

**Archiving is storytelling!** Ask community members to share what's in their archive.  
*Example: If this workshop is in person or virtual, people can share a physical photo, an object, their favorite story, or an image on their phone.*

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## Slide 11 Arrange and Describe (3 - 5 Minutes)

**Organizing your archives will make things accessible** and encourage people to use the items and remember the past. Collections can be organized by the type of material you have or by subject.

*Example: If you have photos, they should be arranged and described separately from artifacts or documents. If possible, identify people, places, and dates.*

Collect information that will help you create a finding aid that will identify what's in each folder and box.

## Slide 12 Analyze Photos Activity (10 - 15 Minutes)

Hand out photos and ask attendees to fill out the **Analyze Photos Activity** document. This can be completed individually or as a group and people can share their observations.

*Example: Who's in the photo? What does the photo document? Where and when was it taken?*

## Slide 13 Finding Aid Activity (10 Minutes)

A finding aid contains detailed information or metadata about your archive. Using the information available, ask attendees to fill out the **Finding Aid Activity** document. One side of document contains an example of a finding aid for the Ocampo Family Collection which documents over 150 years of Arizona history.

## Slide 14 Photo Albums and Scrapbooks (3 - 5 Minutes)

Old photo albums and scrapbooks albums use adhesive that stains material yellow and makes it difficult to remove photos without damaging them. If you have **scrapbooks**, keep the material as is but add acid-free paper in between pages and scan material as soon as possible. Acid free basically means it doesn't have chemicals that harm material. If you use **photo albums**, make sure they say acid-free and don't contain glue, tape, or other adhesives. The majority of craft stores now sell acid-free albums or boxes.

## Slides 15-16 Preserve (5 - 10 Minutes)

Professional archivists and repositories use **archival supplies (acid-free folders and boxes, mylar, and gloves)** to preserve items. Supplies are purchased from companies like Hollinger Metal Edge. Archivists store photos in mylar also known as plastic. Photos and mylar come in different sizes (5 x 7, 8 x 10, or oversize).

Make sure to use gloves to protect photos from dirt and the natural oils on your hands. Gloves are not needed when working with fragile documents and books. Remember to not eat or drink near photos and documents.

In Arizona, we experience extreme summer heat and monsoon rain. **Store archives in a clean and dry space and in stable temperature (lower than 70°F)**. If that's not possible, make sure material isn't in an attic, basement, garage, or outside.

Material responds different to changes in temperature, light exposure, and air quality.

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Low humidity can warp or crack materials. Heat and high humidity favor the growth of mold and insect activity. Light weakens the color of photographs and makes paper become brittle.

ASU Library provides **free archive starter kits** to community archivists. Please contact our CDA team if you want one. If you don't have supplies, use other affordable storage solutions like plastic bins, acid-free boxes, or zip lock bags to store your archives.

## Slide 17 **Water Damage (3 - 5 Minutes)**

If you experience water damage, you can save your photos if you respond quickly and don't let them dry together. **Mold grows after 48 hours** in high temperature and humidity. **Air drying photographs** is the most effective way to prevent more damage. Lay photos on a towel with glossy side facing up. Photos might warp but they can be fixed and flattened out when dry.

## Slide 18 **Digital Preservation (3 - 5 Minutes)**

Digital Preservation is the process of appraising, arranging and describing your digital files similar to your physical archives. Every day we create digital content as technology becomes obsolete. Preserving this material can seem a little overwhelming but we advise that you take the following beginning steps.

- Convert your home movies (VHS) to digital files.  
Allows you to view the movies without damaging the originals.
- Scan your original photographs and create digital copies.  
Allows you to share photos with family members.
- Establish a backup system for your computer, camera, and phone.  
*Example:* Save files on an external hard drive and Google Drive.

## Slides 19-20 **Contact us and Thank you! (3 - 5 Minutes)**

Our goal for this workshop was to make sure you feel confident in your new role as a Community Archivist and prepared to start this important preservation journey. If you have any questions or would like to collaborate on future projects or workshops, please contact us! Visit our website and follow us!

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### **Jessica Salow**

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### **Alex Soto**

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