

National Anthropological Archives Reference Internship Summer 2017

Project Title:

National Anthropological Archives Reference Internship

Project Description:

[The National Anthropological Archives](#) (NAA) at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History is seeking a reference intern to assist staff and researchers during two intensive archival institutes: [The National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages](#), and [the Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology \(SIMA\) Program](#). **Breath of Life** provides training in linguistics and archival research to researchers from Native American and First Nations communities who are embarking on language revitalization programs. The Institute's participants draw on the NAA's extensive holdings relating to endangered North American languages. **SIMA** is a research training program offered by the Department of Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. The program seeks to promote broader and more effective use of museum collections in anthropological research by providing a supplement to university training. Graduate student participants spend time working with Anthropology collection objects and NAA archival material to better understand how to navigate museum systems, select methods to examine and analyze museum specimens, and recognize the wealth of theoretical issues that museum data can address.

The intern will work under the supervision of the NAA's Reference Archivist and alongside other NAA staff, volunteers, and fellow interns to assist Breath of Life and SIMA participants as they navigate NAA online databases, examine archival materials, and design research projects. There will also be opportunities to tailor reference projects to the intern's specific learning objectives as the NAA hosts a wide variety of researchers and houses collections with multiple media formats, levels of organization, and challenges from both preservation and access perspectives.

The internship experience is an opportunity to learn – through hands-on training and one-on-one engagement with both knowledgeable staff and a variety of researchers – how the theory and principles encountered in archives coursework translate into real-world archival and reference practice. This is also an opportunity to gain first-hand experience working with Indigenous archival materials and communities.

Qualifications:

Graduate students or recent graduates (within the last 6 months) enrolled in an archives, library science, or museum studies programs. Students who have completed or are enrolled in

an introductory course in archival principles and practices are preferred. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is generally expected of graduate student interns. Proficiency in MS Word and Excel is also required. Preference is given to applicants with strong research, writing, organizational, and communication skills. This position also requires attention to detail and professionalism. Students interested in anthropology and/or linguistics are encouraged to apply. Cultural sensitivity and the ability to work with people from all backgrounds is a must.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain experience using online Smithsonian databases: SIRIS and Collections Search Center, finding aids, and archival materials in support of research.
- Gain experience in the archival reference process, from consulting with researchers to determine the material most likely to suit their needs, to serving this material and monitoring its use in the research room. Interns will work on specific projects that improve the accessibility and discoverability of materials, and thus improve the researcher experience.
- Learn about the subject of language and traditional knowledge documentation and revitalization.
- Learn about the uses and benefits of archival resources at the Smithsonian, and museums in general, to understand the impact of resources on revitalization efforts and scholarly and non-scholarly research.
- Learn about the challenges and opportunities that Indigenous archival materials provide for researchers and archivists in terms of access.
- Gain experience in the planning and execution of archival research institutes.

Stipend: \$3000.00

Start Date: May 15, 2017

Project Timeline and Location:

The internship is located at the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution Museum Support Center (MSC) in Suitland, Maryland. MSC is a 15-minute walk from the Suitland Metro Station on the Green Line and is also accessible via free shuttle from the National Museum of Natural History. Free parking is also available.

The internship will last through July 21, 2017. The Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages takes place May 29-June 9, 2017. The Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology takes place from June 26-July 21, 2017. The intern is expected to work 4 days a week (Tuesdays-Fridays), 9 am-4:30 pm during both institutes. For the few weeks in between BOL and SIMA, the internship schedule is somewhat flexible.

Please submit a cover letter describing your qualifications and interest, résumé, and contact information for three references to Caitlin Haynes at haynesce@si.edu. Application Deadline: March 3, 2017.