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### 20201001\_October is American Archives Month

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# HSLIC News - LibGuides at University of New Mexico

## October is American Archives Month!

by Jonathan Pringle on October 1st, 2020 | [0 Comments](#)



If you have been wondering what impact COVID-19 has had on the Health Sciences Library & Informatics Center (HSLIC), one of the more notable challenges with switching to working remotely is that we have much less contact with our physical collections. This means delays with donations of original archival materials; unclear timeframes for adequate processing and description; and very little digitization to provide ease of access for our patrons. This isn't just felt at HSLIC; the entire archival profession is grappling with how it can provide leadership in how to do this important work while keeping us and our patrons safe.

So with these barriers in place, what are we filling our time up with, you ask? Much of the answer lies with our own individual thoughts and reactions to change itself.:

"The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are."

J.P. Morgan

COVID-19, for all the suffering and anxiety it causes both inside and outside of our workplaces, has nonetheless compelled archives professionals to consider new ways to cope with--and adapt to--changes with long-established theory and practice. We must openly explore a future in our profession that balances our acceptance of change with its impact on not only our *own* well-being, but that also of our donors and patrons. Empathy and emotional intelligence have never been in as high demand as they are right now. This is a period in which collaboration, ingenuity, and activism are welcomed and celebrated as we all, together, figure out where we go next.

What are some ways in which HSLIC is optimistic about the future of its archival program? Here are just a few examples we see as opportunities in the profession, and in turn for ourselves:

Support for more community archives work, in which unique communities control the creation, preservation (of), and access to information about themselves

Collaborative outreach efforts that create a more trustworthy, inclusive, and sustainable perspective of our present; i.e. open description and collection development

An expanded set of skills and tools to better (and more efficiently) manage electronic records (born-digital and digitized)

Modifications to our work environments that allow us to maintain a closer connection to our homes and families

Our doors are presently closed, but we are open to new ways of working and serving our patrons during this distressing yet transformative period.

To learn more about our current archival program and some of the amazing physical collections that await you once we reopen, visit the [HSLIC Special Collections](#) page. You will also find links to several Special Collections resources we have made available for you online.

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