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Archives Search Committee  
Saint Louis University Libraries  
Pius XII Memorial Library  
Saint Louis University  
3650 Lindell Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63108

**Dear St. Louis University Library and Archives Hiring Committee,**

I am grateful for the opportunity to apply for the Archives Processing Associate position at Saint Louis University. With a Ph.D. in History from the University of Missouri (2024) and extensive experience in archival processing, preservation, and curation, I am eager to contribute to SLU’s commitment to historical accessibility, records management, and special collections. My background includes over seven years of combined experience working with historical materials in government, institutional, and academic settings, including archival work at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and leadership in digitization projects at Madison Historical. These roles have equipped me with strong expertise in accessioning, preservation techniques, archival description, and metadata management, skills that align directly with this role’s responsibilities.

I have ample experience in processing archival collections, rehousing and stabilizing mixed-media materials, and implementing digital preservation strategies in digital and physical archives. At NARA, I assisted in restoring damaged files, rehousing fragile records, and ensuring compliance with federal archival standards. I also contributed to digitization initiatives involving manuscripts, photographs, and audiovisual records, ensuring the preservation of historically significant materials while improving researcher access. My hands-on training in archival metadata standards, conservation techniques, and digital remediation strategies, including software proficiency, has strengthened my ability to manage long-term collections preservation and accessibility.

At Madison Historical, a regional digital archive, I further developed my expertise in digital curation and metadata management. As a project lead, I trained undergraduate and graduate students in archival best practices, digital asset management, and metadata creation, overseeing the collection, digitization, description and ethical consideration regarding over 70 oral histories, thousands of historic photographs, and multiple site-based material culture collections. I developed workflows for tracking and organizing digital objects, ensuring their preservation and accessibility through DACS-compliant descriptions and integration into the archive’s digital platform. Additionally, I worked directly with community partners, educators, and researchers to enhance discoverability and engagement with these collections.

Beyond my technical expertise, I have a strong background in reference services, supervision, and instructional outreach. I have assisted researchers in paging and accessing historical documents, guiding them in navigating finding aids, metadata records, and digitized materials. Similarly, at Madison Historical, I developed training programs for student researchers, providing instruction on proper handling of fragile materials, metadata documentation, and digital repository workflows. My experience hiring, training, and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in archival research, digitization, and records management strategies demonstrates my ability to foster collaborative learning environments. I am adept at guiding interns and volunteers in proper handling of special formats, data workflows, and developing user-friendly finding aids to improve access to archival materials.

Additionally, I have experience in preservation monitoring and environmental control in to protect archival collections. In prior roles, I have worked with temperature and humidity monitoring systems to ensure long-term preservation of materials and have implemented appropriate storage solutions for sensitive documents, including phase boxing, conservation housing, and digital remediation strategies. These practices align with SLU’s need for monitoring storage conditions and stabilizing fragile materials in a university archive setting while making materials open and accessible to its users.

I am committed to professional development and continued engagement in the archival field. I have attended workshops on digital preservation strategies, participated in regional conferences on archival best practices, and continue to refine my expertise in metadata standards, digital asset management, and conservation techniques. This aligns with SLU’s emphasis on continuous learning and professional growth in support of its archival and special collections initiatives.

My background in archival standards, digital preservation, and research accessibility makes me an excellent candidate for this position. I am eager to bring my expertise in processing, accessioning, preservation, and metadata management to SLU’s Archives team and contribute to its mission of maintaining and expanding accessibility to its distinctive collections.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my background and skills align with the needs of SLU’s Archives and Special Collections. I look forward to the possibility of contributing to the university’s archival and research initiatives.

Sincerely,

Shannan Catherine Mason, Ph.D.