December 20, 2010

Mukurtu: an Indigenous Archive and Content Management Tool
New Website Announcement
www.mukurtuarchive.org
Project Director: Dr. Kimberly Christen; Director of Development: Dr. Michael Ashley; Lead Drupal Developer: Nicholas Tripcevich

In March 2010 the Mukurtu project was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Start-Up grant to produce a beta-version of an open-source, standards-based community digital archive and content management platform. As the third phase of an ongoing software production project, the Mukurtu team is aware that indigenous and tribal libraries, archives and museums are underserved by both off-the-shelf content management systems (CMS) and open source CMS and digital archive/web production tools. Over the last decade as web technologies have diversified to include user-generated content and more sophisticated digital archive and content management tools the specific needs of indigenous collecting institutions have been left out of mainstream productions. Based on long-term research and collaboration with indigenous communities and collecting institutions, Mukurtu's development and production has focused on producing a digital archive and content management tool suite that meets the expressed needs of indigenous communities globally. Specifically, Mukurtu:

1. Allows for granular access levels based on indigenous cultural protocols for the access and distribution of multiple types of content;
2. Provides for diverse and multiple intellectual property systems through flexible and adaptable licensing templates;
3. Accounts for histories of exclusion from content preservation and metadata generation sources and strategies by incorporating dynamic and user-friendly administration tools;
4. Provides flexible and adaptable metadata fields for traditional knowledge relating to collections and item level descriptions; and
5. Facilitates the exchange and enhancement of metadata between national collecting institutions and related indigenous communities through robust import/export capabilities.

The Mukurtu software tool suite is under development now with a system demonstration site planned for Spring 2011. Our informational website, development blog, and wiki are now live. These sites allow us to chronicle our development progress, provide updates and engage with users as we move forward to a full launch in August 2011.

Please visit the new site at: www.mukurtuarchive.org and follow the links to learn more about the Mukurtu project goals, development, and collaborations.