

# C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO LIBRARY



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## News and Updates

Welcome to the Special Collections Department's semiannual newsletter. I hope that you and your loved ones are well and staying safe.

While our late spring and summer programming has been postponed, and some of our daily tasks have changed, we have been working hard to continue our Department's mission.

Currently, we are open by appointment-only to UTEP faculty and graduate students. Please email [us](#) to make an appointment. Because we cannot give tours right

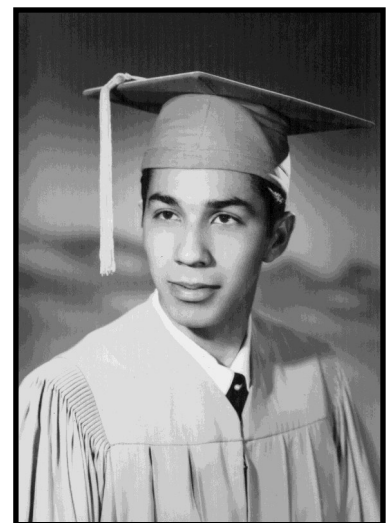
now, I created a [virtual tour](#) of our Department.

At the invitation of Dr. Jeff Shepherd (UTEP History Department), Claudia, Harvey Castellano of Access Services, and I have been attending meetings with archivists and librarians active in the Western History Association (WHA) about how to best help researchers during the COVID-19 era. The group compiled a resource guide and organized a [webinar](#) on digital resources. Future webinars are planned on more specific topics.

Congratulations to our longtime student worker America Alvillar who graduated in May. We will miss you!

Lastly, I wanted to share some resources that our regional professional organization, the Society of Southwest Archivists (SSA), has compiled and that we are learning from. These include SSA's [statement condemning racial violence and anti-racism resources for archivists](#) and the [Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#).

Best, Abbie



Mr. Miguel Herrera, a 1962 graduate of Gadsden High School, called to identify his Casasola Studio photograph on May 18, 2020 after it appeared in the *El Paso Times*. We have had four Casasola images identified since late March.

## Working from Home

Since March 24, Special Collections staff and student workers have been working from home.

In addition to assisting researchers by answering reference questions, we have added 28 find-

ing aids to our website, worked on editing digital images, and created research guides for fall courses.

We have also added new images to our [image database](#) and digit-

ized books and archival materials to [ScholarWorks](#) (formerly Digital Commons).

Special thanks to Lisa Weber for creating detailed metadata for the [Fanny Zlabovsky - Na-](#)

[tional Council of Jewish Women case files, MS508](#). This important collection contains materials relating to Jews trying to flee Nazi Germany and other European countries during the 1930s.



ABCs in the Archives exhibit, January 2020.

## Exhibits

During the spring semester the Special Collections Department created three new exhibits in the UTEP Library.

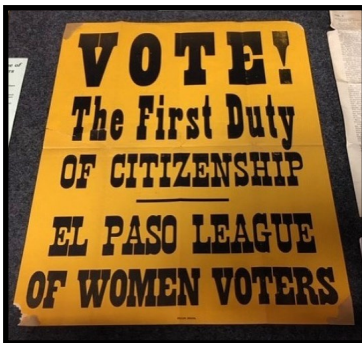
On the sixth floor, Abbie created an exhibit, *ABCs in the Archives*. This exhibit includes 26 alphabet books and books about typography and letter formation. These books date from the

1900s to the 2010s. Most of the books are from our Carl Hertzog book collection.

In February, photo archivist David Flores curated an exhibit of Cynthia Farah Haines' portraits of southwestern writers from her book *Literature and Landscape: Writers of the Southwest* on the Library's third floor. This

exhibit features 50 photographs.

And in March, Abbie created an exhibit about women's suffrage in El Paso to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. We plan to create an online version of the women's suffrage exhibit in the near future.



Women's Suffrage in El Paso exhibit, March 2020.

## Online Resources

Our online Special Collections holdings are free and open to all researchers.

Special Collections serves as the access point for [UTEP's Institute of Oral History collection](#). There are over 1,600 interviews in the collection

and most have transcripts and/or streaming audio.

Our [image database](#) currently contains 4,256 images and we are working to add more photographs and collections.

[ScholarWorks](#) also contains digitized publica-

tions, books, [sources about UTEP history](#), and archival collections.

And on the [Portal to Texas History](#) there are 3,434 items from Special Collections, including city directories, newspapers, and Mexican Revolution primary sources.



Literature and Landscape exhibit, February 2020.

## New to Special Collections

- Civilian Conservation Corps—Fort Bliss District collection
- Leon Metz manuscripts [donated by the estate of Robert McCubbin]
- Jackson—Polk family papers
- Raymond Telles collection [portrait of Raymond Telles by Nestor Valencia]
- *The End of the Myth: from the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America*
- *Border Towns and Border Crossings : A History of the U.S.-Mexico Divide*
- *Migrant Longing: Letter Writing across the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*

## TARO Project

In March, Special Collections was invited to participate in Texas Archival Resources Online's (TARO) Summerlee New Member Initiative Project.

Funded by the Summerlee Foundation, this project will allow many of UTEP's finding aids to be marked up in Encoded Archival Description (EAD-XML) and upload-

ed into the TARO database.

This should make our collections more visible to researchers and will facilitate inclusion in the California Digital Library's proposed National Archival Finding Aid Network (NAFAN). We hope to have 90 finding aids sent to TARO by 2022.

We currently have over 30 finding aids almost completed. Yvette transferred our existing finding aids into the TARO template, while Claudia and Abbie edited and added index terms. These finding aids should appear in TARO later this year.



## Special Collections Interns

During the spring semester we had two interns through the UTEP-EPCC Humanities Collaborative.

Alexander Lopez worked on inventorying several collections, including the [Eva Spencer Osterberg papers](#). He is currently

working this summer on an annotated bibliography of WWII in El Paso sources held by the UTEP Library.

Luis Garcia continued his work evaluating books in the John McNeely book collection for possible digitization.

UTEP History PhD student Blanca Garcia-Barron also interned in Special Collections and processed the [El Paso del Norte Solidarity Committee records](#).

Thank you to our spring semester interns!



Top photo: Eva Ross and Claudia. Bottom photo: Eva with her Volunteer of the Year Award, February 2020. Photos courtesy of Lorely Embriz, BLRA.

## Special Collections Volunteers

Longtime volunteer Eva Ross worked on the vertical files and on inventorying the Juan Sandoval papers. She received the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award from the Border Regional Library Association (BRLA) at the

Annual Awards banquet in February. Congratulations, Eva!

Volunteer Nancy Wilson inventoried the [Thomas Ira Cook papers](#) and the Expanding Your Horizons series of the UTEP collection.

And volunteer Cindy Milazzo continued her work inventorying the tapes in the Edge of Texas records.

Thank you to our volunteers for your hard work—we miss you!

# C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department



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## Overview

The collections contained in the [C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department](#) directly support research and learning at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). The Department currently has over 750 archival collections, over 1,600 oral histories, various rare book collections, and thematic book collections, such as the Southwest, Chicano, Judaica, Art, Military, and McCord Poetry collections. During the 2018/2019 fiscal year, we welcomed over 4,000 visitors.

## Mission Statement

The Special Collections Department supports the University's mission of education, research, scholarship, and community service. The mission of the C.L. Sonnichsen Special Collections Department is to acquire, preserve, and make available for use the archival, rare book, media, and digital collections of the University Library within the scope of the Department's collection policies. Areas of collection emphasis include primary sources for the history of the University, El Paso, and the border region; women's history; fine printing and book design; and military history.

## Vision Statement

The Library sits on a hill within sight of the Mexican border. Our unique position informs our attitudes and the services we offer. We aim for excellence in serving our users and in making our collections accessible.



Try our 28 free online [Special Collections puzzles](#): stress relief for trying times!

To donate to the Special Collections Endowment Fund, please visit our [website](#).