

SMITH COLLEGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (FALL 2023)
2023 Internship Project Description

(Send to Alex Capobianco [REDACTED])

Name of Smithsonian Staff Mentor(s): Greg Adams and Betty Belanus

Title of Smithsonian Staff Mentor(s): Adams – Interim Director, Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives, Belanus – Curator/Education Specialist

Phone Number(s): [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Email Address(es): [REDACTED]

Museum/Institute/Office: Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Department/Division/Office (if applicable):

Project Title (must be ONSITE): Hands-on Archiving: Aid in Preparing the Archival Materials from a Remarkable Career

Project Description – *Please provide as much detail as possible. What will the intern learn? How will this internship benefit the intern and your unit? Please also include any relevant background information on the function of your unit, department, or office:*

How are materials from a Smithsonian career spanning over 35 years prepared to be preserved for future use? What are the skills and tools of professional archivists? Guided by two long time staff members at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) <https://folklife.si.edu/>, one whose materials are the subject of the archival preparations and one a professional archivist, this internship offers an entry into not only a long and interesting career at the Smithsonian, but into the intricate world of archiving.

Betty Belanus (Smith '77), Education Specialist and Curator, has working at the Center since 1987 and will be retiring in the next year. During this time her projects have included curating or co-curating and directing the family activities area of a number of Smithsonian Folklife Festival programs based mostly in the U.S., conducting workshops and seminars, co-creating education kits, and working with other Smithsonian and outside organizations on educational and curatorial projects. Her publications include articles, book chapters, and educational

materials. Her archival materials include correspondence, notes, reports, field reports and photographs, evaluation materials, publication research and drafts, and other documents. These materials are the records of a long and fruitful career of curating and creating educational experiences for K-16 students and the general public.

Greg Adams is Interim Director of the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives at the Center. He has been assisting Belanus and several interns to date on the organization of her Archival materials and the creation of a finding aides, for placement in the Archives.

Read more about Adams and Belanus on the CFCH Staff page:

<https://folklife.si.edu/staff/smithsonian>

Tasks during this internship will include an overview of the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives <https://folklife.si.edu/archives> and its holdings, gaining familiarity with the specific materials to be archived, focusing on a group of archival materials to be processed, introduction to preparing finding aids, preparing materials physically for archiving, and preparing a finding aid for a group of materials. The intern will attend meetings at the Center and online (such as staff meetings) to also gain an overview of our overall work, and will meet and interact with other Center staff as well as staff from other parts of the Smithsonian and other organizations with whom the Center collaborates.

This internship is perfect for a student who is interested in pursuing graduate work in archiving and library science, and/or who is interested in delving deeply into the career of a Smithsonian curator and educator who began the foundations of her career as an undergraduate in American Studies at Smith.

Final project for the internship will include a successfully executed Finding Aid for some significant portion of the collection, plus a project reflecting some aspect of the collection of Belanus's materials, which could take the form of a Smithsonian Learning Lab collection, blog or article for the CFCH website, or other product of the intern's choosing.

Project Learning Objectives:

Sharpen organization skills through arranging, rehousing, and describing archival materials

Collaborate with professional archivists in the creation of finding aids to ensure efficient future use of materials

Help ensure the records of a long and valuable career are properly archived to create a record of the work of that individual

Consider how archives and records management practices contribute to the Center's Shared Stewardship of Collections Policy <https://folklife.si.edu/archives#shared-stewardship> to ensure culturally respectful collections management and increased community access to collections.